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The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy

NEWS

Breeds and Ancient Standards

By Sara M. Drake, Ph.D.

In this article, author Sarah Drake takes us back in time to discover the ancient origins of the Akhal-Teke breed and how it co-emerged with the famous Saluki dog breed, shaped by the same cultural and geographic influences.

The most ancient of horse and dog breeds arose in the vast desertscapes of the Middle East and Central Asia. There are still places in this region where the centuries-old nomadic traditions exist in a relatively undiluted state. In the Near East region of antiquity (now called Central Asia and the Middle East), concepts similar to the modern breeding practices of European breeds were utilized and perhaps served as a model for the development of “breeds.” This was long before these practices were established as a formal means for the creation or alteration of a subspecies by human manipulation of a gene pool. The desert climate of the region demanded the development of endurance and survival capability in the Near Eastern breeds that far exceeds anything that was demanded of European breeds living in a less harsh environment.

Associated Breeds

Among the ancient breeds of this world, which all have their roots in prehistoric antiquity, we might list the Saluki dog and the Arabian horse, which share geographical origins and also have shared many of the same breeders across the ages. The Saluki and the Arabian have had an even closer kinship because of the function both horse and canine have had in common for hunting game. Together with the falcon, they have constituted an age-old hunting triad, which, through selective breeding and highly specialized training, grew expert at bringing down all kinds of game.



Akhal-Teke horse owned by ALBC member Phil Case. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

It was this hunting ritual which helped to shape the breeds individually and fostered the physical characteristics which they had in common – speed, endurance, independence, and the ability to work together and with humans. Each animal carried out a unique function during the hunt. The horse carried the rider. The falcon spotted and helped to immobilize the game. The canine pursued and brought down the game.

In the spring of 1994, I came across a newly published book about another of these ancient breeds, which offered a number of insights about their origins and the ideas and practices which helped to shape many of the breeds. *Sacred Horses*, by Jonathan Maslow, detailed his ventures into the steppes of Central Asia to find the Akhal-Teke horse. The political barriers along with the geographical isolation imposed by mountain ranges and deserts

had gradually served to separate the Akhal-Teke from the other related breeds of the region, and had imposed upon it an extremely harsh existence which has almost decimated the breed. That the ancient Akhal-Teke still exists is a tribute to a few dedicated breeders and a few remaining nomadic tribes, who committed themselves to its survival and preservation despite enormous odds and hardship. Many of the facts referenced in this article can be found in this book.

As a Saluki breeder, I was only quasi-involved while reading about Maslow’s quest to find the Akhal-Teke until I came upon Maslow’s account of his interview with one scholar in Turkmenistan. In the interview, it was mentioned that the Akhal-Teke was traditionally used to hunt together with the “Tazy” [a hound similar to the

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New Executive Director

The Board of Directors of ALBC recently named L. Eric Hallman, Ph.D., as the new Executive Director of the organization. Eric began work on April 23, 2012, and has quickly adapted to his new role. Within his first few days on the job, Eric

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Basic annual membership is \$35, and includes the bimonthly *ALBC News* and the annual *Breeders Directory*. We also accept unsolicited donations. All contributions are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. Please send changes of address to ALBC.

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visited with Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, and presented at and attended ALBC's from *Service to Stewardship* workshop for veterans. "He's jumped right in and is embracing the ALBC mission," said Ryan Walker, Membership Services Manager.

Following a comprehensive national search, the ALBC Board of Directors selected Eric for his unique combination of experience as a senior executive, scientist, educator, and civic leader. As the organization seeks to expand its national reach and membership, Eric's accomplishments in capital formation, strategic planning, and entrepreneurship will help guide ALBC and rare livestock breed conservation into its next phase of development.

"Eric's extensive scientific background, combined with his keen business sense, seemed like an ideal match for ALBC at this point in its evolution. We know that with Eric's leadership, ALBC will continue to build on the conservation successes that it has achieved over the past 35 years," said Charles Taft, Chair of the ALBC Board of Directors.

Most recently, Eric served as the founder and CEO of the Southeast's first commercial biostorage company. Under his leadership and direction, the company became recognized as one of the top biorepositories in the United States. In addition to his role as an entrepreneur and founder of several biotech companies, Eric has served as a university professor and research scientist. He also finds satisfaction in giving back to the community. Eric has served on a number of nonprofit boards, and has been an elected official in the town of Hillsborough, North Carolina, for the past eight years. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and both Master's and Doctoral degrees in Neurobiology from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. Eric also completed a post-doctoral fellowship at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, North Carolina.

"I am excited about joining ALBC and participating in such an important mission. It's a great organization with the potential to make an impact on our local communities, as well as in the national dialogue on conservation, biodiversity, and sustainability," said Eric.

Currently, Eric resides in Hillsborough, North Carolina, with his wife Elizabeth, where they manage three dogs and a historic home. Business aside, Hallman spends his free time as a jazz musician, a local food enthusiast, an organic gardener, and a rookie beekeeper. ❖

ALBC Conference Lineup Announced

ALBC is excited to announce the eagerly anticipated schedule for this year's Annual Conference in Cary, North Carolina, November 9-10, 2012. This year's lineup of workshops and clinics includes something for everyone and is sure to be one of the best-to-date. Join ALBC members, partners, and friends as we reflect on ALBC's achievements, discuss the organization's current initiatives, and plan for the future of rare breed conservation. Hear from world leaders and pioneers in livestock conservation and sustainable agriculture, and learn more about what trends are hot in the heritage breeds arena. If you attend one event this year, make it the ALBC Conference!

Workshops and clinics include:

- Heritage Breed Hog Semen Collection, Evaluation, Processing, and Preservation
- FAMACHA© Parasite Management and Certification
- Getting Started with Backyard Chickens
- Wonderful Warrens – How to Construct and Maintain a Profitable Rabbitry
- The Tricky Business of Managing a Breed Association
- Garden Chick – Growing Food with and for Family Flocks
- The Heritage Farm Startup: An Idea Crazy Enough to Work
- How to Make Bucks with Ducks
- Horse Farming 101: How We Farm with Belgians
- Protecting American Agriculture: U.S.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR



By Eric Hallman

In the March/April *ALBC News* “From the Director” column, Chuck Bassett bade us farewell after ten years of leadership, and now I write to you as the new Executive Director of ALBC with less than 60 days under my belt. As I begin my tenure at ALBC, I am truly fortunate to accept the handoff from Chuck who leaves the organization poised to make more great things happen. I’m honored to continue the 35-year ALBC mission, and I am truly “standing on the shoulders of giants” as I reflect on where we have been and look ahead at the opportunities ahead.

My background, at least on paper, is more lab-based science than hands-on agriculture. Though my wife and I live in a rural community with a close connection to the area’s many small farms, we live “downtown” – as much as you can in a town of 6,500. This limits our livestock to dogs, bees, and until the raccoons moved in, an assorted flock of chickens. In my first week of meeting with the ALBC staff, I felt like an “ag wannabe.”

After a few days in the office, I found myself on Jeff Wilkin’s Wilkshire Ranch among his Red Poll cattle. With one deep breath, I was transported back to my grandfather’s small farm among the barns and livestock where I spent many happy days as a child, a memory that had long faded. I was delighted, and upon returning home, I immediately called my brother, a finance guy, to share with him our re-discovered past. Maybe I’m just light-headed from the smell of manure, but I am reclaiming my “farm boy” roots!

My more recent past has been relatively manure-free, building high-growth entrepreneurial companies in the biotech field. But there is a common thread between that work and ALBC – both share the excitement of unknown opportunities and the potential to make an impact on the world. In fact, what drew me to ALBC was the appeal of the ALBC mission to conserve the heritage breeds America grew up with, and the ability to make a difference. In addition, the mission seems particularly timely. We are all aware of the growing interest of the general public in our collective agricultural heritage. Like me, people are re-discovering their connections to land and livestock. There is a budding recognition that an important genetic resource and our agricultural history are endangered. Each new week on the job has brought another opportunity to trumpet ALBC’s success, to expand the reach and impact of ALBC, and to make a difference.

This is a time of transition, not just in the Executive Director position but also in ALBC’s maturation as an organization. As one board member put it, “Chuck saw ALBC through its awkward teenage years into promising young adulthood; now it is your task to take ALBC to its potential as a grown-up organization.” The ALBC Board of Directors views this time with clarity and purpose. The Board has communicated their collective vision to grow ALBC into an organization of even greater

national prominence. I wish to thank them for their support and encouragement and to recruit you to join us on this mission.

There is no shortage of new opportunities and ways we can grow ALBC’s reach and impact. This is evident every day as someone on staff walks in to the office and says, “I had a thought about how we can...” In a short two months, I’ve heard more of these opportunities than we have resources to pursue. However, if we can find the support, we want to do it all. Expect to see some exciting new initiatives in the coming year.

On my very first day in the office I saw the quote from William Beebe, the explorer and natural historian, as if for the first time: “...when the last individual of a race of living things breathes no more, another Heaven and another Earth must pass before such a one can be again.” It is an emotionally powerful statement. As I stood there in the bustling ALBC office, the impact of this statement struck me deeply. We, ALBC, are the last sentries, guarding against the slow tide washing away the genetic heritage of critical livestock breeds. Ours is an extremely important task, taken on by very passionate and dedicated people. Together we can continue the success that has seen ALBC through the first 35 years and expect greater achievements in the years to come. I am proud and humbled to join you in this mission. So stay tuned. You ain’t seen nothing yet! ❖

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THEIR FUTURE

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Breeds and Ancient Standards

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Saluki bred by ancestors of the Turkmen] and the falcon. Suddenly a new light shone upon the Akhal-Teke, and I began reading the book again from the beginning. It became clear to me as I read on that the Akhal-Teke was really another strain of the ancient breeds of horses which have often been referred to generically as Arabians ("Arabian" being used traditionally as a general term for the horses of Near Eastern origin). Bred in this region for millennia, like the Saluki, the Akhal-Teke is an Arabian strain which has undergone several changes in name and in location across the centuries as it has been taken over by and dispersed to various tribes and nations. An important clue to its relationship with the other ancient breeds and Arabian strains of the region, besides the historical references, was contained in the continuing practice of hunting with the Saluki and the falcon. The Akhal-Teke, because of the isolation imposed upon it for so many years, remains perhaps the one breed or strain today that still leads an existence closest to its ancient nomadic origins.

When in further reading I discovered that the Akhal-Teke is supposed to have the appearance of a "greyhound," a premise began to take shape in my mind: it appeared that perhaps the same "standard" had been used by the breeders of the Saluki and the Arabian horse in their develop-



Sarah Drake's Saluki dog, The Aerie's Let's Fly Away.



This 1887 illustration from the book *À travers l'Asie Centrale* by Henri Moser shows a group of Akhal-Teke horses hunting with Saluki dogs and a falcon.

ment of the horse and canine breeds of the region, probably for the functional purpose of having these different species be able to work together as a team for hunting. There was much promise contained in this rediscovery of the ancient Akhal-Teke in its native habitat.

Most of the Akhal-Tekes reside today in the republic of Turkmenistan, a former part of the Soviet Union. Others can be found with nomadic Turkmen in Iran and western Afghanistan (to which they fled under Soviet repression of their lifestyle). The principal breeders and guardians of the Akhal-Teke in the United States were Philip and Margot Case, who tended a select herd in the Shenandoah Valley near Staunton, Virginia, and offer the same kind of warm hospitality for which the Middle East and Central Asia are famous. Many of the Akhal-Teke accounts and depictions in this article come from the Cases. Sadly, Margot passed in 2009, but Philip continues to maintain the herd on their farm. Today the community of Akhal-Teke breeders grows in the United States thanks to the Cases' early work with the breed.

Long before they were a breed or had acquired their current name, and long before the Turkmen tribe arrived about 1200 A.D. in the region of their origin, Akhal-Tekes were considered to have been the legendary horses, known as the Bactrian or Turanian horses, which were used by Darius and by Alexander the Great in their conquests. Alexander the Great's famous horse, Bucephalus, was reputedly one of

those "horses of quality." They were the horses of the Scythians and later the Parthians. Because these peoples were often engaged in warfare and used their horses to carry their warriors, the horses acquired the function of a cavalry steed. In this role their fame spread across the continents, for, with their speed and endurance, they were instrumental in achieving many victories. The horses were coveted as far away as China, and the Chinese sent an expedition to attack Bactria in 126 B.C., solely for the purpose of acquiring some of these "heavenly horses."

Care and Conformation

Until the time of the Russian occupation, the horses were raised according to tribal conditions. Each tribesman kept one horse and perhaps an additional mare and foal. The horses were used for horseracing and for raiding. Each family maintained the tradition of raising and training the horses.

With the Russian occupation of Central Asia, Cossacks were sent to collect the horses into stud farms. Then, after the Bolshevik Revolution, private ownership was banned. Upon this edict, many Turkmen tribesmen, who were the principal guardians of the breed, fled with their bloodstocks across the borders into Persia and Afghanistan for refuge. A further edict came down, stating that all breeding practices were to be converted into so-called "scientific" means. At the stud farms, Russian-breed bloodlines were intermingled with many of the Akhal-Teke. Next, a

decreed was issued ordering the destruction of all "draft" horses and their conversion into food, so the Turkmen breeders turned their pure breeding stocks loose into the desert to avoid the utter destruction of the Akhal-Teke. It was not until many years later that some of the feral horses of the pure stain were recaptured, and a serious breeding program to preserve this desert breed recommenced.

What lent credence to the effort to maintain the breed true to its origins was a "performance test" carried out in 1935 by some of the tribesmen, who, mounted on their native horses, rode almost 3,000 miles in 84 days from Central Asia across deserts and other arduous terrain into the gates of Moscow. During one stretch, they crossed 225 miles of desert in three days with practically no water. The stamina and endurance shown by the horses, far superior to that of any of the halo-breeds or the Russian breeds, at last convinced the government of the value of this pure desert-bred breed of horses. Previously valued for tremendous speed over long distances, they now came to be valued as well for exceptional endurance and stamina over long distances under the harshest of conditions. These are the same attributes we look for in Salukis, and it is stamina and endurance that set Salukis apart from all other sight hounds and racing breeds of dogs.

While in Central Asia, Maslow was told how the Akhal-Teke are cared for by the tribesmen. They are kept in small bands, tethered to stakes, and covered with felt blankets. The horses are fed pellets made of alfalfa, barley, and mutton fat. This type of management results in a horse that can subsist on small amounts of food and water in a terrain that has extremes in temperature and is devoid of natural vegetation for most of the year. The foals are brought along slowly, being allowed to run first just with their dams, and then later with the other mares. Daily exercise is considered essential so that they can learn to breathe deeply and build strong leg muscles for galloping across the desert. "The Akhal-Teke must run" say their owners. The horses are devoted to their master and are suspicious and aloof with strangers.

In conversations with the breeders he visited, Maslow was told what qualities are bred for in this desert horse. They want a long, tapering, slightly concave, aristocratic head with a long neck set high on excellent sloping shoulders; high head carriage; flaring nostrils; long, beautifully shaped mobile ears; and expressive eyes having a proud fiery gaze. The head carriage, that is, the ability to hold the head up high, was explained to Maslow as, "In the desert the horse needs to hold its head up high to see for and smell danger a long way off." This

is indeed very similar to the head, head carriage, neck, neck set, shoulders, ears, and eyes bred for in Salukis of quality.

The coat is "fine like doe skin" and glossy. The colors are white, black, dappled, bay, and the bright gold with a metallic sheen that is unique to the breed. The coat is often thin, and the mane and tail are sparse (/Case). These colors, coat, and furnishings are similar to those of a Saluki.

The chest is narrow. The withers are long, prominent, and muscled. The back is long, lean, narrow, and short-barreled with a long, pronounced croup and sloping angle of the hindquarters. The legs are long, strong and dry with fine, delicate pasterns, good forearms, and hocks well let down with short cannons of dense bone. The hooves are small with a thick wall of strong horn. Except for the anatomical differences between canines and equines, this is very similar to the Saluki standard.

The Akhal-Teke has a high, courageous spirit with sparkle and energy. Its temperament is quiet, but it is easily aroused. It should be bold, alert, intelligent, and will respond well to sensitive training. As Margot Case explained, "Akhal-Tekes can't be forced. They have to trust their rider. Once they do, they perform like no other, but if you try to push them, they'll balk. If you break trust with them, they won't work with you.... You have to work *with* the Akhal-Tekes, not *on* them." That's what people mean when they say that Akhal-Tekes are temperamental. It's not that they are high strung, only that they are so loyal they seem to have an emotional key different from other breeds. If the description had not been intended for the Akhal-Teke, it would just as well fit the Saluki to a T.

One breeder in central Asia described the most typical and ancient form of the Akhal-Teke as being an animal "with a very 'dry' anatomy: a long, narrow, dished face, little mass on the bones, long ears for hearing over desert distances, a long neck, and long, lean legs." They wanted this dry type "for strength over longer distances."

"Why does the Akhal-Teke win marathons?" this breeder asked rhetorically. "Because of the heart." It must pump blood to every muscle in the body. A Thoroughbred will run the first ten kilometers of a 500-kilometer race faster than any horse in the world, but then, because of the weight it carries in its muscle mass, the heart has to work hard, and the horse

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Sabine Desper jumping Akhal-Teke horse Adamek at Phil Case's farm in Staunton, VA. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

Breeds and Ancient Standards

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begins to tire. The “dry” anatomy of the Akhal-Teke means that heart has to work less hard to circulate the blood.”

In general: “The Akhal-Teke is a true desert bred horse with a light, elegant build and an original and distinctive conformation....The overall effect is of the long, lean grace of a greyhound.”

The native Akhal-Teke breeders, the breeders who seek to preserve the pure desert-bred strains and breeds, know they are dealing with something more than a recreational activity, a sport, or a commercial venture. They are preserving an ancient and noble way of life, whose creatures, beyond being animals, are irreplaceable works of art. They are breeds bearing unique and highly specialized functions which took millennia to develop and which can be lost in just a short time, if not properly cared for. We are required to be artists, scientists, and curators as well as fanciers and breeders. We need to know the whole scope of our duties to these breeds and the required skills for maintaining them. We need to be innovative and to develop methods and means which will help all our breeds to survive true and intact into future ages.

As Maslow indicates, these are not just “sacred” animals, but they are also maintained by “sacred trust.” Much thought and definition can still be lent by each and every member of the trust, those of us who take it on as an avocation when we make a commitment to one of these breeds. As we have seen from the experiences of the breeders of the classic Arabian, and now of the Akhal-Teke as well, these are our friends and allies who share in this sacred trust. It will take that special kind of commitment to preserve these breeds in an authentic state for perpetuity. ❖

Sarah M. Drake, Ph.D. was born and raised in Chicago, IL. She earned her Ph.D. from and taught at the University of Minnesota and has conducted extensive research on heart disease in Salukis. The original article was first published in Saluki International and excerpts have been reprinted courtesy of the author. To view the full article, visit www.albc-usa.org.blogspot.com.

Saving Endangered Hogs Project

ALBC staff members Jeannette Beranger, Alison Martin, and Ryan Walker recently transported Mulefoot, Guinea Hog, and Tamworth piglets from South Carolina to Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. The delivery was part of the Saving Endangered Hogs Project, partially funded by USDA's Southern Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SSARE) program.

ALBC and Berea College will grow out piglets from eight of the *Conservation Priority List* breeds on the same farm under the same conditions at the college. Once the pigs reach market size (variable depending on the breed), they will travel to the University of Kentucky to be processed. Researchers there will do an in-depth carcass evaluation on each of the breeds. The carcass evaluations will be used to produce materials that will help with marketing rare breed pork.

Carcass evaluations are just one piece of the Saving Endangered Hogs Project. The project also includes genetic analyses, production of long-term breeding strategies, development of educational and marketing materials, determining the value chain of heritage breed pork products, heritage pork promotion, and farmer education. Bringing the pigs to the Berea College is step one. The Large Blacks, Herefords, and Ossabaw Island hogs were shipped from individuals breeders to the farm at Berea College, and this summer, the final pigs (Red Wattle, and Gloucestershire Old Spots) will be delivered to the school. The Saving Endangered Hogs Project will take three years to complete, but ALBC hopes the results and outcomes will have a long-lasting impact on heritage breed swine conservation. ❖

For more details on the project, visit www.sare.org. Under project reports search for project # LS11-246.



ALBC staff member Ryan Walker and Berea College Farms Manager Bob Harned help students unload Tamworth pigs at the school farm. Photo by Alison Martin.

ALBC Conference

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- Import and Export Procedures Demystified
- Recovery of the Milking Devon – The Breed that Started ALBC
- Hobby Going Hog Wild
- Planning for Profitability
- Forages for the Birds
- ...But I Don't Knit...

- My Experience with “Obies”
 - Meat Quality and Sensory Attributes of Specialty Poultry
 - Choosing Heritage Breeds for Success – Sales and Marketing Coaching
- To see the full conference schedule and details, lodging and travel information, sponsorship opportunities, and to register online, visit www.albc-usa.org/conference2012/intro.html or give us a call at (919) 542-5704.

From Service to Stewardship

ALBC recently teamed up with the Farmer Veteran Coalition to host a first-of-its-kind workshop to educate and train America's service men and women on the skills necessary to steward some of America's most historic and endangered farm animals. Over 70 attendees enjoyed the two-day *From Service to Stewardship* workshop. The first day of the workshop was held at Central Carolina Community College in Pittsboro, North Carolina, and three farm tours took place at nearby farms the following day. Attendees, who came from across the United States, gave the workshop rave reviews.

A fabulous lunch was prepared for workshop participants by the Central Carolina Community College Natural Chef Culinary Program, and it featured Guinea Hog products and Saxony and Magpie duck eggs. All three of these breeds are listed as critically endangered on ALBC's *Conservation Priority List*. The menu included greens from the school farm with pork cracklins, duck egg steamed custard, heritage pork pâté with apple mustard chutney, grilled flatbread with farm herbs and lardo, lightly smoked ham hock, citrus braised pork belly, roasted pork loin with spicy North Carolina peanut sauce, sweet tea brined ham, slow-roasted, pulled pork butt with apple slaw, and bacon cookies! (Hungry yet?)

Content of the workshop included pre-



ALBC member Julie Gauthier leads the *From Service to Stewardship* poultry workshop at her farm in Wake Forest, NC.

sentations on how to raise heritage hogs, poultry, cattle, equines, small ruminants, and the economics and marketing of heritage breeds. There was also time for attendees to network with each other and discuss their plans for their own farms.

A film crew was also on hand recording a documentary on farmer-veterans in North Carolina. The crew has been following farmer-veteran Alex Sutton and his fiancée, Jessica, who both attended the workshop, for several months, recording their experiences adjusting to farm life. The final day of the workshop included

tours of Jeff Wilkins's Red Poll cattle farm, Anna Rae Hodgin's Tunis sheep farm, and Julie Gauthier's poultry farm, featuring Narragansett turkeys, Magpie and Saxony ducks, and Delaware chickens. ALBC staff attended each session and received extremely complimentary feedback as attendees snapped photos, scribbled down notes, and enjoyed hands-on education about rare breed husbandry. To learn more about ALBC's work with veterans, contact the office at (919) 542-5704 or email rwalker@albc-usa.org. ❖

What Can You Contribute?

Each year, ALBC holds an auction to help raise money for the organization. Contributions have boosted the enthusiasm and excitement at the annual conferences and helped us raise between \$800 and \$3,000 annually. Can you help us be even more successful this year? Your donations will be greatly appreciated! Previous donations have included local crafts, clothing, books, original art, gourmet foods, furniture, and more. Creative ideas for new auction items are welcome – we'll take almost anything!

Our 2012 Annual Conference will be held November 9-10, 2012, in Cary, NC.

This year we are celebrating 35 years of conservation! For more information about the conference visit www.albc-usa.org

Silent Auction items will be displayed Friday evening during the conference kick-off banquet. Your company name and contact information will be displayed alongside the items you donate. Additionally, each person attending the conference will receive a list of Silent Auction donors with your product or service information so they will know how to contact you in the future.

If you want to donate something for this year's Silent Auction please tell us the



following information:

- Business name and contact person
- Mailing address
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Please send us this information by email to: albc@albc-usa.org, by mail to: ALBC, P. O. Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312, or by fax to: (919) 545-0022. *And don't forget – charitable gifts are tax-deductible!*

A Southern Ag Revival

By Bradley Taylor

Some of you may have been involved in my crazy rural adventures over the past few years. For those of you who have never heard of me, I'd like to share with you what I've been up to during the past year.

I didn't grow up in Screven County, Georgia (where I now reside), or even in the country. During my life, I've lived in urban areas and have been a "computer nerd." I do not have a background in farming, although for most of my career I've built "living" systems that run inside computers. A few months after my mother died in the summer of 2010, what I wanted to do with my life changed. I decided to start a farm and named it "LJ Woods" after my mother, Linda Jean.

Almost one year ago, I purchased a timber/recreation tract between Sylvania and Hiltonia, in "Dogtown" Georgia. During the past year, we aggressively transformed this property into a "commercial scale" livestock farm with the goals of promoting Southern heritage breeds and sustainable farming practices (land and money), and experimenting with new approaches that reject the dominance of a global, industrial agricultural system.

Looking at the decline of full-time farmers and family farms in Screven County over the past 30 years, my opinion is that the dominant system of agriculture in our country does not work. I do not assume that I have the answers to such a challenge, but rather I only wish to try to be a part of the solution (as do many of you reading this).

To that end, we have made some interesting progress in the past year:

- Applied design principles of silvopasture to lay the foundation for multi-use landscapes for timber, livestock, and wildlife.
- Assembled what could be the second largest herd of Pineywoods cattle (unintentionally).
- Assembled what could be the second largest flock Gulf Coast Native sheep (also unintentionally).
- Imported 100 hardy nanny goats from Texas for use in reviving the Baylis line



Bradley Taylor's mobile farmer's market, Farm a la Carte advertises heritage meats and other local foods.

of Spanish goat (old-timey Southern briar goats).

- Grew out Ossabaw Island hogs raised on outdoor wood lots (oak and pecan) and supplemented with organic corn purchased directly from a farmer in Bulloch County.
- Purchased Organic rye seed direct from a nearby farm for seeding our winter pasture.
- Made our first retail sales of heritage meat on January 1, 2012.
- Had a Marsh Tacky foal born in late February (less than 300 horses in existence).
- Went from land purchase to revenue in nine months, with full-time employees receiving salary and a benefits package including medical, dental, and 401K with matching.
- Created a vertically integrated local food hub for SE Georgia - Revival Foods.

There is still much to be done, but I feel great about where we are today. I've received a crash course in farm life and wouldn't trade it for anything. The rest of 2012 is going to be hard work, but it will be worth it.

On the market side, it was with great excitement that we recently launched our mobile farmer's market, Farm a la Carte, in Savannah, Georgia. The majority of the food comes from Screven County (my farm and Walker Organics). Customers in Savannah can order online and pick up from the Cart at one of three locations

throughout the week. Additionally, we are working on a program to serve as a liaison between chefs and farmers. All of the meat is from Southern heritage breeds of livestock and all produce is Organic. The idea has been very well received. We were recently featured both in *Savannah Magazine* and on *CNBC*. Exciting!

Although individually these items may seem simple, they each required reestablishing a connection to our land, animals, neighbors, and ourselves that is endangered in these difficult times. As I discovered, this connection is far from extinct. I have received great support in this endeavor, although sometimes with varying degrees of skepticism, and I am grateful to everyone who has played a part in this project.

These small steps are very exciting, because they continue to build on and catalyze the emerging Southern Neo-Agrarian movement in our region. We have the

Tell Us About It!

Would you like to write something for the *ALBC News*, or see one of your articles about rare breeds published here? Articles can be submitted to Ryan Walker at rwalker@albc-usa.org, or mailed to ALBC, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for consideration.

potential to build a new food system and rural lifestyle based on life-affirming principals for farmers, homesteaders, chefs, foodies, small businesses, families, and even city folk. In a time when the media is constantly telling us the country is doomed, this experience is a source of light that is shining brighter every day. We are ultimately responsible for creating the life, community, and homes that we want.

If you know of others that would be interested in our work, please share this story with them. I'd love to chat. ❖

Bradley Taylor is the Heritage Stockman at LJ Woods Farm in Sylvania, Georgia, and founder of Revival Foods in Savannah, Georgia. For more information, visit: www.revivalfoods.com. Bradley can be reached at BradleyTaylor@me.com.

MEMBER VOICES

Silver Appleyards: Flavor Winners

By Jenifer Morrissey

I got a gratifying comment from a customer recently. "Jenifer's ducks taste good the next day. The grocery store ones taste rancid." This was the second endorsement I've received in the flavor department for my Silver Appleyard ducks. The other came from an experiment I ran last summer when I grew out hatchery Pekins alongside my home-hatched Silver Appleyards. I had always assumed that feed influenced flavor because I had varied that in the past and noticed a difference. I concluded that feed alone was the principal arbiter of flavor, but I was wrong.

It was fascinating to watch the Pekins develop; they've definitely been selected for fast and large growth, and these weren't even the ones marketed as 'jumbos.' Then at butchering time, it was interesting to see the substantial difference in fat on the carcasses of the two



Silver Appleyard and Pekin ducks owned by ALBC member Jennifer Morrissey.

different breeds. The Pekins on my feed regimen looked just like the ones I used to buy at the natural foods store which was both surprising and gratifying. I'd always assumed that my management techniques, including raising them in tractors at high elevation, wouldn't match up to commercial growers in the carcass department.

What surprised me most though, was what happened when I served my ducks for dinner. My husband and I are big eaters because of our physical lifestyle. And we are very tuned in to the flavor of our food (I'm a super-taster if that means anything to you). When I served a Silver Appleyard, we each took second helpings, easily demolishing most of a single bird. When I served the Pekins, though, neither of us were inclined to go back for seconds, and we lacked enthusiasm for the leftovers. It wasn't that my Pekins tasted rancid the next day, as my customer shared about her experience with the grocery store variety. It's just that the meat lacked the flavor appeal compared to the Silver Appleyards'.

As I write this, I am setting eggs in my incubator and pondering how many to grow out this year. I do my own butchering because I haven't been happy with my commercial processing options. It's a lot of

Photo Contest 2012

Have some good pictures of rare breeds that you would like to share? Participate in this year's ALBC Member Photo Contest. Please submit photos to rwalker@albc-usa.org.

ALBC prefers digital files in a high-resolution format. However, mailed prints will be accepted. Mail to ALBC, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

Photos must be received by September 14. Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third place. Contest winners will be announced at the Annual Conference in November. Submission gives ALBC permission to use the photos to support conservation efforts. Mailed images will not be returned.

work concentrated in what is already the busiest time of the year. The feedback I've received on flavor, though, gives me motivation to do it all again. That feedback is pretty valuable from a marketing perspective, too! ❖

Jenifer Morrissey is a long-time ALBC member who owns Willowtrail Farm in Gould, Colorado. She raises heritage horses and ducks. Find out more about her farm at www.willowtrailfarm.com. Jenifer can be reached at workponies@frii.com.



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RARE BREEDS, RARE TALES

The History of Walter B. Garland and his Silver Fox Rabbit

© March 2012 By Eric Tudor

A wise person once said, "To know where you are going, you must first understand where you have been." So, I believe, to better understand our unique Silver Fox breed of rabbit, we need to become more familiar with not only the breed but also with its maker. Therefore, I would like to re-introduce the multi-talented pioneer, Walter B. Garland, who created a breed different from any other breed of rabbit to date – his "American Silver Fox" – that possesses unique traits in fur that no other breed of rabbit has ever attained. We salute you, Mr. Garland, for creating something almost 90 years ago that we still speculate about, are in awe of, and do not fully comprehend even today.

Creator of the Breed

Walter Blair Garland was born in Tyronne, Pennsylvania, in 1882. He arrived in Canton, Ohio, at the age of 35 from Youngstown, Ohio. According to both the 1920 and 1930 Census Records he was a resident of Canton Ward 5, Stark, Ohio. During this time, he was a middle-aged man married to his first wife, Verna Gar-

land. However for unknown reasons, either divorce or her death, at the time of his own death, in February of 1960, it is found he was survived by his second wife, Nola. While the details and timeframe are uncertain, it appears he remarried sometime around 1935.

Mr. Garland was not only a pioneer in rabbit genetics, but also an active businessman. Less known is that he was also involved with fancy fantail pigeons and was a dog breeder. He was a partner with his brother, Alfred Garland, and managed the Canton Paint & Glass Co., which they started together in 1931, after settling in the area together. He personally was involved with this business for ten years. His obituary, dated Feb. 2, 1960, states he was 77 years old and living at 7991 Canton Akron Road, North Canton. This same source states Mr. Garland owned and operated the "Garland Kennels" and at one time had the largest rabbitry in the United States (Vema Rose Rabbit Farm). He died in Aultman Hospital from complications and was retired the last four years of his life. He was survived by his widow,



Silver Fox Senior Doe owned by Eric and Sarah Tudor of Lebanon, MO. Photo by Jeannette Beranger.

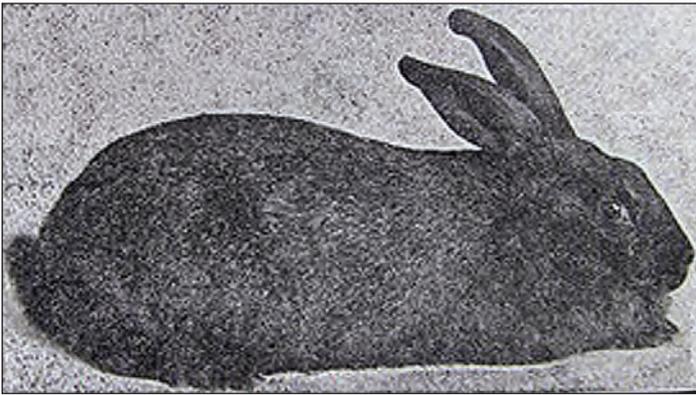
Mrs. Nola Garland of the home; a step-daughter, Edna Mae Kawsnick of Mineral City; a stepson, Robert Walter, also of Mineral City; a sister, Mrs. A.W. Rogers of New Kensington, PA; a brother, Alfred T. Garland of Canton; and eight grandchildren. Mr. Garland was also a member of the William McKinley Lodge F&AM, and Eagles Lodge, and he was one of the founders of the Stark County Rabbit Association, an American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) judge and registrar, and a founder of the Checked Giant Rabbit Club, which he allowed initially to meet upstairs above his Paint & Glass shop.

Developing the Breed

Mr. Garland was one of several pioneers who had been challenged to create a "fox style rabbit" in order to compete with the increasing fox fur sales of that time. Reference to this challenge is found in the following quote from the ARBA Official Guide Book dated 1965. "Prior to 1925, a number of breeders were working to try to produce a breed of rabbit with fur that would resemble the genuine silver fox. They hoped to couple this desirable fur with a good, commercial, meat-type body. In this effort, various experiments were made using a number of different breeds. Some used the Champagne d' Argent and Angora. Others used English Silvers and black Flemish Giants... or selfs (solid color) from Checkered Giants. The result was a success. W.B. Garland of North



Walter B. Garland, in the center, was one of the judges for the 1929 ARBA National Convention in Fort Worth, Texas.



Note the striking similarity of the 1932-1933 ARBA Standard of Perfection photo of the “Silver Black Giant Doe” (right) to that of the “American Silver Fox” (left).

Canton, Ohio, was a foremost promoter of the ‘manufactured’ breed, and a standard was given to the American Silver Fox at the 1925 Convention at Colorado Springs.” We may never know for sure exactly what combination Mr. Garland used to create the final version; however, it does stand to reason perhaps this is why we (as breeders) often have unexplained throwbacks in our lines.

Mr. Garland is believed to have first envisioned the “American Heavyweight Silver” while living in the Youngstown area. He received a working standard in 1925 at the Colorado Springs, Colorado, ARBA Convention for this breed. In 1929, at the Fort Worth, Texas, ARBA Convention, the name was changed to the “American Silver Fox,” and the breed continues by that name today. During the early years of the Silver Fox, the breed was larger, resembling a Flemish or Checkered Giant, and was of a mandolin body type. It is almost certain the original specimens were crossed with the Flemish or Checkered Giant, due to body type and their overall massive size. The main differences of the Silver Fox from these two similar breeds were primarily size, but also the “ticking” made up of solid white hairs. Originally the breed was described in the ARBA *Standard of Perfection* as follows: “This is a new breed having been submitted to our Standard at our Convention held at Colorado Springs, Nov.30-Dec. 5, 1925. The American Heavy Weight Silver was originated by that veteran rabbit breeder, W.B. Garland of N. Canton, Ohio, and promises to be one of the leading commercial breeds as they produce a beautiful fur of good quality, and their size is sufficient to make them a good producer of meat at an early age. At present they are bred in Grey and Blue, but in time the other two colors

will probably be perfected, as I understand the originator has them well on their way to perfection at this writing.”

With the American Heavyweight Silvers the ticking was later described as solid white hairs. Along with the name change to the “American Silver Fox” the 1932-1933 ARBA *Standard of Perfection* clearly defines the distinct difference in the fur ticking that the “American Silver Fox” is to have *white tipped* guard hairs, *not* solid white hairs, in comparison to the Heavyweight Silver version, which is still in existence and defined in the same *Standard of Perfection* that year. The previous mention of a *Grey* in 1929 is now also defined with a name change to what we call the traditional *Black* color we know and love today. Obviously Mr. Garland created and bred both the Black and Blue variety at the same time, but according to the quote from the *Standard of Perfection* above, was actually working on a total of *four* colors during the initial development stages of the specimen.

Another of these colors would have been the *Alaskan Red Fox*, which he worked to develop heavily in the 1920s and 1930s. Mr. Garland was granted a COD (Code of Development) for this third red color at the 1931 St. Louis, Missouri ARBA Convention. However, it was never accepted and has long since become extinct, according to Bob Whitman in his book *Domestic Rabbits and their Histories*. It was described as having either silver or white hairs to be evenly distributed throughout the body, including the head, ears, and legs. The color was to be a reddish tan over the top of the back and carried down the sides as far as possible turning to a slate blue on lower sides and belly, which would tell us the color was not actually red, but more of a tortoise shell. The

fur was also like that of his regular Silver Fox to the point of standing up straight, when stroked from tail to head. Weight was 9 lbs for bucks and 10 lbs for does. Havanas could have easily made up part of the gene pool for the creation of this variety, as Mr. Garland kept both standard and giant Havanas within his rabbitry. One of Walter Garland’s Vema Rose Rabbit Farm ads in the early 1930s mentions this now extinct Red Fox breed: “Originators and Breeders of the American Silver Fox Rabbit... have originated also the Red Fox, a wonderful breed for both meat and fur.” The 1932-1933 *Standard of Perfection* quotes Mr. Garland as saying, “This breed is the only breed entitled to the name of Fox. Various other breeds have frequently been called Silver Fox Rabbits, but they are not recognized by the American Rabbit and Cavy Breeders Association. To obtain the best specimens, interbreeding with other breeds should not be attempted. This breed is now well established, and produces true to type. The results of introducing alien blood may prove disastrous, since the racial characteristics of this breed are not all apparent on the surface.”

It is still uncertain what the fourth color might have been, but we do find mention in a later ARBA Standards book that describes the color change from “Gray to Silver Black” and goes on to say, “If the second color were Brown, then it would be termed Silver Brown”. So, though I am only speculating, the *four* colors he was developing could be: 1) Silver Black, 2) Silver Blue, 3) Alaskan Red Fox, and 4) Silver Brown.

Changing of the Breed

It is also worth mentioning that through the years, from creation to the present, the breed standard has changed. Many

continued on next page

Garland's Silver Fox Rabbit

Continued from previous page

breeders struggle today to get their Silver Fox to Senior Weight. In the 1930s, Silver Fox standards defined weights as 9 lbs for bucks and 10 lbs for does. Body type was a mandolin body type, meaning slightly arched, not humped or chopped off. Back should be broad and meaty and slightly arched, not flat. In regards to color: Blacks should be jet black and Blues to be a Maltese blue, with blue-gray undercolor, the darker the better. In regards to eye color; to be rich hazel brown in Blacks, and distinct blue in Blues, both to be bright and bold.

Obviously a lot of this has changed – weight, body type, and eye color in Blues. In a 1979 *Domestic Rabbits* magazine the National Silver Fox Rabbit Club reports, “A new standard for the fox is in the works and progressing well, I am told by the president, Mr. Paul Block, which should help considerably to clarify some of the weak points in our present standard.” I have found several references that mention differences in opinions in particular to “silvering” and what the goal should be. As early as 1945, that was in hot debate with some judges stating 15% silvering was the most desired, but the Pacific coast seemed to desire as much as 30%, and this percentage seemed to be more accepted overall in most of the eastern states as well. In 1965 the *Official ARBA Guide Book* states, “The American Silver Fox comes in light, medium, and heavy silvering. No shade should be favored. Remember that the evenness is the important thing.”

I believe the other main issue was the mandolin-type body (like that of a Flemish Giant) as opposed to the now changed “round” New Zealand-style meat breed. Some speculate this could have occurred with the class divisions in judging where all breeds were assigned. Still, with this breed, it must be a well-balanced proportion of both type and fur, with fur being worth the most points in the *Standard of Perfection*. I can't help but wonder, however, if the larger versions of the Silver Fox that we see from time to time today, which seem to have more mandolin-type bodies, could be direct bloodlines back to the original “American Heavyweight Silvers”



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An ad circa 1932-1933 for Walter B. Garland's rabbit farm. Photo courtesy of Eric and Sara Tudor.

that Mr. Garland first created. Even in today's age with all our scientific marvels including DNA testing, with rabbit genetics we do well to distinguish the difference between a Domestic and Wild rabbit, and often cannot determine from DNA the difference between breed varieties, much less colors and genetic composition.

Continuing the Breed

There are a lot of unknown facts regarding Mr. Garland as he was a private man, not only with the genetics of his prized Silver Fox, but also in his personal life. My hopes are with continued research we might eventually be able to prove or disprove concepts, with my ultimate goal to uncover the elusive genealogy that makes up this beautiful rare breed.

At the time of his death in February of 1960, the big fur market had ended, and there were only a few Silver Fox breeders left: one in the Midwest, one in Oregon, another in Arizona, and a few back East. The breed club had disbanded due to lack of interest and numbers, and for many years the breed went without any club representation at all. Ten years after his death, in September of 1971, a small group of refocused and determined breeders formed the National Silver Fox Rabbit Club (NSFRC). It was officially chartered with

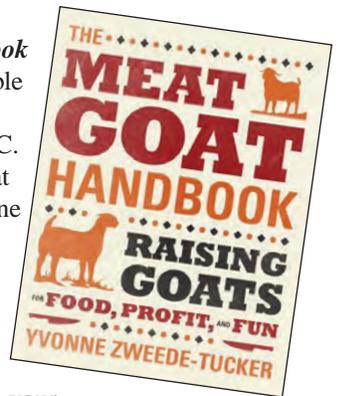
the ARBA, with only 15 members. These included Tom Winters (Gardiner, Montana), Ted and Flo Ann Gordon (Roseburg, Oregon), Joe and John Crawford (Olathe, Kansas) who had preserved the breed, joined by J. Cyril Lowit, “Pappy” Fry, Earl Hough, and the Carpenters, as well as a number of others. The first NSFRC annual meeting was held a month later at the 1971 Albuquerque ARBA Convention, at which time the Silver Fox were again proudly shown on the tables. If it were not for these dedicated preservation-minded breeders, the breed would have surely been lost to extinction. ❖

Eric Tudor and his wife, Sarah, own Riverwind Rabbitry & Farms in Lebanon, MO. They can be reached at rriverwind@yahoo.com or through their website at www.freewebs.com/riverwindrabbitry.

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To purchase *The Meat Goat Handbook*, as well as many other items, visit the ALBC Store at www.albc-usa.org. Books and other items can also be purchased by calling (919) 542-5704 or by mail: ALBC Store, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

★☆☆★ 2012 Board Elections – Vote Now! ★☆☆★

ALBC is governed by a Board of Directors. This Board sets policy and priorities for ALBC. Directors are elected by the membership and serve three-year terms. These positions are of great importance because directors assume responsibility for leadership in the conservation of rare breeds of livestock and poultry in the United States. The candidates below have been nominated to stand for election to the ALBC Board of Directors. Please help shape the direction of the organization by casting your vote.

Richard Bennett grew up in small towns in Kansas and Oklahoma, attended Oklahoma State University, and graduated with a MS degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1970. Upon graduation, he was hired by a major oil company, and over the years he has worked exclusively in that industry as a petroleum engineer and in various management positions. In 1986, he formed his own exploration and development company, Patriot Resources, and operated primarily in California. In 2006, Bennett sold his company and moved to Oregon with his wife of 40 years, Kathy. He began raising St. Croix sheep, which gave him a tremendous respect for agriculture and livestock, especially rare or endangered species. At this time, he and his wife have the largest St. Croix flock on the West Coast. Their goal is to optimize the qualities of these fine sheep through conservation breeding and careful selection. In the past year he has added cattle to his enterprise.

David Kendall (Incumbent) has served as the joint Executive Secretary of the American Milking Shorthorn Society and the Brown Swiss Cattle Breeders Association of the USA since 2002. In addition to duties with the two breeds, Kendall serves as the current chair of the Council of Dairy Cattle Breeding, a member of the National Animal Germplasm Program-Dairy Committee, and the Purebred Dairy Cattle Association. Reared in Chino, California, David graduated with a BS degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of California-Davis, and has worked in the dairy industry in many capacities.

Eric Rapp (Incumbent) is a Kansas native currently residing in the Flint Hills area. Raised on a farm, he has spent most of his life involved in agriculture

in one form or another. Rapp has extensive experience with swine, from dirt lot to corporate industrial production. Until 2008, Rapp was the Security Manager at the Sedgwick County Zoo in Wichita, Kansas, and also supervised the Guest Services department, which attended to all the customer service needs of nearly a half million visitors a year. He is currently the owner and operator of The Rare Hare Barn, a rabbitry that specializes in heritage breeds of rabbit and serves several high-end restaurants, as well as providing breeding stock and exhibit animals for various institutions. Rapp also maintains a herd of Pineywoods cattle, Jacob sheep, and a small flock of Nankin bantams.

Tom Walvoord (Incumbent) is a 1961 graduate of Iowa State University with a degree in animal husbandry. A retired banker, Walvoord and his wife, Ellen, live on a farm in northern Illinois. They have a herd of purebred beef cattle and other assorted farm animals. Walvoord is a past president of the Illinois Red Angus Association. Walvoord has been an ALBC member for 15 years and served one previous term on the Board of Directors. He believes strongly in the organization's conservation objective and feels that the organization faces a critical period, but has an opportunity for significant progress and growth.

Jay Wells (Incumbent) has both BA and JD degrees from Mercer College and has been in the private practice of law for 20 years in Marion County, Georgia. He is seventh generation resident and owner of Brantley Ridge Farm, a 940-acre timber and cattle farm where he raises Highland, Milking Devon, Florida Cracker, and Pineywoods cattle. Wells is currently working with ALBC to conserve the Holt strain of Pineywoods cattle.

George Whipple (Incumbent) is the founder of the Tilly Foster Farm Museum in Brewster, New York (Putnam County). The 200-acre facility is home to a small herd of Randall Lineback cattle, an American Mammoth Jackstock donkey, a pair of Guinea Hogs, American Jacob sheep, Cayuga ducks, Narragansett turkeys, Jersey Giant/Delaware/New Hampshire chickens, and American Giant Blue rabbits. The Farm Museum emphasizes the display of critically endangered, early American

farm animals. Its purpose is educating the public on the issues of genetic diversity, good farming practices, and the history of agriculture in America. Whipple grew up and still resides at Pine View Farm, his grandfather's farm, in Kent, New York. He is the tenth generation in his family to farm in America. He has been a member of ALBC since its very early days as the American Minor Breeds Conservancy.

Hank Will (Incumbent) is the editor of *GRIT* magazine and a contributing editor for *Mother Earth News*. Will started his career in agriculture while working toward advanced scientific degrees in Chicago. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Hank grew and sold alfalfa sprouts weekly to individuals, stores, and food-buying co-ops from his apartment. Will was also a partner in a small food-purchasing and trucking company that served neighborhood co-ops and restaurants in the Hyde Park area. After leaving Chicago, Will grew and marketed several thousand free-range broilers annually at his farm in Harrisburg, South Dakota. His laying flock supplied local food charities with hundreds of dozens of donated eggs year-round and another of his poultry projects supplied hundreds of pounds of donated free-range turkey during the holiday season. Will currently pastures Mulefoot hogs and Highland cattle, keeps a flock of chickens and turkeys, and grows a large food garden on his farm in Osage County, Kansas.

BALLOT

All ALBC members may vote for the Board of Directors, with one ballot cast per membership. Vote for up to seven candidates. Photocopies and fax ballots are only acceptable with a signature. Return ballots to ALBC-Board Elections, PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312. Ballots must be postmarked no later than August 24, 2012.

- Richard Bennett
- David Kendall
- Eric Rapp
- Tom Walvoord
- Jay Wells
- George Whipple
- Hank Will

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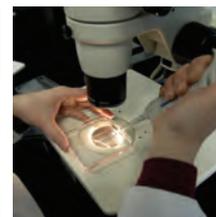
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See the ALBC website for a more extensive list of events. ALBC encourages event organizers to submit events related to conservation, farming, sustainability, rare breeds, and more to the ALBC Calendar. Send your submission to editor@albc-usa.org or mail to PO Box 477, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

July

July 7-14 – The American Dairy Goat Association National Show will be held at The Ranch – Larimer County Fairgrounds in Loveland, CO. For more information, contact ADGA, PO Box 865 Spindale, NC 28160, by phone at (828) 286-3801, email adga@adga.org, or visit www.adga.org.

July 27-28 – The Florida Small Farms and Alternative Enterprises Conference will be held in Kissimmee, FL. For more information, contact Mandy Stage at (352) 392-5930, mstage@ufl.edu, or visit <http://smallfarms.ifas.ufl.edu>.

August

August 16-18 – The American Cream Draft Horse Association Annual Meeting will take place in Spencer, IA. Events include a ground handling demonstration, Scandinavian dinner, “meet the horses”, banquet, meeting, and play in Okohoji. Visit www.acdha.org for more information.

September

September 7-9 – The Wisconsin Sheep & Wool Festival will take place at Jefferson County Fair Park in Jefferson, WI. For more information, visit www.wisconsin-sheepandwoolfestival.com, email wisbc@centurytel.net, or call (608) 868-2505.

September 8-9 – The Navajo-Churro Sheep Association Annual Meeting will be held in Chama, NM. Plans for this stand-alone meeting, not in conjunction with any other event, include a sheep show /auction, a fleece show, a field trip to Tierra Woods, a trip on the Cumbres and Toltec Railroad, and a visit to local shepherds. Contact (509) 773-3671 or email drycreeknc@centurylink.net for more information.

++ **September 11-13 - The National Heirloom Exposition** will be held in Santa Rosa, CA. This not-for-profit event centers around the pure food movement, heirloom vegetables, and anti-GMO activism. Last year’s event had 70 speakers and 250 natural food vendors. For more information, visit www.theheirloomexpo.com, or call (707) 773-1336.

September 18-20 – The Sixth National Small Farm Conference “Promoting the Success of Small Farmers and Ranchers” will be held at the Memphis Convention Center in Memphis, TN. Successes in small farm activities will be shared as well as innovative ideas in research, extension, and outreach to strengthen collaborations and partnerships among state specialists who work to ensure that small farmers and

ranchers not only survive, but thrive in today’s economy. For more information, contact Linda Buchanan at (615) 963-1827 or by email at lbuchanan6@tnstate.edu.

September 21-23 – The 36th Annual Common Ground Country Fair, sponsored by the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), will be held in Unity, ME. Events include a donkey and mule show, draft horse show, fleece show, sheep dog demonstrations, and the Harry S. Truman Manure Pitch Off. Find more information at www.mofga.org, email mofga@mofga.org, or by calling (207) 568-4142.

++**September 22-23 - The Mother Earth News Fair** will be held in Seven Springs, PA. This family-oriented sustainable lifestyle event features dozens of practical, hands-on demonstrations and workshops on everything from beekeeping to using solar electricity. Visit www.motherearthnews.com/fair for more information.

September 21-23 – The Oregon Flock and Fiber Festival will be held at the Clackamas County Event Center in Canby, OR. The festival includes three days of workshops and a weekend filled with demonstrations, livestock shows, seminars, and kids’ activities. Visit www.flockandfiberfestival.com or call (503) 628-1205 for more information.

September 29-30 – Mt. Bruce Station’s Annual Sheep and Wool Festival will be held in Romeo, MI. Visit www.sheepstuff.com, email uhlianuk@sheepstuff.com, or call (810) 798-2568 for more information.