



SOUTHERN OREGON
SOAY SHEEP FARMS
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Viewpoint

FROM THE PREMIER BREEDER OF BRITISH REGISTERED SOAY SHEEP

Barn dance

by Kathie Miller

Like everything the previous owner had built on this place, the pump house was “dump chic”.

Alice’s building dimensions and style were based on the materials she found at the dump. And what she didn’t have in lumber she made up for in nails, often bent and re-straightened. Even the pressure tank and pump she had found used. But, like everything Alice had



The old pump house

built, it had worked very well and for a very long time. Her resourcefulness amazes me. Clearly, she was a recycler way ahead of her time.

With no place for my llama and some of my rams, I

had modified the deteriorating old pump house into a paddock shelter. It made do for a few years, but finally the rams bashed the door to pieces and what was left fell off its hinges. The leaky roof began to fall away from the walls, and opening the gate was a battle because of accumulated hay on the ground; I had to keep re-hanging it a little higher.

When I had the brilliant idea to muck it out to avoid this problem in the future, it was the middle of summer. It didn’t occur to me that I was creating what would become a covered pond in the winter.

With the season’s first rain, I had dry animals with a roof over their heads, but they



The new ram barn

were standing in 6 inches of water. The roof was so bad it drained into the shed, not outside.



Center aisle

As if this wasn’t enough, the once respectable little building was now a major eyesore and the first thing people saw when they drove into the

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March Calendar

- ❑ Before lambs start arriving this month, restock lambing supplies: nipples, bottles, ear tags, colostrums (in case of a bummer lamb), vitamins A & D. Prepare a jug (small pen) to isolate mother and lamb in case there is a problem.
- ❑ Prepare birthing records.
- ❑ Have your list of names ready.
- ❑ Keep your camera handy.

Eating disorder

by Kathie Miller

My llama, Macchu, has been a part of my life for 19 years.

Last summer, he started to go downhill and was drastically losing weight. When the vet saw him, she said, “I suspect he won’t make it through the winter.”

I told her he was getting beet pulp. She said that was fine; give him a few cups a day. Instead, I gave him a half bucket twice a day!

Soon, I discovered wads of wet, unchewed grass all over the barn floor and real-

ized his weight loss was due to tooth problems. I kept up the beet pulp and added some oats.

Six months later, Macchu had put on 50 pounds and looked better than he had in years. Suddenly, however, he quit eating the beet pulp. “NOW what do I do?” I wondered. It wasn’t long before I had my answer.

That evening after feeding, I saw placid, old Macchu run the 130 pound dog off his bowl and

eat all the food.

The vet and I agreed that, at age 20, Macchu can just eat whatever he will eat.

I’m not advocating feeding your llama dog food. But, sometimes, you just gotta do what you gotta do.



Eying the dog food

I have mentioned Shaul's Manufacturing many times in *Viewpoint* because they make wonderful equipment that has enhanced my ability to take good care of my sheep. They are located in California, but travel to shows in Oregon annually and ship all over the country. They have a standardized line of equipment but will custom make things to order. Visit their website or give them a call: www.shaulsmfg.com; 530-695-8185.

A useful little book on building small barns: "Building Small Barns, Sheds and Shelters" by Monty Burch, ISBN0-88266-245-7

I found copies available on Amazon.com for \$1.17 and Amazon.co.uk for £ 2.57.

There are also a lot of sites on the Internet with plans for barns.

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All advice in this newsletter has been used successfully on our farm. It is important to remember that every animal and situation is different. Before you try any of our suggestions, we urge you to consult your veterinarian.

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Barn dance *continued from page one*

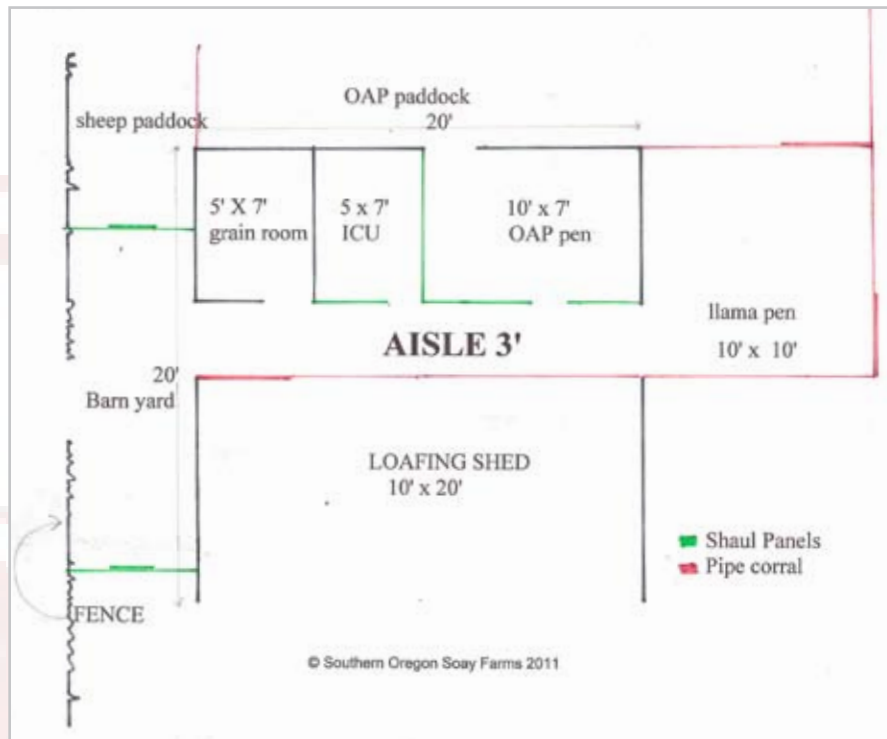


Diagram of the barn

farm. It was time to replace it. I had some very specific ideas about what I wanted in a new barn. It had to be economical and it had to be easy to clean. I manage so many sheep by myself that ease of management was important, too.

What I came up with was a very simple 20'x20' pole barn. I planned to divide the building into two parts with two, 10' lengths of pipe corral. One half of the barn would be a three-sided loafing shed and the other would be divided into a small grain room and two stalls: one for my old rams, the other a small "ICU" for sick or injured animals.

Using pipe corral instead of a solid wall in the middle allows for easy cleaning with the tractor because it can be unbolted in the center and pulled out of the way. The lightweight panels used to make the smaller pens can also be easily removed for

tractor access. In the middle is an aisle which makes it easy to feed animals on each side. By hanging feeders on the pipe corral and panels, I can feed the rams without having to walk in among them.

With three more pieces of pipe corral I created a 10'x10' pen at the back of the barn which I can enter from the aisle. A simple metal lean-to roof provides a comfortable, dry space for the llama where he isn't dealing with 26 rams underfoot. This, too, can be easily pulled apart and cleaned.

Because the building was close to a gate in the pasture fence, I created a sheep-free yard in front of the barn with a few more Shaul panels. This allows me to come and go freely with feed while keeping the rams in their paddock and out of my way. It can also be used as a catch pen.

The last item to address was management: how to handle the rams safely when

I needed to vaccinate, worm, or trim feet and/or horns. I accomplished this by pinning four Shaul panels together in a line and placing them across the opening of the loafing shed, securing one end to the building but leaving the other open until the boys have been caught. Then, it is secured.

This temporary, floating wall creates a large catch pen into which I can lure the sheep with their feed. When I am ready to work, I unlatch one end and pull the line of panels into the shed, encircling the sheep, eventually pulling it into a tight circle from which they cannot escape. They have no room to move and, if I am alone, I can work among them inside the pen, or extract one at a time to be worked outside if I have help.

Tip of the Month

If your feed store is not open every day, be sure to buy milk replacer before lambs arrive, just in case.