



Divide Horsemen's Association

Winter Edition Newsletter

January 2013

Another year has come and gone, and here we start a new year with renewed resolutions and goals for our riding endeavors. I, for one, was happy to get my carpal tunnel surgery done this last fall. That did mean a period of recuperating and then in came the holidays. All which kept me out of the saddle for quite awhile. I guess you know that I am eager to get back to riding!!

*Happy riding everyone!
Charlotte*

President's Posting

Greetings DHA members,

Wishing you all a new year filled with happy trails! We are off with a bang--planning a membership drive and lot of lots of fun" horsey" activities. The Board and I will meet and plan a tentative calendar for the year--plan on coming to the February meeting to give input and sign up for the events you are interested in. Look for another obstacle playday, Gymnkana event, horsemanship clinic, day rides, and a big summer kickoff ride and barbeque! We are also looking into ways to promote our club. And, those are just a few of the things planned!

Before we get too far into the new year, I want to remind everyone of the 2012 DHA accomplishments. We had a successful fund raising spaghetti feed, donated \$ 2,500.00 to the American River Conservancy (Salmon Falls Trail Project) and \$ 500.00 to the GDRD youth scholarship program. We have been partnering with EDETF and sharing activities and events with them, as well as partnering with the local We Are Not a Club group for catered campouts. We also had significant board changes throughout the year and the club still functioned and remains vital--this is thanks to all the members' ideas, participation, and flexibility. A big kudos to you all for hanging in there!

This year I would like to have a theme, a direction in line with our mission statement that helps our club focus on a specific goal as we plan events. I also want to have a focus that will help us attract new members, who are vital to the to the health of any club. I have been thinking of this a lot, and I would like to focus this year on trail riding and the relationship you need with your horse to have a safe and successful ride. I feel like trails and their enjoyment/maintenance and development are at the heart of our mission statement, and helping members and the community enjoy the trails is paramount to our club's purpose. Plan on bringing your ideas and energy to the meeting or email me with your ideas on this. I look forward to seeing you all.

Until then, stay warm and ride safe, Katie Yaranon

Here are the minutes from the January 16 Meeting.

The meeting was brought to order at 7 p.m. by Katie Yaranon, President. Katie opened the meeting by updating everyone of the 2013 officers. All officers were present except Pam Greer who was out of town. Also, the position of secretary remains unfilled at this time. Yours truly agreed to take the minutes and will give consideration to filling the position of secretary. Katie also gave a brief overview of the November meeting where there was much discussion about planning activities for 2013 - essentially "brain storming."

Claudia gave the treasurer's report: \$6,252.13 in savings; \$1,023.47 in checking. A donation of \$2,000 was given to ARC and \$500 to GDRD Scholarship Fund. Katie mentioned the deadline for membership dues is the end of February. There will also be a reminder put in the upcoming newsletter. Membership forms were available at the meeting and will probably go out as an e-mail attachment.

Katie took the time to thank everyone for their generous help to put on the Christmas party. There were 90-plus who attended the party. Ann Blankenship is asking for feedback from members about the Christmas party, asking if there are any suggestions as to another possible location for a party. The Sierra Nevada House in Coloma was mentioned as a consideration. The question was

asked, should a band be hired next year or perhaps consider a D.J. Would it be worth considering something different? Ann also said there was a disparity with the money collected - more money paid out than collected. Jen Gomez and Claudia Gibbons will meet to examine the books.

The big topic of the meeting was to discuss fundraising ideas for 2013. Doug said to just have a good party to socialize and bring folks together. Many ideas were thrown out such as a fun day at Cool Hills Ranch as in 2012, an obstacle course day at Dru Barner, police horse training, team penning, just to name a few. There are already three catered campouts planned for 2013. Jackie thought it would be a good idea for members to e-mail their suggestion(s) about what they would like for an activity.

The final consensus for a 2013 fundraiser would be to have a tri-tip barbecue (with all the fixings) with barn dancing for a date to be determined in September. The location would first have to be found, etc. There was mention that Patty Galdal might offer the use of her barn for such an activity (?). As for now, what we do need is a fun "kick off" event for 2013.

There was discussion of the possible advantages of combining DHA and EDETF. There is definitely strength in numbers. Ann said there are just not enough work volunteers to draw from anymore. Our membership is aging, and Jen asked what can we do to bring in young people. DHA needs to get the word out about what the club has to offer. We really need to identify locations for future activities for starters too.

Jen brought in more t-shirts and sweat shirts to sell, and the meeting was adjourned around 8 p.m. so everyone could be on their merry way. Minutes by Charlotte

Heidi Babcock shares a little adventure about her ride this past summer at Castle Peak. Also be sure to check out Heidi's website "coolhorsetrails.com." There you will find lots of information about different trails, plus "the tip of the week" from Heidi.

This past July Denise Pickering and I, plus one other gal, ventured off to ride Castle Peak for the first time. The weather was beautiful and lots of volunteers were out working on the trails. We started out by heading south down the PCT. We went about 2 miles before turning around, which was highly recommended by the trail volunteers, one being Greg from Echo Valley Ranch, as they said the trail was not good from that point on down to Donner Pass Road. We did have stunning views of Donner Lake and the surrounding country side during that 4 mile round trip. Those were some very technical trails with lots of granite and shear drop offs, not for the faint of

heart or the novice horse or rider. After turning around, we continued north on the PCT through the tunnels that go under Hwy 80. I had heard we had to go through a tunnel, but had no idea what we were in for -- two tunnels made out of metal with cement floors that were not made for horses -- but we did make it through without incidence. Good old Bandit took the lead and led everyone through safely. The other horses were troopers to follow so well. We continued north until we reached Castle Pass and met up with quite a few hikers. We thoroughly enjoyed the ride (with only one, thankfully, fairly minor incident with two horses slipping on the granite and going down - all OK just one very bruised rider and horse). It is highly recommended to have some sort of GPS. The trails are fairly well marked, but it can be a little tricky to find those tunnels on the way home. Next time my plan is to just head north, and I want to make it all the way to Peter Grubb Hut that I have heard so much about.

You will thoroughly enjoy this Christmas story that Elke Schlosser shares with us.

What interested me most in our new neighborhood was not the school, nor the room I was to have in the house all to myself, but the stable which was built back of the house. My father let me direct the making of a stall, a little smaller than the other stalls, for my pony, and I prayed and hoped and my sister, Lou, believed that that meant that I would get the pony, perhaps for Christmas. I pointed out to her that there were three other stalls and no horses at all. This I said in order that she should answer it. She could not. My father, sounded, said that someday we might have horses and a cow; meanwhile a stable added value to the house. "Someday" is a pain to a boy who lives in and knows only "now." My good little sisters, to comfort me, remarked that Christmas was coming, but Christmas was always coming and grown-ups were always talking about it, asking you what you wanted and then giving you what they wanted you to have. Though everybody knew what I wanted, I told them all again. My mother knew that I told God, too, every night. I wanted a pony, and to make sure that they understood, I declared that I wanted nothing else.

"Nothing but a pony?" my father asked.

"Nothing". I said.

"Not even a pair of high boots?"

That was hard. I did want boots, but I stuck to the pony.

"No, not even the boots."

"Nor candy? There ought to be something to fill your stocking with, and Santa Claus can't lead a pony down the chimney either. But no. "All I want is a pony," I said. "If I can't have a pony, give me nothing, nothing."

Now I had been looking myself for a pony I wanted, going to sales stables, inquiring of horsemen, and I had seen several that would do. My father let me "try" them. I tried so many ponies that I was learning fast to sit a horse. I chose several, but my father always found some fault with them. I was in despair. When Christmas was at hand I had given up all hope of a pony, and on Christmas Eve I

hung up my stocking along with my sisters', of whom, by the way, I now had three. I haven't mentioned them or their coming because, you understand, they were girls, and girls, young girls, counted for nothing in my manly life. They did not mind me either; they were so happy that Christmas Eve that I caught some of their merriment. I speculated on what I'd get; I hung up the biggest stocking I had, and we all went reluctantly to bed to wait till morning. Not to sleep; not right away. We were told that we must not only sleep promptly, we must not wake up till seven-thirty the next morning - so if we did, we must not go to the fireplace for our Christmas. Impossible!

We did sleep that night, but we woke up at six a.m. We lay in our beds and debated through the open doors whether to obey till, say, half-past six. Then we bolted. I don't know who started it, but there was a rush. We all disobeyed; we raced to disobey and get first to the fireplace in the front room downstairs. And there they were, the gifts, all sorts of wonderful things, mixed-up piles of presents; only, as I disentangled the mess, I saw that my stocking was empty; it hung limp; not a thing in it; and under and around it - nothing. My sisters had knelt down, each by her pile of gifts; they were squealing with delight, till they looked up and saw me standing there in my nightgown with nothing. They left their piles to come to me and look with me at my empty place. Nothing. They felt my stocking: Nothing.

I don't remember whether I cried at that moment, but my sisters did. They ran with me back to my bed, and there we all cried till I became indignant. That helped some. I got up, dressed, and driving my sisters away, I went alone out into the yard, down to the stable, and there, all by myself, I wept. My mother came out to me by and by; she found me in my pony stall, sobbing on the floor, and she tried to comfort me. But I heard my father outside; he had come part way with her, and she was having some sort of angry quarrel with him. She tried to comfort me; besought me to come to breakfast. I could not; I wanted no comfort and no breakfast. She left me and went on into the house with sharp words for my father.

I don't know what kind of breakfast the family had. My sisters said it was awful. They were ashamed to enjoy their own toys. They came to me, and I was rude. I ran away from them. I went around to the front of the house, sat down on the steps, and, the crying over, I ached. I was wronged, I was hurt - I can feel now what I felt then, and I am sure that if one could see the wounds upon our hearts, there would be found still upon mine a scar from that terrible Christmas morning. And my father, the practical joker, he must have hurt, too, a little. I saw him looking out of the window. He was watching me or something for an hour or two, drawing back the curtain ever so little lest I catch him, but I saw his face, and I think that I can see now the anxiety upon it, the worried impatience.

After - I don't know how long - surely an hour or two - I was brought to the climax of my agony by the sight of a man riding a pony down the street, a pony with a brand-new saddle; the most beautiful saddle that I ever saw, and it was a boy's saddle; the man's feet were not in the stirrups; his legs were too long. The outfit was perfect; it was the realization of all my dreams, the answer to all my prayers.

A fine new bridle, with a light curb bit. And the pony! As he drew near, I saw that the pony was really a small horse, what we called an Indian pony, a bay, with a black mane and tail, and one white foot and a white star on his forehead. For such a horse as that I would have given, I could have forgiven, anything.

But the man, a disheveled fellow with a blackened eye and a fresh-cut face, came along, reading the numbers on the houses, and, as my hopes - my impossible hopes - rose, he looked at our door and passed by, he and the pony, and the saddle and the bridle. Too much. I fell upon the steps, and having wept before, I now broke into such a flood of tears that I was a floating wreck when I heard a voice.

"Say, kid," it said, "do you know a boy named Lennie Steffens?"

I looked up. It was the man on the pony, back again, at our horse block.

"Yes," I sputtered though my tears. "That's me."

"Well," he said, "then this is your horse. I've been looking all over for you and your house. Why don't you put your number where it can be seen?"

"Get down," I said, running out to him.

He went on saying something about "ought to have got here at seven o'clock; told me to bring the nag here and tie him to your post and leave him for you. But, hell, I got into a drunk - and a fight - and a hospital, and -"

"Get down," I said.

He got down, and he boosted me up into the saddle. He offered to fit the stirrups to me, but I didn't want him to. I wanted to ride.

"What's the matter with you?" he said, angrily. "What you crying for? Don't you like the horse? He's a dandy, this horse. I know him of old. He's fine at cattle; he'll drive 'em alone."

I hardly heard, I could scarcely wait, but he persisted. He adjusted the stirrups, and then, finally, off I rode, slowly, at a walk, so happy, so thrilled, that I did not know what I was doing. I did not look back at the house or the man. I rode off up the street, taking note of everything - of the reins, of the pony's long mane, of the carved leather saddle. I had never seen anything so beautiful. And mine! I was going to ride up past Miss Kay's house. But I noticed on the horn of the saddle some stains like rain-drops, so I turned and trotted home, not to the house but to the stable.

There was my family, father, mother, sisters, all waiting for me, all happy. They had been putting in place the tools of my new business: blankets, currycomb, brush, pitchfork - everything, and there was hay in the loft.

"What did you come back so soon for?" somebody asked.

"Why didn't you go on riding?"

I pointed to the stains. "I wasn't going to get my new saddle rained on," I said. And my father laughed. "It isn't raining," he said. "Those are not rain-drops."

"They are tears," my mother gasped, and she gave my father a look which sent him off to the house. Worse still, my mother offered to wipe away the tears still running out of my eyes. I gave her such a look as she had given him, and she went off after my father, drying her own tears. My sisters remained and we all unsaddled the pony, put on his halter, led him into his stall, tied and fed him. It really

began to rain; so all the rest of that memorable day we curried and combed that pony. The girls plaited his mane, forelock, and tail, while I pitchforked hay to him and curried and brushed, curried and brushed. For a change we brought him out to drink; we led him up and down, blanketed like a race-horse; we took turns at that. But the best, the most inexhaustible fun, was to clean him. When we went reluctantly to our midday Christmas dinner, we all smelt of horse, and my sisters had to wash their faces and hands. I was asked to, but I wouldn't, till my mother bade me look in the mirror. Then I washed up - quick. My face was caked with the muddy lines of tears that had coursed over my cheeks to my mouth. Having washed away that shame, I ate my dinner, and as I ate I grew hungrier and hungrier. It was my first meal that day, and as I filled up on the turkey and the stuffing, the cranberries and the pies, the fruits and the nuts - as I swelled, I could laugh. My mother said I still choked and sobbed now and then, but I laughed too; I saw and enjoyed my sisters' presents till - I had to go out and attend to my pony, who was there, really and truly there, the promise, the beginning, of a happy double life. And - I went and looked to make sure - there was the saddle, too, and the bridle. But that Christmas, which my father had planned so carefully, was it the best or the worst I ever knew? He often asked me that; I never could answer as a boy. I think now that it was both. It covered the whole distance from broken-hearted misery to bursting happiness - too fast.

A grown-up could hardly have stood it!

In my quest to find stories to share with you, I thought why not write one of my own. After all, having bred and raised Morgans as a small "hobby breeder" for years, wouldn't you think that I could come up with a story or two?

In my barn, horses came and went. As my quest for breeding and selling Morgans came to an end, I still wanted a Morgan sport gelding, mainly a schoolmaster to school on. You see, in all my years of breeding horses, I always got the fillies, truly (imagine that).

I won't bore you with all the details, but with the loss of a special mare, there came a vacancy in my barn (meaning I had an open stall for possibly another horse?). I then began the search for my "schoolmaster," which took me all the way to Southern California to find this big handsome 16-hand Morgan gelding. "Ben" passed his vet check and arrived at my barn January 29, 2006. My big beautiful Morgan sport gelding was here at last.

Yes, Ben was a wonderful schoolmaster for me in lessons and clinics the years that I owned him. But, I had other horses to bring along, and Ben needed more than boring arena work. In other words he needed a younger, more gutsy rider than I could ever be on him! So, I offered Ben to my long-time friend, Patty, who needed a good trail horse. Patty could and would ride just about anything!!!

Now this is only the beginning of this story. Indeed, Patty enjoyed riding Ben on the trails, and the two of them had the most adventurous of rides. But wait, in comes Whit, Patty's daughter now 14, into the picture. Whit had been a Pony Clubber for years and competed on her pony very successfully through the years in jumping, etc. I heard that Whit had eyed Ben at times and would ride him on occasion in little schooling shows. It became apparent that a bond was forming between Whit and Ben. Whit soon discovered that Ben was a very talented jumper, and magic happened. Patty tells me that they plan to compete in the beginner novice event at Ram Tap in February and move up to training level by the end of the year.



You can be sure I will look forward to watching Whit compete on Ben in the years to come, and will happily cheer their successes. "Benny Boy" will always have a special place my heart for all that he taught me in our years together. Happy riding Whit and Ben!!!!!!

Charlotte

Here are a few tips I found interesting:

- Use an old badminton racket to skim out water tubs. It removes leaves, hay and other debris without losing any water.

- To efficiently utilize space in the tack room, repurpose a sturdy, round-top mailbox and mount it against a wall. Store a saddle over the top of the box, hang bridle on the front hook and store brushes and other supplies inside.
- If you don't have a pair of scissors readily available to cut open a bale of hay, use a piece of extra baling twine, slip it under the bound twine and seesaw until the rope snaps.

Just a thought:

Horses sort human and equine temperament instinctively and without prejudice, an ability that often enables them to see us more clearly than we see ourselves.

Okay, that's it in a nutshell. I hope you enjoyed our winter edition of the DHA newsletter. I appreciate all the input members have shared and hope you will share your special stories/events with us in the future.

Remember DHA meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Greenwood Community Center. Hope to see you there!!

Your editor,

Charlotte Bancroft