

TEES SHOW 2009

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, October, 2009

Your date to remember: October 18, 1:30 p.m., Clymont Hall by Devon, ADMC Semi-Annual Meeting. Bring snacks and ideas and let's have a great meeting! Everyone welcome.

The 20th anniversary of Tees Longears Days didn't proceed exactly as planned but was still a very successful show.

An afternoon and evening of rain on Friday left the infield too muddy to use, and. Classes had to be held in the center of the grassy camping area. Campers were moved back, lawn chairs were moved closer, and the spectators seemed to enjoy being right next to the action. However, because of slippery grass and numerous gopher holes, all classes had to be kept down to a walk or trot.

Moses, a mule owned by Reg and Hazel Rust and ridden by three generations of their family, was the show's honored guest. He was draped with a blanket of roses to commemorate 20 years of continuous attendance at the show and was introduced to the crowd on both days.

A number of special awards were presented to mark the 20th anniversary show. To Reg and Hazel Rust - a collage of photos of Moses throughout the years. To Merv Hollihan - a gift certificate for all his efforts in not only making and maintaining all the show's trail and class equipment but also being the arena "boss" and showing besides! To Ethel Hollihan - a silver club belt buckle for her many hours of work in organizing the shows over the years. To Russ Finlay - a silver buckle for 14 years of terrific announcing, humor, and commentary to keep the flow of the show going. To Ron and Eileen Rust - a gift certificate for all their assistance, including organizing the little tyke's games, and for Ron's contributions as show clown.

Recipients of awards for their performance at the show are as follows: Junior Spirit awards, for participation, assistance, and performance - Brittany Rose (a.k.a. Smiley) and Amy Rust. Donkey Awards went to Ron and Alice Todd and Meghan Forberg. The Mule Award went to Merv Hollihan. A special award was given to the youngest competitor, four year old Andi Hope-Rapp, riding her mom's tall appy mule, Stella.

If there was a winner for the most photographed competitor, it would have to be Ken Quick and donkey Spider. Last year Spider was dressed up to look like Ken in the Handler and Equine Look-alike class. This year Ken was also in costume to look like Spider, complete with donkey ears, tail, blackface, and white muzzle.

We were happy to see four new families competing who came all the way from southern Alberta. We were also very pleased to welcome back some of the original competitors from past shows, including Dwight Beard, Jerry Malcher, Brian Sutherland, and Ray MacNeil, all with teams. On the Sunday, several of the teamsters hooked up six mules and gave everyone a thrill, even executing a tight turn around the grassy infield. Dwight Beard of Calgary ably handled this hitch. Don and Mary Henderson, originators of the Tees show were able to attend and take part in the daily Grand Entry. The Mule Drill team had a tough time finding anywhere to have a practice, but under the direction of Marlene Quiring, they were able to pull off a pretty decent Drill performance for the spectators on the Sunday afternoon.

Show Secretary Ethel Hollihan was glad to see the return of more youth competitors this year. "It has always been our main objective to keep Longears Days a family show, with no admission and no camping charges so that families can afford to come, and to have lots of fun and games for the youth. The family that plays together stays together."

Ethel also reports receiving an e-mail after the show that in part read: "We just want to say thanks for Tees Longears Days. Our little girls had a wonderful time and it's nice to see activities made so family orientated. We look forward to next year."

A used tack sale was held for the first time on Saturday afternoon, with four or five club members reporting good sales. Tickets were sold out for the excellent Saturday night supper provided by Bob Ronnie Catering. The live and silent auction of donated items raised a substantial amount of money for club activities, with auctioneer Russ Finlay providing as much humor as any standup comedian. Musical entertainment followed the auction, with a Cowboy Church service on Sunday morning.

The club wishes to sincerely thank the judge and the ring steward, Laverne and Carolyn Schmidt, and all the sponsors who provided prizes and gift certificates. Also special thanks are extended to our gate persons for the show, Leanne Allan and Twyla Daly.

My deep thanks go out to Donna Quick who wrote most of the newsletter this month. Also thanks to Colleen Campbell, our capable Show Chairperson and her assistant Ethel Hollihan for collaborating with Donna on the newsletter.

Feedback from the show has all been positive and "a good time was had by all." Russ Shandro relayed to me his story of Vern and Betty, a couple that he met at the show that drove from Fultonvale to watch. The couple was celebrating a special occasion and all summer they had been going to her Dressage events. She decided that this weekend it should be hubby's turn to pick a place to go and since he had read about the Tees Show in Horses ALL, he said "we are going to Tees!" Russ says that this pleasant couple approached him just prior to the Grand Entry one day with all kinds of questions about the trainability and handling of mules. Russ, being Russ, told the gal "well here, find out for yourself." and then offered, Red Mullrooney the mule, for the lady to ride in the Grand Entry. Betty did so, smiling and waving to the crowd. Russ says that the couple stayed for the whole day thoroughly enjoying themselves and left giggling about the wonderful adventure they had had. Now he's wondering if they might not come back with a mule next year! In my opinion, Russ would have to be dubbed as one of our best "mule ambassadors." He has attended all of our club events, including taking his mules to Calgary during the Stampede for demonstrations. There and everywhere, he has been greeting and deputizing young and old alike with a commemorative sheriff's badge to promote mules and donkeys. Watch out for him in your community!

And lastly our sincere condolences to Russ and Heather Shandro and family on the loss of Red Mulrooney who because of failing health had to be put down soon after the Tees Show. Red lived to a very ripe old age and gave the Shandro family many years of pleasure, trophies, ribbons and memories that will be forever cherished. We will all miss him.

Have you hugged your longears today?
Marlene Quiring



Our youngest competitor, Andi Hope-Rapp on Stella with the "rest of the family"



Our honored mule Moses with his blanket of roses in the Grand Entry, Owner Reg Rust leads his youngest granddaughter Emma Rust. Ethel and Merv Hollihan carry the Alberta and Canadian flags in the parade.