

# From the Bean Pile - What's in Your Pockets?

By Marj Brady

**T**his is kind of a fashion article or maybe I'm having a kind of game show flashback. Do you remember Let's Make a Deal when Monty Hall used to offer big bucks to whoever had some obscure item in their pocket or purse? I used to love that show in the late 60s, early 70s – people getting all dressed up like farmers and clowns and superheroes to go and make fools of themselves, hoping to trade junk and win some phenomenal prize, or not. Now I'm dressed like a scarecrow most days, unless I'm expecting a farm visit or have to go to town. My pockets are usually so full of junk and necessities I think I'd have a good chance of winning big, if I could just get past the security guard at the gate with my wheelbarrow, rake and pitchfork.

Back in the city, in the olden days of regular office employment, I used to wear suits and jackets. A lot of the time suit pockets are basted shut and I had lots of jackets that I never unstitched, I rarely used the pockets. Instead I carried a purse and that held all my necessities.

Since choosing this 'simple' country life I've discovered that 'simple' may be a misnomer. I still have a purse that I use sometimes but I carry more "just in case" stuff on my person on any given day than I ever did in the city even when my kids were little.

When I unpacked the pockets of my coveralls after chores one day, I made a list, which I'm going to share with you. I was astounded at the variety of content and surprised that my pants don't make me look more like some skinny, droopy-drawerred, gangsta wanna be. This list is

not comprehensive and varies from day to day depending on what I forget, but you get the idea.

- My camera, in case one of the alpacas did something worth recording. The batteries frequently die after the second shot so spare batteries were in another pocket.
- Needles, syringes, end caps, eye ointment, makeup pads, a facecloth, used surgical gloves, baling twine, toenail pruners.
- A piece of farm glass, two nails, a small piece of scrap metal, fence staples and wire bits. These things continue to float to the surface every time it rains and we've been picking them up for over six years.
- Three film canisters – one with electrolyte powder, one containing antibiotic ointment and one containing umbilical dip for crias.
- Three clean chip dip containers for collecting fecal samples. Actually, by the time I unpacked they weren't so clean anymore.
- An alpaca tooth for the education display and a spare nut for the creep gate hinge.

Chaff is ever present in my boots, my pockets, my shirt and some days in my underwear. No, I don't strip down in the barn and no, I have no idea how it got there and yes, I thought it was worth sharing just a little.

It's worse in the winter, my snow pants have two pockets, the wind pants I wear under the snow pants have three pockets but I only usually use two, my ski jacket has six pockets plus an inside one that I keep my pen, ointments and drops that I want to protect from freezing. If it's herd



Ears at 3-days

## Update

For those who enjoyed the spring article on Anthropomorphism – ole Whitey PP Legs, delivered a sturdy white male on May 31st. He has no markings and is a pure and brilliant white. Before you assume that she has completely forgiven me my transgressions of a few years ago, please check out his ears in the above photo. As I write this he's a couple of months old and they are very close to being perfectly straight (see photo below) but I do question whether she has a sense of humour and the joke is on me. Again.



Ears at 6-weeks





health day I waste a lot of time slapping myself on the backside, chest and hips, in some kind of twisted alpaca Macarena trying to remember what pocket I put the thingy in and looking for items that I probably left on the kitchen table.

Because we're in the country and coyotes are making a lot of local headlines,

my father thinks I should add pepper spray or a bear horn to my daily load. I'm afraid to ask him for suggestions on just how he thinks I'm supposed carry it.

I've thought about wearing one of those vests with the gazillion pockets like a fisherman's vest, or maybe a pair of cargo pants with the giant leg pockets.

However, by the time I finish loading up they'd probably weigh more than I do which brings me back to the "how do I remember what's in what pocket" and the "what happens if I fall down" questions.

Maybe I should trade the scarecrow outfit in for the superhero costume - green tights, yellow cape and a red mask so my kids' friends won't know who I am. The neighbours already think I'm a little different so it won't faze them to see me flying around the pastures. If I had superpowers I'd remember to be better organized, I wouldn't have to make multiple trips back and forth from house to barn and I could go super fast so I'd have all kinds of leisure time to sit on the front porch and enjoy this simple country life.

So now it's your turn, what weirdness is in your pockets?

**CQ**

***About the Author***

*Marj. Brady has been breeding entertaining buacaya alpacas since 2003 and lives with her family on a small farm north of Stirling, Ontario, Canada.*

