

Llama Love.....How We Count the Ways!

(Statistically speaking)

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In the course of our llama driving experiences sometimes we just have to take the old proverbial detour. I personally take a lot of those proverbial detours, but that is beside the point. Speaking of detours, driving experiences and the like, not long ago while on a flight I was looking through one of those in-flight magazines that you find stuffed in the pocket of the seat in front of you. The magazine had all your usual stuff, exotic vacation spots, beautiful beaches, unusual stuff to buy for your house and backyard, etc... In other words, all the places I wish I could go to or the things I think I need that I really don't. But right in the middle of this magazine was a story about how we show our love for our pets, dogs, cats, fish etc..., and the unusual things we do or say to them. Well, while I read this article I realized this could have been just as easily written about a bunch of llama owners I know. Imagine That! Well, here are some of the highlights and interesting insights I found while reading this article. Just make your own mental notes and check marks where things apply. Remember the old saying, "If the shoe fits..... Wear it!"

Let's get started. In the Vet & Pet category:

- 1 Who visits the Doctor more at your house, you or your llama? Survey Says.... 58% of pet owners go to their Vet more than their own people Doctor.
- 2 Staying in the Medical category: 73% of pet owners say they would go into debt in order to provide medical care for their pets. Been there and done that one, even got the official tee shirt. We had one llama that broke her two front legs when she was just three days old. To make a long story short, she ended up at the Vet School at Auburn Univ. Saved her life, made a sizeable contribution to the Vet program and 9 years later she is doing great even though she has steal plates in both front legs. I'm sure most of us can share similar stories of indebtedness.
- 3 How much do you spend on your pets? Has it doubled in the last few years? In the last ten years in the U.S., we have doubled the amount we spend on our pets from 17 billion to 34 billion. That is with a B!

What happens when you leave town for a little good old rest and relaxation. Assuming you're fortunate enough to get out of town after spending all that money. Do you still worry about the critters back on the old llama ranch? Did you realize that 54% of all pet owners (llama owners included) think of their pets at least a few times a day when they're out of town and 21% of us think of their pets all the time. As for me, I worry that our llamas could be running wild through the streets of Cohutta unsupervised.

1. 67% of pet owners say they feel guilty about leaving their pets at home.
2. Just ask yourself if you do this. Talk to your dog on the phone or leave the little guy a message on the answering machine, 33% of dog owners say they have! Go Figure.... Not me?
3. How about greeting cards for your pets.... 46% say they have sent their pets greeting cards or better yet, their pets have sent them one. I'm not sure about your dog, but my dog isn't that smart or he is just being cheap. To tell you the truth, I'm not even sure if he knows when my birthday is. I feel a little short changed on this one. My pets don't send me cards or letters. No one to blame but myself. Probably my fault since I haven't taught them to read or write yet. But next time I'm out in the barn I'll let my llamas know I want some cards and letters this year. Maybe I'll just paint my birthday on the stall door so they can all see it

Have you ever imagined yourself all alone on a desert Island? Then imagine you can only choose one companion to share the experience? Well, half of all those surveyed said if they were on a desert island they would choose their pet as a companion over a "human" companion. Not sure who my wife would choose. Talking about companionship issues, nearly half of all pet owners say their pets listen to them better than their spouse. Now why isn't that number higher?

How about these stats:

1. 78% of pet owners (llama owners included) talk to their pets in a different voice from their normal voice. This number would surely be higher if baby llamas were included in the survey.
2. 90% of pet owners wouldn't consider dating someone who didn't like their pets.
3. How much quality time do you spend with your llamas? Emphasis on the quality, I don't think bean collection is considered quality time either. 63% of pet owners say they spend more than two hours of quality time per day.
4. Since we are on the 63% number. How about this! 63% of pet owners admit to kissing their pets. I don't know who they talked to in this survey, but this number is low... 100% at our barn.
5. Finally, how well do you know your neighbors? Apparently not as well as you know your neighbors pets. Because 52% of pet owners know their neighbor's pet's names better than their neighbor's names.

In conclusion, on another more recent trip, while in the hotel room one evening I called home to check on the status of things at the home front. Just wanted to be sure that the llamas were fed, barn cleaned, the dog was let out, and the house hadn't burn down. All

the usual stuff. Just before I hung up the phone, I told my son to tell the Llamas I said "Hi"! Well, I knew the llamas missed me..... OH Well!