

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, March, 2008

The following poem was written by fifteen year old High school student and ADMC member, Katie Skeels, of Ponoka, AB. Biology 20 students at Ponoka Composite High school were given the project of doing a 15 minute presentation on a living organism of their choice. Katie "knew" what her topic would be and even though she says she procrastinated somewhat, she gathered up some pictures and videos from the Alberta Donkey and Mule Club Library, wrote up this poem in record time, and dressing the part, delivered her presentation. Katie says that while most presentations were lucky to make 10 minutes, hers went on until the bell finally rang at 40 minutes. Her teacher, Mr. Fez, found her presentation on mules so interesting that he had not noticed the time slipping by! Katie's efforts, enthusiasm and passion were rewarded, as she was the only student out of 42 to receive a mark of 100%!

"Why a mule? " He asked, with a smile upon his face.
So I hooked my leg around the horn and sought the perfect place.

To begin my muleskinner reasoning about this noble steed.
And why I chose to ride a mule when faced with a trying deed.

Now I guess I could start with basic philosophy,
About their sure-footedness and inherited ability.

To work harder under worse conditions than any creature I know,
Don't matter if it's the desert, the mountains, or belly deep in snow.

You see, a horse will step into a bog without a second glance,
But a mule simply will not take that chance.

They will fool around a barb wire fence like a horse is prone to do,
But I've never seen a mule get cut; I can honestly say that to you.

You let a horse get in the grain and he'll founder on the stuff.
But mules by instinct simply know when they've had enough.

Some mules will buck and spook, but they will always be alert.
And while they fool around, they still make sure they don't get hurt.

A mules' a tough critter and has never been know to fail.
And will often last the longest on the toughest trail.

They would stay plumb fat on grass so short a horse would starve to death.
They never lather easy and are seldom short of breath.

Their gaits are easy on the back, their trot is not that rough.
You see my friend, there is some evidence, that mules have got the stuff.

Mr. Washington felt horses ate too much, worked too little and died too young. While a mule was the opposite and at the age of 18, his life had just begun.

"Why a mule?" he had asked and a reply was deserved. I had one for him that I had reserved...

He sat upon his short-eared animal trying to pick a course. I started off ahead, up the cliff, and asked him...."Why a horse?"

It look's to me that Katie's obvious talent with poetry might just have rubbed off from her grandma, Hazel Rust. Hazel has recorded her humorous and sentimental poetry on several CD's and now finds herself being sought after more and more by entertainment events including Cowboy Poetry Festivals. I'm sure that if grandma ever runs out of material, she won't have far to go as I think Katie might just be following in her footsteps. Thank you Katie for sharing your story and poetry with us!

Don't forget to check out our website at www.albertadonkeyandmule.com for up to date news on COMING EVENTS!

Marlene Quiring



Keith Nicholson, accompanied by Bonnie Potter. Driving Keith's mule Bud and Jim Potters mule Jose'.



Katie Skeels riding Fancy Ass in the Rocky Mountains at Ya Ha Tinda Ranch, west of Sundre, Alberta. Fancy Ass belongs to Jerry Malcher of Bashaw, AB.