

2003 Michigan Fiber Festival

Heather Ludlam, Windswept Farms

August 16th and 17th marked this year's Michigan Fiber Festival. After three days of seminars and workshops for fiber and animal enthusiasts, the weekend began with vendors, demonstrations, and the animal shows and sales. Once again the Shetland sheep were the most numerous of the wool breeds represented, and once again the Shetland sheep show was the largest of the day. We had Shetlands present from all across Michigan and the Midwest, and I continue to be impressed with the quality of the animals that participate in our show.

We were lucky and the Shetland show was first thing Saturday morning. Neil Kentner was the judge for the sheep shows, and did a good job with a very difficult task- evaluating and placing a large group of high quality Shetlands. He had obviously studied the Shetland breed standard and made it his priority while judging. Champion Shetland Ram went to Bernie and Mary Ann Cripe of Greyside Farm, Reserve Champion Shetland Ram went to the Ludlam Family of Windswept Farms, Champion Shetland Ewe went to Bernie and Mary Ann Cripe of Greyside Farm, and Reserve Champion Shetland Ewe went to Ramon & Gayle Nunez-Gross & Family of Sabbath Farm.

After a long, hot Saturday the Shetland breeders gathered at Windswept Farms for what is becoming a traditional yearly party. This year we hosted a pig roast, courtesy of my husband Mike and his underground oven. We were lucky to have John and Lynn McKay of Woolly Acres camping at our farm, along with their sons, and their Border Collies. John gave us an amazing herding demonstration with his young dog Max, who managed to bring my feisty sheep in the barn very neatly with a large audience present. There was lots of hands-on visiting with our sheep, lots of sheep talk, and some wonderful food and fellowship. Our Shetland sheep breeders are a pretty special group of people, and although we only see each other a few times a year, we feel like a group of old friends.

Sunday we were able to kick back, relax, and enjoy the Fiber Festival. We spent most of the day visiting with friends and shopping amongst the vendors. Once again on Sunday afternoon we had to say goodbye to our sheep friends and pack up for home. Thank you to all of the Shetland breeders who traveled such a long way to attend our Festival. We hope to see all of you back next year, and we hope to see many new faces as well!



Bernie Cripe of Greyside Farm, Rachel Lassiter of Windswept Farms, and Gayle Nunez-Gross of Sabbath Farm showing for Champion and Reserve Champion Shetland Ewe



Heather Ludlam of Windswept Farms showing Yearling Ram Abraham Lincoln, while the rest of the Windswept Farms flock waits in the wings.



Rachel Lassiter and Sammy Ludlam of Windswept Farms and Larry Hopkins of Little Eagle Creek Valley Farm showing Ewe Lambs