

Recently someone told me to be careful joining this organization because it could hurt my reputation! I cannot believe someone's reputation would be compromised by joining an organization that wants to promote and better the llama community. I feel multi-association affiliation will only strengthen the llama industry by providing additional information, value and another avenue to showcase our breeding programs. That is why we belong to so many associations and not just a single association. With this comment being made I have done some research and have come to my own conclusion regarding these ill feelings.

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have integrity if you remark and or criticize the current issues that plague the llama industry. Remember, not only did CLI point out these issues, it gave possible solutions. I do not see this as trying to tear an organization down; this is called constructive criticism – some people just call it criticism. I believe the response to this criticism is one of the reasons CLI was founded (We Tell It Like It is). It may hurt, sting or just down right suck, but at least we know what we are facing when everyone acknowledges the problems and tries to solve them (mind you not everyone agrees, but majority rules). It does none of us any good to bury our heads in the sand. By golly we are llama folks and we can orge, spit and scream, but let's take care of the issues and move on so our associations are the best they can be.



Constructive Criticism vs Criticism

people even plan their shows around who is judging the show! This is absolute craziness. It shouldn't matter who the judge is; all animals should get a fair shake.

There are many people in MY opinion who do not possess the skills needed to be competent judges. The reason I say this is they pick animals with very apparent flaws (according to the standing ALSA rules) that should not even be shown or for that matter bred. They even pick animals because of personal preference instead of the rules.

I have seen many occasions in which the animal that is clearly the best in the class get passed up for whatever the reason (most often than not the wrong reasons or no stated reason).

Many people are uncomfortable with addressing subjects like these because they feel they are looked at as trouble makers. Granted, there are trouble makers out there, but I think for the good of the industry we need to address the judging issues along

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with several other rules and standards presently enforced by ALSA. I will give a specific case and point to show this is a valid fact and not my opinion.

Case and Point

This happened one year at the State Fair of Texas/Texas Two Step Show, a double point show with two independent judges. Two men who show mini donkeys were watching the llama halter events and I heard them say "Man, those two judges must be judging two different things here." Obviously confused, they asked me if I was showing in the llama events and I told them, "Yes I am." They then proceeded to ask if the judges were judging the same things or was it a different competition for each judge. I said, "No they are supposed to be judging the same things." Then one man said, "Then how can an animal that just placed 1st by one judge be placed 6th by the other judge?" I just said I did not have an answer for them. After my statement they said (this is an UNbiased opinion from someone outside the llama industry), "There are big problems with that judging system."

- An apprentice should be required to judge more shows under the direct supervision of a level III judge instead of just watching and writing a report. Actual experience is of much more value.
- Peer Review, Peer Review, and Peer Review is needed for all judges with an annual review of each judge's performance.
- All of this should not fall on the members of the board or committees. ALSA is a member driven organization, so in my opinion all people associated with the association should be surveyed. In addition, show superintendents MUST fill out the judge evaluation forms and not be penalized for being honest about a judge's performance or lack thereof.

The items listed above are my opinions gathered from being a showsuperintendent, attending many shows, reading and thinking. As I stated in the beginning of this rant, I cannot believe one's affiliation with any llama group would/should hurt their reputation. My reputation is built on integrity, honesty, trust, friendship and sportsmanship. If others think that by joining any organization I would lose who I am, then they do not know me very well.

When I began showing llamas, never in my life did I realize the journey it would take me on or the opportunities it presented by the way of meeting such great people and friends. If my reputation is hurt because I want to help get the quality and prices of our precious animals up, so be it. I guess I will be a socially deprived llama person, but at least I will be doing something.

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In closing, I hope that everyone will keep an open mind to all issues brought forth by all people in the industry. Remember, everyone is different and different associations