

Dear ALSA Members,

Most of you probably saw the survey conducted by the ILR earlier this year, which specifically asked whether ALSA and the ILR-SD should merge into one association. On April 10 the ILR Board of Directors sent ALSA a letter about the results of that survey and expressed a desire to talk about working together and healing old divisions. While less than half of the survey respondents indicated they were in favor of a merger, we felt that the goal of reuniting the show community was worthwhile and took it under serious consideration. After all, ALSA did not want the division in the first place and has never stopped supporting the Registry by requiring ILR certificates for llamas entered in ALSA shows.

On May 3 we accepted the ILR Board's offer to meet and inquired about the specific topics to be discussed. While we waited for their response we received numerous comments from ALSA members expressing their opinions about the possibility of a merger. Those opinions ranged from being strongly in favor to being just as strongly opposed. Candidates running in the ALSA election were questioned by many members about their position on the issue and their responses undoubtedly influenced the votes of some members.

While waiting for a response from the ILR we sought professional advice about the legal and financial aspects of a merger and what information and documents should be reviewed in order to make a prudent decision as to whether to attempt a merger or some other mutually beneficial arrangement. During that time we also saw ALSA being bashed in social media and unfairly blamed for the division that has existed since the creation of the ILR-SD.

The ILR Board did not respond to our May 3 letter until July 26, after we posted a statement on Facebook to defend ALSA against the inaccurate and unfair allegations being spread. That response again mentioned exploring the feasibility of joining together. On August 12 we sent the ILR Board of Directors a good-faith invitation to meet with us to discuss ways in which ALSA and the ILR could work together to strengthen and unify the llama show community. We proposed that both parties provide financial information and corporate documents as advised by our attorney. We also requested that both organizations make specific proposals on how to best work together for the mutual benefit of our memberships.

We are sorry to say that the ILR Board has declined our invitation. In an August 26 letter, ILR President Debi Garvin stated that the documents mentioned in our letter "would be needed if the two organizations were seriously considering a merger; the ILR Board and our members are not at the point yet." Apparently the ILR Board's interest in a merger has disappeared now that they have sold the ILR's most valuable asset and no longer need ALSA to bail them out. We realize this will come as a disappointment to many of you who are sincerely interested in forming a strong and united show association and we will not give up on achieving that goal. In the meantime, if you want to help end the unnecessary division that exists in the llama show community, please contact the ILR Board of Directors and ask them to dissolve the ILR Show Division and go back to being a Registry that we can all be proud of.

Your ALSA Board of Directors

Paul Schwartz, President
Jim Doyle, Vice President
Cheryl Juntilla, Secretary
Debbie Andrews, Director
Allen Davis, Director
Susan Leslie, Director