

Lasting Impressions

A letter from the editor of Hobby Farms.

By Karen K. Acevedo

This past November I attended my first national poultry show—the Crossroads of America Poultry Show in Indianapolis. The American Livestock Breeds Conservancy (ALBC) was holding their annual conference in conjunction with the show, of which Hobby Farms was a proud sponsor.

As we entered the exhibition hall on Friday, the first day of the show, the collective clucking of thousands of birds was at a fever pitch. In addition to the sea of cages set in place to house the show's chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys and guineas, there were breed association/club booths, retailers selling poultry supplies, books, art, magazines, and all manner of chicken kitsch. Kids and teenagers were showing their prized birds, and judges roamed the aisles with their notebooks, studying the entries closely.

Don Schrider, ALBC's Communication Director, conducted a poultry tour where he passionately highlighted several rare breeds and told the stories behind these great birds. Each and every bird was so unique, so beautiful, so polished. Attending the show for two days gave me a glimpse into the wide world of show poultry and the people involved in it. Read all about poultry shows and how you can start showing in "A Passion for Poultry" by contributing editor Carol Ekarius.

In Memorium

© Dennis Acevedo Last fall marked another first for me—the passing of a beloved pet, my Pygmy goat Charlotte. Charlotte was my second Pygmy goat whom I got almost six years ago when I lived in California. Charlotte and her caprine sister, Simone, kept our horse company, and in turn, taught me everything I needed to know about goat care.

We discovered Charlotte had a heart condition and we decided to try medication for her, rather than putting her down. Our vet told us she would not live to see her next birthday, but four years later, she was still alive and well, eating her medications, tucked inside a frosted shredded wheat pillow, twice a day.

She was a gentle, sweet and polite goat, who always got short shrift when it came to the barnyard, being shoved around by the other, stronger goats. She was also the tiniest goat, so her head butts did not deliver the same blow as the others', which frustrated and confused her.

She was intelligent, as she learned her medication routine early on and always stuck to it, marching up the step to the tack-room door, awaiting my arrival at feeding time. She was truly a special goat.

Charlotte meant so much more to me than what met the eye. My husband and I cared for her before we ever had a farm and I always told her (in that funny "goat mom" kind of way) that "someday we'll live on a farm." So when we finally made the move to Kentucky, her presence there signified the realization of a dream for me. She, along with our other goats, represented why I wanted this life, this farm, these chores—this change.

Charlotte, you are dearly missed. And as the engraved rock on her grave states, "we will always love you."