

Investing in llamas and plenty of gratuitous Fu action

By **JOE BOB BRIGGS**
Syndicated Columnist

For two years now my buddy Buster Peebles has been trying to get me to invest in llamas. I'm not making this up. Buster's got this ranch outside of Divide, Texas, that he's turned over to a herd of about 50 llamas, and he's breeding new ones all the time. If you've never seen one, they look like a giant goat that's been bred to a fat jackrabbit. They stare at you like Tony Franciosa hopped up on cocaine, and if you move too quick around 'em, they snap their neck straight up like a rattlesnake. It's like some animal that God didn't quite finish.

Anyhow, Buster was in town last week for the Fort Worth Fat Stock Show, where he shows his llamas and tries to win blue ribbons so he can charge some idiot \$10,000 for some llama sperm. Ten years ago nobody in Texas had any llamas, but today there's 27 million llamas in West Texas alone, and you know why? "I think these llamas are going to TAKE OFF in the next 10 years," Buster told me. "One of these female breedin' llamas brought a hunnerd thousand dollars last year."

I don't know if you're acquainted with any of the Peebles, or maybe you know some llama breeders yourself, but what that means is, everybody's been talking too much about llamas down at the barber shop. "Somebody's gonna get rich off these things," they been saying, "so might as well be US."

I need to take time out right here to talk to those of you who read this column every week and know that sometimes I make stuff up. I swear to God, ranchers all over Texas are walking around with beer guts hanging out over their belts, prancing proudly forward, clicking their tongues and yanking on a leash attached to an alpaca sweater with legs.)

So I went over to Fort Worth

with Buster to watch this year's Llama Exposition. See, the problem with the llama market at this particular point in time is that people keep walking up to Buster and the other llama breeders and saying, "So what do you use them things for?"

And Buster says, "Pack animal."

And they just kinda nod and chew a little bit.

"State parks department uses llama pack trains to go up in the desert mountains."

"Uh—huh," they say.

"And, course, they make great pets for kids."

And then they nod and chew some more.

So what's needed is a llama competition to show people just EXACTLY what the highly-trained llama can do. And so that's what they did. The llamas had to go through a 10-step obstacle course, including walking over a log, ducking under a steel rod, walking across a piece of plastic, and climbing into a horse trailer. It was truly awe-inspiring. Buster's prize llama is named Oprah Winfrey, and Oprah was a little persnickety when it came to the grueling back-up-through-a-gate competition. So Buster only got fourth this year.

"Buster," I said, after it was all over, "tell me again what you're gonna use these llamas for. It's a pet, right?"

"This ain't a pet," Buster said. "This llama's an INVESTMENT."

"Y'all are all just gonna sell these llamas to one another, aren't you? You're just gonna trade em back and forth."

"Luanne and me are gonna RETIRE on the money we make from these llamas. Joe Bob, do you realize this is one of the oldest pack animals in the world? Royalty used to have 'em."

"Buster, people got PICK-UPS now! People don't need pack animals!"

"That's the kind of negative



"Night of the Demons," is the movie that asks the question "What happens when your date turns zombie on you and starts eating off parts of your body?"

thinking that'll keep you from ever amounting to anything in life."

"Buster, I think I'd rather own a hunnerd thousand dollar pick-up than a hunnerd thousand dollar llama. If the llama dies, you can't sell it for parts."

I guess that was the moment when Buster cleaned my clock. We used to be pretty good friends, too. Buster, if you're reading this, I'd like my hat back, even if it's all stomped flat.

Speaking of demon-faced creatures with no apparent purpose, "Night of the Demons" is a new flick just out from the guys who made "Witchboard," and it's your basic Spam-in-a-cabin Halloween plot, about some California nerds who use "party" as a verb all the time and think it'd be fun to pop some brewskis in an abandoned funeral parlor that was built on an ancient Indian burial

ground when 17 or 18 people have died horrible grisly deaths, including one Indian brave who was found "gnawing on a papoose." He probly choked to death on the leather. After about a half hour of plot, the cast starts turning into sex-crazed grasshopper-headed "Solid Gold" dancers, especially Angela, who wriggles around on the floor like Tina Turner while her body forms into a toad-monster. And, of course, everybody who enjoys sex MUST DIE.

No "Witchboard," but fairly decent. Eight breasts. Eight dead bodies. Seven undead bodies. Giant katydid breather monster. Demon disco dancing with strobe. Closeup eyeball-gouging. Deadly neck-twisting. Mooning. Aardvarking in a coffin. Heart staking. Demon roasting. Head rolls. Arm rolis. Tongue rolls. Gratuitous dead-rat dangling. Seance Fu. Demon Fu.

Flamethrower Fu. Crematorium Fu. Razorblades—in—an—apple Fu. Drive-in Academy Award nominations for Mimi Kinkade, as Angela, for doing a Stevie Nicks dance routing as a demon-possessed sex monster; Linnea Quigley, as Suzanne the demon, for doing the whole movie in a pink tutu hiked up to here, seducing a fat guy, and saying "Maybe I'm in the mood for pork tonight"; Hal Havins, as the obnoxious fat guy necessary to the plot of every horror movie, for saying "I can't LIVE without my music"; Alvin Alexis, as the terrified son of a preacher, best actor in the film, who trembles through the whole movie and says "We're dead; we've all died and gone to hell"; and Joe Augustyn, the writer, for the line "Would you like a fudge log?"

Two and a half stars. Joe Bob says check it out.

And Mom said, "Thank goodness I don't have to figure THAT out anymore."

You can just take it out of the price of my airplane ticket, if you would, POR FAVOR.

Wisdom on Parade

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I'd rather not know exactly how many Frequent Flyer miles you have. This is nothing personal. In fact, I think it's wonderful that you qualified for triple miles on Delta and American, scored some Avis upgrades, and now you have enough miles to fly round-trip business class to Canberra, Australia, on Qantas. What I'm worried about is, when is everybdoy going to start USING these trips to Canberra? So far I've met 368 people with Frequent Flyer mileage in the six figures, and only one person who's actually cashed in. (That guy, by the way, used the miles to fly his family from Dallas to Miami, and he ALREADY regretted it. After all, he was already 25 percent of the way to Athens, and

he WASTED his miles on a domestic flight.)

Why has the whole country turned into nerds because of a few free handouts? I'm gonna start asking people that sit next to me on airplanes to discuss the MS-Dos system on an IBM compatible PC. It's a much SEXIER conversation than this.

"This is a 1,342-miler. I make it twice a month."

"Wow! You must be racking up some Frequent Flyer miles!"

"Me and the wife are going for the 500,000 mile Bangkok-Hong Kong-Helsinki package on JAL."

"I think I've heard about that one. Does it include the donkey act in Helsinki?"

"We have no idea. But we just thought, what the hail, FREE FLYING, might as well take it."

"Otherwise you never would

have seen Helsinki."

"Nope. Or, we could fly to Vegas and back 27 times. But the wife told me she don't want to do that."

"That would be fun, too."

You guys realize what's gonna happen, don't you? The airlines are putting off dates on Frequent Flyers now like "Use 'em in three years or lose 'em." This means that three years from now, ALL of us will be going to Canberra, Australia, at the same time! But that's not even the worst part.

The worst part is that NONE of us will want to be there. We'll all be over there wandering around among the sagebrush staring at the same koala bears and saying, "Nah, see, I HAD to come. I had too many Frequent Flyers NOT to come."

Didn't we already learn this

lesson with S & H Green Stamps in the '50s and '60s? For a long time it seemed like a great idea to go to the grocery store, leave with a basket of food and a 10-foot strip of stamps, stay up all night pasting them in a book so Mom could get a free toaster and Dad could have that baby-blue windbreaker he was always wanting.

And then one day everyone just quit collecting green stamps. It might have been the day the discount grocery down the street grew up — the one that didn't give away stamps but DID have prices that were a nickel lower on coffee and canned asparagus. Or maybe it was the day Dad took a big trash can full of broken electric can openers, bent toy wagons, and ripped T-shirts that said "Kick Me" on the back, out to the Dempster Dumpster.

"What if we didn't go to the Green Stamp store anymore?" Dad said.

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