

Greetings from the residents of **BLACK SHEEP ANIMAL CROSSING FARM ANIMAL SANCTUARY!**

Every spring we hope for a gradual thaw here at BSCFAS. Rapid thawing leaves a mucky lake in the equine barnyard and varied-sized puddles in the yard. It also provides a great opportunity for romping, rolling and splashing through by the eight canines. Great fun for the dogs! NOT fun for me! It is futile for me to attempt 'spring cleaning' of the house. But that's ok, because I prefer being outside and look forward to all the work to be done outside.

Chore: an unpleasant task that must be accomplished. The key word here is the word "unpleasant". My husband, Marty and I look forward to chore time. It is anything BUT unpleasant. Early mornings and late afternoons are when we are able to spend the most time with the animals.

We do all the chores ourselves. Our day begins between 4 & 5 am and ends between 5 & 6 pm. That is 365 days a year, 24-7. There's always something to do. We do get help putting up the hay – which averages between 1600-1800 bales. Cleaning out the coop, aviary, pig palace, barnyard, and goat barn also requires some extra help.



Time spent doing everyday tasks is our favorite! We do not rush. It's when we spend important bonding time with all our critters. We follow their lead and pace. A good example of this is in getting the five Standard Donkeys out to pasture.

The ten equines must go through the goat barn to get into the pastures. The quarter horse, Welsh pony, and her daughter (a mule) prefer to go first. The two miniature donkeys follow. The Standard donkeys choose to bring up the rear. They also proceed in order. Silvia and Virginia, sisters, refuse to go through the goat barn until their offspring, Mary Pete, Sigwalda, and Axle, have entered the goat barn. Virginia, the oldest at 22, follows her sister but will not exit the goat barn until she receives several kisses behind her long ears and long scratches down her back. Once accomplished, she trots on out to the pasture to join her family! ☺

Afternoon routines can be lengthened by Sunshine, the Jersey cow. She seems to delight in making us walk to the farthest part of the farthest pasture. Everyone knows the sound of our whistling means "Head for the barns – it's suppertime"! Sunshine ignores us (and the others). She waits, looking straight at us, until we finally arrive to dispense chin strokes, back scratches and ear kisses. A gentle tap on her bottom finally sends her on the half-mile trek back to the barn.



Marty & I find our present lifestyle interesting and challenging. Unique experiences occur almost daily. Observing the interaction between several different breeds of animals and learning individual personalities and preferences takes time and a lot of patience, which makes it so rewarding for us.

We are held in awe of the relationships we have developed with the animals of Black Sheep Crossing!

Hope everyone enjoys a beautiful spring!

Cherry