

Felton's resident camel will join the parade

By DONNA KIMURA

Sentinel staff writer

FELTON — Horses in downtown Felton are a common sight, but a camel?

It's true, at least today. Look for Jabal during the Felton Remembers parade.

The one-hump, year-old animal belongs to Diane Dalton, who also has llamas and rare-breed sheep.

"We just instantly fell in love with him," Dalton said. "He is gentle, loving."

He doesn't conform to the bad reputation that camels have for spitting and being hard to handle, she said.

The San Lorenzo Valley resident has had Jabal, a Moorish word for mountain, for about six months.

The parade will be his first official public appearance, but some people may have seen him with Dalton walking through the woods around Henry Cowell State Park.

"They're flabbergasted," said Dalton. "Most people have never seen a camel, period. Some have only seen them in zoos."

People then fire a series of questions about Jabal and marvel at how sweet he is, according to Dalton.

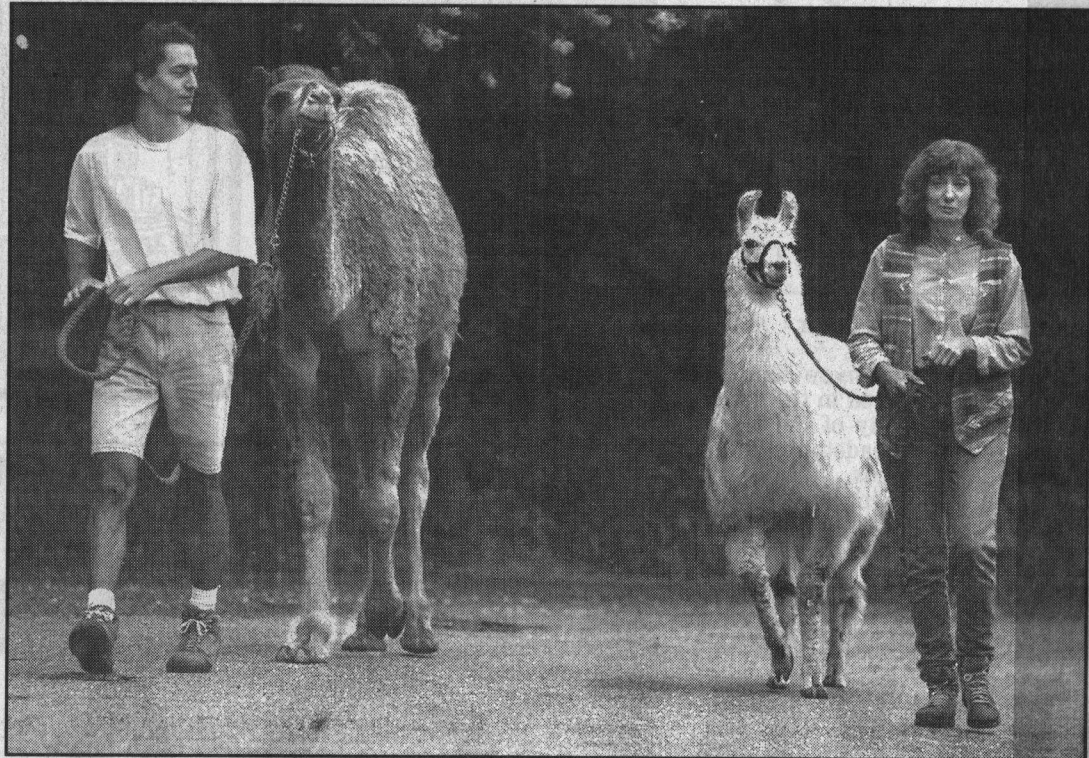
Unlike stubborn Fido, Jabal lies down on command.

Dalton was interested in having a camel after seeing one at the Dragonslayers ranch, a place where disabled individuals work with animals. The folks there wanted a second camel.

Their deal to buy one from a camel farm in Colorado, however, included a second animal. The 7-month-old camel was sold to Dalton.

He was unaccustomed to people, so Dalton worked daily with him for three to four months to build his trust.

He stands about 6 feet tall at the hump and is,



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Jabal the camel and Rio Blanco the llama out for a walk with Dustin Yoder and Diane Dalton. The four will be in the Felton Remembers parade today.

of course, camel color.

Still too young to be ridden, Jabal will be led in the parade by Dalton's son, Dustin Yoder. They will be part of the Camel Crossing entry, a belly dancing group. Dalton will lead Reo Blanco, her heavy-wool llama and grand-cham-

pion of the Santa Cruz County Fair.