

A WHOLE NEW KIND OF SHOW GOAT

By Maggie Leman

I got an unusual call one Wednesday from David Zimmerman, President of Southern Shows, Inc. This is the company that organizes those fabulous home and garden shows. The Southern Ideal Home Show was set to open in 2 days at the NC State Fairgrounds in Raleigh, NC. One of their feature exhibitors, Cyndy Allison of Willow Tree Landscaping, wanted some goats to put the finishing touch on their display; the theme was an Irish Crofter's Cottage and Garden. Being only 30 minutes from the fairgrounds and not wanting to miss such an opportunity to promote our herd and club Dan and I hopped in the goatmobile and headed for the Fairgrounds.

It was obvious the display was going to be awesome, with a darling authentic thatch roofed cottage, tiny yard and garden, and a burbling stream and pond all set into a boulder strewn "hilltop". Amazingly enough this was built indoors, right at the entrance, first thing that the public would see. We discussed what was needed to make the goats comfortable and secure for the weekend and found out that Cyndy and her daughter Tori were no strangers to caring for livestock. We agreed to deliver a couple of goats on Friday evening. We both contemplated the perfect choices for this event and amazingly arrived at the same conclusion. We all know how adorable kids are; we thought a doe and her twins would be perfect. We also thought another adult would help keep the young mother sane. We both hit on the perfect combination at the same time, Tussy Mussy had the perfect twins, a caramel buckling, Sweet William, and a gray agouti doeling, Sweet Melissa, and Tussy was still very close to her dam, Starr who pretty much doted on her "grandkids". Cyndy and Tori were delighted with the news that we would be including a couple of cute kids.

We finished our chores on Friday and loaded up the little family, grandma, daughter and grandkids, called Cyndy and set out. She met us in the parking lot very excited and said she had built the perfect little pen, and she couldn't wait to meet the goats to see how they liked it. We unloaded the goats' baggage and put the collars and leads on the girls and handed Cyndy and Tori the kids. The does walked in like the queens they are, got lifted into their weekend digs and settled in. Cyndy had put in several large rocks for them to play on and Sweet William promptly demonstrated his rock climbing skills. Cyndy told us to listen to the local radio station on Saturday morning and she would be sure to mention the goats and our herd. It was exciting to hear our farm name in the radio as we enjoyed our coffee!

Mid Sunday afternoon we returned to take the goats home. The show would be ending at 5:00, but we have chores to do then and Cyndy wanted to make a fast get away to a surprise birthday party for her son. She said they had been a major hit and they had given out all of the pamphlets we had given them. Cyndy said the 2 questions of the weekend had been, "Are they pregnant?" and "Is that rock real?" We made new friends, learned some stuff about landscaping and making a garden pond and our goats were perfect ambassadors where no goats had gone before.