

Best of America Trail Club

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Issue 15, September 2011

2011 Ride Schedule

- October 7-9 - Brushy Creek Lodge & Resort, Black, Missouri (GT)
- October 21-23 - 3rd Annual Fall Colors Trail Ride @ Leatherwood Mtns, Ferguson, NC (GT)
- Oct 29-30 - Trail Ride at the Anita-Alta BRHA Horsecamp, Lenoir, NC

TR=Trail Ride - GT=Grand Tour
PS=Production Shoot

Tom's Words of Wisdom

Dear Friends,
You deserve more!

Throughout life, there maybe roadblocks that seem to pop up and disrupt your plans for a weekend getaway trail ride. Whether those roadblocks are weather related issues such as the tornados in the Midwest and in the South, an earthquake like we experienced here on the East coast, (where the epicenter was very near our home) or the economic depression felt nationwide.

The key is to stay positive and remember what makes you happy!

As I've said many times in speeches across the country, I truly believe that rural minded people are the heart and soul of America. Rural people, farmers, cowboys/cowgirls and horse people have always been the strength of this country. Even though so many of us have been hurt so much from life's burdens we will bounce back. It is the American way.

As we move towards cooler weather of the fall, I want to remind you that you deserve the opportunity to take your horse or mule, your family and friends on a weekend trail ride getaway. You deserve the opportunity to enjoy yourself and your animals. It doesn't have to be any place fancy, nor do you have to go very far, but please, please, pick a date, stick to it and enjoy your passion for the outdoors and your life.

Your family & friends will be appreciative for you taking the initiative to make it happen, but most importantly you can "recharge your batteries" & refocus your priorities which will keep you enjoying life!

All the best in life and on the trail, -Tom Seay On the Trail w/ Mark Laney

As Brenda and I travel back to the Texas heat from the cool mountains near Guffey, Colorado, west of Pueblo with our mules, I reflected on the production shoot that we had experienced while there. It occurred to me, while I have not observed all clinicians, most clinicians that I have observed not only primarily teach in the round pen, but for many it is only in the round pen. Justin Dunn adds to the foundation laid in the round pen (which is done with rare full 'hands on' participation of the 'student'), his dimension of following through with the hands on approach as it actually applies in the real world -- out on the trail. Visit dunnshighcountry.com. On Sept 16-17 we will attend the Extreme Supreme Mustang Makeover in Ft Worth with our good friends from our company Headquarters at Leatherwood Mountains in North Carolina, Phil & Connie Whitson and our good friends from Pfizer, Susen & Don Shields of Georgia. October 7-8-9 will find us at our ride at Brushy Creek, near Black, Missouri, where we will joined by the Ernie Rodina and Purina, our long time sponsor. From there, we will travel onto our Headquarters to conduct some business, before enjoying the beautiful vibrant colors at our 3rd Annual Headquarters Fall Colors Trail Ride at Leatherwood Mountains, nestled quietly in the Blue Ridge Mountains, October 21,22-23. leatherwoodmountains.com. This is a 'not to be missed' beautiful trail ride. We invite you to come join us at one or both of these rides.

Happy Trails! Life's a Journey, Enjoy the Ride! -Mark

Dutch Henry Stage Coach West and BOABH – Two Companies, One Philosophy

Howdy Folks!

Jack and Mary Jo Peacock started Stage Coach West in 1979 in a tiny 24x24 store and together have grown the company into the largest western clothing and equine supply store on the East coast with a 17000 square foot store and worldwide internet sales. “I guess you could say we’ve lived the American Dream. We started with nothing and with the help of supportive customers we were able to grow business.” Jack explained that it has been and continues to be lot of fun. “The people in the trail riding world are the most wonderful people. It’s always a pleasure helping them fulfill their dreams. We are very committed to helping the trail rider and giving back to them.” The motto of Stage Coach West is, “Do the right thing.”

Jack met Tom Seay at the Equine Affaire in New England 5 years ago when Tom walked into the Stage Coach West booth and asked if he could interview him about Tucker Saddles. Like most folks who meet Tom, Jack soon felt like he’d known Tom a long time. “I still remember our first chat and I remember Tom saying that what they like to do at BOABH is help folks realize their dreams. That struck a chord with Mary Jo and me.” It wasn’t long until Stage Coach West became a major sponsor of BOABH. “The philosophies of Tom and the BOABH family are the same as ours,” Jack said. “Help folks to live their dream.”

Jack and Mary Jo have ridden with BOABH a number of times, and the biggest thrill they had was last September when they rode in D.C. from President Lincoln’s cottage to the White House along the same route President Lincoln often traveled on his horse. Especially thrilling to Jack, a Marine, was riding with the U.S.M.C.’s Mounted Color Guard from Barstow CA. “Being a Marine, having the chance to ride with the Marine Color Guard was a really, really big thing to me. Something I’d have never gotten to do without Tom and BOABH. And after we rode to the White House we rode across the great Mall to the Washington Monument. What an unbelievable day!”

Jack and Stage Coach West have thrown their support behind BOABH on another adventure to continue to help folks live their dreams. The Best of America Trail Club. “This is simply the best trail rider club going.” Jack said. “And it is free, all riders need to do is log on to become a member.” Jack explained that while the Trail Club is young and still adding exciting benefits, there are plenty of reasons to join right now. And over 5,000 folks already have! Club members get early notice on BOABH rides and special pricing. They can log their trail miles and win terrific prizes. Members are eligible for member only pricing at Stage Coach West, and a host of other sponsors. There is also a chat forum where riders can make new friends and swap ideas. “What a great way to help people live their dream!” Jack told me.

Dutch's latest novel *"We'll Have The Summer"* (recommended by Tom Seay) is available on Amazon or his website, www.dutchhenryauthor.com

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With such like philosophies on business and life, it is easy to see why Stage Coach West and BOABH enjoy working together to help people realize their dreams. Thanks for all your help, Jack!



Here is a nice shot of Jack and Mary Jo and some of their close personal friends!

Gitty Up, *Dutch Henry*

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If you'd like Dutch to write your story, email or call him!



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Monthly Member Spotlight IDAHO TRAIL RIDERS LLOYD & VALERIE WILLDEN

During the past month Lloyd and Valerie Willden returned from the Chief Joseph trail ride (five days of riding progressively from Spencer, ID to West Yellowstone, MT), relaxed for a few days and then drove to Malad, ID for an ACTHA ride, followed by riding in southwestern Colorado. That might not be too remarkable except that Lloyd is 81, Valerie 64.

The Shelley, Idaho couple met at a horse show in California 42 years ago. Lloyd likes to relate the story: "There was a nice arena in the Sacramento area near where I lived. Friends from southern California liked to compete against me. We'd generally meet in the middle of the state for shows. One day the president of the local club asked why I didn't ride around home. 'Got any good competition?' I said. 'We have one gal nobody can beat,' he said. 'Well, I hope she don't mind takin' second place.' He looked sorta shocked and replied, 'We'll see who takes second place.' 'Lloyd likes to let Valerie tell the rest of it. "Lloyd had a Tinky Poo mare who was just the most incredible athlete I've seen. She could do anything, and I had been secretly drooling over her. My horse was a gelding who just didn't make mistakes, but he was no competition for her. At the first showdown, I took all seconds with the exception of one first." "I always say I fell for the horse first, and couldn't stand Lloyd." She shrugs. "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em."



They were married forty years ago and moved to Idaho in 1981. Lloyd was born in rural Colorado at the beginning of the Great Depression. His father died when he was eleven, so he supported himself and his mother by night herding sheep in the La Sal mountains with just a dog and horse for company. He began working for the S & S Cattle Company, the third largest in the world, as a teen, rounding up wild cattle over thousands of acres. He participated in three cattle drives, taking cows from Paradox, Colorado to the railroad in Thompson, Utah. He experienced stampedes and paid for the birth of his second son with money he won in a roping. These things have been fodder for Valerie's cowboy poetry over the years.

Lloyd likes to emphasize that although he's led a cowboy life, he's accomplished other things, too. He played semi-professional baseball with a 700 batting average! A bridge and dam specialist, he was a construction superintendent for years. He had an engineering license and owned a construction company. And he and Valerie have always ranched and farmed

besides. "We've raised grain, hay, cattle, cotton, and kids," Valerie says. They also successfully ran Appaloosa race horses, owning a world champion, J & B Little Dan. Lloyd was leading race owner and trainer in Idaho in 1993. About five years ago Lloyd was incapacitated from a back surgery and told he should never ride again. He was partially paralyzed and couldn't walk. He dug a trench with his backhoe, had two people help him on his horse, and began riding again. In a few months he was riding 20 miles 2 or 3 times a week. And he could walk again.

A native of California, Valerie had her trainer's license, too, though she was too busy teaching school to do much of it. She has been a lifelong equestrian and cowgirl and has enjoyed competing in western, English, jumping, gymkhana, barrel racing, team penning, and the Extreme Horsemanship Challenge. "I'm not all that competitive anymore, but it's still fun to train and try," she says. She raised and showed registered Limousin cattle and hopes to expand her writing now that she's retired from teaching school. She worked as a reporter and as a writer for the California Horse Review magazine years ago.

The Willdens plan to continue to hit the trail on their Fox Trotters, Appaloosa, and Quarter Horse. Two years ago the couple rode in 7 states in one year. This year it looks like it will be about 5 or 6. They belong to three trail riding clubs and a team penning group. "We are blessed to live in and around some of the most scenic trails in the world," Valerie says. "We ride in Yellowstone and the Tetons on a regular basis."

"You can't keep Lloyd down," she adds. "He has a hardware store in his back and an oxygen container inside his slicker when we ride the higher elevations. We enjoy the trails all summer and you'll find us team penning all winter, even when it's 10 below. We intend to keep riding until we can't drag our legs over a horse's back anymore."

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE A FEATURED MEMBER IN NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER, PLEASE CONTACT BECKY AT BECKY@BESTOFAMERICABYHORSEBACK.COM! SEND AN ARTICLE AND PICTURE!

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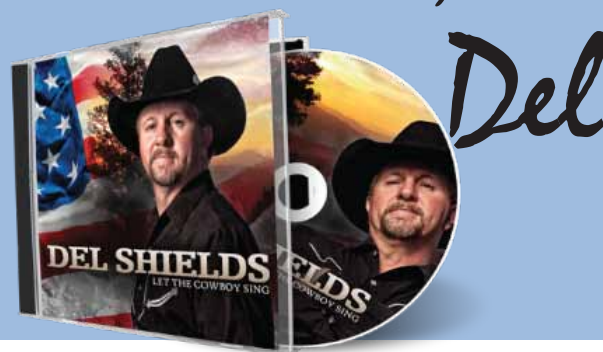
Hello again everyone. I hope you survived the summer's furnace she threw at us this year. It was hard on humans and horses alike. But it appears that we are in for better weather soon, which means everyone is going to be ready to saddle up again and do what horse lovers do best. We are ready to hit the trails. If you haven't signed up yet to join us in Black MO, or Leatherwood Mtns. in North Carolina, I hope you'll do so. We so look forward to being with old friends and making new ones. I wish to thank all of you who have been so gracious to order my new CD, "Let The Cowboy Sing" and have given such great responses to the music on it. It makes it all worthwhile when my music makes you feel good. I am going to extend the offer to you, the Trail Club Members for another month to save on orders of the album. If you will call and order direct and let me know you are a Trail Club Member, I'll send your CD out for \$15.50 all shipping included. If you order from the website it will cost a bit extra. I hope you'll be listening for my music to be played a radio station near you, as it is now being sent out to radio stations all over the US, some in Canada and even the UK. Come ride with us and till next time..

Keep Safe, Smile Often, Trust the Lord and "Always Ride the High Trail"

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Upcoming Show Schedule

September 6 - Fort Valley, Virginia

September 13 - Western Caribbean Cruise to Belize, Cozumel & Costa Maya

September 20 - Pole Canyon Ranch, Texas

September 27 - The Reagan Ranch, California



Steve Edwards The Mule Man with Answers



Equine do not fully understand verbal communication. They communicate non-verbally with their bodies. Part of an equine's language is asking, telling, and demanding. As an example, a mare is usually the herd leader. If a new equine wants to come into the herd, he will come in dropping his head and licking his lips to ask if he can come for a visit. A lead mare will invite the equine in by first pinning her ears as a way to ask the other one to come in slow. If the equine comes in too fast, the mare will tell him to come in slower by swishing her tail. If the visitor is still approaching too quickly, she will spin and kick or even bite. The new equine will eventually become submissive in order to regain comfort.

Just like you and me, an equine's life is one of comfort or discomfort. In much the same way that the mare makes the new equine uncomfortable to set the pecking order, we have to make the mule or donkey uncomfortable to get him down the trail. We make him uncomfortable by putting a halter on his head, a bit in his mouth, a saddle on his back, and spending several hours on the trail. It is up to the human, the herd leader, to understand how to make him comfortable using the proper tack.

The non-verbal communication tool we use from the saddle is our bit. If you go into any tack store, you will see hundreds of bits. Most people buy a bit because it looks good or looks like it would be comfortable. When shopping for a bit, you need to understand that different bits are used for different communications. A snaffle bit is used to build a foundation or fix a problem. It is not meant to be used as an everyday bit. A bit with shanks on it is meant for lightness. The shank is leverage. It is meant to be used only with one hand, whereas a snaffle bit should be two-handed when building a foundation or fixing a problem. Where a bit is manufactured is also very important. Unfortunately, a lot of the bits available have been taken and remanufactured overseas. These bits may look like the original but there are subtle difference in the type of steel used and the cant (the balance in the equine's mouth) that can be important to your communication. A professional mule trainer and showman from Minnesota contacted me when he found my bit was more effective than bits he has previously used. He told me he was upset with his wife when she spent money on my bit which closely resembled several that he already had hanging in his barn. However, as he began to use my bit, he found his ability to communicate with his mule was greatly increased. His mule was more responsive to his directions; his mule's nose went on the vertical, his mouth quieted, and he could communicate with far less resistance. The first thing I said to him was, "My bits are made in the USA by Reinsman, one of the top bit makers." This mule trainer went on to tell me that when he looked closer at his own bits he realized they were made in Pakistan and China.

Stay Tuned...To be continued in the coming issues...

Product Spotlight

MILLCREEK
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When we say a Millcreek Manure Spreader can make a big difference in your life, that's no pile of horse manure. It's a fact! A new day of good horse keeping has arrived.

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unpleasant, unsanitary piles. Eventually the piles are hauled away, usually at considerable expense.

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plan to rotate your pasture lands, you can put nature's recycling miracle to use solving what could otherwise be a very messy, expensive problem.

Load it up, tow it to a nearby field, with your garden tractor or ATV, press the lever, and in seconds the earth receives the nutrients it needs to restore growing capacity.

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Photos from the trail ride at *Reed Valley Ranch ride in Hemet, California*

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