

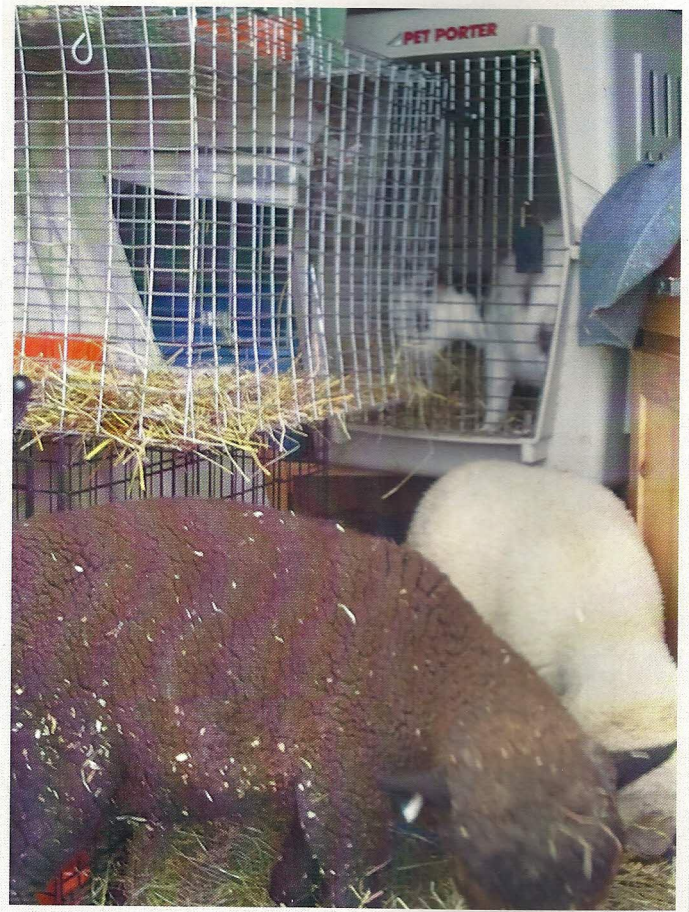
News From the Volunteer State: Tennessee



For years I've contemplated moving south, and finally those thoughts became reality over these last six months. A lot of planning in my head, then on paper, then real life actions, when I located the farm I'd been searching for in March of this year. I needed something that was not only perfect for myself and my father (we decided to move out of Wisconsin together), but the place needed to be suitable for a herd of about a dozen Fell ponies!

One of the deciding factors in the move was my desire to continue stewarding this very rare breed I love so much. Since the economy downturn on the tail end of 2008, expenses in the north to raise any sort of livestock far outweighed the profits in meager years. I needed to devise a solution to this if I was to continue as a breeder. Combine economics with my lack of enthusiasm for harsh winters and the signs began to point south.

Overall, Tennessee offered a good combination of mild winters, an extended growing season versus WI (more hay & grass!), lower cost of living, and a landscape that more closely resembled northern England than our prior farm. The location is also more central to the rest of the country, which I hope will expand the area I can serve when introducing newcomers to the breed.



"How I fit 3 rabbits, 2 goats 2 sheep & a cat into the living quarters of my horse trailer on the trip down. The back of the trailer was full of horses!"

So while I was planning the overwhelming logistics of relocating two households and a working horse farm 600 miles away, I was also gearing up for my third season at the Bristol Renaissance Faire. This year I received approval for a shop expansion, so while my mind was thinking 'Move', my body was busy digging and planting and painting and mulching a 1500 square foot garden. This became the new home of our "unicorn" Kira (expertly played by Lunesdale White Heather) and her group of animal friends. There were baby bunnies, pygmy goats, a parrot, koi fish, my miniature donkey Fiona, and a new addition which soon became my favorite, Molly & Mojo, a breeding pair of Olde English Southdown Babydoll sheep. Heather was also joined by 'Bella' (Mustahevonen Rheged's Lemon Drop), a beautiful 9 year old mare who came to Dream Hayven around the middle of May. Bella played the very important role of Fell Pony ambassador (giving Bodini a break this summer).

Altogether, I was nearly collapsed by the time the nine week span of working the faire was done, and I had only 10 days to commence moving to Tennessee. Somehow, mostly thanks to very good friends, it all

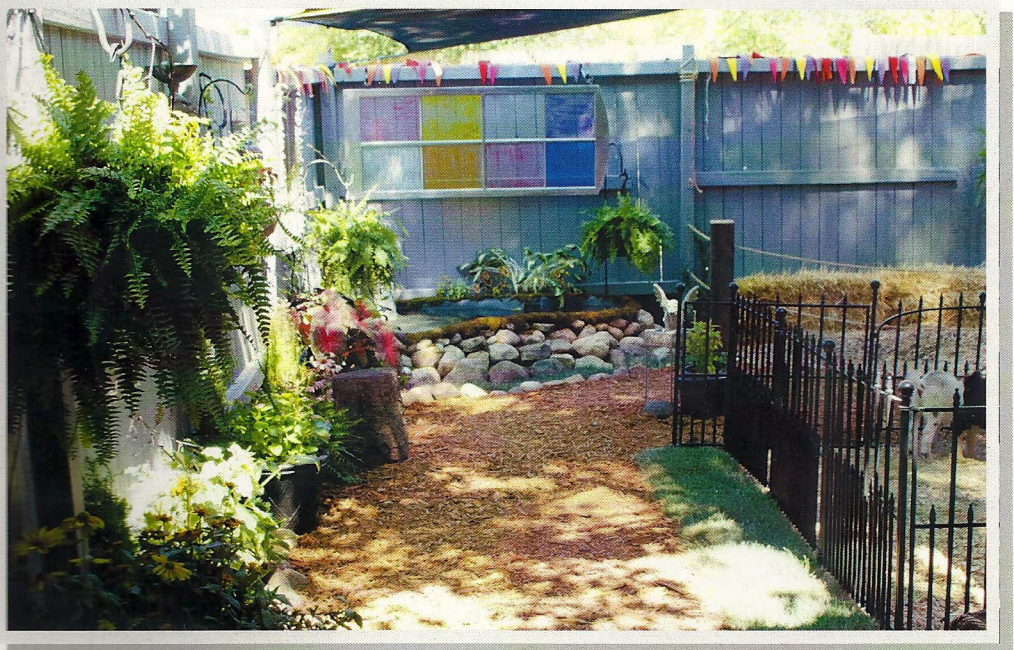
came together seamlessly (believe me though, stress levels were high!). We moved in two trips, household first, livestock second. I'll never forget pulling onto the farm that dark night, hauling 14 animals of various species in my own trailer, with another hauler ahead of me with the remaining 8 ponies. Twelve hours one way, but in true Fell Pony fashion, they behaved themselves beautifully and settled into the brand new place better than I could have ever expected.



The ponies all settled in their new home

I look forward to accomplishing several projects here on the farm over the next six months, so that by spring I can begin offering a lesson and training program specifically geared towards Fells, in addition to expanded consignment and sales services. I am excited for the future and the possibility of introducing Fells to a whole new area!

Wishing you all the best,
Melissa Kreuzer
Dream Hayven Farm
(Near) Nashville,
Tennessee



Kira's Garden is from Bristol Renaissance Faire. This was known as Kira's Kingdom where Heather played Kira the Unicorn