

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, Oct 2008

**Semi Annual Meeting**, Sunday, October 19, 12:30 lunch, 1:30 meeting at the Reynolds – Alberta Museum, Wetaskiwin. Members and friends, bring your ideas and thoughts on how we can further promote and protect our favorite long-eared equines! We have had a very full and productive year of activities. My lament would be that so very few members actually take advantage of the clinics and events that we offer. Often we have more non-members participating than members. While that does appear that we are being successful in educating the public about longears, I wonder how we can afford to *not* have our members educated as well. There is always more to learn and often more effective and safer training programs than what we may have learned years ago.

The ADMC sponsored Jerry Tindell Clinics held in August were definitely successful educational events. Two, 3 day clinics were necessary in order to accommodate the many equine owners that wanted to participate. Equine Wise Services of Tofield, AB. hosted the clinics at their facility. Good weather prevailed as most of our time was spent in the outdoor arena.

As organizer of the clinics, I am deeply grateful for the insight, wisdom and helpfulness of Jerry Tindell. His program is safe, sensible, well presented and maintained by Jerry's personal willingness to help beyond any time frame.

We took to the clinics 3 mules, My personal saddle mule, 25 yr. old Smokin Joe,' [Who in no way knows that he's 25!] "Joe" is basically a good mule that in the last few years has been giving me grief to trailer load. He never was "great" at loading from the time I owned him. In essence he has been telling me for years that he had a problem with it and it finally grew into Joe pulling away from me [Commonly know among mule-skinners as "mule – sking"!] and running off when we approached the trailer. Jerry taught us how to work on correcting this, which involves going back to teaching our animals to lead better and follow our direction. He explained and then demonstrated the groundwork we needed to work on and how we needed to develop our timing. It will take consistent repetition on my part to build a new behavior pattern with Joe, but at least now, I know how to go about it so that Joe and I both win!

Our other two mules also had some problems. Roy's mule, Clip Clop, who attracted a lot of "fans" at the Mane Event in Red Deer this spring, had recently developed a very dangerous problem with saddling. Again, right from the beginning, there were signs that Clip Clop was not "good" with saddling but not knowing how to fix this, we ignored it and hoped it would get better. It is very apparent to me that these little things never go away by themselves and will grow into much bigger problems. Jerry says fear in the animal is always at the root of the problem and he works on releasing that fear by using movement in the animal.

Jerry worked with Clip Clop and Roy and explained that Clip Clop's behavior was fear-based and how with movement and pressure, Clip Clop could learn to release this fear and become soft to handle and the saddling issue would not be a problem

anymore. We saw a huge change in Clip Clop once Jerry had worked with him in the round pen, a big difference from the last time Roy went to saddle him and had a 1500 lb., 16 plus hand bucking bronco at the end of the rope! Jerry showed Roy how to work with Clip Clop on the ground and then Roy went on to saddle him in a quiet, safe manner and go for a ride. Thanks to Jerry!

The third mule was my dear Scarlett, raised, as was Clip Clop by my previous husband and myself but unlike Clip Clop who was sold as a yearling and then bought back later, Scarlett never left home. She was started at a mule Colt Starting Clinic and even though she was ridden at the clinic and behaved very well under saddle, she took a lot of time and effort to accept the "approach" of the saddle. That appeared to scare her and we obviously never did succeed in getting her over that fear. As a result she went through 2 trainers and was sent home each time with bad results. The last few years, I drug her to more Clinics in the hopes of some help for her and she got help but never enough so that we could progress with her. We just didn't know what to do with her anymore. Then along came Jerry Tindell. Again, he worked his "magic" on her, which looks so simple if one could just get all the "feel" and "timing" that Jerry possess when he works with these animals. It wasn't too long and Jerry had Roy up and riding on Scarlett in the round pen. Again, Jerry taught us the tools for helping Scarlett to get over her fears and re-started on a road to success.

We hope to see Jerry Tindell at the Mane Event again next year and he will definitely be coming back to Alberta to continue teaching his safe, effective training and retraining programs for mules, horses and donkeys. For more on Jerry, check out his site at [www.jerrytindell.com](http://www.jerrytindell.com).

Watch for reports on Tees Longears Days and Team Mule's participation in the Telus Battle of the Breeds, next month! See you ALL at the meeting.

Marlene Quiring



Jerry helping participants with ground work



Jerry helping Donna Chittick direct her mule over an obstacle



Roy riding Scarlett in the round pen



Jerry riding Colleen Campbell's donkey Tinsel