

Dennis Rabe

One evening in March of 2003, my wife, Vicki, and I saw the “I Love Alpacas” commercial on TV. I turned to her and asked if she had ever thought of raising alpacas, and she replied that she had, but thought I wouldn’t be interested. By January of 2004, the first alpacas arrived at the ranch, and we have been busy alpaca ranchers ever since. We have been fortunate to receive wonderful guidance as we began our journey into the alpaca world from Amanda Vandebosch. It is safe to say that without her help, and kindness we would not be where we are today. In an effort to “pay her generosity forward”, I look forward to the opportunity of serving on the CALPACA board, and helping our industry move forward successfully in the coming years.

Background: I was born and raised in Prunedale California. March of 2009 will mark my 20<sup>th</sup> year with Graniterock, a construction materials supplier for the South San Francisco Bay Area. During my years with Graniterock, I have had the opportunity to serve on the board of directors for Rotary District 5230, The Central Coast Chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association, the Northern California Chapter of the Interlocking Concrete Paver Institute, the Salinas Chamber of Commerce, Business Advisory Committee, and the Salinas Valley Builders Exchange. The



Dennis and Vicki with a bundle of fun!

experience gained from serving on

these boards, and various committee assignments, has provided me the tools for managing budgets, improving existing programs and growing membership.

On the ranch, Vicki, and my parents take care of the day to day operations on our 16 acre property, and I join in after work and on the weekends. Our family really enjoys the opportunity to work together as we grow our herd and make improvements to the ranch. We have 40+ alpacas, now, with more than half of them agisted for our clients. With the help of Amanda and Dale Davis, I have learned the ropes of alpaca shows, serving in all the positions available, including the halter show superintendent for Alpacamania, the Monterey Pronk, Alpaca Fest West, and the Southwest Regional Alpaca Show. While working the shows, I have met the nicest group of people there are... alpaca owners. My favorite question for them is “so what did you do before you had alpacas?” We all come from doing something else before we had alpacas, and it is this wide variety of experience that makes the possibilities for our industry so promising. We have the opportunity and obligation to continue to build on the good work of those who have worked so hard to create the alpaca industry as we know it. I promise to give my best for my fellow members of CALPACA.