

CLI...

The Mystery Unraveled

By Dale Peterson

Exactly what is CLI (Collectible Llamas, Inc.)? Quite likely it is not what you think. If you have believed what others have said or printed about CLI or if you have read postings on various chat sites, then you do not have a true understanding of CLI. Some of you prefer to avoid llama issues altogether, hoping one day all will blow over and miraculously the llama community will become a smooth running machine. Many scare tactics have been used to keep you away from CLI and it is safe to assume that the general llama community is confused about exactly what is CLI, what CLI stands for and how it operates.

A little history

Here are some of the more notable rumors you may have read or heard about CLI:

- Early on, there was a “No Crossbreeding” media campaign about CLI, claiming CLI would cause the demise of the llama industry by creating thousands of llama/alpaca crossbreeds. Several joined that campaign by calling theirs “pure llamas.” It’s fair to say many are perplexed over that statement. Just what is a pure llama?

- Another rumor was that CLI planned to import hundreds, if not thousands, of suri llamas from South America, destroying the value of North American llamas. Anyone who took time to read the information at TheCLI.org discovered that wasn’t true. In fact, the opposite is true; CLI believes importation should be tightly controlled and severely limited, if

allowed at all.

- Then there was the rumor that those involved with CLI had a pyramid scheme to “take the money and run.” Question: What money and run to where?

- Another story you may have heard was CLI is exclusive and interested only in Suris. Again, the CLI website dispels that theory. And the best of all scare tactics: “Being involved with ‘those people’ is bad for your reputation.”

The purpose for stating the above is to show the environment in which CLI has operated. Through all of the misinformation, untruths and scare tactics, CLI has continued to forge ahead. The organization was created in July 2004 (hard to believe it was just two years ago) and held its first management meeting that month, where the CLI operating framework was laid. That framework remains in tact today without any major changes. And those who were fully committed then still remain just as committed to having a better llama industry.

Moving forward

CLI Mission: **To enhance the long-term viability and profitability of the llama industry through the promotion and marketing of all types of Llamas.** The key words here are “all types of llamas.” When CLI was established, the founders’ vision of “collectible llamas” was **all** llamas. The word “collectible” was chosen to convey that llamas are special. With the idea of inclusion, CLI created its framework to provide a registry, shows and marketing for all types of llamas.



TheCLI.org

Registry

- Though purposely not yet on line, the registry has been created and llamas of all types are, and can be, registered. **All llamas registered with CLI must be DNAd, microchipped and parent verified.** Only by requiring these mandatory steps can the owners and buyers of llamas feel confident with their reported lineage and feel assured they got what they paid for.

• **Registry Divisions:**

• **Traditional**

Open to all traditional and silky coated llamas

• **Select**

Any male or female that has produced one or more offspring that has been classified “Suri” using the CLI classification system?

Any non-Suri male or female offspring from CLI classified Suri parent(s)

• **Suri Producer**

A new division that was added for any male or female that has produced two or more offspring classified “Suri” using the CLI classification system

• **Suri**

Any llama classified “Suri” using the CLI classification system.

- Hands on classification required using the CLI Suri Breed Standard

- To be classified “Suri” the llama must be extensively evaluated

on conformation and fiber characteristics.

- If a llama does not meet llama phenotype requirements, it will not be classified “Suri”



Shows

- CLI has developed a fair and impartial show division that demands creditability from its judging system.

- Animals owned by members of the CLI management team are not allowed to participate in CLI shows.

- CLI has judges that are extensively trained, make impartial decisions in the show ring and do not play politics or issue favors.

- CLI's show division provides a venue for people to showcase their breeding programs and then be rewarded for their breeding achievements. Therefore, CLI's awards are meaningful, because they are extremely difficult to obtain and one has to strive for perfection to receive one. Then, and only then, can it be said with pride... **“My llama is a CHAMPION!!”**

- CLI's show division has three divisions in its show format. These include Traditional Llama, Silky Llama, and Suri Llama. These three divisions **never** compete against each other. Each llama competes only in its division. CLI will also add other divisions if the demand is merited. For example, Mini Llamas, Futurities, etc. could be added.

- CLI shows do not include performance classes.

- CLI will provide support and education at each event it hosts. Exhibitors and/or interested parties will be able to learn about conformation and fiber. They also will be able to register their llamas with the CLR (Collectible Llama Registry) and have their suri llamas evaluated and classified for registration.

- CLI will be highly selective in choosing judges and will limit the number of judges. Having a small number of judges will ensure they stay “on the same page” by following well-defined judging criteria.

Marketing

- CLI intends to use a very worn out word that has been around the llama industry since the llama industry's inception. **Marketing...**I say worn out because how many times have you been approached by different individuals and llama organizations begging for money to do marketing. Then when you give money where does it go? Did you or the llama industry reap any benefits?

- CLI has said from its inception that a marketing campaign can only be successful when CLI is on solid footings with its registry (the CLR), its show division, and its message of creating fairness, no personal agendas and issuing no favors.

- CLI currently pays to send copies of Cool Camelids magazine to interested potential camelid owners in order to test the marketing waters. When the time is right and when the buy-in from enough people has occurred, a full scale campaign can be launched to attract new llama owners and breeders to CLI and the llama industry.

- Once the infrastructure described above is operating smoothly, CLI will begin a program to market llamas. All llamas will be portrayed as “special” - or collectible - in the sense that they are unique and valuable.

CLI's Intent...

The supporters involved with CLI believe in the llama industry. They also know that following the same path that they have been on for years is leading nowhere. They believe it is long past time for a change and time for action instead of listening to the same rhetoric that has been spun to them for more than a decade.

CLI does not advocate the downfall of any of the current llama organizations. To the contrary, the llama industry needs these organizations, because each has its own benefits for those who participate. Competition among llama organizations, which in turn raises the bar and gives the llama community choices, is good. With llamas, as with horses, cattle, donkeys, dogs, cats, goats or any other animal, individuals like to have choices. No one should be labeled a **“bad person”** if they want to belong to a certain llama organization or if they want to belong to all the llama organizations and take advantage of what each organization has to offer. The main thing to consider is that, in our own way, each of us is doing what we think is best for us and matches our individual preferences to have fun and enjoyment with our llamas and to make a positive contribution toward making the llama community a better place.

You have choices. Consider making CLI one of those choices.

