



A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

by Frieda Goodrich

Couturiere's first cria arrived last Fall. What a huggable little girl. She was picture perfect. Aren't all crias? I thought we might name her after a flower and proceeded to go through the list – pansy, daisy, daffodil, tulip, aster. It was endless. None of them seemed to fit. She was just so delicate and beautiful. Then it came to me, Rosebud. Perfect!

I am often asked how we come up with so many different names. It may be as simple as choosing a name for crias that start with a certain letter of the alphabet for each year. This way it's always known the year the alpacas were born.



When visiting alpaca farms at the beginning of our alpaca adventure, I was amazed how owners could identify their individual alpacas, even those my novice eye saw as identical. Then when

I heard that they all had names I was duly impressed.

Our initial herd of two alpacas – Melissa, a pregnant brown female, and Jewel, a juvenile gray female, were eas-

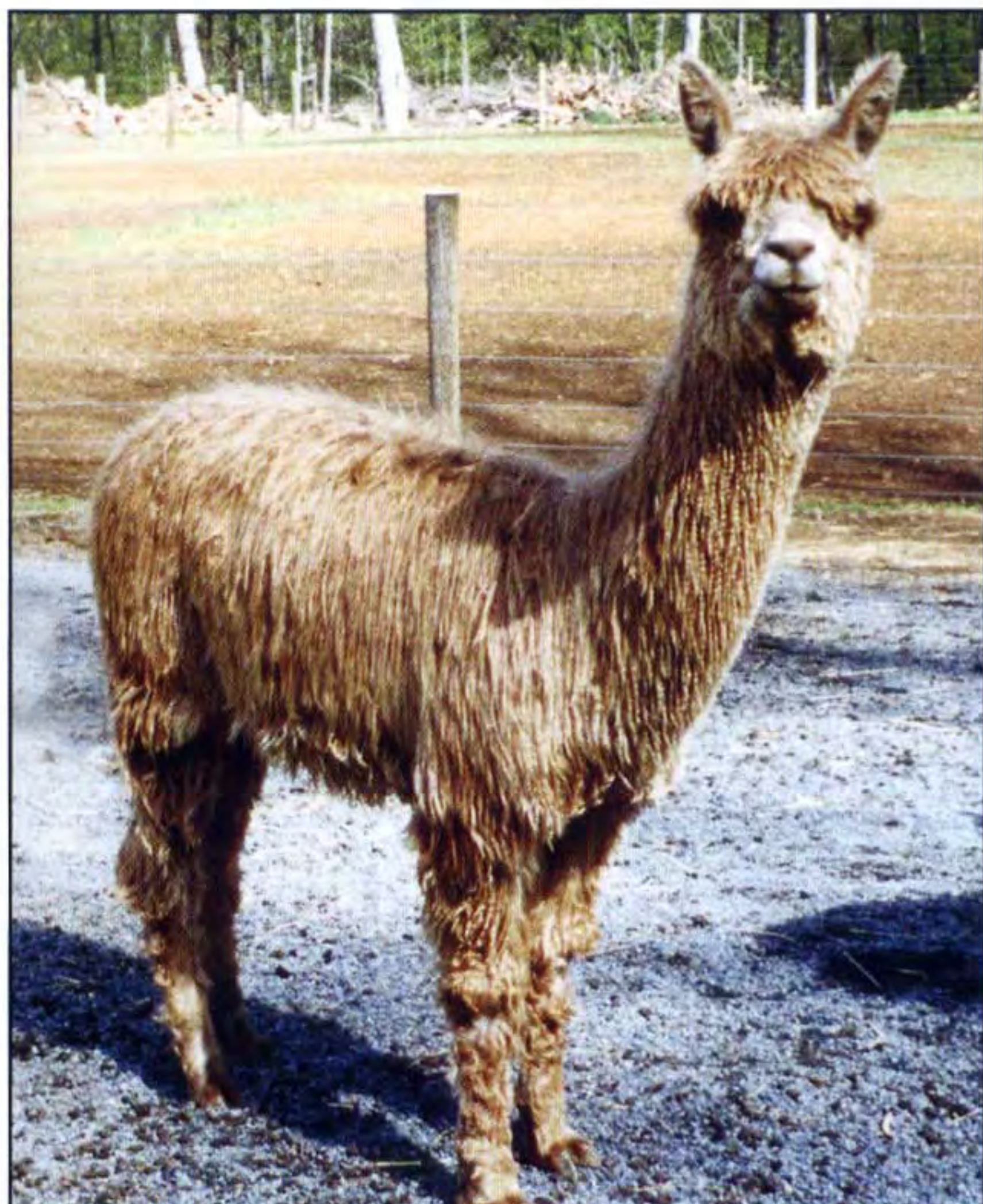
ily identified. As our herd grew, we became acquainted with each animal's personality. Now our farm visitors are amazed that we can identify each alpaca and that they all have names.

I am often asked how we come up with so many different names. Some breeders choose themes. It may be as simple as choosing a name for crias that start with a certain letter of the alphabet for each year. This way they always know the year their alpacas were born. Other themes may be countries, favorite characters, actors, holidays, or even cocktails. The theme may also vary from year to year.

When our first cria arrived, our sons wished to do a theme and decided on Greek gods. They named our first girl Athena. The following year when Melissa had her next cria, it was late afternoon, and the goddess of dusk, Hespera, seemed very appropriate.

Our Greek theme faded a bit as we named Faliche's boy after his coloring, Chestnut. Since then, we have continued to choose names that match each individual cria. The names and stories behind them are countless.

Pilchera's cria reminded me of a but-



Facing page: Copperfield (left), named after David Copperfield as he would sneak around stealing milk from all the moms; and Cassie, named after Hop-Along-Cassidy because of the way she hopped and jumped around the pasture. Inset: Snuggles, whose fiber reminded the author's children of the fabric softener bear advertised on television.

Left: Memiki, which is native American for "Butterfly." Above: Julia. After birth, Julie went for the hay bucket even before going to her mom, so naturally she had to be named after someone who loves food, so we chose Julia Child!

terfly, flitting from one place to another. Since her father was Lakota, she was named Memiki, which is Native American for butterfly. Our little girl, Cassie, was named after Hop-Along-Cassidy. Why? Because I have never seen a cria hop and jump as much as she did.

Then there is young Julia. She was less than an hour old when she went into the hay bucket – even before going to her mom. I thought she should be named after a chef, a female chef of course. Who else but Julia Child. Julia still loves her food!

Our inquisitive suri, who was always busy investigating, is named Sherlock. Then there is Tarzan, who acts like the king of the jungle. Recently, we had a young male who continued to race in circles. As I watched him, I envisioned a black racehorse. Try as I might, I could not come up with the name of a black racehorse. Then one day as I watched him, I thought of Zorro. Then it came to me – Zorro's horse – Tornado. It fit him to a 'T' because he actually looked like a little tornado as he raced in a circle. Believe it or not, as soon as I decided on his name, the racing stopped!

We also have a young male suri nicknamed Copper. We gave him this name when he was born because of his fleece color. However, we have since given him the formal name of Copperfield, after David Copperfield. It seems his mother did not have enough milk to satisfy his appetite, so he could be found sneaking under other moms

while their crias were nursing and stealing whatever he could before they found him out.

When Athena's little boy arrived late this spring, the Greek theme was again called into action. As I watched him, I noticed that he really enjoyed playing in the water. I began to investigate the Greek gods of water. I was having a problem coming up with a suitable name and then I saw it. Danaus. Not only was he the grandson of Poseidon, but he was also the father of fifty daughters! Since our cria population at that point was mostly boys, I thought this might improve the odds for the future. If only it were that easy!

Naming Rights

Our sons feel they have the winning name. While my husband, Daryl, and I were away at a show, Natalie had her first cria at 10 o'clock at night. She was a beautiful white cria. When the boys called to tell us of her arrival, they also mentioned the name they had chosen, Snuggles. She was so fluffy when they dried her off. All they could think of was the Snuggles fabric softener bear. My husband felt the name was inappropriate; people would think of the fabric softener. But how do you argue with two boys who were up around the clock calming a nervous first-time mom? Snuggles continues to "grow" into her name, as she is becoming more and more fluffy with each passing day!

Daryl and I gave our effort to top their name when Melissa had her most

recent girl. She was such a lovely shade of brown. We instantly thought of chocolate and Hershey's Kisses. At two months of age, Hershey is one of our sweetest crias.

What's In a Name

Our latest addition is a cute black girl who arrived two weeks early on Christmas Eve. Holiday company offered many suggestions for her name like Noel, Eve, Carol, and Angel. Then, Daryl's aunt suggested Early Black. We thought for a minute and then decided, yes Early Black she is. You may think this name has to do with the fact that she was born early and is black, but that is just a side note. Daryl's family was in the cranberry business for many years and 'Early Black' is a variety of cranberry!

The next time you visit a farm you might just ask the owners how they came up with some of their names. I am sure it will lead to many enjoyable stories.

Happy naming!

Frieda Goodrich, along with her husband and three sons, owns and operates Angel Wood Alpaca Farm, LLC, in northwestern New Jersey. Her favorite activity is training crias. In her spare time, Frieda spins, knits, and crochets and is looking forward to weaving on her newly acquired loom. She can be reached at (908) 852-7204 or on the web at www.angelwoodalpacas.com.