

MAFA Grants Program Final Report  
Morgantown Fiber Guild  
West Virginia Fiber Festival 2014

The Fifth West Virginia Fiber Festival was held at the West Virginia University's Reedsville Farm Arena on September 6 & 7, 2014 in Reedsville, West Virginia.

Over 1300 members of the public attended the festival. A list of attendees was developed for future direct announcements for the 2015 West Virginia Fiber Festival scheduled for September 12-13, 2015. Attendees were from the states of West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio.

There were 28 vendors and 11 Educational Display participants. All vendor participation is limited to the presentation and sale of products produced from natural fibers or products relating to or derived from natural fiber products and industrial materials.

Livestock farms represented the fiber species of Angora goats, Suri alpacas, llamas, Huacaya alpacas, French Angora rabbits, and several breeds of sheep including Wensleydale, Cotswold, Coopworth, Jacob, Kerry Hill, Hair sheep, and several new cross-bred sheep species.

The West Virginia Alpaca Organization (WVAO) is the primary sponsoring association for the festival. Organization of the festival falls under the charter of the WVAO, which is the official WV Representative Affiliate for the Alpaca Owners Association (AOA), an international association of some 5000 members.

The WVAO is incorporated in the state of West Virginia as a Not-for-Profit corporation under the IRS designation as a 501-(c)-(5) corporation. Other major sponsors and financial supporters of the Festival include the Morgantown Fiber Guild (MFG), Mid-Atlantic Fiber Association (MAFA), Alpaca Owners Association (AOA), WVU Agricultural Extension Service, North American Alpaca Federation (NAAF), USDA Farm Service Agency, West Virginia University, Preston County Farm Bureau, Tucker Community Foundation, WVU Conservation Service, Monongahela Conservation District, WVU Library, WVU Animal Sciences Department, and the Oak Park Church of the Brethren.

The West Virginia Fiber Festival is now recognized by the State of West Virginia as an official Heritage Festival in the State. The WV Division of Culture and History is now a sponsor of the Festival. The 2014 WV Legislature approved partial financial support of the Festival for advertising purposes in support of tourism in the State.

The total budget for each Fiber Festival comes from grants from non-profit organizations, universities, non-governmental-organizations and government agencies with the remainder of the budget income derived from vendor and stall fees, raffle tickets and T-Shirt sales.

Grateful appreciation is expressed to all of our sponsors for their encouragement and monetary support, and for monetary grants from the Tucker Community Foundation, the Monongahela Conservation District, the Preston Farm Bureau and to the Alpaca Owners Association. Their grants made this success possible.

Advertising was purchased in thirteen newspapers, and was donated by one radio station and one television station, representing the States of West Virginia, Maryland,

Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio. Advertising on WV Public Radio was purchased for the week leading up to the festival. Other newspapers in the State were responsible for the publication on News Releases that featured aspects of the Festival. Information is provided to the public and participants through our website <http://www.wvfiberfest.com>.

The WVFF is completely planned, executed and staffed by volunteers. There were more than 40 volunteers representing some 11 different organizations. Most of the volunteers are from the following organizations:

- Monongalia Conservation District
- West Virginia University
- West Virginia Alpacas Organization (WVAO)
- Oak Park Church of the Brethren
- Mid Atlantic Fiber Association
- West Virginia University Extension
- Morgantown Fiber Guild
- Preston County Farm Bureau
- West Virginia Shepherds Federation
- WVU Reedsville Farm Arena Staff
- West Virginia University Library

The organization of the festival is structured as a Volunteer-Committee-Work-and-Report activity under a master schedule and organization business plan administered by WVAO. Responsibilities for all functions are run through the West Virginia Fiber Festival committee Co- Chaired by Judy Bannon and David Moran and Becky Hammer, Treasurer.

The master keys to the success of the Festival are:

- Individual Responsibility,
- Great Organization,
- Dedicated Volunteers, and
- Financial Support through Donations and Grants.



## Financial Summary for MAFA

The WV Fiber Festival spent \$1000 directly attributable to advertisements under the approval of the MAFA grant. Total advertising costs were \$ ....., of which the remaining costs were charged to other contributors.

The MAFA covered advertising costs were specifically:

Preston Publications     \$ 500   out of a total of \$500 for the publication (Funds received from MAFA)  
WVU Athenaeum         \$ 500   out of a total of \$654.50 for the publication  
 TOTAL MAFA               \$1000   Total due at this time from MAFA \$500.00

PUBLICATION	COST	PAYMENT	WVAO	WV GOVT	MAFA	AOA	TCF	WV Farm Bureau
Republican Oakland	345.00	CC9173		345.00				
Dominion Post	631.70	CC9173		631.00				
Preston Publications	500.00	CC9173			500.00			
Union Herald	394.20	CC9173		394.20				
WVU Athenaeum	654.50	CC9173			500.00	154.50		
Uniontown Weekender	120.00	CC9173		120.00				
Ravelry	10.00			9.80		0.20		
Website	100.00					100.00		
Brochure Printing DDM	100.00					100.00		
Market Bulletin	0.00							
WV Tourism Site	0.00							
Program Printing JB	100.00					50.00	50.00	
<del>Signage (New Costs)</del>	<del>0.00</del>							
Cumberland News	252.45	CC9173	2.45			252.45		250.00
<del>Tucker County News</del>	<del>0.00</del>							
Parsons Advocate	157.50	CC9173					157.50	
<del>Elkins Newspaper</del>	<del>0.00</del>							
<del>PIT Post Gazette</del>	<del>0.00</del>							
Public Radio Spots	300.00	CC9173	300.00					
Mountain Messenger	120.00	CC9173	80.00				40.00	
Shinston News	168.00	CC9173	168.00					

## Photographs

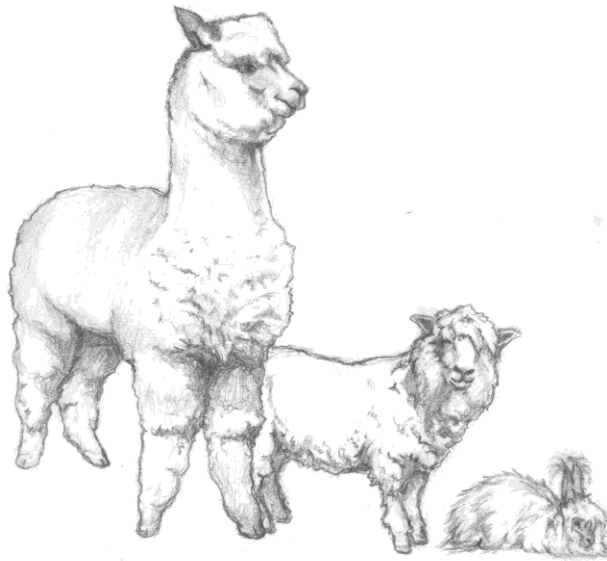
**All photographs are open and of public record and are free to MAFA to publish in MAFA reports and brochures.**

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

of the

## **West Virginia Fiber Festival**

6 - 7 September 2014  
WVU Reedsville Farm Arena  
[www.wvfiberfest.com](http://www.wvfiberfest.com)



### **A Weekend of Fun, Fleece and Fellowship**

Judy Bannon & David Moran  
2014



## **Photographs**

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## **PURPOSE**

The West Virginia Fiber Festival is organized to encourage and facilitate the development and revival of the natural fiber industries and livestock production in West Virginia and in the surrounding areas including Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia & Ohio. The festival is designed to highlight heritage industries related to fiber farming and production as well as modern industrial initiatives in the fiber and fine-fashion industries of America.

The festival is presented as an educational event and an opportunity for families, parents, children and all participants to participate in the processes and understanding of fiber livestock production and management and in all aspects of the fiber arts and industries.



## **MISSION**

The West Virginia Fiber Festival is the only fiber festival in West Virginia. It is an official heritage festival in the State as recognized by the WV Legislature in 2014.

The festival is free to the public. Our festival is intended to provide a complete awareness and appreciation of the beauty and value of natural fibers (wool, fleece, etc.) and natural fiber products produced in West Virginia, the US and internationally. The festival is designed to showcase the entire fiber industry and provide a forum for showcasing West Virginia natural fiber. It is intended to promote the success of our fiber industry as it continues to increase in value and gain economic productivity in the fiber world.

The public is invited to participate in an abundant selection of fiber related activities, vendor offerings and educational programs. Admission and parking are free. The site is designed to provide an open and cordial atmosphere for visitors, participants and vendors.

All educational programs are designed to be hands-on participatory training in-as-much as possible in a public forum. Participants are invited to have the opportunity to explore the fiber industry through all five senses where appropriate.



The Festival is open to all “natural fiber” products, fiber producing animals, related services and equipment. Sheep, goats, rabbits, alpaca, llama, and silk products are available for close inspection and study. The purpose of the festival is to increase the awareness and appreciation of the public for fiber animals and fiber products including clothing, blankets, rugs and home decorations. The festival is also designed as a hands-on learning center for introducing all fiber production processes to the public, including shearing, handling, spinning, weaving, garment production, fashion characteristics, and material quality judging.



## **SUMMARY**

The Fifth West Virginia Fiber Festival was held at the West Virginia University’s Reedsville Farm Arena on September 6 & 7, 2014 in Reedsville, West Virginia.

Over 1300 members of the public attended the festival. A list of attendees was developed for future direct announcements for the 2015 West Virginia Fiber Festival scheduled for September 12-13, 2015. Attendees were from the states of West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio.

There were 26 vendors and display participants. All vendor participation is limited to the presentation and sale of products produced from natural fibers or products relating to or derived from natural fiber products and industrial materials.

Livestock farms represented the fiber species of angora goats, Suri alpacas, Suri llamas, Huacaya alpacas, French Angora rabbits, and several breeds of sheep including Wensleydale, Cotswold, Coopworth, Jacob, Kerry Hill, Hair sheep, and several new cross-bred sheep species.



The West Virginia Alpaca Organization (WVAO) is the primary sponsoring association for the festival. Organization of the festival falls under the charter of the WVAO, which is the official WV Representative Affiliate for the Alpaca Owners Association (AOA), an international association of some 5000 members.

The WVAO is incorporated in the state of West Virginia as a Not-for-Profit corporation under the IRS designation as a 501-(c)-(5) corporation. Other major sponsors and financial supporters of the Festival include the Morgantown Fiber Guild (MFG), Mid-Atlantic Fiber Association (MAFA), WVU Agricultural Extension Service, North American Alpaca Federation (NAAF), USDA Farm Service Agency, West Virginia University, Preston County Farm Bureau, Tucker Community Foundation, WVU Conservation Service, Monongahela Conservation District, WVU Library, WVU Animal Sciences Department, and the Oak Park Church of the Brethren.

The West Virginia Fiber Festival is now recognized by the State of West Virginia as an official Heritage Festival in the State. The WV Division of Culture and History is now a sponsor of the Festival. The 2014 WV Legislature approved partial financial support of the Festival for advertising purposes in support of tourism in the State.



The total budget for the 2013 Fiber Festival comes from grants from non-profit organizations, universities, non-governmental-organizations and government agencies with the remainder of the budget income derived from vendor and stall fees, raffle tickets and T-Shirt sales.

Grateful appreciation is expressed to the Alpaca Owners Association for their encouragement and monetary support, to the Tucker Community Foundation, to the Monongahela Conservation District for a grant of \$400, to the Preston Farm Bureau for a grant of \$250 and to the North American Alpaca Federation for their grant of \$50; that made this success possible.



Advertising was purchased in 10 newspapers and on National Public Radio, and was donated by one radio station and one television station, representing the states of West Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio. Advertising on WV Public Radio was purchased for the week leading up to the festival. Other newspapers in the State were responsible for the publication on News Releases that featured aspects of the Festival. Information is provided to the public and participants through our website <http://www.wvfiberfest.com>



The WVFF is completely planned, executed and staffed with volunteers. There were more than 40 volunteers representing some 10 different organizations. Most of the volunteers are from the following organizations:

- Monongalia Conservation District
- West Virginia University-Prof. Bob Cochrane
- West Virginia Alpacas Organization (WVAO)
- Oak Park Church of the Brethren
- Mid Atlantic Fiber Association
- West Virginia University Extension
- Morgantown Fiber Guild
- Preston County Farm Bureau
- West Virginia Shepherds Federation
- WVU Reedsville Farm Arena Staff
- West Virginia University Library – Historical collection of hand woven rugs



The organization of the festival is structured as a Volunteer-Committee-Work-and-Report activity under a master schedule and organization business plan administered by WVAO. Responsibilities for all functions are run through the West Virginia Fiber Festival committee.

The master keys to the success of the Festival are:

- Individual Responsibility,
- Great Organization,
- Dedicated Volunteers, and,
- Financial Support through Donations and Grants,
- The joy and direct involvement of children and their families.



## **Our Fifth Year**

This report marks the completion of the Fifth Annual West Virginia Fiber Festival. It also marks a turning point in the organization of the festival based upon the completion of accomplishments that were outlined in the first year.

- The West Virginia Fiber Festival is now recognized by the State as an Official Heritage Festival and has been granted support by the West Virginia Legislature for Fiscal Year 2014-2015.
- Attendance at the festival was more than 1300 by actual count and has consistently increased by 25% every year since 2010.
- Nine different and unique classes in the fiber arts were conducted
- Twenty-six vendors participated. This number has increased accordingly each year.
- Fourteen individual sponsors and major financial contributors supported the festival.
- Financial earnings by vendors and the attraction of out-of-state participants proves that the WV Fiber Festival is a strong contributor to the economy and to tourism in WV.
- A complete annual report has been prepared each year at the completion of the event and has been circulated to all parties and participants at their request.
- The festival has remained as an all-volunteer non-profit operation under the 501(c) (5) authority of the West Virginia Alpaca Organization and has operated within budget every year.
- Planning for the Sixth Fiber Festival in 2015, September 12 & 13, is well underway. Future success, disposition and venue of the WV Fiber Festival rests upon the development of an enhanced management structure for the festival. This objective will be pursued during 2014 and early 2015, leading up to the September 2015 festival in Reedsville. All proposed changes to the management and disposition of future festivals will be implemented at the 2015 event so that they are in place for future program management in 2016. The areas of concern include:
  - Enhanced volunteer services under strict definitions of responsibility.
  - Professional advertising and promotion programs.
  - Potential cooperation with other events for joint use of facilities and promotional activities.
  - Identification of a new site for the festival that is more attractive to the public.
  - Establishment of appropriate livestock health entry requirements and certifications.
  - Continued increase in the number and quality of vendors and vendor spaces.
  - Increase pre- and post-event coverage in the public media.
  - Increased donor revenues and increased support from the State of West Virginia.
  - Employment of professional staff for site preparation and post-event clean-up.

With an eye toward the future, attention to the past, and a focus on the accomplishments of the 2014 event, this report is accordingly structured for public and private review.

David Moran and Judy Bannon, September 2014