

Alberta Donkey and Mule Club News, September, 2009

There is much to report about this month. There are always so many events crammed into our short Alberta Summers. In the next few days, Team Mule will be back at Spruce Meadows to defend their 2008 Telus Battle of the Breeds Championship. This was a victory that is probably still baffling to people that have little real knowledge of mules and their capabilities. The significance of TEAM MULE winning the 2008 event, has, and will, go a long way in putting to rest the many inaccurate but often repeated old wives tales about them being stupid, stubborn or that they kick. The Alberta Donkey and Mule Club strives to be represented in as many events as possible but this means that some of its most active members are stretched pretty thin. Therefore, we are so very appreciative of the time and talents donated by our hard working TEAM MULE to once again bring a team to the 2009 Spruce Meadows Telus Battle of the Breeds. Kudos also to our club members that will be volunteering at the booth and providing animals for the booth stall so that people can get a chance to see a real donkey or mule up close and personal.

At this time I believe that Compulsory Skills and Jopardy Jumping take place on Thursday Sept 10 with Precision Driving and Barrel Racing on Friday Sept.11. The competition ends with Trail on Saturday morning, Sept. 12. Stop by our Booth at the Equi Fair from Wednesday Sept 9 to Sunday, Sept. 12 for more information and an up to date schedule of events. It looks like we will also have mules and donkeys taking part in Showcase, which will features many horse breeds.

Team members this year remain as last year: Deloit Wolfe with his great mule, Horse, Mogens Nielson with Maizie, Jessica Bishop with L.S. Hot Buckaroo and Katherine Cook with a new young mule OK Whislin' Dixie. Katherine will only have had a few months to work with her new mount and this will be 4 year old "Dixie's" first trip to Spruce Meadows. No matter where you place this year, Team Mule, you Rule!

For those that can't make the trip to Spruce Meadows, please join members and friends at Reg and Hazel Rust's annual Ride and Drive, September 11-13 at their acreage near Ponoka. This is always a fun, easygoing weekend with good food and good music. Please call 403 783 - 5197 for more information.

Those that attended the JERRY TINDELL CLINICS held in July at the Lakedell arena at Westeros, AB. came away with a lot of new knowledge whether they audited, or participated with a horse, mule or a donkey. We had 4 participants drive over from B.C. to take part and a few local members and several horse owners. I was disappointed in the low turnout of club members. Jerry's primary concern is safety, for us and our animals,- something that many of us longear owners take for granted because of the longear's natural affinity for self-preservation. However, we still do have wrecks and it's time we realized that most, if not all could be prevented if we took the time to really understand how to work our animals, from the ground up. Jerry believes that "*you_ride the animal you lead.*" If you have a critter that has little or no manners on the ground, that walks over you or runs away from you and you cannot direct him with success to

stop, back up, or move in any direction from a light feel of the lead rope, or won't trailer load

[and the list can go on...] you needed to be at these clinics. Jerry would caution that we take the time to train on the ground before we take another ride! Jerry is an awesome teacher and trainer, tactful, patient, humorous and totally dedicated to his job.

Previous to our clinics, Jerry did a 4 day clinic in Hythe AB.[my home town] and had a great reception there with over 75 auditors a day coming out. This clinic was all horses. The Beaverlodge- Hythe, horse community were very keen to learn all they could from this great teacher. They will be bringing Jerry back next year and we hope to also. Jerry's help is just too valuable to pass up. The continuation of the Riding clinic from last year was so beneficial for those of us that started with him last year. We all made significant progress with our animals so we want to continue. Dates for next year's clinics will be set soon...watch for it!

Just a short week later, many of us gathered again for the annual Hummingbird Trail Ride. Great hot weather with a few nighttime showers made this a very enjoyable time to socialize, and enjoy the great outdoors with our favorite friends and equines. This year was the biggest turn out for the ride in many years. It was great to see Karen Anderson and her daughter Lexi and have them join the ride. Karen works with Brad Cameron, another excellent clinician that travels up to Alberta each year to teach a clinic in Olds. Evenings were spent around the campfire with music provided by Danny Gibson and his daughter Susan and fiddle tunes by Keith Kendrew. Fred Godberson and Rob Muller were just a few of the gatherers that were always good for some entertaining jokes and stories.

Next month we will report on the activities at Spruce Meadows and the 20th Anniversary celebrations that happened at Tees Longears Days in August. Watch for the ADMC's semi annual meeting which will be coming up in October.

Enjoy the rest of the summer!
Marlene Quiring

See pictures below....



Riders at the club Hummingbird Ride - L to R. Susan Cotterill, Doug Moran, Joyce Muller, Rob Muller, Karen Anderson, Lexi Anderson



More riders at the ride - Deena Sobon, Blaine Johnson, Twyla Daly, George Seagrave