

# MINI-GOAT NOTES

## Miniature Dairy Goat Association Newsletter

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### Tattoo Letter for 2019

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### Members (as of Dec 20 , 2018) 806

MDGA Numbers

### Registrations as of Dec 20:

*breed total numbers (of that number)*  
Mini Alpine 1119 (59 are Grade)  
Mini LaMancha 4597 (236 are Grade)  
Nigerian 555  
Mini Nubian 9606 (427 are Grade)  
Mini Oberhasli 468 (17 are Grade)  
Mini Guernsey 19  
Mini Saanen/Sable 212 (37 are Grade)  
Mini Toggenburg 140 (5 are Grade)

### News about the Newsletter

Dear Members,

Mini-Goat Notes is going to get a face-lift over the winter! We anticipate 6 issues in 2019, and look to include more show coverage, success stories from members and articles that will help breeders and members overall. If you have an event, recap of a show, or idea for an article, please email [newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net](mailto:newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net).

Something under consideration for future Newsletters, is a Directory for people to feature their farms and businesses. If there is enough interest, this would be expanded to solicit service providers, equipment, etc.

The proposed Directory would cost \$5 per issue or \$20 for the year. Listings would be by State and in alphabetical order. This will not replace, or affect, your membership-included directory listing online. An example of what a listing might look like is on the last page of this issue.

If this is something you would be interested in, I need to know by January 20 to set up the forms, etc. Please send email to [newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net](mailto:newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net), include directory in subject line and type yes or no. If there is enough interest, the form will be posted in the first 2019 issue - and everyone will get 1 free listing in the fall "breeding" issue!

### Reminders

Have you renewed your membership for 2019? Renewals are due annually on January 1 of the membership year. Expired memberships are removed from the website directory

New members who joined after 10/1/2018 have their membership carried through 12/31/2019

## **Kidding is Serious Work - Part 2**

### Breeding to Criteria: Should Color or Generation be the Ruler?

*by Jill Hoenmans*

In Part 1, featured in the October issue, I shared the importance of investing in a quality buck that will compliment your does. Part 2 is a discussion of criteria and their importance in your breeding plan and line up.

“I want the ‘unicorn’ - F6 (purebred,) polled, blue eyes and spotted.” “Oh, and milk.” This is a common request I get - yes, I have polled, blue eyes and spots in my genetics, however, I neither breed nor retain animals with those characteristics, unless they are structurally correct, and able to milk to my requirements.

The “unicorn” is different things to different people, but, when laying out your breeding plans, and looking at adding animals and lines, selecting for generation, polled, eye color or coat marking as your primary criteria may not be in your, long-term, best interest.

#### **Generations**

Generations come with time, that is inevitable. Basing breeding choices solely on seeking to gain the next level of generation is a bit like taking the fast lane on a scenic drive. You may miss out on the best part of the journey - getting everything you want in one package. Many seasoned breeders are opting to start with creating new lines and F1/F2 kids add genetics to, what can be, a tightly related community. Breeding for structural correctness, udder attachment, teat placement and length, milk production and other desirable traits, ex: breed character, means establishing a solid foundation upon which to build your generations, eventually leading you to purebred status.

#### **Colors**

Everyone has a preferred “package,” and the dairy goat is no exception. Frosted? Solid? Spots? Black? Brown? In some breeds, the options are limitless. Those breeds that have certain color requirements makes this decision a bit easier. However, for the breeds where color is limitless, often breeders, and buyers, put the color before the conformation or milking ability. Color is a bit like the frosting on the cake - if you are allergic to chocolate, putting vanilla frosting on a chocolate cake doesn’t make the cake right for you. Breeding for the basics, and having those genetics well established, and, if your market/demand means breeding for spots, solids, etc., don’t make that your primary selection criteria - rather, breeding for everything else, just like with generations, and add new genetics, that are at least as correct and well established, that carry the possibility of getting the color combinations you would like. Your other option, is to educate your buyers on the fact that color can show up randomly - example, I bred a brown doe to a brown buck - of the 4 kids born, 1 was light brown, 1 was dark brown, 1 was solid black with frosted ears and nose and 1 was black and white (this doe throws spots, both brown/gold and black/white.) While it may, initially, be

easier to sell colorful kids, having a structurally correct animal, with high, consistent milk production and longevity, is usually an unbeatable combination.

### **Polled/Blue Eyes**

Face it, most of us hate disbudding, and having polled kids is both physically and emotionally welcome. Again, selecting an animal solely because they are polled, risks adding undesirable genetic material to your program. Unless all else is perfect, polled shouldn't factor into the decision. Same with blue eyes. Breeders/buyers either love them or aren't at all interested. Eye color is decoration, not a trait that is measurable in terms of how the animal will hold up over time, milk, etc.

We all have our "ideal;" and being able to work toward that makes breeding dairy goats so interesting, challenging and full of options. If you stay focused on what your future herd looks like, taking the time to enjoy the journey, and select to measurable, repeatable criteria, will get you there.

## **Mini Milkers 2018 Fall Frolic Goat Show "First MDGA show in TX in 15 years"**

*by Margo Begy, HCMM "Fall Frolic" Show Chairperson  
November 3, 2018, Decatur TX Fairgrounds*

The Hill Country Mini Milkers first live show is in the history books! It was a LOT of work, and tensions ran high as the time for our show approached. Our goal was to have a successful, sanctioned show; and to learn. We wanted to learn about goats, and learn about showing. We accomplished all these things, and are moving forward, with all of the positive energy we got from our history-making participants, toward our next show, planned for summer 2019.

When Kerry O'Neal, Karen Orth and I arrived at the Wise County Fairgrounds, the day before our show, we attended a showmanship clinic, which was great for us since none of us had shown before! It was very informative, with a demonstration on how to prepare a goat for show, and how one should dress, and comport oneself, while showing. For example, we learned the "goat handling twirl" that you do in front of your goat to keep her between you and the judge!

The next morning, we arrived in our "show whites" at the fairgrounds early, to check in our participants' goats, and get everything set up for the show. There were only three classes, as we wanted to keep things simple for our first show. We had Senior Mini Nubian Does, 12 entries, Junior Mini Nubian Does, 10 entries, and Junior AOM (All Other Minis,) with 3 entries. Our show commenced on time at 9:00 am, and was over by about 11:30 am.

Our Judge, Yvonne Blosser, could not have been more gracious and understanding. She was very generous with her time, and answered many questions from the participants about what various descriptions of dairy goat conformation meant. For instance, she showed us the difference between flat bones and rounded bones by having us run our hands over different goats' ribs. She showed us what a "sharp withers" looks like, and what "dairy skin" feels like.



Rafter O June Bug - Best in show

Winning line-up follows:

**Best-in-Show, Senior:** Rafter O June Bug, Owned by Kerry O'Neal

**Best-in-Show, Junior:** Rusty Star Ranch Jasmine, Owned by Kellie Jones Parker

**Best Udder-in-Show:** Rafter O June Bug, Owned by Kerry O'Neal

**Senior Mini Nubian GCH:** Rafter O June Bug, Owned by Kerry O'Neal

**Senior Mini Nubian RCH:** Kickin' K Ranch Ginger Snap, Owned by Kellie Jones Parker

**AOM Junior GCH:** J&W Myers Farms Athena, Owned by Karen Orth

**AOM Junior RCH:** Loma Verde Holly, Owned by Anna Wendt

**Junior Mini Nubian GCH:** Rusty Star Ranch Jasmine, Owned by Kellie Jones Parker

**Junior Mini Nubian RCH:** Screaming Goat Farm Zaina, Owned by Margo Begy

We concluded our show with raffle drawings for the gift baskets that we had assembled and donated on behalf of the club. The "Goat Care" basket, was won by Megan Menard, the "Kid Care" basket, was won by Cassandra Baldovinos, the "Personal Care" basket, donated by Katie Youmans, of Udderly Precious Soaps, was won by Alison Stubing, and the Milking basket, went to Kellie Parker. Alison Stubing and Kellie Parker also won the gift certificates from the Goat Journal and UBRL. Congratulations to all!

In conclusion, a good time was had by all, with lots of opportunities to "talk goats" with fellow enthusiasts, and learn more about goat-showing and goat conformation. Several young participants and observers have been "bitten by the show bug," and now want to show in the future! We also got some good ideas for making our next show an even bigger success.

A special shout-out goes to our show committee Secretary Kerry O'Neal, and Show Steward Karen Orth, without whom this club and show would not have been possible. You both made a difficult task a rewarding and enjoyable experience. Thank you both so much.

**Want everyone to read about your show in the newsletter?  
Want them to know about an upcoming event? Send me an  
email [newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net](mailto:newsletter@miniaturedairygoats.net) Send pictures if  
you have them! Pictures should include the names of people  
and animals, location and information relevant.**

## Directory (if members are interested)

Want to promote your farm, breeding program, get visibility?

MDGA is considering offering a directory in the newsletter, Mini Goat Notes, but we need to know if members are interested! \$5/issue or \$20/year (6 issues/year)

If the directory moves forward, we will contact suppliers across the country offering them space to showcase what they have to offer the Mini Dairy Goat community.

Here is an example of what a listing will look like:

### Alabama

#### **My Goat Farm**

Town, AL 12345

555-555-1234

[website](#)

(blurb about what you want people to know

65 character max)

