



Northern Colorado's Premier Artisan Fiber Mill and Boutique

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## MARCH 2018 Newsletter

*Notes from Rhonda...*

**Top O The Mornin' To Ya!** March might be the snowiest month, but it sure feels like spring! Time to start thinking about scheduling your shearing for the 2018 harvest. I have a few people that can help you with your shearing needs. Raymond Brekel shears sheep. He will be in our neighborhood on April 5<sup>th</sup> if some of you need the early spring shear for those sheep. Please give us a call if you need him or other shearers to help get you scheduled. We offer some tips in this newsletter to help your shearing experience be as productive and easy as possible. Be sure to review these tips and see if they work for you. Remember we offer shearing in our arena and skirting instruction while you are here.

Our website reconstruction will be finished this month! Thank you for your patience! Finding our pricing and services will be much easier and I know I looked good as a guy with a beard but I really must show you what I look like shaved! 😊

This month I am not offering a class, but I am offering a Saturday in which you can call or come in with skirting questions, project ideas or questions, plus have some shopping fun, take a tour and see demonstrations of tools that we have to offer! Mark your calendar for March 24<sup>th</sup> 9am-3pm and call the mill if you have questions!

What is RECOMBING? We offer this service to our customers who like to dye their roving or who have stored their roving and now it is "squished" or "slightly felted". We can take that roving (still has to be in roving form) and run it through our drafter and reorganize the fibers so they will fluff up and give the roving new life! We do require a "bleed test" if it is dyed fiber as dye can contaminate the machine. The cost for recombining is \$25/hr

**Luck has come your way!** We have recently lowered our outgoing price on rug yarn! Rug yarn is a great use for those nice seconds and neck and leg fibers. It makes a large core yarn that can be made into nice woven, knitted and crocheted rugs! Needle felted sheets are another great product for those multiple staple lengths and nice neck and legs fibers. These sheets can then be made by you into many items like rugs, clothing, hats, table runners, and much more. With these helpful ideas on what you can have your fleeces processed into we hope that you will MARCH on with your nice seconds!

Please take a look at the information provided in this newsletter on the CSU Camelid Castration clinic. This is a great chance for alpaca owners to get a good price on castrating males and it's a good opportunity for the students to learn these procedures.

Tours of the mill have become very popular and we are very excited to share this wonderful process with everyone! Tours can be scheduled for Wednesdays and Saturdays depending on our schedule. Please call the mill for availability.

Have a great month,

Rhonda 



## **SHOWS, SHOWS and MORE SHOWS! And CHECKING IN FIBER!**

The Fleece Factory attends alpaca shows a little differently than at fiber events. We will be visiting your booths/stalls individually instead of purchasing our own vendor booth. We know shows can be a crazy time for you to run by and talk to us about your fiber so we will stop by your booth instead. This way we can pick up your fiber or drop off an order at your convenience. There are certain fiber shows where we will have a booth that will showcase what we do here at the mill, but mostly we will just have representatives at shows for your check-in and drop off needs. We look forward to visiting with all of you! As always you can still swing by the mill to drop off fleeces! Call the mill at (970) 284-7711

MAY 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> GWAS ( Great Western Alpaca Show) National Western Stock Show Complex, May 4<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup>

We will have a presence at this show on Friday May 4<sup>th</sup>. Call us to schedule a stall appointment!

June 9<sup>th</sup>- 10<sup>th</sup> Estes Park Wool Market- <http://www.estesparkeventscomplex.com> Come Visit us at our booth!



LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE! See great tips, and events! *The Fleece Factory Of The Rockies LLC*



**New BULKY SINGLES!** We are getting nice reviews of our new bulky single yarn. These coreless singles have a handspun characteristic! The fiber that is best for this yarn is any staple length from 2”-6” of your nice fiber. This service is \$30.00/lb outgoing weight price. Call if you have questions!



**HAT SHAPERS** are now available at the Fleece Factory! Stop by and see all the new hat forms that you can purchase and make your own hats! We have 12 styles to choose from. You can also try out our wet felting class where we use these wonderful hat forms!



HAND MADE PEG LOOMS specially designed for rug yarn are available in 24", 36" and 72" (collapsible). The 72" is available by special order only! Order yours today!

Not sure how to use this loom? Check out our Peg Loom class!

\*\*\* NEW\*\*\* Our peg looms are now available with SMALL pegs for regular yarn use on the looms!



WE ARE YOUR LOCAL LOUET RETAILER! Now you can get LOUET fiber processing equipment and parts from The Fleece Factory!

Introducing the new Erica Loom! Click below to find out more about the new weaving loom offered from Louet.

<https://www.louet.com/>

<https://www.louet.com/erica>

## CSU Camelid Castration

My name is Joel Foote and I am coordinating the Colorado State University Veterinary Teaching School camelid castration clinic in March. Dates have not been set yet and CSU needs at least 20 animals to hold the clinic - to date we have 15. CSU can do 35/day and if there are more than 35, a second day can be added. This is a once-a-year clinic so please help to spread the word.

The clinic is open to all alpaca and llama owners (no limit on the number of animals per 'customer') on a first-come, first-served basis. The cost is \$45.00 for alpacas and \$55 for llamas and includes nail and teeth trimming.

Gelding candidates must be in good health, halter-broke, reasonably well-behaved, and at least 18 months old. Both testicles must be descended into the scrotum so even though the animal is 18 months, if the testicles are not descended they cannot participate. Because this is a production clinic, genitourinary anomalies cannot be accommodated. NO exceptions. Please check your boys!

The animals will be anesthetized so please keep them off food for 12 hours before the appointment. An appointment schedule will be sent the week before the clinic. A reminder will be sent in February,

Please contact me if you have any questions. My email is [fuzzyfarm@earthlink.net](mailto:fuzzyfarm@earthlink.net), my cell phone is 303-748-2308, and the house phone is 303-465-1576. Please include the number of animals, their age, and your contact information (address, telephone, email, etc.)

Thank you,

Joel

**Colorado  
State  
University**

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# CLASSES

**March 24<sup>th</sup>: Open house for shopping, tours, and demonstrations.**



**“THE BEST CLASS” - FREE SKIRTING CLASS** We are continuing our popular free skirting class for anyone wanting to learn more about this process and about fiber! We hold this class on the **LAST THURSDAY** of the month at 6:00pm here at the Mill. You **MUST** give us a call to put you on the list as there is limited room! Please bring a fleece (blanket and seconds). This is a very informative class and you can take this class as often as you would like until you get the hang of it. The more you know about your fiber the better. **YOU MUST RESERVE YOUR SPACE!**

**CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS-** The following classes are available by reserving your space with a \$20 non-refundable deposit (except the Skirting Class). Please call The Fleece Factory at (970) 284-7711 for all reservations and questions. Classes may also be listed on our Facebook Page, but this will not count as reserving your space in the class. Please use this as a helpful way to remind yourself of the class and share with your friends!



**NEEDLE FELTING** Learn basic techniques and discover simple ways to create and decorate with needle felting. All materials and tools are included for the class. Please note that you will be working with a sharp needle and caution is advised. Cost is \$45/person. 9am-12 approx. Reserve your space for this fun class. (970) 284-7711



**DYEING** This is a basic acid dye class. You will be taught basic pot dyeing and handpainting yarn. Tools and dye are provided. Please bring 2 skeins of a protein based fiber (wool, alpaca, etc) for dyeing. Yarn is available for purchase at the mill. Cost is \$50/person. 9am-1pm approximately. Please wear clothing that you do not mind staining.



**NEW PEG LOOM WEAVING WITH RUG YARN!** This is a wonderful weaving class that uses a very simple way to weave. You will learn how to load your loom and do a simple weave. Tools for the class are provided. Please bring enough filler yarn; bulky yarn or rug yarn, plus a warp yarn for a small rug or place mat size. Rug yarn, warp yarn and looms are available for purchase at the mill. Cost is \$45/person. 9am-12 approx



**HAT WET FELTING** – Create your own fashion! Wet felt your own hat! This class teaches you how protein fibers felt and lock using water!

**NEW! WET FELT A BOWL** – This new class allows you to wet felt a bowl shape. This class teaches you how protein fibers felt and lock using water!

All materials are provided except a towel for you to take your project home on. Cost is \$75/person. 9am- 3pm approx.. Hat forms are now available for purchase. Must reserve your space in the class by calling the mill (970) 284-7711.





**TRADITIONAL RUG HOOKING** - In the Traditional Rug hooking class we will be teaching very basic rug hooking techniques; loading the frame and basic punching. Please bring two skeins of yarn (different colors) or you may purchase yarn at the mill. Cost for the rug hooking class is \$85/ person which includes the punch tool, frame and cloth.



**RAKE LOOM KNITTING** This rake loom knitting class teaches a basic pattern for a hat or scarf. Rake looms are provided for use during the class. Great class for youngsters! Please bring a skein of yarn. Yarn is available for purchase. Class is from 9-12pm Cost is \$45/person Reserve your space in the class by calling the mill (970) 284-7711

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## **SHEARING TIPS:**

Making good decisions about all aspects of shearing can reduce stress, yield more profit with your harvest and reduce the cost of doing business! In the next few newsletters, I will share some tips to help you have a successful harvest.

First and foremost, be sure your shearer fits your needs. You want to work as a team. We are assuming that your shearer is experienced with the equipment and animals, and that the tools (such as the shears and ropes) are kept in good working condition. The shearer (and you) should also have the supplies (like medical) needed in case of a situation with the animal. Does your shearer need or have the knowledge of how to shear for a show fleece? Will your shearer need helpers or are they bringing the help they need? Will your shearer need to handle an older animal or unruly animal? Does your shearer have insurance?

Once your basic requirements are met, then you can look at the logistics of the actual shearing. If you require time to weigh, vaccinate, take accurate records, photograph, and inspect your animals yourself, be sure the shearer take the time to let you do these things. Brush, vacuum or blow the vegetation off the animal BEFORE you shear them. This saves you time and money trying to get out pesky vegetation from the fleece in the skirting process. Contamination of fleeces (mixing of fibers) due to the work area not being cleaned after each animal can result in a loss of the fleece or a change in its use (usually a lesser quality product), so be sure that they take the time to clean after each animal. Ask if your shearer knows how to noodle fleeces. This is a process in which the blanket is kept in its original shape as it comes off the animal, onto a plastic or fabric sheet and then rolled or folded to avoid the touching of fiber. This allows the fleece to stay in one piece. Noodling is essential if you are going to use the fleece as a show fleece OR if you would like to save yourself time and headaches when SKIRTING. Noodling also allows for a wet or sweaty fleece to be taken aside and dried before being rolled up and bagged. NEVER bag wet fleeces! They will become moldy and exacerbate the deterioration process. A good shearer will let you know if your animal has any kind of visible infestation such as lice or mites. Detection of these pests will allow you to get the animal treated so you can protect your harvest and the welfare of the animal.

These are a few tips that will help you with shearing. I am sure that there are more things that you might do depending on your needs are but no matter what, the shearer and you need to be a team! Take the time to visit with your shearer. Be sure that they know what your needs are and that you know what the shearer can and cannot do for you. Communication is key.

## **HAPPY SHEARING!**

## MILL TOURS AND FARM TOURS



We are very happy to give tours! Appointments are the best way to arrange your tour!  
We can take large or small groups, young or old!

Tours can be scheduled for Wednesdays and Saturdays depending on our schedule.  
Please call the mill for availability.

Platte Valley Middle School FFA students visiting The Fleece Factory.

HOW MUCH IS IN QUEUE AND WHAT IS THE TIMELINE? We often get these two questions at the mill. There is never a definitive answer to these because it is so fluid, but we can usually give you a guestimate! Here's how we make an educated guess: 1- How much poundage have you checked in and how much poundage is in front of your order? 2- What is each bag of your fleece going to be processed into and what is each bag in front of you going to be processed into? 3- What is in the mill being processed at this time and what is its time frame? 4- Maintenance and the unexpected? So when we look at you with a hesitant blank look it is not that we don't know the answer to these questions, it's just a lot to think about when trying to estimate! Thanks for your understanding!

**WE ARE CURRENTLY PROCESSING JUNE and JULY ORDERS.**

Our INFORMATION BOARD: Anyone can post information for alpaca sales, services that help other customers, and any other information we approve! Email us if you want anything posted!

As always, if there are any questions, please call us or email us and we will get back to you as soon as we can!

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