

2008 National Show, the trip of a lifetime!

Getting there-

Mariah attended her first national show in 1995. Since then, we have only missed a few. With that much traveling together, we have developed our own style and agenda. I do the driving. Mariah pours coffee, feeds me snacks, answers the phone, takes pictures, and gets directions and weather updates from John, who tracks us by computer and telephone. We milk three times a day on the road, nearly all by hand. On arrival, we set up, feed and milk, then eat our own dinner (cooked in the truck while driving, one of my best investments ever!) After dinner, we relax, then set up our bed next to the goats. In the morning, we milk, put feed in the trailer, and either load up the goats, or simply turn them loose to graze while we finish. Then we break down and load up the remaining tack, put food in the truck for us, and off we go. For our noon milk stop, we find a fairgrounds or other facility where we can turn the goats loose for some R& R while we milk, and let them drink from an automatic waterer. After milking, we break for lunch, and then back on the road. Although this usually takes a couple hours, the break is worth it for a solo driver, and sets me up to continue through the afternoon and evening. We usually cover 500-600 miles per day. We do have favorite fairgrounds along the way that we tend to go back to when possible.



Our first night on the road, at a new fairgrounds. Gooding Co. Idaho was very welcoming, and had a very comfortable exercise pen for the goats.



Tokay is getting impatient- she wants that National win!



Second day, leaving Gooding. Filling up with diesel is best done by not looking at the price!



On the road again, the direct route is not always the most scenic route.



Milk stop in Bear Lake Co, Idaho. This is one of our favorite stops, as the goats really get to graze and stretch here.



The goats settling in to enjoy the ride.



We happened to meet a draft horse pair that were traveling on the Oregon Trail, also taking a break.



Nesse enjoys some shade and HER water bucket.

Shortly after Bear Lake, our first 'event' occurred. At a pilot car stop in a construction zone, a potato truck didn't stop, and hit the rear truck, ripping open the trailer, and causing it to swerve out of control until skidding to a stop only a few feet from us! A few moments before this photo, we were parked in the bare space next to the semi, getting hit by falling potatoes!

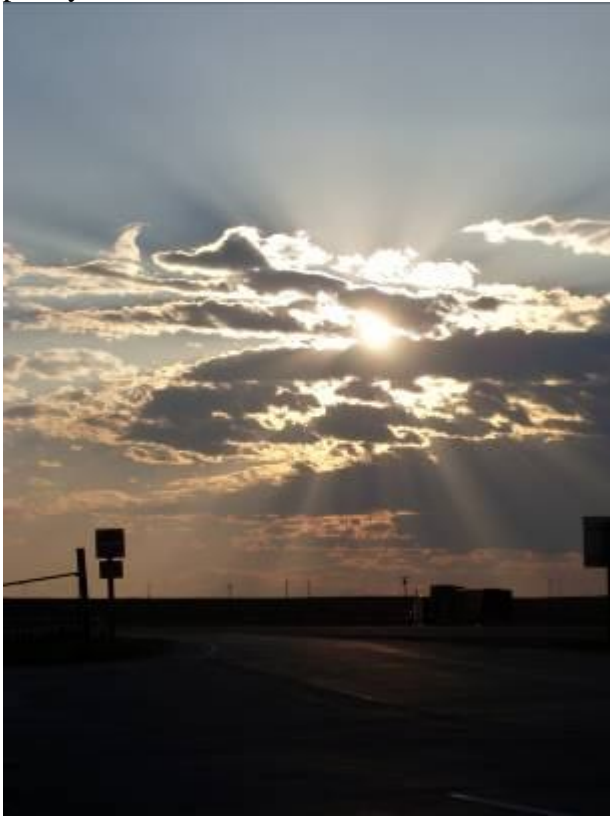




Safely off on the side, we then waited nearly two hours for police and road crews to clear the mess. Thank goodness our trailer had plenty of ventilation.



Here the goats and people take an early morning time out in Rawlins to relax and graze before heading off again.



After the delay, that night saw us late on the road, headed to our next stop, another favorite in Rawlins, Wyoming.





Nesse knows how Laurie is without her coffee, and stands guard to make sure she can drink it in peace.



Or maybe she just wants some too!



By now, we've lost rack of the days, but the next day brings our next adventure, an explosive tire blow out on the truck. We've had a lot of experience with flat tires, but never one that knocked us into another lane and took part of the truck with it! We were fortunate, as we were starting to change it, we were assisted by Topka Roadside Assistance, and after a hot and difficult time, we were back on the road.



Noon milkstop that day was more like 4 pm, but the goats were able to get out again in Lawrence, Kansas.



At least until a thunderstorm sent them back into the trailer!



Once again, sunset on the road means another late arrival at our next overnight stop. The next day, the goats get to see the big city, while Laurie white knuckles the trailer through downtown traffic in St. Louis.





At last, our home for a day! Pinckneyville, Illinois is a wonderful small town, very helpful and friendly. They set up a nice pen, amidst several antique tractors. Perry Co. Fairgrounds is the home of the American Threshermen Asso, specializing in antique tractors and assisting tired goat haulers. Experience has taught us that a day of rest is invaluable before arrival, so we find a place to stop for 24-36 hours and rest. Well, the goats get to rest. Laurie went to find a mechanic to replace the blown tire, and also replace some improperly fitted brakes on the truck. That afternoon, both of us went to town to get food supplies, and to go out to our only restaurant meal on the road. While we were away, a severe storm came up. We rushed back, only to get lost in the storm on the way. When we finally arrived, the tornado warnings were going! The beautiful fairgrounds suffered some flood and wind damage, but the goats were safe in their pen.





At last, the goats are safely in their pens, everything is set up, and we are ready for the Nationals to begin! (Unfortunately, we were so busy in the ring that Mariah didn't have time for candid shots!)



A little R&R while in Louisville included a trip to Churchill Downs.



Last day on the road. A back road from Pinckneyville gives us a beautiful view of Rend Lake. We try to only travel a few hours so that we are relatively fresh when we have to unload and set up.



Mariah needed to stay in Kentucky, so John flew out to help on the way home. Packing on the last day- Yes dear, all that stuff will fit in there somewhere...



Yes, we really did win all that stuff! The reality started to sink in when we had to pack it all up.



Loaded and ready to leave, one last photo as our home for the last two weeks pulls away, leaving Mariah behind. Fortunately, the trip home was completely uneventful, I don't think I could take anymore excitement! John, who missed the Saanen and Alpine shows, and the trip out, still wonders what the fuss was all about...

The Show-

Saanens-



The intensity of the Championship class...



Then, the moment, National Champion!!!



The sweetest rewards of teamwork, Mariah and Laurie share a moment after the Championship class.



2008 National Champion Saanen and Best Udder- GCH des Ruhigestelle Winseeker 3*M.
"Seeker" finally finds our win in Louisville, our first National Champion in 28 years.

Our Saanen Class winners-



1st/ 1st udder 2 year old, SG des Ruhigestelle Elende 9*M



1st/1st udder 4 year old, GCH des Ruhigestelle Winseeker 3*M



1st Dairy Herd, left to right-Winsseker, Llyonesse, Elendili, Elende



1st Best Three Senior Does- left to right-Winseeker, Llyonesse, Elende



1st Produce of Dam- SGCH des Ruhigestelle Elendili 8*M, using daughters Elende and Elendrea



1st Dam and Daughter-dam Elendili with daughter Elende



Highest 305 Milk and Butterfat- (also 3rd place 4 year old)
SGCH des Ruhigestelle Elendili 8*M, 3-00 302 4005 151 3.8% 118 2.9%



Highest Lifetime Milk and Butterfat- (also 2nd place 5-6 year old)
SGCH des Ruhigestelle Llyonesse 5*M, 1731 19222 648 3.4% 616 3.2%

Alpines-



The realization of a lifetime dream, 2008 National Champion Alpine, SGCH Tempo Aquila Tokay 5*M. Laurie and Ed Jodlowski with Tokay and Music, nothing could top this.

Our Alpine Class winners-



1st/1st udder 3 year old, SGCH Tempo Aquila Tokay 5*M



1st/1st udder 4 year old, SGCH Tempo Aquila Freely Imagined 5*M



1st Dairy Herd, left to right-Tokay, Imagined, Tetrazzini, Finally Free



1st Best Three Senior Does- left to right-Tokay, Imagined, Finally Free



1st Produce of Dam- GCH des Ruhigestelle Free Thinker 4*M, using daughters Imagined and Finally



1st Senior Get of Sire-SGCH ++*B Milar Farm Royal Image, using daughters Imagined, Tetrazzini, and Tokay



Highest 305 Milk - (also 1st place 5-6 year old)
SGCH Tempo Aquila Freely Imagined 5*M, 3-09 305 4066 141 3.5% 116 2.9%

Our LaMancha Class winner-



1st/1st udder 2 year old, CH Barnowl Hockus Pockus



With a lot of hard work and perserverance, dreams do come true.