

Goat Tracks



Journal of the Working Goat - Spring 2019

Until You Have Loved an Animal, Part of Your Soul Remains Unawakened. --Anatole France

The indoor life is the next best thing to premature burial. --Edward Abbey



**Karen Bean is Back! And this time she's traipsing around Idaho's White Clouds!
Page 13**

Also in this issue:

Page 7: The Lost Packgoat, It Happens, Why?

Page 9: What is in your water? Is it potentially harmful?

Page 10: A Tale of Two Discs, the Packgoat Spine

Page 20: Mama's Boys: Dam Raising Packgoats

Page 24: Lucky Sam, a Goat Recovers from Damage Done by a Marauding Bear

Page 27: The Training Pen, Bonding with New Kids

Goat Tracks Table of Contents

Page 3 - On Track With Goat Tracks
Larry Robinson, Idaho City, ID

Page 4 - Paradise Packgoats, Where Your next PGs Should Come From

Page 5 - The Mailroom

**Page 5 - 31st Annual Northwest Oregon Dairy Goat Association
Goat Conference**
Taffy Mercer & Curtis King

Page 6 - Potpourri, Jon Clough & his Successful BHS Hunt!

Page 7-9, Land Use Issues, A Discussion Vis-a-Vis Lost Packgoats
Larry Robinson, Idaho City, ID

Page 9 - What's In Your Goat Water, It could be harmful
Larry Robinson, Idaho City, ID

**Page 10-12, A Tale of Two Discs, the Goat Spine and its Charac-
teristics**
Lauren Hall Ruddell

Page 13-17, Karen Bean & Company Tour the White Clouds
Karen Bean, Maple Falls, WA

Page 19 - What to Expect When You Are Expecting Baby Goats
Carrie Miller, Miller Micro Farm

Page 20-22, Mama's Boys: Dam Raising Packgoats for Success
Nan Hassey, Rye, CO

Page 23 - Of Helicopters & Goats, Aviators Close for Comfort
Karen Bean, Maple Falls, WA

**Page 24,25 - Lucky Sam, A Goats Recovery from Severe Bear
Damage**
Diane Miller, CO

Page 27,28 The Training Pen, Bonding With New Kids
Rex Summerfield

Page 28 - Seven kid goats born in Northern Ireland prison
Belfast Telegraph, Belfast, Ireland

Page 29 - The Packgoat Marketplace

Page 30 - The North American Packgoat Association, NAPgA

Page 31 - Working Goat Directory

Goat Tracks

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On Track with Goat Tracks

by Larry Robinson



2019 begins my 9th year of producing Goat Tracks magazine. Which, in and of itself, to be brutally honest, was *NOT* a project I was anxious to commit to. I felt I had enough on my plate and didn't want to repeat the mistake of many 'retireds', who figuring that since they had lots of new 'free time', they could take on multiple service projects. But who subsequently discovered that they had taken on too much and could do none of them really well.

However, since Shannon Ashment did not feel that she could continue the magazine, and since I definitely did *NOT* want to see John Mionczynski's project die, I reluctantly put out the first of my efforts at Goat Tracks in the Spring of 2011.

And so here we are, putting together Spring 2019. And since my porch, and the high country as well, is earlobe deep in snow, I certainly do not have to worry about any 'hiking' distractions.

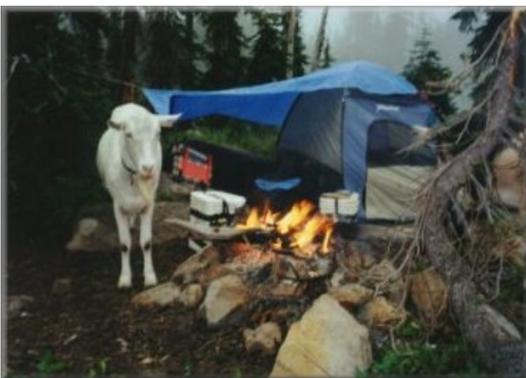
It is worthy of note that in regards to hiking with the goats, last year had the best late fall-early winter hiking I have ever seen. Hiking continued into November, with two hikes into the high country in 2-3 inches of snow, and a final fling into a primo hot spring at 4200'.

This coming Spring, I am hoping to repeat my previous visit to Hells Canyon. This time with a little more emphasis on 'stopping and smelling the daisies'. However any venture that direction will depend on the weather. I really want to have a minimum 5-day weather 'window', something that is difficult to come by in an Idaho spring. Getting stuck in the 'big ditch' with miles of hiking ahead in the rain does not define what I conceptualize as a 'good time'.

Don't overlook the wonderful articles that fill this issue of Goat Tracks. Lauren Hall Ruddell, Diane Miller, Nan Hassey, and a great write-up of Karen Bean's foray into the White Clouds of Idaho.

Finally, regarding land use issues, conditions right now seem to be vaguely reminiscent of the 1930s movie, All Quiet on the Western Front. In other words, little to nothing appears to be happening at present, but there is a very real threat of a return to hostilities, with shouts of 'Incoming' at any minute!

I am always looking for folks to describe their goat-travels here in Goat Tracks. I have a lot of my stories on backlog, but you are going to get real tired of just reading about me! Please consider sending me a narrative of your adventures. I can edit like mad, but can't describe your travels!



Goat Tracks Advertising Pricing

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Paradise Ranch

Pack Goats

Research & Development

Paradise Ranch Research & Development has over 130 kids on the ground, in 2018, with more yet to be born. If you are interested in the 2019 kids now is the time to reserve your "Boys". They are already being reserved and will go quickly. Don't let another year pass you by!

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Mudslide & Louis, Bridger-Teton NP, WY



You could be the proud owner of good-looking boys like these



These pictures are from a past years crop of Dwite's goats





Larry;

I liked your article on losing Bogdan. For sometime now I have wondered if I should be putting tracking collars on my goats when out and about. Not wondering any more. I also have nametags on my collars. My collars are 2" wide and orange. I have had beagles and larger hounds for most of my life and used to spend a lot of time looking for them. Twenty five years ago I got my first tracking system and now never turn a beagle or squirrel dog loose with out a tracking collar on them. I have the old beep collars that I never use anymore which would work well for goats, and the newer GPS collars that are fantastic. Last year while hare hunting I had a beagle drop a track and take off down the road for a mile. Thanks to the collar I was able to see what he was doing and catch him. This was the second time this happened in this area. Caused by running into a bear dened up above ground. Really freaks the beagles out.

I think that the Goat Tracks magazine and the NAPGA dues should be combined and this magazine become the official mag of the association. This is pretty common. Bugle is the official mag for the Elk Foundation and American Hunter is for the NRA. Makes it a little less confusing.

Paul Malovrh
Wisconsin

I really enjoyed "*The Yule Goat*" article by Lauren Hall Ruddell in Winter 2018. I love history and this was a very interesting look at the role goats have played in Scandinavian Christmas tradition down through the centuries.

I was also looking over the Summer 2018 issue again recently. It was the one with the article I wrote about the passing of my old goat, Cuzco, and I was sending some extra copies to friends and relatives for Christmas. I realized I had never read that particular issue (I guess it was a little hard for me at the time), and I was delighted to read the article by Paul Malovrh about "*Hauling Wood with Blackie*". Driving goats is one of my passions, so it's always great fun to see other folks training their goats to pull. "Keep up the good work, Paul!"

Nan Hassey, Rye, CO

31st Annual Northwest Oregon Dairy Goat Association Goat Conference



On Saturday, February 23rd, NAPgA President, Curtis King and I taught a goatpacking class at the conference. This conference is held annually and normally draws 300-400 people. There are 4 sessions (2 in the am & 2 in the pm) with numerous classes to choose from in each session. There are also vendors and a catered lunch.

This was the first time we had taught at the conference so we didn't know how many folks would be attending. It turned out we were one of the most popular classes held with 35 attendees! Our audience included everyone from those who were going to be getting their 1st goat to those who are experienced goat owners and many 4-H members and their leaders.

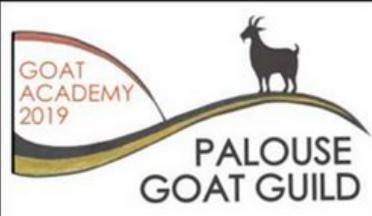
I have set up a packgoat display at this conference the past 3 years. This year I added a special feature – Dolly Lamba. I have a life size sheep which I outfitted with packgoat gear and I added a set of horns. Dolly was a HUGE hit and quite a draw with both adults and youth. Both Curtis and I were asked to take photos of people with Dolly with their cell phones!

I'd created a PowerPoint presentation a couple years ago for a presentation at the local REI that Curtis, Debbi & Eldon Otta and I gave. I updated it for this class. Curtis and I spoke during different sections of the PowerPoint that were our specialty. Folks were able to see several different saddles, packs and other equipment. They asked some great questions.

After the class ended Curtis and I stayed at the packgoat display. Many of the people who attended the class stopped by during the rest of the day to ask questions. I feel we reached several potential goatpackers during the day.

[More Pictures. Page 6]

Interested in Hiking or Hunting with Pack Goats?



Saturday
May 18th, 2019
7:30AM-6PM
Latah County
Fairgrounds,
Moscow Idaho

All day conference on all things goat.

Featuring a Pack Track:

Pack Goat 101 with Curtis King

President of North American Pack Goat Association

Pack Goat Equipment with Matt Lyon, Bantam Saddle Tack

Hunting with Goats with Howie Holcomb

Goat First Aid with Dr. Christine Smith, DVM

Transporting Goats with Sonia Thyssen

Full class schedule and registration under events on

www.palousegoatguild.com

Questions? palousegoatguild@gmail.com



Jon Clough with the results of a Successful Bighorn Sheep Hunt. There was one permit this year... he had it!

This girl and her dog just saved a mom goat and her newborn kid. And no, I don't know where it was, but it does look a bit inhospitable, does it not?



Land Use Issues

While this discussion doesn't exactly fit into Land Use, it is, however, somewhat relevant to our use and impact on the land.

The issue at hand, being related to the potential for one of us to experience the loss of a goat while we are in the woods.

While when a goat disappears, the circumstances and causes are unique to each case, each and every instance is a temptation for land use managers to send us home from the woods... permanently. This reaction would be due to their irrational fear that our goats are going to get chummy with the Bighorn Sheep locals, and spread a pathogen that will cause one of the many die-offs that BHS experience on an all-to-frequent basis. Die-offs, incidentally, that have never been traced back to a Packgoat.

One facet of this discussion is the subject of high-lining goats at night. There are some that think that high-lining is not necessary because they believe that *their* goats would never run off at night. While some have practiced not high-lining, and gotten away with it so far, many of us believe that it is only a matter of time before those particular chickens come home to roost. And like George Bogdan, Idaho's pioneer goat packer, eventually you will find yourself all alone in the morning, with nary a goat in sight. It happened, and the goats in question were never seen again.

Highlining is an absolute necessity.

I certainly would not want to be the one that caused the rest of the packgoat world to lose access to the forest simply because I refused to high-line. As I am wont to say, "For a goat, survival trumps everything." The reason I and Matt Lyon still have all of our goats after our confrontation with a cougar, is because our goats were unable to go anywhere since they were already high-lined.

Please note what our President, Curtis King has to say regarding this issue!

From Curtis & Andy's meeting with the Inyo NF:

Andy and I made the phone conference meeting with the Inyo NF for the Sierra Nevada wild Big Horn Sheep issue this morning.

Overall Andy did an excellent job representing us and I was able to get some good microphone time in to represent our organization and to show our willingness to work with them on other solutions that will work. I really preached our BMP's, and... they listened.

They have indicated that they will be in contact with us in the near future to discuss resolutions.

It should be noted that John Wayhousen (spelling), a scientist, was extremely vocal in the meeting about PACKGOAT people loosing their goats and that their packgoats will run into the middle of the wild sheep herd and potentially give them a disease. This run-away pack goat and or lost pack goat issue continues to haunt us in these meetings. I can assure you they are LOOKING for this kind of ammunition to destroy us.

I really need everyone's help in enforcing and getting all of the pack goat community to strictly, *and I mean strictly*, follow our best management practices. Mandatory High lining at night and **NO LOST PACK GOATS. A lost pack goat in bighorn sheep habitat will be the arrow in our chest. It simply cannot be allowed to happen.**

Curtis King
President, NAPgA

Following is a response I (Larry Robinson) did to a note on the eMail group about lost goats, because of one individual's observation that they had never heard of a lost goat,

Well, I gotta respond to this, because in spite of the fact that Curtis and Marc were classy enough not to point out my lost goat experiences, someone undoubtedly will, and then the finger is gonna come pointing directly back at me.

FYI: NOTHING I say here will contradict what Curtis says about high-lining. I have ALWAYS high-lined. It IS absolutely necessary!

To put some perspective on this, in 2011, when we began to tussle with the Shoshone, there were two lost goats recounted on the Internet that the Shoshone pointed to and thereupon said, "SEE, Packgoats get lost and are an imminent danger to BHS" This response clearly underscored that they hadn't actually done their research as the lost goats in question, finding themselves on thier own, both went looking for a human; ***not a herd of BHS***. And as a result, they were subsequently taken out of the woods by humans.

A lot of years back, one of Greg Locati's friends lost some goats, goats which were new to her and therefore not bonded to her (a relevant issue), and it took a couple of days of looking before they were reunited. But reunited they were.

There was a single goat some years back that turned up in McCall, ID, the original owner was never located,

and so the goat was taken out of the FS's hands by what I believe was the original owner, who had previously sold them to another (unknown) individual.

A couple or three years back, there were a couple of goats turned up in the Seven Devils. They were corralled and taken out of the woods by some hunters. The 'rest of the story' is that the individual that had lost them was actively looking for them, and they were eventually reunited without incident.

So there is certainly history of goats ending up on their own in the woods.

And so we get to Larry, who has misplaced goats several times. The immediate response is to note, "What a dufus!" At least, that is the immediate response if you have no idea how it all occurred. In each case, the circumstances were somewhat unique, and each instance was instructional.

Two issues that should contribute to perspective here; 1) I have to hike alone most of the time, and 2) each year I spend at least 200 miles in the mountains. Therefore I have more exposure than a lot of the folks that are using these boys.

Following describes the circumstances where I have temporarily lost track of 3 of my packers (In reverse chronological order):

Bogdan... is a teeny bit on the squirrelly side, and that factors in here somewhere. In any case, we had done about 45 miles in 4 days, he and George were lagging off and on as they were hungry. George and I curved around a sharp bend, and disappeared, at least in Bogdan's mind, and he took off back up the way we had just come. I suspected as much but I didn't want to leave George to go running after him. 20-20 hindsight, I should have quickly tied George up and gone running. But I just didn't come up with that plan at the time. As Goat Tracks readers are aware, he was in the wilderness for 2 weeks minus one day. That he did not get predated is certainly a miracle. A backpacker brought him out as a result of a flyer that I had put up at the TH. I had also alerted the local authorities.

Ezra. This boy was giving signs that he was fed up with the whole packing thing. He was lagging behind, we rounded a corner in high brush, and once again in his mind, we were gone. Long story short, he turned up back at the trailhead about 5 days later, one of the campers there tied him up, and I was there shortly afterward as I was going looking for him just one more time.

Ezra again. It is all too easy to say that I probably shouldn't have had him out in the woods period, since he had already left me once, but that is a

judgment call and at the point I decided to take him out again, I was quite short of animals, to the degree that I was once again carrying a pack myself. So I resolved to try to keep a closer eye on him. We had progressed 10+ miles into the wilderness, we were going up a long climb, he was lagging again, and we (the other goats and I) abruptly descended a short drop down the trail into a drainage, in order to cross the river. Apparently in his mind we were 'gone' again, and so he exited stage-left. I looked and looked and called and called for him to no avail, to the degree that that day became a 16-mile day before I had to stop and bivouac due to a complete absence of light. All I had was my sleeping bag, he had everything else, so had to lie on the ground. Not a good night. He turned up at the trailhead, and a lady volunteer-ranger took him under her wing, and when I got back from a trip to TN, I went and retrieved him. He **NEVER** went into the woods again.

Cocoa-Brownie (CB). I was hiking with a companion. We were off-trail, and CB was skirting below us as he didn't like the climbing we were doing. My companion would back me up that we had just seconds earlier noted CB's location, and then he was gone like a light. We did our best to locate him to no avail. Since he was carrying all my stuff, we had no choice but to backtrack the 5 miles we had covered. My suspicion was that he was spooked by a predator. There *are* three packs of wolves in this immediate area. I came back the next day, overnighted, went all the way to where we had lost him and back, and when I got back to the truck, there he was, sans gear. Which falls in line with my belief that survival trumps everything, including bonding. If their life is on the line, at least in their mind, they are going to attempt to preserve it.

A very pertinent bottom line to all of this, is that our goats are bonded to humans, a human leader is their normal, and if separated from 'their' human, they go looking for another human. They *DO NOT* go looking for a herd of BHS, or a herd of anything else.

Everything I have seen and experienced indicates that. Larry Robinson, Idaho City, ID

and from Matt Lyon

Sorry Larry, you don't get to be the odd man out. I sent this text in a response directly to Curtis:

Statistically, packgoats are going to get lost. Sheer numbers guarantee it. I lost a goat in 2017. Spent 3 or 4 days looking nonstop and another 10 days or so driving back to the trailhead, posting signs, hiking all over the place, etc. There's nothing more I could have done, other than to string my goats together on the trail. His remains were finally found a couple months later by an elk hunter.

More thoughts. Since that experience, I have been looking for a GPS tracking solution, or maybe radio tracking. Had we had that sort of technology, I think we'd have found that goat within a half hour. One thing to consider is the mental state of a goat that becomes separated from his herd and his humans. It's a stressful situation and I don't think you can predict for sure what a goat is going to do, particularly a goat that is not human-imprinted.

A few people who know me well, also are aware that I lost 3 goats (all at once) my first year goatpacking. I did not follow the BMP's, I followed the "your goats will stick around at night -- no need to tether" advice that I was hearing. Never again. I spent 3 or 4 solid days scouring a 3-mile x 3-mile triangle of undulating terrain, finally returning home at the direction of a BLM officer. My goats followed another hiker out to the trailhead about 2 weeks later and we recovered them. This was over 500 miles from home.

While I realize that goat losses are very bad p.r., they are statistical absolutes. They are going to happen. The BMP's should go a long way to minimize these situations, and I wholeheartedly endorse and practice the BMP's. One question I have is, in addition to the BMP's, what can we do about this problem? I have repeatedly said that we need to be fighting the propaganda machine of the Wild Sheep Foundation. They have inundated public land agencies, and the general hunting public, with bad info and they are years ahead of us in that effort. We have got to figure out a way to counter their propaganda... we are going to lose badly if we are playing "ranger district whack-a-mole" every time a new potential closure pops up.

Best to all, Matt

So What's In Your Water?

Do you know?

If you live in a community with a municipal water system, then you are probably already aware, and it likely boils down to chlorine, fluoride or other poisons.

So why am I blathering on about this?

In 2003 I moved out of Boise proper into a small mountain community north of Boise. The point was to give me enough space so that I could have the goats I had been dreaming about.

So, all well and good. However, after about two weeks, I was chatting with one of my new neighbors, and he noted, "You aren't drinking the water are you?!"

Umm... *why not*, I wondered back to him?

Well, because it has arsenic in it, that's why not!

That was the point in my learning experience that I discovered that arsenic is a naturally occurring substance that can appear in your well. As it turned out, 3 of our 4 wells had it, and so at that point we naturally began to bring in our drinking water from a local provider of purified water.

The goats, sadly, were stuck with the provided community water; that is until recently, when I had what I would refer to as a benchmark experience.

The background was that last summer two of my goat boys 'fell out' due to leg/joint problems. Since these were not the first of my many boys to have these sorts of problems, I began to rethink the whole arsenic issue. And also, since one of my neighbors here almost died due to his sensitivity to the arsenic in the water (you get far more arsenic in your body from showering than you ever do simply drinking it, and people differ in their degree of sensitivity to this chemical), I began to consider what part it may have played in my goat issues.

As a result, this winter it solidly piqued my attention once again, when I noticed that the horrid leg wobble that Mocha had developed at the beginning of last summer had apparently cleared up during the winter. Since they drink far less water during the winter, I just couldn't help but wonder, one more time, about this whole arsenic issue.

(Leg wobble video here: <http://www.boiselarry.com/mocha.mov>)

As a result, I have begun to carry water for the goats as I once did for our personal drinking water. How things go this summer as I transition into hard-core hiking again will be illuminating in regards to the validity of my thinking on this subject.

My point in all of this, is that if you don't have your water tested, you could be feeding your goats a whole panoply of unpleasant chemicals. Have you had any leg, joint or other health issues? It would be worth the cost of an analysis to find out just what's in the old H₂O. They drink a lot of it in the summer, and believe me, the trail, where I found out about my boy's problems, is *no place* for that sort of 'discovery'.



Douglas Clegg's Goats

A Tale of Two Discs

by Lauren Hall Ruddell

When I first pitched this story to our esteemed editor, my intention was to use the best that science has to offer on the goat spine and to examine what happens to it with an ill-fitting pack saddle (inspired by Nan's previous article 'Does This Saddle Make Me Look Fat') or the effects of overloading a saddle. I was to be disappointed in my quest in one way, and fascinated by what has been done in another way.

There is a great deal of press about the goat spine in the news just now. As is usual for anything involving research with goats, Europeans and pretty much any developed country outside of the US, frankly, has been making inroads in the field of artificial cervical vertebral implants using goats as test subjects. Why? Because when it comes to a pain in the neck, goats are soooooo like people (well, duh!). Goats with these implants are up and leaping within 15 hours of surgery, with no apparent pain and outstanding cervical rotation capacity. It may soon be time to test these discs in people.

So in many ways goat spines are like human spines, especially the cervical (neck) vertebrae. This was not considered relevant to human medicine until late in the 20th century because of the idea that vertical spines and horizontal spines carried load differently. Sort of makes sense, intuitively. However, turns out not to be very true. The axial load of a goat's spine (and a horse's spine) and the way it is handled by the bones, discs, muscles, and ligaments involved turns out to be almost identical to humans. Weird science, I know, but there it is.

In actuality, when it comes to intervertebral discs (you know, the ones that can 'slip') all mammals are pretty similar. There is a plump and pillowy interior, the nucleus pulposus (NP), encased in a flexible yet tough skin, the annulus fibrosus (AF). In adult mammals, the spinal environment is almost entirely avascular (no blood vessels) which makes this portion of the body function in a nutrient and oxygen poor setting. The poor spine seldom gets any help over the years, so it is no wonder that trauma, old age and genetic vagaries can take a toll at varying ages for both humans and goats. The NP tends to dehydrate over time anyway, and trauma to the human or caprine back can speed degeneration along or even result in herniation. This all sounds

pretty grim, I know, but there is some good news. Regeneration is possible, if slow and often painful. Cortisone injections followed by SAID can help to get a wether down on his back legs up and packing again, along with therapeutic exercise in accordance with Wolff's law.

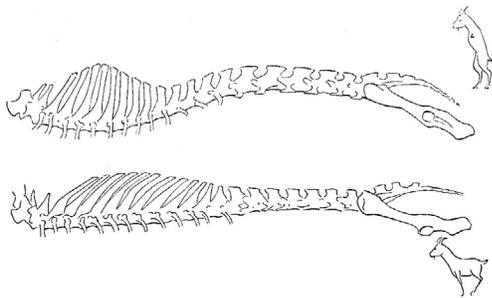
SAID is an acronym for **S**pecific **A**daptations to **I**mplicit **D**emands. That means that your body will adapt to the demands that you place upon it regularly, as in just about everyday. If you practice Nordic Skiing, the muscles and joints specific to this activity will be worked regularly, and they will adapt to help you become a better skier. In the case of bone remodeling, such as that needed following a fracture, specific loads to the injured bone will help it adapt to tolerate futures loads and stresses. This is the basis for Wolff's Law. Slow incremental loading on the recently healed site assists in complete and even superior recovery. I saw this with a wether who broke a front leg (broke, not fractured). After the cast was off, I started him on a regimen of weight that began with an empty pack saddle and then increased the load by 10 lbs. every two months. Eventually this leg was actually better than new. Without realizing it, I was putting Wolff's law into practice. This has applications for the caprine spine as well.

A goat that has suffered from a trauma or an ill-fitting pack may experience chronic pain that makes packing for him or her extremely unpleasant. Small insults to the back are not an issue, but chronic stresses are. Most of the time temporary and infrequent minor damage heals quickly. Even a small herniation that is the result of the NP smooshing out into or past the AF can eventually be resorbed into the body.

It is with chronic stress that damage to lumbar muscles can have a permanent effect. Chronic stress causes the brain to restrict the movement of the vertebrae by tightening the muscles around the vertebrae in an attempt to protect the spine while the trauma heals. When healing occurs, freeing up of the back takes place. But with chronic continuing damage, the release never has a chance to occur and serious damage can be the result. These taught muscles can actually change the shape of the spine over time.

In 1946, a Dutch guy named Slijper investigated the influence of the primary back muscles on the

dorsal spinous processes of the vertebrae. He raised a goat which was born with only two hind legs. At advanced adulthood, he euthanized the goat and compared the angle of this goat's dorsal spinous with the dorsal spinous processes of a normal goat. The bipedal goat allowed him to demonstrate that his hypothesis was right. Slijper believed that the angle of the dorsal spinous processes were influenced by the action of the muscles acting on those processes, and apparently he was right.



Vertebral column of a normal and of the bipedal goat.

This experiment illustrates dramatically the influence that rigid muscles can have on the caprine spine over time. This is an extreme example, plainly, and yet it creates a potent visual concerning the malleability of a goat's spine. Imagine trying to fit a saddle to a goat with a spine that looks like the top illustration! This is definitely a case where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, to use a loading metaphor. After researching this topic and reading Nan's article again, I realized that I tend to place my saddles a bit too far forward up on the caudal vertebra. Never again!

Spinal neurological trauma such as a herniation can heal, thank goodness. I had a buckling that at 3 years old slowly started to have trouble rising, and started kneeling to eat. A year later, after good days and bad days, he could no longer get up at all. The vet who did the farm call had no idea what was going on, and just advised anti-inflammatories and daily gentle exercise. The drugs helped, and every time he rose up to walk or pee we encouraged a few more steps than he really wanted to take. It was slow, but a year later he was fine. In retrospect, I believe that he may have had a herniated disc produced through rough play (he was awfully rowdy). It took time, but apparently the spine healed itself. And there is science to back up this assertion, wouldn't you just know it!

In 1984, researchers found that the collagen in

intervertebral discs behaved according to Wolff's law just as well as bone tissue. So a case was made for use it or lose it, just do it moderately and in small increments. Sounds like common sense and very good news.

This being true along with all of the hoopla about goats and artificial cervical discs and how useful goats are as non-human models for understanding trauma to the spine, I figured there would be research on caprine spinal loading in general. Surprise! There is pretty much nothing anywhere on the Internet about vertical compression on goat spines. I expected one or two articles, but nada. So I am therefore forced to perform a feat of deduction, my dear Watson.

Mammal spines are all similar in that function of the vertebral discs is nearly identical. Humans are vertical mammals, horses are horizontal mammals, and goats are both. It therefore follows logically that back problems that trouble humans as far as loading is concerned can be extrapolated to goat backs, and also that equine back problems due to loading can also be extrapolated to goats. Now then, let us begin with humans and overloading/poor load distribution.

A 2016 study of school children performed in Italy found that "researchers discovered that more than 60 percent of the students had backpack-related pain. Researchers noticed a significant spike in pain reports in young and older adolescents compared to younger children, despite younger children carrying more weight in their backpacks." The potential moral of the story, goats over 24 months old can carry more than a one year old, but are probably more susceptible to back pain than a younger goat. Further, "Studies have also shown that carrying loads unequally, such as when a child carries a backpack on one shoulder, can cause the more frequently loaded shoulder to be lower and may cause lateral spinal curves." Ergo, distribution of load matters.

Extrapolation from equestrian yields further clues. "I have seen many horses ridden sequentially by people of very different weights and seen an immediate change in the way the horses moved. I have previous evidence of horses in full work with no underlying clinical problem showing transient lameness when ridden by a heavy rider. Horses with low-grade lameness when ridden by a lightweight rider may show much more obvious lameness

when ridden by a heavier rider” (Dr. Sue Dyson, British equestrian researcher). So for a pack goat of average height, weight and fitness, there is reason to suspect that an overly heavy load can cause problems immediately. Further, Dr. Dyson also found that horses with poor fitting saddles tended not only to be sore, but also exhibited under muscled backs, specifically the multifidus and psoas muscles (and of course, goats have those too, as do humans.)

The moral of the story, gentle goat packers, is to prevent chronic spinal trauma by being mindful of correct saddle fit, weight distribution consistency, appropriate load amount, and if there is a problem with a goat’s back, pasture rest followed by slow but steady recuperation in the form of incremental exercise challenges. Wolff’s law to the rescue!

‘Gluttonous’ goat that always steals food from its owner avoids getting slaughtered for its meat after becoming an Internet celebrity

PUBLISHED: 11:59 EST, 14 December 2018

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-6496351/Goat-steals-food-owner-avoids-getting-slaughtered-online-celebrity.html>

- Greedy goat eats just about everything in sight - particularly its owner’s food
- Videos of the animal devouring its 27-year-old herder’s food have gone viral
- The goat has gained so many fans that its owner has decided to keep it as a pet

A goat with a voracious appetite for just about anything in sight - particularly his owner’s food - has become the latest internet celebrity in [China](#).

The greedy grazer belongs to 27-year-old Li Fu, who has been rearing and living among a herd of 100 goats in Datong, northeast China’s Shanxi Province.

The three-year-old male goat has gained a loyal fanbase of more than 300,000 followers on popular short video site Kuaishou, which ultimately saved it from being sold off and slaughtered.



The three-year-old male goat has gained a fanbase of more than 300,000 followers on popular short video site Kuaishou, which ultimately saved it from being sold off and slaughtered.



Kuaishou / Li Fu

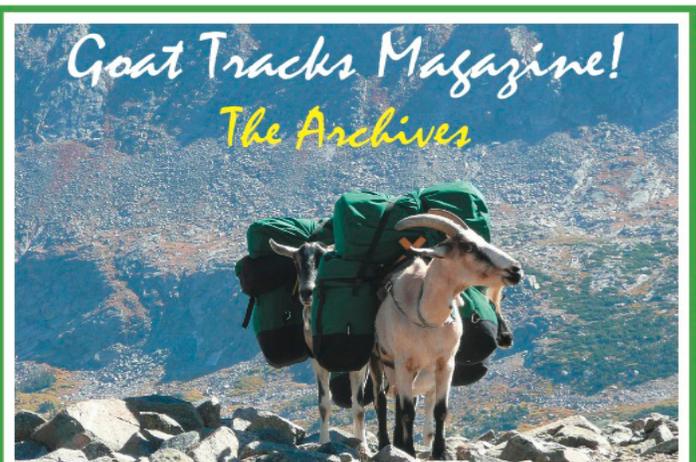


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In my frequent forays into the files that make up the GT Archives, I have come to the conclusion that the only reason that everyone doesn’t have a copy of this information is that they just don’t realize how completely entertaining lots of this stuff is. There have been some great writers for GT over the years!

Karen Bean is a friend that I became acquainted with through my brother who ran into her and her goats on the trail in upper western Washington. She not only is an excellent writer, but a fun trail companion. I hope you enjoy this latest recounting of her foray into the wilds of Idaho. This is not the first time Karen has been featured in GT. She previously graced the covers of both the Summer and Fall 2015 issues of Goat Tracks.

I've Seen Fire, I've Seen Rain, and Ice, and Snow...

Hiking the White Cloud Wilderness, Idaho, August 2018

It was a trip three years in the planning. Not that it was that complicated. Things just kept getting in the way. In 2015 my husband, Ian, and I decided to go to the Idaho's White Cloud Wilderness. We had met Larry Robinson and he spoke in such glowing terms: high mountain peaks, remote lakes with wildflowers at low levels and pristine alpine lands as one climbed. We thought it would be perfect for us and the four pack goats... Tiberius (lead goat: Oberhasli), Remington (Saanen), Balder (Saanen), and The Professor (smallest-Cashmere-that-ever-lived).

Then Ian became ill in 2016 and died of ALS. Then I had my hip replaced in 2017, and was just happy to limit my walks to our local, beautiful wilderness. So it was in 2018 I sent Larry an email saying "Bean's coming to the White Cloud Wilderness". The goats were now a bit older – all could carry a "pack" in some form or other.

Tiberius is 7 and Remington is 5 so they each had a full pack. The Professor is 5, but as he's tiny, he carries a dog pack. Before anyone shrieks, his pack carries the empty meal packets and other trash. Even Balder, at 2-½ years got a pack, with some light clothing in it. I was hesitant, but Balder's has a huge self-image and unless he has a pack on he harasses the other goats.

Larry very kindly made a temporary pasture at his house so we would have a place to stay on our first night in Idaho. He also accompanied us on our first 3 days of hiking, which was a real pleasure. I must also add, that if you need someone to get you into the Idaho out-back at a good pace, Larry's your man. The boys and I tend to meander, but we needed to make some time on the first days.

The Walk:

The walk I chose in this area is loop that includes: Baker Lake, a side trip to the highlands near Castle Lake, Noisy Lake, Quiet Lake, Scree and Shallow Lakes, then up over Windy Devil Pass and through the Chain Lakes area. You are never without water on this walk.

I normally take my time. First days are most often 3 miles, to ease into the trip. I don't like to walk more than 6 miles a day. Why rush? You cannot see or hear as much when your hurry. Time, however, was of the essence on this trip, because the fires burning in the area changed my initial plan.

I had wanted to start at the Fourth Of July Trailhead. But the Stanley ranger(s) dissuaded me when he said "We're discouraging people from parking there. It would be a shame if you came back and your truck was completely burned." That's how close the fires were. Turn back? Never. Larry knew another way in, so we drove across the state to the Livingston Mill Trail Head. (☺ *It only seemed like it was 'across the state'. However, from the Stanley Ranger office to Livingston Mill TH is definitely a bit of a trip*)

Our alternate way into this wilderness incorporates a long slog up and down a trail with bicycles, motorcycles, and horses from the trailhead to Willow Lake. It adds a fair bit onto the walk and, honestly, is only charming as you near the lakes. Larry sets a fair clip, however, and he had us nearly to Frog Lake, just a few miles off Willow, by the first day, and Baker Lake by day two. (*Had there been no fire, I would still begin the walk at Fourth of July trailhead.*)

Baker Lake:

We crossed a number of small streams as we headed for Baker Lake. Remington embarrassed me by balking at each one. Larry's goats just





Baker Lake-Remington

Baker Lake is about 1/4 its original size. It has filled in as shallow lakes are wont to do. The area behind Remington would, at one time, been lake, not grass.

marched right through. The boys and I are not the most organized hiking team.

Baker Lake has well-used horse-packing areas, and a quite nice smaller area up at the northwest

side of the lake. It is a small, shallow, peaceful lake that is banked on the Southside by tall grasses that catch the light as they quiver in the wind. A lovely spot, had it not been for the billowing cloud of smoke that appeared over the ridge to the south – that was more than a little unnerving.

The day after we arrived, Larry, I, and all of the goats (his and mine) climbed the steep trail to just below Castle Lake. The trail there is an old logging road, and passes a disused cabin and the opening of a mine. It terminates on a high, wide, rocky alpine plateau where you are surrounded by towering ridges. The way to Castle Lake is up over a massive slope of scree to where the lake is nestled just below Castle Peak. We didn't walk up there.

Larry had a previously scheduled commitment, so we parted in that beautiful, if austere, environment. I lingered, wandering about, and laying back as the boys browsed. 10 years ago with my husband we probably would have given it a go. But I've seen scree lakes, and the plateau had its own beauty. The boys and I meandered back down to Baker Lake and I spent the day wandering through the delicate wildflowers that grew amid the mossy streams at the northeast end of the lake.

I did keep an eye on that billowing cloud of white smoke to the south. Making alternate plans the entire time... i.e., should the next day be worse, we would pull out (Was it a curse? Would I never make this trip?)

Noisy & Quiet Lakes

I was not cursed. The next day was smoky, but the huge, frightening fire plume was gone.

I packed up the boys and we headed north to Noisy

and Quiet Lakes, north and up a very steep slope. The trail here is not distinct. If you choose to walk this, watch the "trails" carefully, and bring a map (I gave my spare to a young hiker who had gotten lost).

There are three trails that leave Baker: 1) to Castle Lake: this is obvious, you immediately start going straight up, 2) to another area, equally lovely, I'm sure, but not Noisy Lake – the hiker had mistaken that trail for the way to Noisy, 3) the most "northern" trail, the one to Noisy.

This trail clings to the edge of those lovely grasses, then enters a forest. After a gradual rise, a gentle cascading stream is crossed.



Noisy Lake-Balder

Then the trail rises steeply. Very, very steeply. OK, it's vertical. And it can be tight. At times I had to backtrack down the pack line to help shift a stuck pack as the goats passed between boulders and downed trees. However it is definitely safe.

There are no sheer drop-offs. You are simply climbing up the side of a steep mountain. It is quite fun, really, especially if the goats are carrying all your gear. I love packing with goats.

Before you approach Noisy Lake, the trail becomes a gentle slope as it meanders along a now calm stream. Lovely pools, small waterfalls accompanied us all the way to the sunny rock ledges that surround the lake.

Noisy, despite its name, is a quite, tranquil, small lake. We spent some time just lingering in the sun and enjoying the beauty of the waters and the sound of the little waterfall across the lake. There are wonderful little camping spots all around the lake; I would suggest staying here should you embark on this loop hike.

This section of our walk was smoke free. The angles of the ridges and mountains seemed to protect us.

We could not have asked for a more glorious day. On we walked to my goal of camping just east of Quiet Lake.

Quiet Lake:

As we rounded the ridge that led us to Quiet, the smoke returned. It had settled in this area. Oh well, no turning back. There is a well-used



Quiet Lake-Balder

(totally flattened) campsite at the rise that overlooks the northern end of Quiet. You really cannot miss it. The trail to Scree and Shallow Lakes is just opposite this campsite. This is important to know, because that trail is not well marked. Well, it was when we left, as I put innumerable

Cairns along it

After pitching camp, the boys and I spent an enjoyable, but head scratching, afternoon looking for the trail to Scree Lake. We went east. We went north (but the slightly wrong north). We went west. Heck, we went in all the wrong places until the end, when I realized the trail was about 50 feet from where we were camping. "Not well used" is an understatement, thus my obsession with placing Cairns.

Quiet Lake is noisy. Where as Noisy was quiet – go figure. The winds never stopped blowing while we were there. The view of the lake is dramatic however. Quiet is very, very big. There are also some lovely views if one walks due north of the campsite up on the ridge, although the way there is steep.

Scree Lake

The next day dawned clear. No billowing clouds of smoke. Indeed, no smoke at all. The firefighters had apparently succeeded and the winds had cleared the area. The boys and I set off on another steep, but shorter, climb to Scree Lake

This stretch is not as steep as the one leaving Baker

Lake. And once you are on the trail, it is pretty easy to follow. This portion leads into the high alpine.



At Scree Lake... the Snow Begins

Trees

become smaller. This is good, as they are also lying across the trail having been blown down by wind and, most likely, snow. When one gets to Scree you are just shy of 9,600 feet.

I saw no camping spots at this small, lovely lake. The land slopes too steeply to the shore. There is excellent forage for the goats however. We took the time to walk uphill, away from the lake so the boys could have a bit of a browse before our last push up for the day.

At the end of Scree Lake, the trail follows a gentle stream, rounds some rocky outcrops and deposits you at southwest side of Shallow Lake. The outflow from this small, pristine alpine lake slides thorough rocks and moss. To the south, a wall of scree and rock that rises to a 10,800-foot peak borders the lake. In one guide the route to Shallow Lake is marked as coming over this ridge. Do Not Do This. From Shallow Lake the "trail" area is visible. It is a straight, dangerous drop. If you come in by Fourth of July, go via Quiet Lake. To the northwest of Shallow Lake hillocks and small trees form the shore, then the land rises as it climbs to a ridge.

Shallow Lake's terrain is primarily rocks and lumpy ground, but there is at least one place to pitch a tent. Good forage is a short walk downhill at Scree Lake. Scree Lake has no scree, Shallow Lake has scree: Noisy and Quiet Lakes' names seem reversed as well. It still makes me ponder if someone was having a bit of fun at our expense.

The day had been clear as we arrived at Shallow Lake. By the time I had made camp, the weather was changing, so I set up a shelter for my boys. Those winds had not only cleared the smoke, but they had brought storm clouds and a light rain as well.



Shallow Lake-The tent at this point a snow shelter our quiet walk in the drizzle turned to sleet as we made a hasty return to the campsite.

By the time we were at the tent, all of 10 minutes later, we were in snow. We were to remain in a snowstorm for the next 36 hours. There are no photographs from the height of the storm. I only emerged from my tent for necessities and caring for the goats.

I had envisaged my vacation as me and the boys relaxing near a remote lake with no other folks around; they would browse and doze, I would read and sketch. Watch what you ask for in life. We had that, but I was in a tent, wearing every bit of gear I brought, as I was thinking, “we’re leaving in the dawn, no matter what. We’ve got to get out of here.” I was very concerned that the storm would last for days (they do where I live) and we needed to get over a pass and back to the truck before my stores ran out. I always carry three days extra of food, but, expecting the worst, I did not know how long it would take us to get out.

I pulled out my map and compass (I’m old fashioned. Maps and compasses never run out of batteries). Using these, I plotted a route that we could walk in zero visibility – yes it was really snowing – and reach an area that would lead us to the Chain Lakes Area.

In the meantime, the boys had taken one look at my shelter and said in no uncertain terms “thanks, but

no thanks”. They wandered up the hill behind the tent and went to ground where two massive trees had fallen decades ago. Their area was completely sheltered from the wind and snow free. (Side note: I do not tie up my goats at night. I do not think this is safe. They have horns. They have good sense. They will come to me on a whistle or when I call their names from over a quarter-mile or more away. On the other hand, we are a mess when we walk down a trail, we have no form at all, just free spirits followed by one, often cursing, human).

The frigid landscape was beautiful. Our total isolation was amazing. I got my “reading by a lake” in, while buried in my not-very-good, rapidly-returned, new, “guaranteed to 20F” sleeping bag (never ever believe a salesman). The boys browsed what they could find on the hills between storm surges. Personally, I think we would have all enjoyed it more from a lodge with a lovely, warm barn... But that’s the joys and adventure of hiking. I really would not trade it for all the posh lodges in the world.

After waiting though an entire day of ice and snow, with the sounds of boulders bouncing their way down the slopes opposite us, we gathered up, loaded up and left, following my compass.

A compass and map, or GPS, is a good idea if walking this route even on a clear day. There is no trail from Shallow Lakes to Windy Devil Pass.



Approaching the top of Windy Devil Pass

Over The Top to the Boulder Chain Lakes

I am happy to say my compass coordinates were spot-on. I had even marked a turn at the proper place. As we neared the top, the storm, which had turned to rain, lifted and we were walking, once again, in sun. No smoke, no rain, no sleet, no ice, no snow. Well, the weather gods apparently just wanted us to have a full experience in Idaho.

From the pass, there is a trail that takes one down through a massive wall of scree to the lovely lakes

below. Tiberius didn't think much of it. I rather think he was "done" in his mind. He wanted to go back. He didn't know we were walking a loop that we were now heading out. So, for the first time in the trip, he had to wear his lead. The other goats who seemed to think the whole thing amusing, tried to take advantage of the situation. "Tibo's on a rope. Let's hit him." Did I mention there's a bit of cursing when I walk? I usually walk alone. Once they settled down, and Tibo realized that, no, we weren't going back, and glory of glories there was grass down at those lakes below, we were off, shambling and bouncing down though the scree to some truly amazing lakes.

The Boulder Chain Lakes are a series of very popular, very beautiful lakes in this area. Each has very well used horse campsites. Normally they also have a lot of folks. There is one thing to be said for going for a walk in fire, rain and snow: there is no one around. We had the upper lakes to ourselves. We lounged just above the shores of Scoop Lake. The warm sun was a welcome change to our past two days and the browse was luscious. The lakes shone in the brilliant light as we wound our way down to Hummock Lake accompanied by the whistles of marmots.



Balder looking down to Hummock Lake from Scoop Lake

There we chose a well-worn campsite, hung the bear bag and went for a peaceful, beautiful and people-free walk around

Hummock. You cannot go wrong on a walk around this high altitude lake. In places there is a clear path. But the low trees and wide expanses under the towering peaks make it impossible to lose your way on a fine day.

The next day we began our descent. Our route followed streams as we wound downhill past the entire chain of sparkling lakes beneath trees that continually increased in height as our altitude dropped. Until we got to Willow Lake, we only saw two campers on a distant shore.

At Willow we met the trail on which we had entered, and would now exit. With no one around, the goats simply plodded though the creek or



crossed the log bridge without balking, of course. Immediately, however, we met 3 mountain bikers. Remington (who had balked at the stream when Larry was with us) did not bat an eye. The bikers stopped and waited as he waded the creek, strolled by them and caught up with us at another well-used campground.

The campgrounds here are too well used. We explored a bit and found a nice site away from the trail along the north shore of Willow Lake. A lovely late afternoon saunter along the sun-flecked lake as we watched raptors soar was the last of our "vacation".

Out And Away

The next day we rapidly retraced our steps out to Livingston Mill. As we traveled we met teams of walkers coming into the area. Our days of glorious isolation were over, but we were just heading to the trailhead and truck to spend the night.

Well, that was the plan. When we got to the parking lot, we met 3 very nice horse wranglers, who informed us that they had "15 horses in already. 23 arriving soon. And a tourist for each of those horses." I made the decision not to spend the night there. I will say the wranglers were very nice, and very interested in the pack goats. They were surprised that my goats just followed along and were happy to have a head scratch by the folks they met.

It was a wonderful trip. Exciting, worrisome at times, beautiful, and challenging. I would recommend it to anyone with backcountry experience. Do bring a map, a compass (or a GPS), a plan, extra food, and the willingness to adapt. You never know what to expect on a longer trip into the wilderness, as just about anything can happen.

(Ed. Note: I am fairly certain that the horse people are restricted from going any further up the Boulder Chain Lakes drainage than Hatchet Lake, which has a very large and well used camping area.)

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What to Expect When You Are Expecting Baby Goats

Reader Contribution By [Carrie Miller, Miller Micro Farm](#), 2/14/2019

<https://www.motherearthnews.com/homesteading-and-livestock/what-to-expect-when-you-are-expecting-baby-goats-zbcz1902>



Each year hundreds if not thousands of new goat owners wait impatiently for their first baby goats. Knowing the signs that the time is near can help in being prepared for the

joyful occasion. While each doe is different these are the guidelines I have found personally to be most accurate. I find it helpful to have a notebook for each doe, I write all her signs and changes as they happen. It helps me know what to watch for the following year. It is also a great place to keep track of breeding dates, vaccines, doctor visits, hoof trims, and when supplements are given.

Early-pregnancy

- They do not go back into heat.
- Sleeping a bit more than normal.
- Becoming protective over their baby-side (right-side) during roughhousing.
- Appetite increasing.

Mid-pregnancy

- Appetite continues to increase.
- Water intake also increases.
- A baby bump may begin to show.
- Some does become more affectionate others become standoffish.
- Udders may begin to develop
- Vulva begins to swell and open
- Baby bump grows
- Fast hard breathing when laying down

Emanate Labor 12-24 hours

- Fast breathing
- Become extremely uncomfortable (Pacing)
- May stop eating
- Significant mucus discharge
- Becomes more vocal
- Some contractions
- Udder typically becomes full and shiny
- Tail ligaments loosen causing the tail to hang off side
- Hips become extremely sunk in

Labor

- Vulva becomes floppy and open rather than swollen
- Breathing becomes even faster
- Contractions become painful (back will hunch and tail will be straight up)
- Laying down, standing up, laying down... repeat



- Vaginal discharge increases
- Biting at or talking to baby-side
- Pawing at the ground
- Screaming in pain
- Squatting
- Begins pushing

While you will be scared and fearful of possible problems, most births go perfectly fine and will not require any intervention.

You will, however, need an emergency vet on call or a goat mentor for possible problems. Stay calm! From the time the second bubble sack appears it should roughly take about 30 mins for the baby to be delivered. You should first see two hooves through the second bubble then a nose and tongue. It typically takes the longest to deliver the front half of the baby then the rest just slides on out. While it's OK to help mom dry off the baby and clear the nose do not take the baby away if you plan on her raising it. Let her bond with the baby by cleaning and licking on it. The placenta should deliver within 24 hours but typically comes within a few hours from delivery. While absolutely disgusting be aware that most mothers will eat the placenta. The sound this makes is nauseating! I take this time to go into the house and clean myself up, especially if it is late at night or early in the morning, I simply cannot stomach it.

What to expect after the delivery

Mom will bleed off and on from her vulva for days or even weeks. She will need increased nutrition for body condition and milk production. Mamma may also seem a bit restless for a few days. She will clean the baby(s) a lot, drink the urine, chew on the umbilical cord, and clean any poo. My does become very affectionate requiring extra attention and care. They also become more vocal as they talk to their babies. Watch for a lopsided udder, babies have a tendency to favor one at the beginning. You may need to milk the other each day to keep her from getting uncomfortably full or from acquiring mastitis.

The baby will sleep a lot the first day or two, they have been through a lot. The first poo or two will be black and tar-like. The poo will eventually become light brown/yellowish in color and a bit thicker than pudding. You may need to wipe their little bums from time to time. It will take a few weeks for the umbilical cord to dry up and fall off. The baby will become more active and playful within a few days. They may begin nibbling on grain and hay with mamma within a few days even occasionally sneaking a drink of water.

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Mama's Boys: Dam-Raising Packgoats for Success

By Nan Hassey, Goat-O-Rama



According to conventional packgoat wisdom, Phil and I are “doing it wrong.” We *dam-raise* our kids! I know, it’s practically unheard of among packgoat breeders. Nearly every article

and book I’ve read about packgoats emphatically states that all packgoats **MUST** be bottle-raised. Dam-raised kids are skittish and will never bond with humans!

Call me a rebel, but when I started breeding packgoats, I refused to follow the crowd. My first kidding experience had left me somewhat traumatized when my friend whisked the brand new kids away from their mother and into the house to dry them off and feed bottles. While everyone else fussed over the cute kids, I couldn’t stop listening to the plaintive cries of their mother standing alone in the dark, wondering where her babies were and why she wasn’t allowed to clean and nurse them herself. She eventually got over it, but I didn’t. A moment that should have been joyous felt heartbreaking to me. If pulling kids was necessary to goat breeding, I wasn’t sure I wanted any part of it.

Well, it was too late to change my mind. My girls were already bred, but I was determined to do things differently. I understand completely why others bottle-raise and I won’t argue with their reasoning, but it was not something I wanted for *my* herd. The question for me was how to raise these babies on their dams while still ensuring a strong human bond.

First, I started with friendly mothers. While possible, it is much harder to raise friendly babies from mothers that fearfully try to hide their kids away from people. The kids will almost always pick up on at least some of her skittishness.

Second, it is imperative that the mothers be healthy. CAE is a common disease and is primarily spread from dam to kid through milk. I had my goats tested before our first kidding season, and I have tested every year since in order to prove my herd is still clean. A CAE-positive doe would need to have her kids pulled at birth so they could be raised on CAE-negative or pasteurized milk. There are several other less common diseases that can also spread through milk, so before dam-raising your kids, draw blood on

your does and have them tested for any diseases that could potentially infect her offspring.

If your does are friendly and healthy, there is no reason why they can’t raise friendly, healthy kids provided you take the time to make sure they bond with humans as well as with other goats. I like to attend every goat birth so that the first things a baby goat sees, hears, feels, and smells are their mother and humans working together to dry it, warm it, and help it find milk. The first time I check on the new babies, they come toddling toward me as part of their family. They never learn what it means to run from a human.

Sometimes people ask me whether it’s ok for a baby goat to jump on people, climb on laps, chew hair, etc. My response is “Absolutely!”



This is one of the funnest aspects of raising goats, so never discourage a young kid from using you for a jungle gym. It’s important not to quash their playfulness and curiosity.

I like to take my cues from the mothers. I’ve noticed that mother goats are very permissive with young kids. Kids get to climb on mama, tug her ears, chew her wattles, and even use her belly for a trampoline. She (and even my older non-related herd members) are very tolerant of young kids’ antics, but as the kids grow, their tolerance fades until eventually kids are no longer allowed to take the same liberties they did when they were brand new. Phil and I follow a similar progression. Very young kids are allowed to satisfy their curiosity about hair, buttons, zippers, shoelaces, and climbing on people, but as they grow these curious behaviors morph into a demand for attention.

Kids rapidly become big, bold, and mature enough to handle a bit more discipline in their lives.

Within a week or two the older herd members have laid down the law, and soon the mothers start to enforce personal boundaries as well.

Since the kids are already learning correct behavior from the other goats, having them learn it from humans is not a big

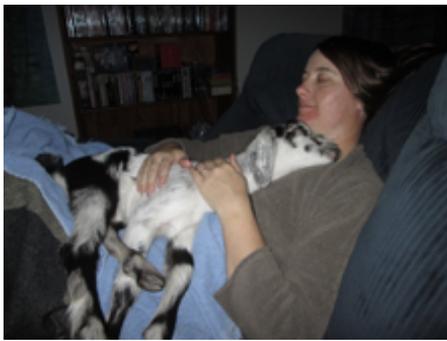


leap. We brush them aside when they try to jump on us, and we remove hair and clothing items from their mouths. There's rarely a need to punish a young kid, but they do need to be taught boundaries before they get big enough to become a nuisance.

One of the things Phil and I do when our kids are under a month old is we bring them into the house every night while we watch TV. They usually spend about two hours sleeping on our laps before we put them back with their moms.

We also spend time playing with them outdoors. We take all of our goats for one or two walks around our property every day so the kids learn to follow us along with the rest of the herd.

Kids love interactive play. They don't have to see you as a walking meal in order to bond to you. They can also bond to you because you are fun to hang out with! I have a doe who, when she is not raising kids



of her own, spends a lot of time playing with other goats' babies. She's the "cool aunt" of the herd and the kids adore her despite the fact that she never feeds them. I have

found this instructive in our dam-raising journey.

I see some distinct advantages to dam-raising kids. First, I don't have to maintain as many pens. My goats live together in one herd made up of multiple ages and sexes. The kids grow up within a healthy herd structure which is less prone to producing bullies and outcasts than herds that are made up of all similar ages. I like to say a herd of all young goats takes on a "Lord of the Flies" resemblance. By contrast, in a herd with mixed ages, senior goats teach the youngsters about discipline while also shielding them from bullies. I feel this is good for a youngster's social and psychological development and leads to fewer problems in their interactions with humans later on.

Another advantage to dam-raising is that kids get a lot more early growth and are less prone to health issues. One of the pitfalls to raising bottle kids is that it's hard for humans to give them enough round-the-clock feedings to mimic the natural feeding schedule kept up by goat mothers. We compress bottle feedings to 2-4 times/day and give more milk per feeding to compensate for the less frequent meals. A goat nursing from its mother is going to be able to take in more milk in 24 hours than a bottle kid

without ever having as much milk in its belly at one time. This aids in rapid early bone growth and weight gain with less potential for digestive problems. Dam-raised kids also start eating solid foods at an earlier age and rarely need to be fed grain.

While dam-raised kids may generally be healthier than bottle-raised, it is critical to monitor their health daily.

An advantage to bottle raising is that it forces you to look at your



kids at least twice a day, so it's easy to catch and treat problems early on. It is just as important that your dam-raised kids be carefully evaluated for their health on a daily basis. I had a kid last summer who began to look unthrifty when she was about 6-8 weeks old. The mother had a blocked teat which I was having to milk out by hand. Both kids refused to touch the difficult teat, but the larger kid was hogging the easy one. I ended up training the smaller kid to take a bottle twice a day so she could bloom again. Eventually the mother's teat unplugged and the kid was able to nurse normally, but she could have lost a lot of ground if I had not been paying close attention to her body condition.

Dam-raising allows me to take time that I otherwise would have spent preparing bottles and put it toward playing with the kids. One reason bottle-raising is so successful is that it forces you to spend time with your kids at least 2-3 times a day without fail. Never let dam-raising make you lazy! That 2-3 times/day interaction is just as critical for the dam-raised kid. The amount of time matters less than frequency and consistency, which is what bottle-feeding forces you to provide.

One of my favorite things about keeping kids with their mamas is watching the sweet interaction that happens between doe and kid. Mother goats love their babies, and I love to share the experience of raising kids with them, but I would never want to deprive them of it.

I love seeing kids snuggle up and sleep against the warm, reassuring softness of their gentle mother. I love watching the mothers clean and nurture their little



ones and come running when they call. Nothing puts a smile on my face like seeing a new mother lick and nuzzle her tiny, wet offspring, help him to his feet, and nudge him toward the milk. It's a special and important bond that I don't think humans can fully replace. We can share in the experience and form our own unique bond with these kids that is just as strong and just as important without any need to replace their natural mother.

This article has been aimed at breeders, but to you buyers out there, do not automatically shun a dam-raised kid. If done well, dam-raising can produce kids every bit as friendly and bonded as any bottle baby. The kids in this last photo are seven weeks old and clearly love people. They're too old to be still jumping up, but I can forgive a kid for being "too friendly." We'll work on manners when my hands aren't full!



Local charity delivers goats to people in need in India

By Whitney Bashaw Staff Writer, Feb 12, 2019

https://www.thedailystar.com/news/local_news/local-charity-delivers-goats-to-people-in-need-in-india/article_78ab8168-5641-56e1-b47d-6e5ce8fc1a2f.html

"Each one, teach one."

In its fundraising and advocacy from the city of Oneonta to support various villages in India, this guiding axiom of the Ninash Foundation reflects the simple premise of the organizations endeavor: that each person can help another.

"The Oneonta community did all this," Ninash Founder Ashok Malhotra said. "We



are doing it, moving the world."

The president and treasurer of the Ninash Foundation made their annual visit to three schools in India and this year, brought goats to poor families in Kuran, a village in the state of Gujarat.

The Goat Giving project is an offshoot program of Ninash, spearheaded by Linda Drake.

Students from Oneonta's three elementary schools spent 10 days raising money to buy the goats, culminating in a goat-kissing ceremony in December.

This year Malhotra and Drake brought 23 goats to families in Kuran. Drake said this brings the total number of goats donated to 300.

"It's amazing how all three schools were involved and how excited every child was to give goats to their friends in India," Drake said.

Because the goats go to families of four or more, Drake said, "we are helping more than 1,200 people."

Many of the goats came with offspring too young to be without their mother, so some families received two.

Goats supply dairy products to the families, who are encouraged to give away excess milk or the offspring to support other families in need.

Founded in 1996, the Ninash Foundation builds schools and promotes literacy for underprivileged children in India.

"You have to think about the future, isn't that wonderful?" Malhotra asked.

Over the years, Oneonta schools, Rotarians and the larger community have supported the Ninash Foundation.

Ninash supports schools in Kuran, Gujarat; Mahapura, Rajasthan; and Dundlod, Rajasthan. The three schools currently enroll more than 1,200 students.

The first school was started in 1996, and this year Malhotra and Drake visited with alumni of the schools, who are on track in various career paths.

The schools continue to grow and function mostly through Ninash Foundation funds, and are looking to implement more sustainable solar projects, computers and establish scholarship programs for students.

"What we usually do, we go through all the classes in each school, discuss subjects, pitch in what we know, then we sit down with the teachers," Malhotra said. "we ask: what is your wish list? It has to come from them because they are the ones doing all the work."

Whitney Bashaw, staff writer, can be reached at 607-441-7218 or wbashaw@thedailystar.com

Of Helicopters and Packgoats

by Karen Bean



My goats and I live and hike in the high Cascade Mountains, very close to the Canadian border. In fact, one of our local mountains is called "American Border". They had to think long and hard on that one.

Because of border security and illegal drugs, government helicopters often fly in the area. Usually they are respectful of

hikers. Once in a while one gets a pilot who seems either enamored of goats or is checking to make sure what he's seeing is real: one person, four goats on a ridge line.

I don't blame people for being interested, but helicopters can create dangerous situation... on a ridge... with goats.

My boys and I were out for an over-night ramble. We had climbed a trail to around 5000 ft, and meandered along a long disused trail that is known only to locals. The tent was pitched in a wide-open expanse. We took off along the ridgeline on a lovely day, moving between heather, blueberry bushes, and patches of snow that still clung rocky slopes.



The route in this area often follows five-foot wide ridgelines with steep drops on each side. From these you can see the creeks below as they cut their way down to lakes large and small. Above you are the towering peaks and massive out-crops: Larrabee, Yellow Aster Butte, and American Border Peak. It's very tranquil, until an overly inquisitive local pilot decides it would be fun to fly 25 feet over you.

As we stood on our 5-foot ledge with its 1000-foot drop-off, I watched the helicopter circle around one popular camping area a few miles away. The pilot then made a wide sweep around our ridge and carried on off to the east. But we must have caught his eye. He circled back

around. I gave a little wave to acknowledge him. The goats were a little nervous; they stood rigid watching this loud thing in the air. Then things got bad.



The pilot decided to come within 50 feet of us. I know they do not have to approach that closely to get a good view. Modern technology offers excellent digital images. But in he came. The boys spooked. I'm saying "It's OK, boys, it's OK" but they were starting to run, to hit each other to get away.

You may have seen video of herds of wild animals running, away from camera, across a wide plain. They



are running from the helicopter from which the cameraman is filming. My boys decided that they should do this as well. I, of course, was in

the middle of them, on a narrow ledge. All I could think was "I don't want to fall down this cliff and dislodge my artificial hip." Dying I could deal with, but I worry about those pieces of metal in my leg and massive pain.

As is obvious, I did survive... as did the goats. My previous nice wave at the pilot was replaced by a rude gesture. Oh, I *do* hope they had that recorded.

In case they did not capture the moment for posterity, I called Border Patrol and the Drug Enforcement Agency when I got home. Both got an earful from me. I didn't care which agency operated that helicopter. Each was surprised that I could pinpoint the location, day, and time when it happened. The event was rather memorable.

Who knows if they really cared. However, we walk this area regularly, so each agency will get a call the day that we go, every time.



Lucky Sam

(Whether or not Sam was actually 'lucky' depends on whether you are a 'cup half full' or a 'cup half empty' person. He certainly endured more than I would have wanted to. Sam, however, certainly is 'Lucky' to have such caring folks take care of him. Ed.)

It happened on a clear, cold evening in May of 2017.

I was away at a funeral in Georgia. My husband, David, was up late working and heard "a ruckus" outside



The 'Recovered' Sam

our bedroom window. Thankfully, the day had been warm and the window was still cracked. David quickly realized that what he heard was our 2-year old goats bleating in their pen. He grabbed a flashlight and ran outside and was shocked to see a medium-sized black bear climbing over the fence and out of the goat pen. He opened the gate leaving it swinging, rounded the corner and shined the light into the shed, afraid that he'd find carnage. Both goats seemed OK upon cursory inspection but then Sam, our Alpine-Saanen cross, and Willow, our Saanen, both bolted out of the open gate.

David followed our terrified goats to where they huddled together in the pasture north of our house. He grabbed Willow and walked him back to the pen. Sam did not follow and when David returned to get him, he was nowhere to be found.

The next morning I called from Georgia and David started off by saying, "we had a bear last night." I immediately pictured feathers everywhere and a torn up chicken coop. When he told me that a bear had attacked the *goats*, I was in shock. I was 1,500 miles away and felt completely helpless. David had already spent much of the morning looking for Sam without any luck. We brainstormed places Sam might be hiding out but I knew in my heart that if Sam wasn't answering his calls or seeking out human company, he was either badly injured or dead.

Two days later, I phoned David as soon as I landed at the airport. He told me that he had just found Sam underneath our next door neighbor's deck but not to get my hopes up because Sam was severely injured and quite ill. A vet was on the way.

Sam had a gaping hole in his belly, claw marks across his shoulder and literally smelled like an elk carcass

that has been sitting on the side of the road for days. He had a fever of 104. The vet cleaned his wound, gave him shots of antibiotics and suggested we wait the weekend to see if he survived. On Monday we brought Sam in to the clinic where another vet suggested that Sam needed surgery to clean out and stitch his wound. Although we were pretty sure that closing the wound was not a good idea, Sam was gravely ill and we decided to take the vet's advice. After surgery the vet said much of the tissue he had stitched was, "iffy." He also said that the skin and sheath around Sam's penis had been completely torn away and it was impossible to say how Sam might heal.

Within 36 hours, Sam's wound blackened and started draining and the odor of death returned. He was having trouble urinating. The vet was worried his bladder would overflow and a nightmare would ensue. He recommended euthanasia. When I hesitated the vet really pressured me and said there was no viable alternative.

Something in the look in Sam's eye and the rhythm of his breath told us he was not ready to give up. We knew the risks but decided to find a way to give Sam a chance.



Not as bad as it got, but the other pictures were gruesome

We called Dr. Louise, our regular vet who was home with a newborn son and she sent out the "rookie" helper she had hired for her maternity leave. The young vet came out and video chatted with Louise while we held Sam for the camera. They agreed that Sam might have a chance but that it would take a lot of time and effort. We commenced regular antibiotic and anti-inflammatory injections. David and I "flipped" Sam daily, flushed his wound with sterile saline, rinsed and swabbed him and then rewarded him with probiotics mixed with peanut butter.

There were many ups and downs over the following weeks but gradually Sam grew stronger and the wound that had started out the size and depth of a man's fist developed pink granulation tissue and began to fill in. Three months later it was the size of a quarter and Dr. Louise said we could stop the treatments and let it close up on its own. Sam was by that time quite strong and resistant to being flipped so we were all ready to move on and declare him healed.

Sam's penis remains exposed and is now tucked up against his (wethered) scrotum, placed more like that of a human than a goat. He pees sideways (don't stand on

his left side!) but has figured out how to lean forward enough to avoid soiling himself. He is very much at risk for frostbite so we keep a heat lamp in the goat shed most of the winter.

Almost 2 years later Sam is strong and healthy. He started packing last summer and is a typical Alpine, full of heart and always the first in the string. He is still skittish though and sometimes we have to coax him along when he thinks there might be danger ahead. We swear that he can smell bears and he has literally bolted after sniffing bear scat on the trail. But, he's our Sam who falls off into hypnotic bliss when we pet or brush him. He is loyal, sensitive and full of devotion to his humans. We love him back and don't regret that we took a chance on Lucky Sam.

Note: At the time when the bear attack occurred, we had been living in northwest Colorado for twelve years. Most of that time we'd had chickens free ranging on our property from dawn to dusk and never had problems with bears. During the day the goats pastured behind an electric fence but at night they stayed behind a 5-foot tall wood and metal fence with a shed for them to get out of the elements but no electrical protection. We had never considered bears might be a threat.

Needless to say, we have since added electric wiring around the top of the goat pen with enough charge to knock a human to the ground. We have also added lighting and cut back the brush around the fence. We are especially vigilant in early spring when bears are awakening from hibernation and don't have as many food options.

After the bear incident I warned the goat dairy down the road because I knew their goats stayed in an old barn with some open windows at night. They said they thought they lived far enough away from woods and trees that bears were not a threat. Just yesterday, they found one of their does dead, clearly the result of a predatory attack. Bears are hibernating so it was likely a coyote or even a mountain lion that got into their barn.

When ur pet falls asleep on u and the fear of disturbing them paralyzes u



We have both seemingly learned the hard way that just because you've never had a problem with predators in the past, doesn't mean you won't in the future.

Diane Miller
Colorado

Cromer's Bagot goats enjoying a winter break - but they will be baaaaaaack next year

David Bale, 20 December 18

<https://www.norfolknews.co.uk/news/cromer-s-bagot-goats-enjoying-a-winter-break-1-5827444>

Cromer's Bagot goats are enjoying a change of scenery over the winter after their sterling work this year.



The herd of goats was released back onto Melbourne Hill in May and spent their summer holidays on the cliff face, eating the foliage which overgrows there.

But the nine nannies and three nanny kids are now grazing at Salthouse Heath and 15 billies are at Kelling Heath, both in north Norfolk.

The billies will soon be heading further afield, with Norfolk Wildlife Trust taking them for a winter break near Thetford.

As well as being the stars of thousands of photos, videos and selfies this year, the goats – who first arrived in Cromer in 2016 – have saved North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) and local taxpayers more than £10,000 thanks to their habitat management on the cliff this year.

In the past, the cliff area has become overgrown, leading to a problem with litter becoming embedded and snagged in bushes. The goats graze on rough materials rather than grass, and that helps keep plant growth across the area under control.

Mark Frosdick, an animal control assistant at NNDC, was the brains behind the idea of using the goats to keep the cliff clear of overgrowth and rubbish.

He said: "The goats have been a brilliant success and have carried out a very useful job. They have saved taxpayers thousands of pounds, as well as proving an attraction for visitors.

"The Bagot is a rare breed, so it's great that we are also helping to keep them alive and well."

This year saw the launch of some merchandise to promote the Bagots, with the artwork by Ian Richardson, another member of staff at the council.

More than 1,500 mugs, tea-towels, ceramic fridge magnets, mounted prints, postcards, key rings, bags and coasters have been sold, with the income more than offsetting the cost of vets' bills and feed for the goats.

Mr Richardson said: "Depending on the weather, the Bagots – possibly including some young kids – will be returning to Cromer sometime in the spring or early summer next year."



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From the Training Pen

(The Best of Rex Summerfield)

Bonding with New Kids



Winter snow is slowly disappearing and kidding time is here again for many goat owners across the country. Pack goat breeders hope for a majority of their annual kid crop to be big strong buck kids, which they will sell as prospective packers. Most will be sold after weaning at three to four months of age. Unfortunately there is a lot that needs done with these kids during that initial period. The main one, no doubt, is bonding. A few goats can learn to bond with humans later in life by carefully working to gain their trust but I believe the most reliable way to raise a pack goat is by making sure they are bonded to humans during the first few days of life. Without a doubt the success rate for bonding is much higher at this time, approaching 100%.

So let's say you are new to raising goats or you decided to get your goat early and raise it yourself. What should you do to ensure it becomes bonded to you? Let's start by going back to the basics and get a few tips from the doe's instinctual actions with her new baby. With rare exception a newborn bonds to its mother within a few hours of its birth. Little understood chemical releases in the body trigger the mothering and bonding actions to happen between them from certain types of touches and smells. So what does she do exactly?

First, she is obviously nearby so her smell is very strong to the newborn as soon as it starts breathing. Next she tenderly cleans the newborn by licking it from head to toe, often softly nickering, for lack of a better term. These sights, sounds, feelings and smells are all processed in the newborn goats mind and the bonding process has begun. Before long, the kid will stand on wobbly legs and search its mother for a teat to suckle. If she has begun the bonding process as anticipated she will stand and allow it to find her udder. The warmth and smell of its mother, together with the tasty warm milk, makes being near her a pleasurable experience. Later she continues to clean and care for her baby. She treats it with the utmost kindness and protects it from other goats. She spends many hours with it sleeping and exploring around the pasture. They are so inseparable that often times a newborn

kid has the same standing in a herd hierarchy as its mother, as long as she is there to enforce it. The kid in return begins to depend on its mother for all of its basic needs and the bonding is complete.



If you ever doubted the strength of this bond, try separating a three-week-old kid from its mother. Pandemonium would best describe what happens as each calls to the other and tries to get through the obstacles that separate them. The bond is so strong that they will both continue to cry and fret for days. This is the type of bond we want our pack goats to have with us. That overwhelming desire to be with us and go where ever we go. It is this very quality that makes pack goats such a unique and exceptional pack animal. Think about it, with only a few very rare exceptions horses wouldn't follow us without being led; neither would mules, donkeys or Llamas. Only a dog could be said to follow along and carry a few pounds on the trail, driven forward by nothing more than its desire to be with us.

So how do we, as humans, ensure that we get that same undying devotion from our new little pack goat? That's easy, we simply imitate what works. Following the doe's example you should try to be there when it is born. Make sure your smell is in its nostrils from the minute it touches the ground or at least as soon as possible. Imitate the licking action of the doe by cleaning and drying it with a soft towel. If you plan to bottle raise the baby from the beginning then you should milk some colostrum from the doe and start teaching it how to suck from a bottle within the first hour. Holding it on your lap and cradling the lower jaw and chin is a good way to help keep the kid focused on the bottle and keep the nipple in its mouth until it figures out how it all works. It also comforts the goat with your warmth and aroma during this time, so it better associates your presence with a warm full tummy.



Some Contented Newbies

So far you have established your smell, and linked your touch to comfort and warm milk. Obviously you can't sleep in the barn night after night with the baby so you will

have to devote as much time as you can to being with it. Bottle-feeding provides the best of both worlds when bonding with young kids. First it requires you to go out and spend time with it multiple times per day and it begins to associate your presence with good things. It will begin looking forward to your visits and the bonding will be well underway. It is important to remember that you should not be too concerned with training at this time because corrections may confuse the goat and even make it afraid of you. Be friendly and nurturing to the goat. Lightly bumping it down with your knee when it jumps up on you is acceptable as long as it is done in an easy manner. Remember, the most important thing for the goat to learn at this point is that you are a source of security, not someone to be afraid of. There will be plenty of time for more serious training after this critical step in the bonding process. After the goat is a few days old and is steady on its feet, you can begin to take it out of the barn for short walks.

At first it will be afraid and will stay with you for security. Keep the walks short and interesting and before you know it you will have a junior pack goat following you around the yard.

This basic bond is the foundation you will build on as the goat grows. It is the energy that fuels performance on the trail and the reason they willingly accept your training. Not every goat can be a good pack goat. Establishing this strong bond makes it all possible. Without it you have nothing.



Seven kid goats born in Northern Ireland prison

Belfast Telegraph, February 8 2019

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/entertainment/news/video-seven-kid-goats-born-in-northern-ireland-prison-37796103.html>



Students at Hydebank Wood College this week assisted in the birthing of seven Saanen-crossed pygmy kid goats.

Hydebank Wood College this week welcomed the birth of seven kid goats.

The Saanen-crossed pygmy kids were delivered by two students who have been learning about animal husbandry as part of their rehabilitation.

Goats were introduced to Hydebank Wood College two years ago as part of an animal therapy initiative for students.

Vocational training officer and part-time farmer Ricky Graham has been working with the students, teaching them basic husbandry skills and watched over them during birthing of the kid goats.

Michele McElnea, business development officer at Hydebank Wood College, said: "The therapeutic value of looking after and caring for animals is widely recognized and initiatives like this are helping us to support the young men in our care, challenging them to change, and helping to build a safer community in Northern Ireland.

"We've provided these two young men with an opportunity to develop new skills. They're now working towards a qualification in animal husbandry and keen to pursue careers in this field once they leave the college, which is a very positive example of the work being done by the Northern Ireland Prison Service."

Saanen-crossed pygmy kid goats born at Hydebank Wood College.

Students who have been learning about animal husbandry as part of their rehabilitation, were involved in the birthing of seven kid goats at the college. Goats were introduced to Hydebank two years ago as part of an animal therapy initiative for students.

Picture: Michael Cooper



Video: <https://youtu.be/yHi8uxp044c>



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“CAE PREVENTION PROGRAM” (May be modified by the words “strict, continuous, etc. Assumes a history of testing of does yearly, and pasteurization of all milk products.)

“CAE NEGATIVE TESTED HERD” (Use this only if your does are tested yearly or have tested negative in the current year.)

“GUARANTEED CAE FREE OR RETURN” (This means that you will replace the kid if he is found to be CAE positive at the earliest age of reliable testing, which is considered by WSU to be 12 months. This is the only context in which “CAE free” will be accepted. This does not guarantee a CAE free kid, just replacement.) Remember that you will have a year of work into a kid by the time it is testable.

Any of these choices will more clearly define a herd’s status to buyers and should be welcomed as a step forward in controlling a disease that is potentially crippling to packgoats.

Goat Tracks Advertising Pricing

		Per Issue	Year
Business Card	2x3-1/2 or 3-1/2x2	10.00	30.00
The ‘Square’	3-1/2x3-1/2	15.00	45.00
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1/2 page	3-1/2x9 or 7x4-1/2	35.00	105.00
Full page	7x9	50.00	150.00
Classified, per word, contact info counts as one word		.20	.60



Why Join NAPgA? NAPgA is the only organization that exclusively represents goatpackers, and works tirelessly to open areas for camping and hiking with your goats that are closed right now, or have come under fire for the supposed danger of goats to Bighorn Sheep. The NAPgA governing board holds regular quarterly meetings, which are open to the entire membership (Meetings are conducted via computer and Internet-base meeting software).

Where do Your Dues Go? Since this is an all-volunteer organization, there is very little 'manpower overhead' and so your dues are exclusively used for issues directly connected to goatpacker concerns. As of late, we have spent a lot of money for our legal representation, but that has been well-rewarded in our successes with our fight to keep goatpacking open in the Shoshone and other unfriendly locations. Goat packers, due to our limited time as a recognized pack entity, have our work cut out for us in order to gain recognition as a viable part of the overall 'packer' spectrum. NAPgA is the only means to get that done, and those that are a part of the current BOD are working daily to make that happen.

Please join with us NOW and help us to encourage and develop packgoating nationwide. Dues may be paid with PayPal or with a check to:

Membership Classes:

- Bronze, \$20
- Silver, \$50
- Gold, \$100
- Youth, \$10

By becoming a member, you help NAPgA work to keep the wilderness open to Packgoats

NAPgA Mail Application

Date: _____ Date Received: _____

Member Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ eMail: _____

Brief Description of Packgoat Experience and/or Interest:

Contact: napga.org@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.napga.org>

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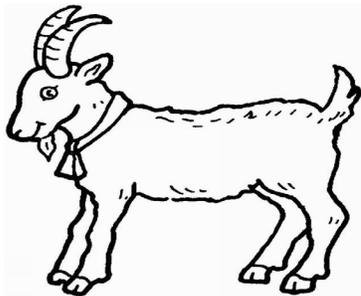
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