

Pens and Annual Meeting

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Summer has arrived!! I thought that it would never come. Some of you have barns full of next winter's hay while the rest of us will soon be at work bringing the hay in. It is such a satisfying feeling to see the bales stacked high. With this heavy work done, it is time for many to turn their interest to upcoming shows and fairs.

I would like to announce that we have chosen a site for our 2008 Annual dinner. In the past it has been somewhat of a hardship for those members on the east side of the Cascades to attend. To try and be more centrally located we have decided to hold the dinner at the Suttle Lake Camp. This camp is conveniently located at the top of the Cascades approximately 30 minutes from Sisters. The access is just a short drive on an all season paved side road. Overnight lodging is available at the camp for those that do not want to drive in the mountains after dark. We will be providing a continental breakfast for those that do spend the night. The date is set for Saturday, November 8th with overnight accommodations into Sunday. We are privileged to have Marie Layman speaking to us on goat conformation. She is a very active judge and is engrossing to listen to. I am also hoping to have Dr. V. from OSU Veterinary School speak. She is a very colorful speaker and is very generous with her knowledge. Artificial insemination is an up and coming reality in the goat industry and I would love to hear her presentation of this topic. More details in the next newsletter.

My husband and I have just finished with 12 maidens producing 22 kids. We have utilized 'jug pens' in the past year but it was a helter skelter affair utilizing hog panels around the does at the site that they kidded. The situation was less than ideal. For the maidens, Larry built a 20 x 20 shelter that had two solid sides. We used hog panels to create six 4 x 8 pens leaving a large area to hold hay bales, feed buckets and other supplies. The girls kidded out in the pasture under the watchful eyes of Sadie and then were moved to their private pen with lots of feed and fresh water. We found that if we left the new moms out in the pasture with their new kids, there seemed to be a fair amount of anxiety but once they were confined they settled down nicely. This arrangement made it easy to trim, worm and do any other treatment necessary during the week that they were kept in. After 7 days, we moved mom and kids into a small pasture with shelter for a few days. Due to a hole in the fence, the other young ones would squeeze through to get acquainted so there was minimal fuss when they were all moved into the larger pasture with Daisy, our baby dog. The only glitch in this system was the transport from the bonding pens to the pasture. The kids rode in a dog crate on the trusty Red Flyer wagon but the moms made grooves all the way. Lord, are they stubborn! Getting the kids OUT of the crate was also a chore...talk about leading a horse to water...We have a new barn going up this summer. A row of bonding pens will be a must now that we have seen how efficient they are. Our maidens are nicely filled out and the kids are growing fast.

This is pretty short and sweet but along with the return of the sun comes the return of lots of projects. I will return to the basics as the summer progresses. Enjoy the rays; Vitamin D is good for you. Just try not to burn.....Linda DeHart