



OFQHA NEWSLETTER

October/November 2008

Ohio State University Equine Nutrition and Feeding Conference

November 8-9, 2008

This conference is designed for owners, breeders, caretakers, veterinarians and technicians. Program topics include equine nutrition overview, feeding for all ages, grain and hay selection, supplements and nutraceuticals, medical conditions related to nutrition and treatment of these conditions.

Speakers include Dr. Teresa Burns, Holly Flemister, Dr. Laurie Gallatin, Dr. Samuel Hurcombe, Cinday Isaacs, Ray A. Johnson, Dr. Catherine Kohn, Dr. Britta Leise, Dr. Margaret Mudge, Aaron Rhoades, Dr. Liz Santschi, Dr. Michael Schmall and Dr. Phoebe Smith.

For more details and to register visit: <http://vet.osu.edu/4580.htm> or call 614-292-8727.

For more information about courses or questions, please visit our website: www.vet.osu.edu/ce or call 614-292-8727.

125 mile, 6 Day Ride on the old Pony Express Trail

For lack of other material for the newsletter and since Bob Weiser likes my travel stories, this one is for you Bob!

About 15 years ago I found an ad in a horse magazine for a horseback/camping trip on part of the old Pony Express and Oregon Trail in the South Western part of Wyoming. I couldn't find anyone that wanted to go with me, so off I went on my own. Requirements were: Bring a Slicker and Saddle Bags, pack all your stuff in a duffel bag and you are responsible for saddling, un-saddling and grooming of your horse. There would be vehicle support for breakfast and dinner. Lunches were laid out at breakfast and packed in saddle bags.

Day 1: I flew from Columbus to Denver. In the Denver airport it was hard not to notice 4 women whose clothing was covered with trail ride patches. They were extremely loud and obnoxious and it seemed they had a New York accent. I avoided them and said a little prayer, something like "Please don't let these women be on my trip"! From Denver we (New York women included) got on a commuter plane and flew to Riverton, Wyoming. We were picked up and taken to a motel for the evening. The New York (as we found out later it was New Jersey) girls were drinking and becoming ever more disruptive. I decided to take a walk outside and met a woman from New York City who was also alone. Michelle was also trying to avoid the New Jersey group so we decided on the spot that she and I would share a tent for the trip. We were both relieved!

Day 2: In the morning we were transported to the ranch to pick out our horses for the week and meet our fellow traveling partners. In all, there were about 16 people including a Doctor, his wife and 12 year old daughter from Ohio, 2 men from California who brought their own horses to ride, an elderly woman, a couple from France who spoke no English, a woman and her 13 year old daughter from Texas, the New Jersey contingent, another man from Texas to help the guide and the guide, Skip.

The picking out of horses was a free for all! They had horses tied everywhere and saddles sitting all over the fences and with no explanation of the suitability of the horses according to riding skills! Of course the N.J. girls ran as fast as they could to the prettiest horses and saddles. Most of us were a little more laid back about the whole thing. I finally found a big paint gelding tied to the back of the stock truck and found a nice saddle. Of course one of the N.J. girls wanted me to trade saddles with her when she saw mine was nicer than hers. I said "NO"! We rode our horses around the ranch for awhile and some people did change horses. Then the horses were loaded in the stock truck, we were loaded in a bus and away we went to our starting point, which was a store that had once been the Sweetwater Pony Express Station. We got all saddled and geared up and headed out. What an adventure! About 2 hours into the ride the older woman with us became confused, we believed from the combination of her medication and the altitude and had to leave the ride. We kept it pretty slow that day with little trotting and cantering. I had no idea what we were really in for! We arrived at our camping spot for the night. Tents were up and arranged in a little treed area. After Skip inspected

Inspected camp he announced that a moose had been in camp the night before. There are no Port A Potties or shower facilities on this trip! It's make do as best you can! most nights there was a campfire and we definitely enjoyed them. The N.J. girls spent the entire evening surrounding Skip. Yep, he was part Native American and pretty good looking. None of us could even sit near him but he did tell good stories. He also carried a gun. He explained that if a horse should break a leg, the horse would have to be shot (this was before the advent of cell phones). This was my first lesson in the Western way....they don't treat their horses as pets. The horses are tied on a high line and were fed very large grain pellets every morning and night but no hay.

Day 3: We are up bright and early. Today we split up into two groups, a fast group and a slow group. By this time the N.J. girls had alienated a bunch of people and when they rode they surrounded the guide, so one could get near him. Much of the time the two groups rode together but we did split up several times. Camps are always near water and the horses are watered only in the morning and the evening. These horses are extremely herd bound. The guide is the last to mount up and no one can go anywhere until he gives the signal and we all move out. We rode to the stream to water the horses and the guide made the Doctor go back to the camp and he had forgotten his halter. Somehow he got the horse back to camp, but didn't quite get his seat before the horse took off at a dead gallop for the stream and his buddies. We heard galloping noises and watched as he got brushed off by a low limb. Thankfully, he was ok and NEVER forgot his halter again! We rode through partly wooded rolling land and stopped at an old miner's log cabin for the lunch break, which was never much longer than a half an hour. The ride continued through rolling land but trees and brush were getting a lot more scarce. We never saw a fence. We did more trotting and cantering as we had to be in camp before dark each night. We eat dinner tonight sitting on the ground and a lot of us were glad to have a glass or two of wine or beer. Medicinal purposes of course! We sat with the French Couple who passed around pictures of their mansion and pool in France. They thought nothing of showing us the pictures of the wife, young and pretty, but sans clothing in the pool. We managed to communicate despite the language barrier and they were very nice. Most of us were pretty tired that night and didn't stay long at the campfire. The skies are incredibly clear and we could see an easily recognizable satellite with our bare eyes. The stars are awesome. We crawled in our tent and fell asleep immediately! We did 20—22 miles today.

Day 4: Everyone was still sound asleep when I hear the sound of spurs jingling outside and Skip yelling "GET UP. WHAT DO THINK THIS IS? VACATION"? That would become our wake-up call every morning of the ride! Riders dressed, ate breakfast, tacked up, mounted and were ready to go by 9:00 am. We had a lot of miles to make before dark. We trotted, we cantered, we galloped a lot! We did see wild horses today; a paint stud and his band of 3 or 4 mares and one foal. Skip said this particular stud tires of his mares every two years, runs them off and steals new one from another wild herd. This ride was turning out to be no ride for the 'stop and smell the roses' person! We were heading for our lunch stop at an abandoned gold mine when most of the horses got ahead of and out of my horse's sight. I was trying to hold him back and finally got tired of it and let him go. I have NEVER been on a horse that could run that fast! Forget the gallop, we were going Mach 1! Tears were streaming out of my eyes from the wind and Skip yells "Watch out for Prairie Dog holes"! Holes? The ground was a blur (honest!) and I was perched up on that horse's neck like a jockey! Skip admitted later that he was the fastest horse they had on the ranch. We camped in a barren spot with a stream with just a trickle of water for the horses. It took a long time for them to find enough water to fill them up. I am sore from riding, really SORE and to add to my misery my knees are now rubbed raw on the inside. Everyone is filthy by now from 2 1/2 days on the trail and no showers. The doctor brought a ton of Ace Bandages and graciously gave me two for my knees. I also brought along Dr. Shoals Mole Skin, which is like a thick bandage and with both of those I am feeling better. That night we find clean clothes and walk to a small log cabin from the early 1800's where we eat dinner. It is now occupied by a couple who purchased it and did some minor repairs. It is VERY rustic. I asked the owners how many acres they have and I was told in no uncertain terms that it is very rude to ask that question. My second lesson in Western ways. You can still see the wagon ruts on the prairie near the cabin from the migration West on the Oregon Trail. Everyone is now exhausted so there is no campfire. We find our tents and pass out from fatigue!

To be continued.....

Elections Are Approaching!

It is most important that OFQHA members contribute to nominations for offices and vote in the election. Historically there has been a poor response to both nominations and ballot returns. If you enjoy our shows and clinics and the camaraderie please consider running for an elected position and/or nominating someone for a position. New ideas are welcome and appreciated. Think about giving back a little to the organization that provides fun ranch horse shows with cattle at very reasonable fees, instructional clinics, horse sales, a trail ride and a fun and friendly atmosphere! Please contact Joy Sims if you have a nomination or would like to run for an office or a directorship position. Joy can be reached at 740-872-3138 or by email at joykays@sbcglobal.net.

Horse Sale information

Number of horses sold: 32

Number of no sales: 15

Average price of horses sold: \$695.00

There were several horses that sold for \$1,000 or more and some that sold for \$100.00.

High price horse: \$2,200.00

Money took in: \$23,505.00

Expenses:

Fairgrounds: \$450.00

Auctioneer: \$400.00

Pedigree reader: \$100.00

Advertisement/stamps and office: \$1,385.02

Vet and coggins/ approx. have not received bill yet: \$336.00

Transfers: \$30.00

Paid out to sellers: \$19,483.25

PROFIT: \$1,320.73

Big thanks to members for all the help given during the sale. Special thanks to Greg Gessner for heading up the sale committee, Debra Collopy for doing the sale book, Michael Fish for keeping things on the web and to Susan Elliott for assisting the treasurer. Several people helped the day of the sale and this helps keep our events fun and running smoothly.

OCTOBER EVENT

Trail ride was held at Barkcamp State Park Oct. 5th. Ten riders went on the trail ride. It was a perfect day and we had a good time eating before the trail ride, during the trail ride and after the trail ride. An informal discussion of club business was held after the ride. Some members came on Friday and camped for the weekend with members also riding on Saturday. I was told Greg Gessner is to receive the chef award for 2008. Greg, are you looking to open a food stand for 2009?

WE WILL BE ELECTING OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS NEXT MONTH. IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN RUNNING PLEASE CONTACT JOY SIMS AT 740-872-3138 BEFORE THE END OF OCTOBER.

2008 OFQHA Schedule

Sunday, November 2: OFQHA meeting, 4:00 pm, Perry Township Fire Hall

Sunday, December 7: OFQHA meeting, 4:00 pm, Perry Township Fire Hall