



# The Goat Source

The Goat Source Newsletter  
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Here is your Jan. issue of The Goat Source Newsletter. Another year has come and gone – wasn't it just June the other day? This year has brought changes – my first ever Boer Cross kids were born and I was very pleased with them. They have grown well and the girls are all pregnant (fingers crossed!). The wethers brought a decent price when I sold them, much better than my straight bred kids did.

My old man, Mosaic LZ Capital Asset, died this last week. He was 10 years old and had been doing poorly. The cold weather really was hard on him. He leaves behind many daughters and grand-daughters in my herd to carry on. I always appreciated the excellent feet he threw and the wonderful milk production. He will be missed.

We have had a couple of really nasty days of wind, with blowing and drifting snow. The weather on the TV says it will be 55 degrees by the end of the week! If you don't like the weather, just wait a bit - it will change!!

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your friends.

## What's New This Month?

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## Watering In Cold Weather

Keeping your animals watered in the cold winter weather can be quite a challenge. I love my automatic heated waterer's but what if you don't have electricity to where the waterer needs to go, or you don't have the money in the budget for this expense? I have found a variety of innovative (sometimes inexpensive) solutions for watering in winter.

When I lived in Laporte, my pens were fairly close to the house and the utility room on the house had a hose hookup from the hot water heater. I would go out and break the ice in the big black rubber tubs and dump them, then fill about half full with cold water, from the outside tap. I then ran a hose out the door from the utility room and filled the rest of the tub with hot water. The goats would drink their fill quickly while the water was still hot. This worked but wasn't ideal, I would wind up with a mountain of ice chunks around the water area and draining the hose was a mess and had to be done without fail.

Here is a cold weather tip for you folks that don't have electric to your barns or pens for bucket heaters, from Tonya DeMarco of Smokey Summit Ranch. She uses several 5 gallon cooler jugs, the kind you take on a picnic when you are having lots of people or the kind that utility trucks and road crews keep on their trucks. Place in the pen, tied to a fence or panel where the goats can't tip it over, and fill. Pluck the thin layer of ice out in the morning and add a little hot water. It has held down to 10 degrees at night so far. Thanks for the hint, Tonya (<http://www.smokeysummitranch.com>). I took this from the Yahoo Pygora list, a great place for owners of Pygoras to meet other breeders

From the Yahoo Packgoats group, here is a solar watering system.

This water system gathers rain & snow melt off the roof of the barn, stores it in a couple of barrels inside an insulated closet with a glass door facing south, and keeps a bucket full via a float valve. It is heated by the sun so even tho it does freeze if the weather gets really cold, it thaws pretty quick when the sun comes out. A rain gutter along the roof gathers the runoff and directs it into a 30 gal plastic barrel. That fills up and siphons into an old 40 gal water heater tank. A hose goes from the bottom of that to a float valve attached to a 3 gal bucket. The bucket is inside the closet, with an opening big enough for a goat to stick his head thru. A simpler system would just use one 55 gal barrel with a hose bib installed near the bottom. The bucket could be insulated as well. Thanks to Jeff Ross for this system.

Here is another solar powered system from the Packgoats group. You may need to swap back and forth between two batteries when you are not getting enough sun light. Just charge one at the house while the other one is discharging, and swap out as needed.

Supplies needed:

15 watt solar panel---\$80

7 amp panel controller----\$30

400 watt 12VDC to 120VAC inverter-----\$40

Deep cycle 12V battery the more amp hours the better---\$60-\$150

Thermostatically controlled pipe heating cable/tape (the kind used to keep pipes from freezing)----\$20-\$80

Misc. wood-----\$0-\$40

Start by wrapping (be sure to tape and secure) the pipe heat cable/tape around your tank, the length of the cable/tape you buy will be dependent on the size of your tank. Make sure you get thermostatically controlled cable/tape, with as low a wattage (you can get them at around 36 watts) as you can find. Then build a box (plywood, wafer, steel, etc) that is 3"-4" longer, wider, and taller than than your stock tank. place 3 or 4 supports in the bottom of this box to set the tank on, making sure that the supports will place the tank flush with the top of the box. Fill the voids in the bottom of the box, up to where the bottom of the tank will sit, with insulation (fiberglass, foam, etc.)

Place the tank inside the box and center it. Fill the void around the tank with insulation, and build a lid that covers the insulated portion around the tank, being sure to leave a hole for the heater cable/tape cord. While you are at it, building a partial lid for your stock will increase the efficiency of the system, leave a hole in this lid just big enough for your animals to access the water.

Mount your solar panel in a location that will get the most hours of sun light through out the day (Southerly facing). Hook up the 7 amp controller to the solar panel, the battery to the controller, the inverter to the battery, then plug in the tank to the inverter and you are in business. Be sure to securely house the controller, battery, and inverter away from animal access and weather. If possible place the tank inside a shed or barn or at least in a location that provides a wind break. Thanks to Josh Leavitt from the Yahoo Packgoats group.

I saw a watering systems for cows that takes advantage of the heat in the ground and the "thermo siphoning effect" that causes warmer water to rise to the top and cold water to sink. Two large pipes are sunk in the ground at about a 10 foot depth and connected at the bottom. They are tapped into the pressurized water system with a float valve. One of the pipes is capped off and the other is fitted with a drinking bowl. The pipes have about a 60 gallon capacity (you need at least this much to keep the water from freezing solid). and the float valve keeps the waterer full. The water from the main water pipe comes into the pipes at ground temperature, and the slightly warmer water rises to the top. The water at the top becomes chilled and sinks to the bottom. The main problem with this system, is that you need a lot of animals drinking out of it for it to work. I'm not sure it would work with just a few goats, as they wouldn't drink enough to keep the thermosiphon working. The pipes coming out of the ground need to be well insulated, also. Has anyone tried a system like this? Did it work? I would be interested to know! A major worry with electric waterers is that if the power goes out during a cold snap, your waterers will freeze up, possibly bursting your pipes! These are only some of the innovative ideas for watering in cold weather. If you have more ideas, let me know. We are always looking for more great ideas to help make taking care of our goats, better, easier and faster!!

### **New Year's Resolutions**

- 1.I will put an automatic waterer in the kid pen.
- 2.I will build my dog a new house – the old one is ratty and ugly!
- 3.I will cut more firewood during the summer, not wait till when I actually need it!
- 4.I will tattoo my kids before they weigh 100 pounds!!
- 5.I will lose 20 pounds (YEAH RIGHT- DREAMER!) I had to put this one in – isn't it the number one NYR?

### **This Month's Quiz...**

New format for the quiz - I will give a prize for the first correct answer and the answer will be published in the next months newsletter. So, on to the quiz...

What is a ruminant? Why are they different than other mammals?

### **Classified Ads...**

I Love Goats! Pocket Knives Laser Engraved folding pocket knife (opens to 6 ¾ inches). Black composite handle with pocket clip. Every goat person needs a good knife!! Order today - \$6 each plus S&H. Discount when you order more than one. Need a good fund raiser? Order these for resale OR get your own design laser engraved (custom orders must be ordered in quantities of 100 or more). Quantity discount on all custom orders!! [The Goat Source](http://www.goatsource.com) I can work with you on custom orders – just let me know what your needs are!

## 12 Days Contest Winners

Crystal Emmerson was the only entry to the contest. She wins a free ebook plus a Christmas Goodie pack just for entering. Thanks Crystal for playing!! There was no grand prize winner - nobody answered all of the clues.

### THUMP, BANG, WHOOP, AND HOLLER

by Connie S. Reynolds

[autumnfarmboers.com](http://autumnfarmboers.com)

Ravenswood, WV

I really love our baby monitors down at the barn. You can hear everything that goes on and I can't tell you how many times I have ran over the hill to save a kid or help a doe deliver. So, baby monitors are great. But, sometimes... Okay, sometimes you just get tired of hearing too much. Oh, I don't mean tired of delivering kids or saving a kid that has escaped into the wrong stall and that doe is trying to kill him. So help me, sometimes you think the does are remodeling your entire barn. At times you hear so much thumping and banging and you find yourself asking what was that? Was that a saw? I could have sworn I heard a drill, too. And, when you run down to see what on earth is going on. All the does and kids look at you so innocently and they are so quiet. You wonder if you went to the right barn.

Sometimes you get really tired of frantically running over the hill to the barn and finding absolutely nothing wrong. I mean, I don't want something to be wrong, but why on earth did I just about break my neck running down an icy hill because it sounded like the end of the world had just arrived in my barn and only I could save all my critters, and then they just turn their heads to stare at me, asking, what is her problem? You can just see them thinking, Why is she in her house shoes? There's three foot of snow outside and she's in her house shoes! And, no coat! These humans sure are wacky.

Up at the house, listening to the baby monitor, you really would believe that somehow the goats had got hold of Lee's tools and they were sawing and hammering to make the stalls the hay they wanted them. Why I say Lee's tools, is that I don't have any tools except my trusty duct tape. I can just about fix anything with duct tape, including patching clothes. Anyway, in between all this sawing, hammering, and drilling you hear, the goats are whooping and hollering at each other. In goat language it sounds like they are hollering, "Pass that saw over here. This main post in the barn is totally unnecessary. And, can you believe where they put that beam? I'm cutting it out. Anybody got anymore nails? I'm almost out." I really expect to see the barn totally rearranged when I go down.

But, what am I talking about. They don't need tools. Tools are for the inept, not for a goat.

Have you ever noticed a goat's upper lip? It has a type of split in it. They can maneuver those lips to take apart anything you put up in a barn, particularly if you are like me and tie everything or duct tape it. They can take apart in minutes what you have spent hours in tying up.

I remember one time tying up our pvc pipe grain feeders along the fence. Several all neatly tied up with my favorite hay twine, ready for the next feeding. Sure it took me a couple of hours to get everything just right, but it was worth it. I let the goats in the feed area to get fed, came back a half hour later to shut the gate after they had left, and what do I find? Yep, my feeders all neatly untied and lying on the ground, string still through the holes. I would challenge any Boy Scout to tie a knot, any knot, and I bet a goat, particularly a kid, will have it untied in minutes. It's mind boggling. These scientist are crazy to think that ape's are the smartest because they have those fingers and thumbs. Goats are ten times smarter with that little split lip of theirs. You've should have seen all the little grain feeders I tied up in the barn. Yep, in minutes they all were down. The only thing to discourage a goat from untying something is to put so many knots in it that they get bored. That's why all the things I have tied up look so weird and why I have to use so much string.

So, why on earth do the goats in the barn need to make such a racket? I really think it's just to drive me crazy. I can see them down there egging each other on to make a noise that will make me show up at the barn wild eyed and sure that someone is in their death throes. Why not turn the baby monitors off so I can get some rest? You've got to be joking! Someone might need me. I might miss something. It's like being addicted to your favorite TV show. You've just got to see what happens next. With a baby monitor, you've just got to hear what happens next, particularly in kidding season.

With all my complaining about them, I have to admit that I now have a nice extra bonus in listening to the baby monitors. One day I heard this continuous soft little whimpering sound. Intrigued, I ran down the hill to discover what it was. There, in winter, was a house wren. At least that's what I think it is. A tiny brown bird with dark brown streaks and a long narrow beak for eating bugs. It was making this little whimpering sound as it hunted through the cobwebs for bugs to eat. Since I never knock down the cobwebs, it was finding a feast of dried bugs, and was happily making it's busy little whimpering sound as it worked. Now I thought they left in the winter, but evidently this guy decided to stay because of the feast he found in our barn. He can walk up and down walls, even hang upside down on the ceiling checking out interesting webs. Very social, he will fly over to where I am bottle feeding to say Hello and then go on his way, searching out the cobwebs. At least twice a day he has to break out in a beautiful song. So, without those baby monitors, I would truly miss a wonderful concert.

But, those goats... Right at the moment I am listening to a squealing sound. You know the sound children make when they are pretending to drive a car and it's going around a tight corner. You wonder what on earth that is? Ha! One of my does absolutely has to make that sound before she brings up a cud to chew. It sort of makes your hair stand on end until you realize it's only Bernice bringing up her cud.

Now what was that? It sounded like someone started up a microwave down there. Is that popcorn I hear popping and a TV being turned on? Good Grief. I'd better run down and check this out. If they are going to throw a party, I don't want to be late!

THE END

### **Answer to the January Quiz:**

Answers will be published in February. Be the first with the correct answer and win a prize. Email answers to me at [The Goat Source](http://www.thegoatsource.com).

### **Helpful hints:**

When you do some landscaping and wind up with odds and ends of the treated landscaping timbers, save them. I used a small scrap to nail to the post by the buck pen gate. When the gate is closed, it rests on the timber, preventing it from sagging. Because it is treated, it will last a good long time.

Did you spray your gate latches with WD40? I did, and in the last storm where everything got coated with ice, the latches stayed clean and unfrozen. I make sure the safety chains with the snaps on the end are well coated and when I snap them shut, I put the open spring part facing downward, so it doesn't collect water in the groove.

I put a heat lamp up above my desk in the milk barn and turn it on while I am milking. I have two cup warmers hooked up also - one is for the teat dip and the other is for the wash water. Unfortunately, my cup of tea still gets cold. Along with the two heat lamps in the ceiling, it makes the barn a wee bit warmer and milking much more comfortable. It isn't warm enough to be a health hazard to the milkers, from getting to warm and then going out into the cold. In the summer, I switch out the heat lamps for yellow bug lights.

That's all for this month,...  
See you next month!!  
Leslie, The Goat Source  
The Goat Source  
13611 NCR 9  
Wellington, Co 80549  
(970) 568-9622  
<http://www.goatsource.com>  
[goatsource9@cowisp.net](mailto:goatsource9@cowisp.net)