

NASSA AGM 2006

By Gail Former, Underhill Farm, Spencer, IN

Once again a successful AGM has come and gone, providing an excellent range of educational sessions, good fellowship, fine food, and the opportunity to see many Shetlands from several farms all in one place. The 2006 Annual General Meeting was held in conjunction with the 150th Anniversary of the Indiana State Fair on Tuesday, August 15th, with associated events on Monday and Wednesday.

Monday evening the Indiana Shetland Sheep Breeders hosted a potluck supper in the sheep barn, providing everyone an opportunity to mingle and socialize. On Tuesday, the educational sessions began with Dr. D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD presenting a session on sheep genetics, with an emphasis on color.

After the lunch break, Theresa Gygi presented results from the study of 80 of the more than 400 fleece samples she has received, with photos taken through her microscope. At the end of her session, there was an opportunity to look at the actual samples that she had collected and assembled into reference albums.

The educational sessions ended with a presentation on the Federal scrapie eradication program and the Premises Identification System by Dr. Cheryl Miller, DVM, from the Indiana Board of Animal Health. Dr. Miller is responsible for overseeing the voluntary scrapie program and mandatory plan in Indiana. At the end of Dr. Miller's presentation, a question and answer session was held, with questions fielded by Dr. Miller and Dr. Garry Weybright, DVM, the USDA/APHIS vet in charge of the pro-grams in Indiana.

Items donated to the AGM were on display during the day, with a silent auction on a select group of the items that concluded after the last session. Bidding was lively, and the funds raised were used to help offset the cost of presenting the AGM. Folks then tramped back across the street to the Fairgrounds for some "sheep immersion therapy" while waiting for the banquet.

The banquet was a success, with tasty lamb kebobs for the adults and pizza for the youth. The tables were decorated with two clever "shepherdess" dolls made from wooden spoons, each with her own flock of "sheep". There was much speculation as to what was going to happen to the centerpieces at the end of the banquet, with two lucky people at each table taking them home. Door prize stickers were placed under randomly selected chairs and door prizes awarded.

Dr. Sponenberg was our dinner speaker, with some prize anecdotes about his adventures with rare breed livestock. (Ask him sometime about wild pigs.) The banquet ended with the Annual General Meeting called to order by President Shannon Fletcher. Attending committee chairs presented an overview of the accomplishments of their committees throughout the past year. A certificate of appreciation was presented to Sandy Powers, our newsletter editor, for her efforts beyond her job description.

Wednesday was the sheep show. Imagine everyone's surprise when we realized that we had 150 animals showing for the 150th anniversary of the fair. Neil Kentner from Michigan was our judge, and did a heroic job judging the large classes in just four and a half hours.

At the conclusion of the show, a Judges Workshop was held, featuring George Harrell, Shannon Fletcher, and Heather Ludlam.

Thanks must be extended to all those who worked so hard to make this another successful AGM: Kathy Berghoff for doing the lion's share of the actual organizing; Theresa Gygi for her hard work on the AGM while doing her excellent fleece study; Mary Ann Cripe, with the able assistance of Stephanie, Ashley, Abigail, and Samantha Spraker who made the delightful centerpieces; all the generous folks who donated or bid on items to benefit the AGM; ISSBA members; and last but not least, Larry and Angie Hopkins who generously designed and donated the souvenir bags.

It was exciting to meet so many folks from across North America, and put faces to names. For those of you who were not able to come to the 2006 AGM, plan to attend one in the future. The 2007 AGM will be presented in conjunction with the All American Junior Sheep Show next July at Michigan State University. The 2008 AGM will be presented in conjunction with the Wisconsin Sheep and Wool Festival in Jefferson, Wisconsin in September of 2008. Hosts are still needed for the 2009 and 2010 AGMs. The 2011 AGM will be hosted by the Northeastern Shetland group in honor of the 25th anniversary of the arrival of Shetlands in the United States.

[AGM 2006 THANK-YOUS!](#)