Focus

Sharing Her Gift With The Rest Of The World

By Dianne Ryder,
Editor in Chief

Linda Dummars is a program analyst in the Defense Contract Management Agency's Resource and Organization Management Team, and those who have worked with her know she has a ready smile and helpful attitude. But unless you've attended events like the recent National Day of Prayer observance or various retirement ceremonies, you may not know her true talent is singing.

Dummars has been with DCMA headquarters since December 2006 but has actually had 13 years of combined military and civilian service. As to how long she has been singing, Dummars says, "as long as I can remember."

Her desire to develop her gift has led to the production of a compact disc of inspirational music. "My love for music and ministry is what propelled me to want to spread the word, to encourage and inspire others through song — that's my gift, and that's the way I wanted to share it with the rest of the world."

Dummars has worked with producers in the past but when asked about "connections," she says, "Interestingly enough, I've always met [producers] through friends, associates, church members — I never had to seek out anyone, it has just fallen into place, and that's how I know it has been ordained to happen — not so much in my timing or as quickly as I'd liked it to have happened."

Linda Dummars, who has been singing for "as long as [she] can remember," sings at her workstation at DCMA headquarters. (Photo by Dianne Ryder, DCMA Public Affairs)

A couple years ago, when friends at her church in South Carolina urged Dummars to distribute a CD, she did so and sold a few hundred copies. Nevertheless, Dummars would like to "complete" the compilation, as the current CD has only seven selections of what she describes as "heart songs, or songs that inspire and generate hope."

"I want it to have mass distribution," said Dummars, "and if you're paying the same price for my CD as somebody else's, I think the quality should be just as good." Since Dummars has sung at many weddings before, her friends wonder whether she will sing at her own upcoming nuptials in August. "Not at the wedding … because everyone probably expects that I will, but I wanted to change it up a little bit, and my groom doesn't even know, but I'll be singing at the reception — so it'll be a surprise performance."

You can keep up with further news on Dummars via her social network page: **www.myspace.com/lindadummars.** C

Focus

One Man Making a Difference

By Ann Jensis-Dale,
DCMA Public Affairs

Patrick Cassidy is not one to sit still for very long. Just ask his girlfriend, Kymberly Duarte, or his friends and coworkers at Defense Contract Management Agency Hartford. According to them, he is a man on the move.

Cassidy volunteered for a contingency contracting administrative services deployment to Iraq in February and will be there until August. "He felt a strong desire to help our troops in any way he can," said Duarte.

Prior to his deployment, he received a promotion as a management analyst and transferred to DCMA Hartford from his position as a quality assurance specialist at DCMA Aircraft Propulsion Office Pratt & Whitney. Although his workday is long, Cassidy felt he could still do something more for the men and women serving in Iraq.

He holds a fourth degree black belt in Jujitsu and decided to offer basic training classes for anyone who was interested. Following his first class, word spread among the troops and subsequent classes quickly grew in size. Now fondly referred to as the "Hammer Jammer," Cassidy teaches techniques that are useful in any combat situation.

Patrick Cassidy, right, DCMA Aircraft Propulsion Office Pratt & Whitney and DCMA Hartford, is currently serving on a contingency contracting administrative services deployment to Iraq, where he's teaching basic Jujitsu classes.

"[Cassidy] is teaching the troops the basics of Jujitsu, but what he teaches can save their lives," said Duarte. "If they are shot at, they will know how to fall swiftly and safely in a dive roll; if they are captured and taken from behind, they will learn how, with the littlest pressure, they can finagle their way out of a hold and put the enemy in a hold under their control," she continued.

According to Duarte, word about Cassidy's Jujitsu training continues to spread through military bases in Iraq. Commanding officers at nearby camps are exploring training classes with Cassidy for their personnel. C

Patrick Cassidy, kneeling, teaches basic Jujitsu moves to service personnel in Iraq.

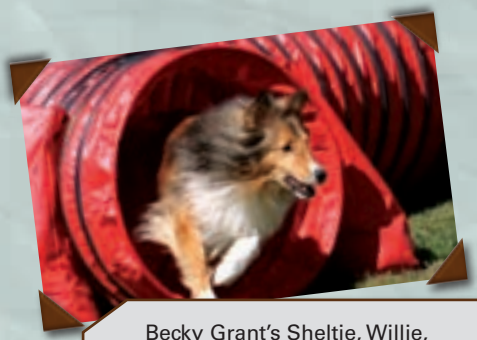
Now fondly referred to as the "Hammer Jammer," Cassidy teaches techniques that are useful in any combat situation.

Focus

DCMA Employee's True Passion to Train Shelties

By Julia Wyant,
DCMA Public Affairs

By day, Becky Grant is an information technology specialist in charge of software acquisition policy at Defense Contract Management Agency headquarters. Grant is working to set up the DCMA Software Center, and her department is responsible for policy, instructions, guidance, training and tools associated with software management. But after hours, Grant embraces her true passion: she is an agility instructor and trains and competes with her Shetland Sheepdogs or, as they are commonly known, "Shelties."



Becky Grant's Sheltie, Willie, exiting a tunnel on an agility course. (Photos courtesy of Becky Grant, DCMA Headquarters)

Grant has four Shelties: TJ, the oldest, who is retired from agility competitions; Willie, who got Grant started teaching dogs agility and entering them in competitions; Bunni; and Nikki, the youngest, who will begin training this summer.

During the competitions, the judges measure the length of the course and how long it should take the dog to complete it without any mistakes. The dogs follow their trainer's voice commands and shoulder, head, eye and foot movements for cues as to how they should navigate the course.

According to Grant, it takes approximately two years of training before the dogs are ready to begin competing. The hardest agility skill for the dogs to learn is navigating the "weave poles" because it isn't a movement pattern dogs perform in nature. Weave pole training involves rows of thin poles placed at 22-inch intervals through which a dog must "weave" its body to get to the other side. Successful training can be accomplished in as little as four or five minutes a

Becky Grant and her Sheltie, Bunni, on an agility course.

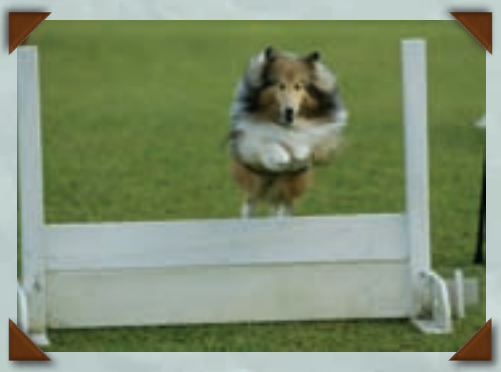
Becky Grant's Sheltie, Willie, competing in the a novice-level weave poll agility course.

day over a period of several months. Grant and her dogs began attending classes seven years ago. When she and her husband got Willie, he was a very active puppy and they realized he needed more than just playing in the yard; he needed a job. "For that matter, we needed a hobby that wasn't just sitting in front of the computer or the television — we wanted to become more active," Grant said. Her breeder suggested agility training, and, after taking the first class with Willie, they were hooked and continued training with all of their dogs.

For the first year and a half, Grant watched from the sidelines while her husband worked with the dogs because she had been injured in an accident and didn't think she could participate. Inspired by a woman who had muscular dystrophy and was showing dogs while on crutches, Grant decided to give it a try and compete using the United Kennel Club's provisions for handicapped trainers. "With some lifestyle changes and the recovery from the accident, I was able to do it, and we now compete in several venues in addition to UKC."

"We are continuing to progress in proficiency in the agility trials," Grant said. "My goals are not the same as those of the competitors' you see on "Animal Planet." My first goal was to see if I could do it; my second goal was to see if I could make course time, because I hated to have handicapped times to qualify." Now Grant says her goal is to continue to improve her performance with Bunni and introduce Nikki to agility.

What Grant enjoys most about competing is not winning but meeting people, working with her dogs and witnessing a dog's excitement when it knows it's going to a competition. "Outside of work, this satisfies me on so many levels — it gives me friendship, it gives me companionship with my dogs, it gives me physical challenges," Grant said. "People who enjoy their dogs would be amazed at just how much fun this is." C



Becky Grant's Sheltie, TJ, prior to his retirement, jumping over an obstacle on an agility course.

Focus

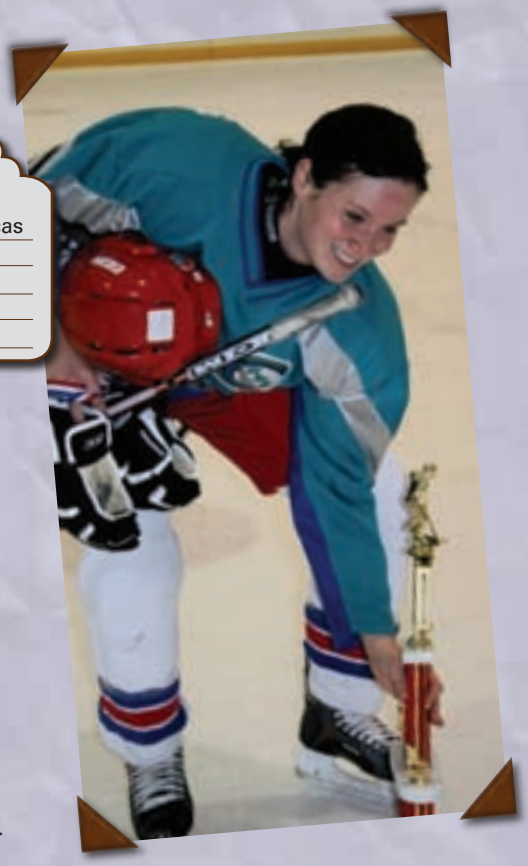
DCMA Americas Employee Has 'Other Life' On Ice

Mark Woodbury,
DCMA Public Affairs

A game known for bone-crushing hits, 100-plus mph puck speeds and "extracurricular physical activities" may not be the first place one expects to find any perfectly sane Defense Contract Management Agency employee spending free time. Factor in that the employee is female, and a few stereotypes can be heard shattering.

Lindsay "Big Red" Armstrong, a DCMA Americas contract administrator, started playing competitive hockey at age 10, and she can't remember a time when she didn't want to be involved with the sport. "As far back as I can remember, I have always been interested in hockey. I recall my parents asking me about what kind of activities or clubs I wanted join when I was young," she said. "They suggested things like dancing and gymnastics, but I wanted to play hockey just like my big brother."

> "There is something about the adrenaline rush I get from playing hockey that I love."
> — Lindsay Armstrong



Lindsay Armstrong, DCMA Americas contract administrator, began playing competitive hockey at age 10. (Photos courtesy of Lindsay Armstrong, DCMA Americas)

Armstrong said she and her brother were always rounding up all the other kids in the neighborhood to get a game of street hockey going. Rain, shine or blizzard, Armstrong's early years were fused with hockey and everything it had to offer.

Later, as she got into her high school years, however, she was disappointed to find there was no women's hockey team. True to her personality, rather than accepting this as an insurmountable hurdle, Armstrong decided she would try instead to make the men's varsity team. "I think it was this moment that caused people to finally take notice and acknowledge the need for a girl's team," she said. "The very next year we had a girl's team that I then captained all the way to a silver medal in our first season."

Contemplating what it is about the sport that drives her to be a part of it at all costs, she said simply, "There is something about the adrenaline rush I get from playing hockey that I love. Game time is 'my' hour where I put everything out of my mind and just play. You definitely can't beat the excitement of scoring an important goal, winning a tough puck battle on the boards or winning a quick footrace to the puck."

Armstrong currently plays for the Gloucester Moonshine Competitive "A" women's hockey team out of Ottawa, Canada. She plays the center position because, as she puts it, "I love being in the middle of all the action, and I love to take a wicked face-off."

Lindsay Armstrong, third from left, on offense during a hockey game. (Photos courtesy of Lindsay Armstrong, DCMA Americas)

Fully admitting her luck, Armstrong said that she has not sustained any major injuries that have kept her off the ice for more than a week or so — "knock on wood." She said that being one of the taller and stronger players on the ice gives her an edge when it comes to the physical aspect of the game.

When her DCMA coworkers find out she plays hockey, Armstrong said people are generally surprised. "I guess it's because I still have all of my teeth and my nose isn't crooked or something."

Hoping to pass along the same supportive spirit and hours of sacrifice her parents made for her to pursue the sport, Armstrong intends to do the same for her children one day. "I think my time of sacrifice will come when I return the favor to my kids when they pursue their interests — hopefully, hockey."

Lindsay Armstrong, center row, fourth from left, with members of her winter league hockey team, the Gloucester Moonshine Competitive "A" out of Ottawa, Canada.

A key lesson that has influenced Armstrong's everyday life through playing hockey is the principle that the stronger, faster, more skilled team doesn't always win the game; it's the team that wants it the most. "'Leave it all on the ice,' one of my coaches used to always say. I try to follow that philosophy in my life as well — give it your all in whatever you do and come away having no regrets," she said.

For anyone interested in taking up hockey, Armstrong says, "Go for it and don't let anyone hold you back. These days, there is always a place to play hockey for anyone at any age." C

Armstrong's Advice to a Beginning Hockey Player

When you buy your first hockey stick, cut it pretty short. Too many beginners become dependent on a long stick for poke-checking because they find it hard to keep up. A shorter stick enables you to stick-handle closer to your body and forces you to get in closer when checking another player, encouraging you to play a more physical game.

Once you have your stick right, practice stick-handling off-ice with a tennis ball until your arms fall off.

Focus

It's a Small World After all

By Ann Jensis-Dale,
DCMA Public Affairs

"It's a world of laughter, a world of tears, It's a world of hopes and a world of fears. There's so much that we share, that it's time we're aware. It's a small world after all." — Richard M. Sherman and Robert B. Sherman

Air Force Maj. Donna Pilson's current assignment as Defense Contract Management Agency Irvine's commander has its challenges. She bears responsibility for more than 50 personnel spread across 40 square miles of California and contract support to more than 250 government contractors. The contractors produce such key parts as actuators for the F-22 *Raptor* and F-35 *Lightning II* joint strike fighter, external fuel tanks for the F-18 *Hornet* and parachutes for our troops.

Despite her challenging assignment monitoring more than 5,000 contracts valued at more than $3.8 billion, Pilson still finds time to lead a Brownie Girl Scout troop for 15 girls in Irvine, Calif. "My daughter, Kiana, is on her fourth year as a Brownie Girl Scout. I was a Daisy [Girl Scout] leader one year and a Brownie co-leader for one year in Woodbridge, Va. Here in California I [have been] a Brownie co-leader so far for a year," said Pilson.

Pilson's troop of second- and third-grade girls all attend College Park Elementary School in Irvine. Throughout the year, the troop participates in various activities, including several community service projects voted on by the girls. "We focus our activities on helping children, making new friends, learning math and getting along and working together," said Pilson. Selling Girl Scout cookies is one of the best-known fundraising activities worldwide, but did you know that you can still support this effort without actually eating all those cookies? The "Cookie Share" program allows patrons to purchase cookies and donate their boxes of cookies to a specific activity chosen by the troop. "Our troop decided on donating cookies to deployed DCMA personnel in Kuwait and Iraq after they heard my story of receiving Girl Scout cookies when I was deployed," said Pilson.

The girls sent 86 boxes of cookies to DCMA personnel, exceeding

Army Capt. Chris P. Hornsby received cookies from the Brownie Girl Scout troop Maj. Donna Pilson, DCMA Irvine commander, leads.

Army Staff Sgt. Bruce D. Bogertey received cookies from the Brownie Girl Scout troop Maj. Donna Pilson, DCMA Irvine commander, leads.

their initial goal of 75 boxes. Each case included handwritten notes and cards to DCMA men and women expressing their appreciation for the deployees' work. "The girls were ecstatic to get letters, cards, certificates and photos in return from our folks for the cookies," said Pilson. "It felt really good getting a letter because that meant they cared about the cookies and really liked them," said Kiana.

Pilson gave a presentation to the Girl Scout troop highlighting her experience on her recent deployment as executive officer to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander and Combined Joint Task Force 76 Air Component Coordination Element in Bagram, southeast of Charikar in the Parwan province of Afghanistan. "During one of my presentations to them, I explained the military's role in Afghanistan and how our efforts helped remove the Taliban. One of the results was that more schools were opened and girls could attend schools now. The troop thought this was cool and wanted to help," said Pilson. The girls purchased and sent school supplies for 50 girls attending school for the first time in Afghanistan.

The Girl Scout Troop also selected to study Afghanistan as part of the annual International Day activities. Again, Pilson was able to share her experience with the girls. "One of the most interesting items to the girls was the wearing of the Afghan Burka. They found it so interesting how it hid the women's identities and feminine characteristics." Another highlight was learning the Arabic alphabet, basic words and phrases and serving traditional "khatai" cookies. C

"Our troop decided on donating cookies to deployed DCMA personnel in Kuwait and Iraq after they heard my story of receiving Girl Scout cookies when I was deployed."
— Maj. Donna Pilson

DCMA Irvine Commander Donna Pilson, left, with the members of the Brownie Girl Scout troop she leads in Irvine, Calif.

Focus

It's all Part of my Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy

By Dick Cole, Chief, DCMA Public Affairs

The mobilization began just after dawn. The fog and mist were still hanging in the air as the bus pulled into the parking area and began discharging its passengers. Quickly, a small crowd began to gather, greeting the passengers with clipboards, handshakes and the flash of cameras. The individuals leaving the bus were royalty, but not in the conventional sense of rulers and potentates. They were some of the biggest names in rock music.

Dick Cole, DCMA Public Affairs, at Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp in Columbus, Ohio. (Photo courtesy of Dick Cole, DCMA Public Affairs)

They had arrived to be counselors at Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp, and I was a "camper."

We were outside on an uncharacteristically steamy September day in Columbus, Ohio, checking in for the first-ever one-day RRFC. Prior to this experiment, RRFC had always lasted five days and was held only at one of four locations: Los Angeles, New York City, Las Vegas or London. The goal was to attempt to cram as much of the weeklong experience as possible into a single day. I was there as part of a group of 80 campers to try my hand at being a rock star.

RRFC takes people of all ages, from all over the world and, after an audition and a few hours of rehearsal in a camp-assembled rock band, puts them on stage to perform before a crowd at a venue like LA's House of Blues. For this one-day camp, the bands were going to perform in a "battle of the bands" with the winner announced during a Journey and Def Leppard concert at Columbus' Germain Amphitheater.

My instrument is the drums. I began playing at 13 after six disastrous years of squeaking away on clarinet, and I played in band and orchestra throughout junior high and high school and then sporadically until 2004 when I resumed taking lessons and started playing regularly with a praise and worship band at my church. That experience was certainly satisfying

During one rehearsal break, I got some private drum instruction from both Simon Kirke, drummer for Bad Company and Free, and Artemus Pyle, former drummer for Lynyrd Skynyrd.

and enjoyable, but I still yearned for a taste of the rock star life. At about $10,000, not including travel costs or hotel, the standard five-day camp is no frivolous indulgence and is out of my price range. I thought I could afford the one-day camp in Columbus at a cost of $2,000 plus travel and hotel.

All campers were to come prepared to play two songs for their auditions, which began immediately at 8 a.m. The 10-song audition song list included: "Gimme Some Lovin'" by the Spencer Davis Group; "Sweet Home Alabama" by Lynyrd Skynyrd; "China Grove" by the Doobie Brothers; "Sister Christian" by Night Ranger; "Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy" by Bad Company; "Alright Now" by Free; "Sweet Child of Mine" by Guns 'n' Roses; "Once Bitten, Twice Shy" by Great White; "Pretty Woman" by Ray Orbison; "Brown Sugar" by the Rolling Stones; "Rock 'n' Roll" by Led Zeppelin; "Smoke on the Water" by Deep Purple; and "Can't Buy Me Love" by The Beatles. These songs were on the audition list because a member of most of these bands was a counselor at the camp. I came prepared to play "Sweet Home" and "China Grove."

After playing "China Grove" for my audition, I was assigned to a band. Our counselor was Michael Lardie, keyboard player for '80s super group Great White. We received a tent assignment for rehearsals. With barely time for a "hello," we began the process of selecting a song from another list to learn, rehearse and perform in the battle of the bands later that evening. After a brief discussion, because we had a female lead singer, the band decided to rehearse "Hit Me With Your Best Shot," an '80s rock standard by Pat Benatar.

The rehearsals were intense. Lardie would make suggestions about ways to improve our performance and to perform with flash and panache to impress the judges in the battle of the bands. As we practiced under Lardie's tutelage, big stars would drop by to pose for photos, listen to a song or even join in and play. During one rehearsal break, I got some private drum instruction from both Simon Kirke, drummer for Bad Company and Free, and Artemus Pyle, former drummer for Lynyrd Skynyrd. On another break, VH1Classic VeeJay Lynn Hoffman came by and interviewed me for a program they were making about the camp.

Besides Lardie, Kirke, Pyle and Hoffman, other stars present for the camp included: Teddy "Zig Zag" Andreadis, keyboard player for Guns 'n' Roses; Jeff "Skunk" Baxter, guitarist with the Doobie Brothers and Steely Dan; Fred Coury, drummer with '80s "hair band" Cinderella; Spencer Davis, guitarist and founder of the Spencer Davis Group; Mark Farner, lead singer of Grand

Members of Cole's Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp band take a bow following their performance. From left: Parke Fisler, John Rose, Cole, Ro Sweat and D.J. Mathis. (Photo by Jaye Cole)

Funk Railroad; Sandy Gennaro, drummer for Cyndi Lauper; Kelly Keagy, drummer for Night Ranger; and Gunnar Nelson, one of Rick Nelson's twin sons and member of the band Nelson.

Finally, after hours of practice in the heat and humidity of our rehearsal tent, it was time for the day's special treat. We all got an opportunity to meet and greet the members of Journey and Def Leppard, who were performing that evening in concert at the amphitheater. We met our heroes, got our pictures taken with them, shook their hands and got their autographs. Following the meetings with the two bands, we quickly changed clothes and got ready for the battle of the bands.

Each band took the stage outside the amphitheater in random order based on drawing a number from a hat. Ours was the fourth band to perform before the judges. Local radio station personalities, a newspaper entertainment reporter and a VH1 executive served as members of the judging panel. More and more people arrived for the evening's concert and stopped to watch and listen to the RRFC bands perform.

Cole's band greets members of British group "Def Leppard." From left: John Rose, Cole, D.J. Mathis, Ro Sweat, Def Leppard guitarist Phil Collen, Def Leppard guitarist Vivian Campbell, Mike Nelson, Kelly Stroud and Parke Fisler.

By the time our band took the stage, there was a substantial crowd. I frequently am a spokesman to media as part of my duties as a public affairs specialist, but playing in front of that crowd of people was far more unnerving! Once we completed our turn on stage, the members of the band listened to the remaining bands perform and then made our way to our seats for the evening's Journey and Def Leppard performance.

Following Journey's set, as the stage was undergoing reconfiguration for Def Leppard's performance, RRFC founder David Fishof and two local radio personalities took the amphitheater stage to announce the winners of the battle of the bands. No, it was not our band, but we all had a fantastic time during our camp experience.

Attending the camp motivated me to join a local band — Point Blank — that plays in clubs and lounges and performs for private parties, corporate events and weddings. Two of my RRFC band mates, lead singer Kellie Stroud and lead guitarist D.J. Mathis, both joined a Sacramento, Calif., band, Highway 20.

Therefore, attending RRFC was my motivation to return to performing in a band and made music one of my other lives. I am still a pilot, photographer, book author and college professor besides performing my "day job" with the Defense Contract Management Agency, but, as they say, that's another story. C

Dick Cole, DCMA Public Affairs, at Rock 'n' Roll Fantasy Camp in Columbus, Ohio. (Photo courtesy of Dick Cole, DCMA Public Affairs)

Focus

New Addition to a Growing Family

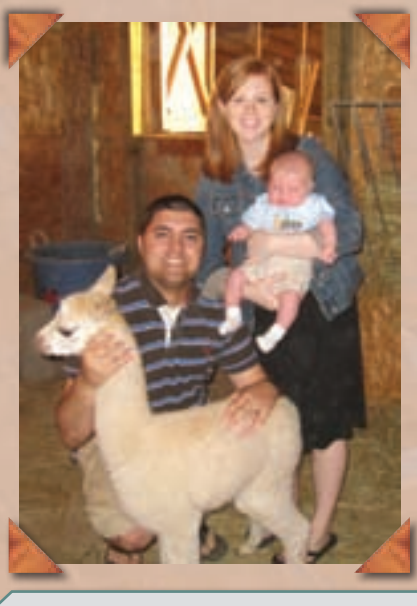
By Mark W. Delp,
DCMA Ohio River Valley

Jason Edem, an acquisition process improvement specialist, DCMA Ohio River Valley Business Support Team, enjoys assisting his parents in running their Caesar Creek Alpaca Ranch.

Edem became involved with alpacas when his parents bought their first one nearly four years ago. The ranch's herd has since grown to seven alpacas with plans to increase the herd to 20. Recently, the family welcomed the second cria — a baby alpaca — which was born at the Caesar Creek Alpaca Ranch June 13.

Alpacas originate from South America and are the smaller cousin of the llama. Alpacas are raised and known for the quality of their fiber, or wool, which is lightweight, soft, durable, silky and luxurious. While alpaca wool is similar to sheep's wool, it is warmer, not prickly and has no lanolin, making it hypoallergenic. The alpacas are sheared once a year, and a typical adult alpaca will produce 5 to 10 pounds of wool each year.

There are more than 100,000 alpacas in the United States on 11,000 registered farms and ranches. Ohio is home to 19,000 alpacas, which come in many different natural shades and colors. C



Jason Edem and his wife, Alia Edem, and son, Alexander Edem, with Izzabelle, the baby alpaca. (Photo by Vicki Edem)

Alpacas at Caesar Creek Alpaca Ranch, owned by Jason Edem, acquisition process improvement specialist for DCMA Ohio River Valley Business Support Team, and his parents. (Photo courtesy of Jason Edem, DCMA Ohio River Valley)