

THE JIM BARKER SURI NETWORK AMBASSADOR AWARD PRESENTED AT SYMPOSIUM

Jim Barker left a legacy of contributions that will continue to impact the Suri Network community for a many years to come. The **Jim Barker Suri Network Ambassador Award** was established to recognize a SN member who exemplifies Jim's commitment to and enthusiasm toward the Suri alpaca industry and shares the Suri Network's mission of promoting and preserving the Suri alpaca in North America.

The selection process involved SN members submitting nominations based on criteria that represented Jim's commitment and contributions. We received 12 nomination letters and after review by the committee and Jim's wife Gini Barker, this year's recipient was selected. The award was presented to **Dick Walker** during the Summer Symposium.



Dick has been raising Suri alpacas for 17 years during which he has been a tireless champion of the Suri alpaca industry. He spent six years working hard as the president and a member of the Suri Network Board of Trustees. While president of Suri Network, he was instrumental in leading the membership in development of the Suri Alpaca Breed Standard as well as setting the stage for development of EPD s. For an entire year he traveled and attended AOBA Affiliate breed standards conferences to educate the membership on the importance of having a breed standard. He helped to establish the Suri Herd Improvement Program continues to be a key advisor. For a number of years he represented the Suri community on the AOBA Show Rules Committee and was instrumental in establishing a separate Suri Show division.

He has published many articles on genetic diversity and breed standards in *PurelySuri* and *Alpacas Magazines*. While serving as the president of the Suri Network, he brought in a consultant to help develop a "Long Range Strategic Plan" to ensure consistent and effective dialogue between the Board of Trustees, the committees, and the Suri Network membership, so that everyone's voice would be heard.

In his own words: "Serving as President of the Suri Network has been both challenging and rewarding. The biggest challenge is finding the time to devote to this task in an already busy professional lifestyle. The greatest reward has been the opportunity to move this industry forward by helping bring Suri breeders together. Suri Network now represents the majority of Suri breeders in the US. This Network provides a forum for accomplishing tasks that are essential to the continued success of the Suri industry, tasks that can only be accomplished by a cohesive group of dedicated individuals."

The Suri Network is proud to offer this award to deserving individuals within our membership. Look for the nomination process for next year's award to begin in June 2014.

