

Trails and Tales

Atlantic Canada Trail Riding Association Newsletter

Volume 235

www.ac-tra.ca

January/February 2010

Greetings!

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and stockings were stuffed with all kinds of horsey items and gadgets!

New Year's Eve was a beautiful night to go for a ride, no wind and a full moon. I jumped on Dude (he was the only sane one of the bunch) and headed over to Deanna's, yelled Happy New Year! Unfortunately she had her grandson for the night and couldn't join me on my wintry night jaunt. I continued up around the fields and thru the woods. What a feeling it was to be cantering through a field of snow at night with just the moon showing you the way!!

The Year Ends were well attended, both for the meeting and the banquet supper. The awards and silent auction (which raised \$290) were held after the annual general meeting. Bidders left with some really nice items. Chester will be ready for the Pink Challenge Cup next fall as he had the winning bid on a beautiful pink outfit!! A big thank you to Elwood and Gary for helping out with the bidding!!

In October 1979, a newsletter article appeared in the Cumberland County newspaper The Citizen with the headline "Competitive Trail Riding Growing In Cumberland". The article highlights the fourth annual Frolic-N-Acres Competitive Trail Ride hosted by Garnet Gallant. I am including it in this newsletter for everybody to read. ACTRA is celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year and we are looking for some ideas and suggestions on how to mark this milestone. If you have any suggestions please email/phone and let our Board of Directors know! I know I would love to see a Parsboro Reunion Weekend of rides....hint hint Gary!!!!

Has the winter weather got you thinking about what kind of goals you will aim for this summer? How about a Maritime Challenge Series? Certain rides from each province will be asked to participate with a Grand Prize going to the winner. Intrigued?

Another idea that has been discussed is having Tailgate Training Rides. Riders to meet up at different places to condition their horses on various terrain and have a lunch box meal on the tailgates afterwards. Some things to think about for spring riding!!

Have you checked out our website lately? Karen Murray is doing a wonderful job of keeping it updated with all the latest news and she has just added the Ride Entry Form under our growing list of forms available online. She has also set up ACTRA on Facebook, so join up and have a look!

Happy Winter Trails.....

ACTRA 2010 Board of Directors

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Bev Elliott

Members advertising rates are:
\$10.00/page, \$5.00/half page, \$2.50/qtr page
Business cards \$1.00. All rates are per issue.

Business advertising rates are:
\$15.00/page, \$10.00/half page, \$7.00/qtr page
Business cards \$5.00. All rates are per issue.

Trails and Tales is published six times per year.

All letters to the editor must be signed.

All articles must include the source.

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ATLANTIC CANADA TRAIL RIDING ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

JUNIOR OR OTHER RIDERS IN FAMILY

NAME _____ BIRTHDATE _____

NAME _____ BIRTHDATE _____

I WISH TO REGISTER THE FOLLOWING MOUNT WITH ACTRA (Lifetime Mount Registration Fee \$25.00)

NAME _____ MARE GELDING STALLION (Please Circle)

BREED _____ AGE _____

BREED REGISTRY INFORMATION _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES: INDIVIDUALS \$17.50 - FAMILY \$22.50 - MOUNT REGISTRATION \$25.00

PLEASE SEND MEMBERSHIP FORM OR FACSIMILE TO: Pat Rideout, 3540 Route 890 Hillgrove, NB E4Z 5W6

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RECEIVING ACTRA LITERATURE? Yes No (Please Circle)

I HEREBY ALLOW ACTRA TO PUBLISH MY NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER ON THE MEMBERSHIP LIST TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE ACTRA NEWSLETTER ONLY. Yes No (Please Circle)

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP DUES SUBMITTED _____ @ \$17.50 = \$ _____

_____ @ \$22.50 = \$ _____

_____ @ \$25.00 = \$ _____

TOTAL = \$ _____

Nov 14/09 ACTRA AGM
Coastal Inn, Sackville, NB

Gwenn Dexter	Donna Lee Cole	Lucy Rudge	Elwood Munroe
Pat Rideout	Kim Dellacioppa	April Haliburton	Susan Hovey
Chester Gillian	Sherry Brooks	Afina Kamminga	Jean Bridges
Bertha Harrison	Karen Murray	Donna Munn	Ann Bridges
Kaaren Lebert	Deanna Johnston	Bev Elliott	Irmgard Lipp
Jim Burns	Kate Cameron		

Meeting called to order at 13:15 by Gwenn Dexter

09 Spring AGM minutes read by DL Cole, accepted by Bev Elliott, seconded by Elwood Munroe

Reports Offered:

- 1) Treasure Report offered by Pat Rideout
 - a. General membership down by 15 members
 - b. ACTRA donated to David Fuller Memorial
 - c. Motion by Bev Elliott "Donna Munn continue to be CaLDRA representative and that ACTRA pay for her membership", seconded by Deanna Johnston, carried
 - 2) CaLDRA Report offered by Donna Munn
 - a. CaLDRA has been very quiet this past year
 - b. New rule book is working well
 - 3) Public Relations report written by Lynn Beezley and read by Bev Elliott
 - 4) Sanctioning Report offered by Donna Munn
 - a. There were 4 LD's and 2 CTR's this year
 - 5) Newsletter Report offered by Bev Elliott
 - a. There are currently 10 people receiving hard copies of the newsletter
 - b. E-newsletters have been very well received
 - 6) Rules Report: none offered by Eric Dwyer
 - 7) Volunteer Report offered by Lucy Rudge
- All reports were accepted as presented.

Old Business:

- 1) Rule Book
 - a. Rule book will be ready for presentation at the Spring 2010 meeting
 - i. New members have a right to a current rule book
- 2) Breed Awards
 - a. General discussion re: Breed Awards based on CTR conditioning scores only. In the past several years the CTR's have been limited as such the awards have not been presented due to lack of conditioning scores and associated point system
 - b. Motion made by Bev Elliott "Awarding of the Breed Awards will be based on CTR and IDR conditioning placings, JP Trail Horse placings" seconded by Pam Thorton, one opposed, carried

New Business:

- 1) General discussion on senior members riding for miles only
 - a. Motion made by Deanna Johnston " Riders may request to ride for Miles Only from Ride Managers", seconded by Kaaren Lebert, carried
- 2) Chester Gillan will contact Bob Gielen to congratulate him on his Kentucky Endurance Race placing as top Canadian.
 - a. General discussion about how ACTRA can support Bob either financially or through product support or by ACTRA endorsement
 - b. Chester will ask Bob how ACTRA can be of assistance.
- 3) Motion by Bev Elliott " To award Year End points for LD's based on order of finish", seconded by Kaaren. 4 opposed, carried.
- 4) Motion made by Chester Gillan " The BOD of ACTRA have the ability to run the day to day management of the Association, on behalf of the membership" Seconded by Bev Elliott, carried
- 5) Motion made by Bev Elliott " The BOD have the discretionary ability to utilize funds up to an annual amount of \$1000" Seconded by Kaaren Lebert, carried
- 6) Motion made by Elwood Munroe " ACTRA membership shall be notified of all extraneous financial expenditures by the BOD in excess of \$250" Seconded by Bev Elliott, carried
- 7) Motion made by Pat Rideout "That the ACTRA BOD review and compare the current insurance carrier with Classic Equine BFL Canada and will present the selected insurance carrier to the membership at the Spring 2010" seconded by Kim Dellacioppa, carried
- 8) Motion made by Jean Bridges "ACTRA participate in the 2010 January Thaw Equine Expo, and ACTRA will pay the cost of renting a table" seconded by Donna Lee Cole, carried.
- 9) Public Relations will notify membership of any upcoming equine events ex: January Thaw, Equine Review etc.
- 10) General discussion by Gwenn Dexter on the effectiveness of Rider Reps at rides.
 - a. General consensus is that this system is working well and no issues were raised this season
- 11) Election of BOD positions up for renewal
 - a. Donna Lee Cole will stand again
 - b. Kaaren Lebert will stand again
 - c. Eric Dwyer was not present to re-stand
 - d. Irmgard Lipp nominated to BOD

Meeting adjourned at 15:35 by Gwenn Dexter

Submitted by DL Cole
Nov 17/09

Judged Pleasure Ride - Horsemanship

Champion: MDA Billy Four (Donna Munn)

Reserve: PD Cat-a-Hoolah (Betty Dwyer)

Third: Phyve Point Lily (Kim Dellacioppa), Jalna Saffire (Jean Bridges)

Fourth: Magnifyque (Kaaren Lebert)

Fifth: Pitshko (Shannon Robbins)

Sixth: Thunder (Pam Thornton), Summer Breeze (Pam Rustige), Al (Lori Singer)

Judged Pleasure Ride - Trail Horse

Champion: PD Cat-a-Hoolah (Betty Dwyer)

Reserve: MDA Billy Four (Donna Munn)

Third: Thunder (Pam Thornton)

Fourth: Magnifyque (Kaaren Lebert)

Fifth: Pitshko (Shannon Robbins), Prairie Shadowfax (Chester Gillan)

Phyve Point Lily (Kim Dellacioppa), Royal (Bob Curran)

Sixth: Jalna Saffire (Jean Bridges), Guysborough Grey (Ann Bridges)

Introductory Distance Ride - Conditioning

Champion: Arabian Styles (Elwood Munroe)

Reserve: JDA Azrael The Canadian (Deanna Johnston)

Third: Thunder (Pam Thornton)

Fourth: Jalna Saffire (Jean Bridges)

Fifth: PD Cat-a-Hoolah (Betty Dwyer), Call Me Lauren (Russlyn Patriquin-Dyke)

Sixth: Aazzaan (Bev Elliott), Amigos Micah (Deanna Johnson)

Kindred Spirit (Lynn Beazley)

Introductory Distance Ride - Trail Horse

Champion: MDA Billy Four (Donna Munn), Elastic (April Haliburton)
Annabelle (Sheila Brown)

Reserve: Aazzaan (Bev Elliott), Guysborough Grey (Ann Bridges)
Ronya (Irmgard Lipp)

Third: Sir Ruby (Pat Ritcey), Arabian Styles (Elwood Munroe)
Jalna Saffire (Jean Bridges)

Horse & Rider Mileage 2009

Lynn Beazley	202	#231 Pitshko	1,601
Troy Beazley	65	#243 Virginian Magic	2,749
Kelly Bentley	324	#257 Sirrocco's Indian Thunder	882
Ann Bridges	1,139	#259 Guysborough Grey	2,023
Jean Bridges	7,665	#267 Ronya	1,263
Sherry Brooks	25	#275 MDA Billy Four	1,883
Sheila Brown	1,505	#276 Call Me Lauren	1,825
Jim Burns	241	#278 PD Cat-A-Hoolah	764
Donna Lee Cole	1,088	#279 Royal	595
Robert Curran	1,737	#280 CR Dorra Nedjyn	387
Kim DellaCioppa	670	#290 Phyve Point Lily	334
Gwenn Dexter	3,721	#291 MDA Four On The Floor	55
Betty Dwyer	747	#297 Just One Cool Dude	381
Bev Elliott	4,366	#300 Grand Marnier	450
Stephane Fournier	105	#310 Thunder	430
Chester Gillan	2,204	#318 Sir Ruby	182
Sylvia Gillies	3,781	#323 Rewbay	676
April Haliburton	2,832	#327 Arabian Styles	371
Nancy Hennessey	15	#333 Summer Breeze	180
Susan Hovey	821	#336 Jalna Jesta Cat	165
Deanna Johnston	690	#338 Jalna Saffire	1,101
Karen Jonah-Brown	148	#340 MDA Japros Sultan	205
Afiena Kamminga	570	#343 Morgan	120
Kaaren Lebert	2,924	#349 Elastic	84
Evan Lebert	33	#350 Aazzaan	587
Vernon Leighton	259	#357 JDA Azrael The Canadian	515
Denise Lemay	75	#363 Caruso	427
Irmgard Lipp	1,287	#372 Prairie Shadowfax	32
Stephen Loughnan	55	#376 Kindred Spirit	218
Donna Munn	4,095	#377 HHR Shetan	121
Elwood Munroe	622	#378 Annabelle	15
Jennifer McDonald	837	#379 Micah Amigo	15
Russlyn Patriquin-Dyke	2,324	#380 Magnifyque	49
Pat Rideout	3,232	#381 Washademoak Sunset	17
Pat Ritcey	407	#382 Deuces Wild	64
Shannon Robbins	204		
Lucy Rudge	4,202		
Pam Rustige	180		
Lori Singer	46		
Pam Thornton	4,506		
Leslie Wade	341		

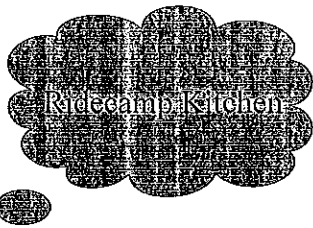
Jalna Saffire 1000 Mile Blanket
Guysborough Grey 2000 Mile Blanket

If you see any errors, please email me!

Ann Bridges 1000 Mile Jacket
Donna Munn 4000 Mile Jacket

What's Happening In 2010.....

January 23	January Thaw Equine Expo Fredericton, New Brunswick www.januarythaw.com
February 27/28	For The Good of our Horses Equine Educational Conference Hobby Horse Farm, Coldbrook, Nova Scotia www.horsenovascotia.ca
May 1	Equine Review St. Louise Park, Sussex, New Brunswick
June 26	Pine Tree - Endurance 50 Miles - LD 30 Miles North Waterford, Maine
July 1	2010 Canadian Championships - End 50/75/100 New Lowell, Ontario
July 1	Ride 'n Tie 5-10 Miles Kim DellaCioppa
July 2	CTR 25-35 Miles / IDR 10-20 Miles Kim DellaCioppa
July 3	Endurance 50-60 Miles / LD 25-30 Miles Kim DellaCioppa
July 4	Judged Pleasure 10-20 Miles Kim DellaCioppa
July 31	CTR - Wickham, New Brunswick Jennifer MacDonald
Aug 1	IDR - Wickham, New Brunswick Jennifer MacDonald
Aug 11, 12, 13	Western Maine Pioneer - LD/END - 30/55 Miles Each Day Fryeburg, Maine
Sept 4, 5	The Amigos - ?? Maple Ridge Rides - ?? Hillgrove Rides - ?? Decision and details to follow!!



The following are recipes that come from the kitchens of our hard working Ride Managers. Please send in your recipes for everyone to enjoy!! Any requests, let me know!

From the kitchen of Donna Lee Cole.....

Slow Cooked Corn Chowder

2 ½ cups Milk
1 can (10 ¾ oz size) Cream of Mushroom Soup, undiluted
1 can (14 ¾ oz size) Cream Style Corn
1 ¾ cup Frozen Corn
1 cup Frozen Shredded Hash Brown Potatoes
1 cup Cubed Cooked Ham or Bacon
1 large Onion, chopped
2 tbsp Butter or Margarine
2 tsp Dried Parsley Flakes
Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions: Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on low for 4 hours.

From the kitchen of Bev Elliott.....

Peanut Butter Pie

8 ounces Cream Cheese (1g block)	1 cup Powdered Icing Sugar
½ cup Creamy Peanut Butter	16 ounces Cool whip
1 Pre-made Graham Cracker Pie Crust	
Chocolate or Fudge Syrup	

Directions: In large bowl mix cream cheese and peanut butter. Add icing sugar and cool whip and mix until well blended. Pour into the pre-made pie crust. Drizzle chocolate syrup over the top. Refrigerate for 2 hrs before serving. Can be frozen.

From the kitchen of Jean Bridges.....

Sweet and Sour Sausages

2 lbs Small Pork Sausages	14 oz Can Sliced Peaches
¾ cup Sugar	1 tsp Curry Powder
1 tbsp Onion Flakes	1 cup Chili Sauce
½ cup Ketchup	

Directions: Brown sausages, not necessarily cook, in frying pan or under broiler. Cut in bite sized pieces or use cocktail sausages. Place in 1 ½ quart (1.5L) casserole. Add remaining ingredients. Stir together. Bake uncovered in 350 F oven for 30 minutes. Stir. Continue to bake for 15-20 minutes until sausages are well done. Serves 8.

Make the Most of Winter



Canadian winters are long and hard. With cold, snow and biting winds, sometimes the last thing you feel like doing is riding. But the season doesn't necessarily have to result in total downtime for riders.

by Nicole Kitchener

By keeping your horse active through the winter months, you can maintain his physical fitness, avoid boredom and even stave off illness. Then, when spring arrives, you will be ahead of schedule when you hit the show ring or start working more intensely. As well, the time can help you bond with your equine partner.

Hit the Snow

If you're lucky enough to have access to an indoor arena, it's obviously easier to keep up a regular workout regime through the winter. Nonetheless, it can get boring. And riders without an indoor arena or all-weather ring often don't have much choice but to hack in the winter.

As long as the footing is safe and temperatures and winds aren't too ridiculously cold, riding through the snow in fields or the woods will invigorate you and your horse and can provide a good workout. Even a simple jaunt down the driveway is worth bundling up for.

Be careful on icy or slippery ground, don't travel through hard snow and use vaseline or cooking spray to prevent snow accumulation in your horse's feet.

If possible, keep an area clear of snow and ice so you can continue riding outside all winter.

Back to Basics

Sometimes riders forget the importance of practicing simple figures and patterns, no matter what their preferred discipline. Winter is the perfect time to focus on perfecting these basic exercises – circles, figure-eights, serpentines – with little stress on our animals.

It's also a great time to perfect lateral work: turns on the forehand and haunches, side passes, leg yielding, shoulders-in and transitions.

Claudia Wagner-Wilson is a hunter/jumper coach, trainer and rider, who operates Silver Spring Farm in Oakville, ON. She finds giving horses a break from jumping, to concentrate on flatwork is sometimes helpful.

Keep over-fences work simple too. Courses comprised of poles on the ground will help keep you and your horse sharp or, like Wagner-Wilson, use a gymnastic jumping chute for the horses to go over alone or with a rider aboard.

She'll set up a rail to a small jump or a rail to a small jump,

Wagner-Wilson. "I might stop jumping them for a little bit and go back to flatwork for a little while with them. I work on 20-metre circles and shoulder-in, a little bit of half-pass, transitions. It depends on how experienced the horse is."

Likewise, dressage riders might find it useful to pop their horses over some jumps. They don't have to be major obstacles – cavaletti and cross rails, even poles on the ground can be enough to sharpen a horse's responses, self-carriage, balance and rhythm. The horses will likely find it a fun change, as will their riders who can work on feel, timing and their own balance, among other skills.

Also, take advantage of riding with coaches who specialize in other disciplines or by attending clinics.

Winter

Winter is a perfect time to do groundwork with your horse. You don't need to produce an animal that prances around you like a circus horse doing airs above the ground at a snap of your fingers.

All groundwork needs to accomplish is to refine the horse's attention and improve his response to your commands by establishing you as your pair's leader. It also helps enhance your relationship, which will ultimately enhance your under-saddle work, as well.

Some of the things you might want to practice are backing up, yielding the front and back ends, sending your horse through and over objects and desensitization.


For many groundwork exercises, you don't even need to leave the aisle of your barn. Incorporate manner lessons, such as teaching a horse to stand still on the cross ties or getting used to the sound of clippers, for example.

There are a number of training programs (i.e. TTEAM, clicker training) that stress groundwork fundamentals. Find one that makes sense to you and have fun with it.

As long as the footing is safe

As long as the footing is safe, there's no reason why you and your horse can't go for a walk together. My mother and her 33-year-old Thoroughbred used to walk up and down the snowy sides of the driveway when he was past his winter riding days. (Sometimes Mom got a lot of exercise trying to keep up with the old guy though.)

Keep up a good pace and both you and your horse will receive an aerobic workout. Plus, as with many of these winter activities, it gives the two of you a chance to bond.

Other winter busting ideas include: bringing clinicians into your barn; attending clinics; hosting fun shows; catching up on equine-related reading; watching training videos; and taking up pilates or yoga to help riding fitness and flexibility. Really, doing anything that keeps you engaged in the sport while your horse stays occupied and healthy, will not only be good for you both, but will make winter a season to enjoy, not dread. 

WHAT OWNING A HORSE MEANS.....

- *When you are tense, let me teach you to relax.
- *When you are short sighted, let me teach you to see.
- *When you are short tempered, let me teach you to be patient.
- *When you are quick to react, let me teach you to be thoughtful.
- *When you are angry, let me teach you to be serene.
- *When you feel superior, let me teach you to be respectful.
- *When you are self absorbed, let me teach you to think of greater things.
- *When you are lonely, let me be your companion.
- *When you are tired, let me carry the load.
- *When you need to learn, let me teach you. After all, I am your horse.

And now ... The REST of the STORY!

- *When you are tense, let me teach you that there are dragons in the forest and we need to leave NOW!
- *When you are short sighted, let me teach you to figure out where exactly in the 40 acres I am hiding.
- *When you are short tempered, let me teach you how to slog around the pasture for an hour before you can catch me.
- *When you are quick to react, let me teach you that herbivores kick MUCH faster than omnivores.
- *When you are angry, let me teach how well I can stand on my hind feet because I don't FEEL like cantering on my right lead today, that's why.
- *When you are worried, let me entertain with my mystery lameness, GI complaint and skin disease.
- *When you feel superior, let me teach you that mostly you are the maid service.
- *When you are self absorbed, let me teach you to PAY ATTENTION.
I told you about those dragons in the forest.
- *When you are arrogant, let me teach you what 1200 lbs of yippee-yahoo-gotta-go horse can do when suitably inspired.
- *When you are lonely, let me be your companion. Let's do lunch.
Breakfast and dinner sound good too.
- *When you are tired, don't forget about the 600 lbs of grain that needs to be unloaded.
- *When you are feeling financially secure, let me teach you the meaning of "veterinary service".
- *When you need to learn, hang around the barn, Bud, I'll learn ya.

Competitive Trail Riding Growing In Cumberland

BROOKDALE— Competitive trail riding is a sport which is quickly growing in popularity across the Maritime provinces and Cumberland County is certainly no exception.

Local horsemen are earning a reputation as being amongst the best in the field and are expected to place well in the fourth annual Frolic-N-Acres Competitive Trail Ride slated for October 27.

Frolic-N-Acres, operated by Garnet Gallant in Brookdale, is the centre of the sport in the county.

A three-man team which rides out the Gallant's operation earned the respect of fellow horsemen when they captured the team challenge trophy at a recent 27 mile ride in the rough terrain around Sussex, N.B.

"It was the most grueling ride I've ever been on," says Gallant who won the award teamed with Haydn Bowles and Larry McKim.

Twenty-five riders, including three in the junior division from Cumberland County completed the ride, and all are expected to enter the October 27 ride and fair well.

In addition to the team trophy, Gallant, riding "County Line" won the senior horsemanship award (judged on the care and handling of a rider's mount throughout an entire ride) and placed sixth in the senior conditioning category.

McKim, meanwhile, on "Buck", came in senior horsemanship, while teammate Bowles atop "Misty" was fourth.

In the junior division two other riders from Frolic-N-Acres also placed well.

Michael Randall, astride "Sir George" was second in horsemanship and fourth in conditioning, and Grace Elliott, riding "Frolic-N-Var", placed fifth in horsemanship and sixth in conditioning.

Young Mark Boon from Joggins, riding "Indigo" was third in horsemanship and second in junior conditioning.

Organizers expect it will take five hours for the 35-mile Frolic-N-Acres trail ride to be completed by the 25 riders from all over the Maritimes, who are expected to complete. But one thing worries them: It's hunting season.

They are asking local hunting enthusiasts to cooperate while the ride is on October 27 between 12:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on that day.

The ride is being held in the Brookdale area, starting from the Frolic-N-Acres stables, proceeding along the Pumping Station Road and on through wood trails and lumber roads to Hastings.

From there, the riders will proceed through the Salem and West Leicester areas on the same types of trails, roads and power line right-of-ways.

The area will be well marked by organizers, who began the chore last weekend.

Signs will be posted along the main road areas of the ride, and the trails will be marked by colored ribbons. Hunters coming across these ribbons are asked by organizers to be very alert for horses and riders.

Riders, they say, will be dressed to suit the season, and all competitors will be carrying bells or some other type of noisemaker to make sure they are heard before they are seen.

They ask hunters who sometimes shoot at sounds not to do so in the ride area on October 27.

However, the organizers are confident most hunters are responsible people who always refrain from shooting until their quarry is absolutely identified.

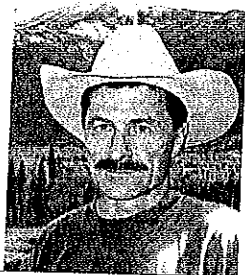
As one committee member said: "We are fully aware that this may create some minor inconvenience to a few hunters, and for this we apologize."

"However, we trust that all hunters will concede that fall is one of the most beautiful times of the year in Cumberland County, and that all people, whether they hunt or not, have the right to enjoy the use of the woods at that time of year."

"We ask them to respect this right, and to be extremely careful if hunting in the Brookdale, Salem or West Leicester areas on October 27."



SWEET SUCCESS— Haydn Bowles, who with Larry McKim and Garnet Gallant recently won the Senior Team Challenge trophy in the trail riding competition, with the team, the Frolic-N-Acres, at the recent 27 mile ride in the rough terrain around Sussex, N.B. The men are among the best in the county.



By Stan Walchuk Jr.

Four More Trail Knots

Sheet Bend, Hondo Knot, Bowline, & Inline Bowline

Promise me this: if you use horses and you have never learned a proper knot, then of all the knots you could learn, take a few minutes to learn the quick release knot and the bowline knot (instructions for the quick release knot can be found in the January 2009 issue). It will take only minutes, and it will change your life. Now you can tie up and get going in mere seconds. No longer will you fight with a knot that is so tight it appears welded together, or end up with a rope in segments, hacked apart with your jack-knife, tossed aside, or hung on a barn nail. Your life will be altered.

The quick release and the bowline are knots that my family uses every day. We use the quick release knot more often because we are constantly tying up horses to rails and poles, but the bowline is more versatile, used in a variety of important situations.

The bowline is king on the high seas and on your horse. It is used when you need a fixed loop, when you need a knot that can be undone after great pressure, and for Houdini horses that can untie release knots. It is used to lead multiple horses, tied neck to neck with 11-foot lead ropes. It is used to tie a puller. It is used on a picket line and for emergency rope hobbles. It is used when we tie horses for longer periods, as an insurance policy. It is used to lead horses that may get wrapped around a tree or to lead inexperienced horses that may pull. It is used on a scotch hobble, when a front or back foot needs to be lifted up. And it is used to pull out your truck and horse trailer after getting bogged down in the mud.

If knots are not tied properly they can get you into trouble by coming undone at the worst moments, or

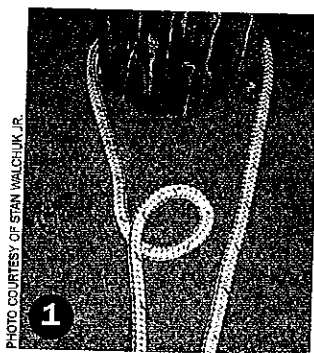
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Calm, reliable horses are central to the success and safety of your trail riding and horse camping adventure. And a few reliable, practical knots will help keep both horse and rider out of trouble.

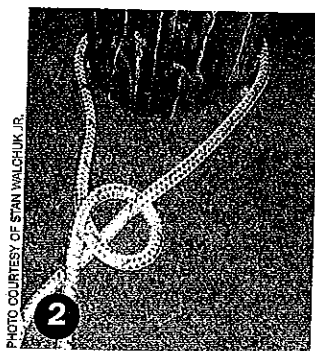
Bowline

The bowline is the most versatile of our horse knots, performing a variety of jobs daily while on the trail. It is used whenever a fixed loop that can always be undone is needed. In the final step, the bottom segment of the knot is pushed downward to loosen the knot before untying it.

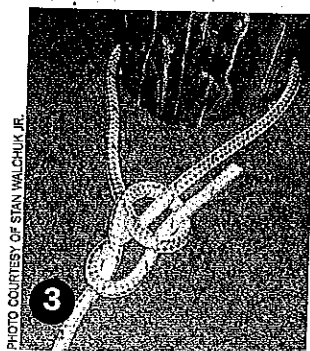
The bowline knot is like the diamond hitch in that there are many versions. One of the criticisms of a bowline is that it will slide down a post or a tree. This can be remedied by wrapping a couple of loops around the post first, or by using a running bowline (for instructions, see Blue Creek's *Trail Riding, Packing & Training*). Notice that we thread the tail end of the lead rope around the post or tree left to right. This is because on the trail we are constantly tying to trees and brush and want to feel for the tail with our right hand if we are right handed.



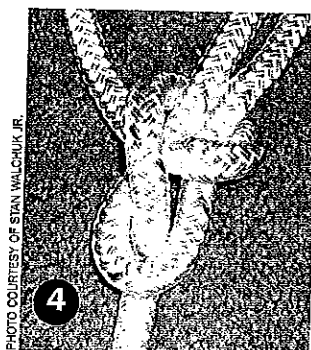
1 Pass the rope around the post left to right (or right to left if you are left handed), and put a small loop in the fixed end of the rope, as shown.



2 Pull the tail end of the rope through the loop.



3 Circle the tail end around the fixed end of the rope below the loop, then pass the tail end up through the loop.



4 Pull to tighten the knot.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

by not doing what you expect them to do. Sometimes we blame the knot but usually it is the person who tied it.

Once I received a call from a well educated trail rider of some experience. He was about to take a horse camping trip and was inquiring about our services. As it turned out, he opted to put his outfit together on his own. That winter, at an outdoor convention banquet, I saw him sitting at a nearby table. My curiosity was piqued when his hand appeared. One finger or thumb — I can't remember which — was heavily bandaged. I walked over, said my hello, and asked him if he stuck his finger where it didn't belong. As a matter of fact, "Yes," he said, "I lost part of my finger."

"Really? What happened?" I asked.

"Well, after I called you I went to pick up that neighbour's horse I was going to borrow. I got her into the trailer, went to tie her up."

"Yeah?"

"And then she pulled when I was tying the knot and my finger fell on the floor."

"You're kidding."

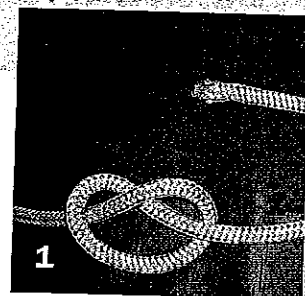
"Do I look like I'm kidding? I fell on the floor too. Good thing my buddy was there."

There are two messages here: one is to learn to tie knots properly and efficiently, without sticking your fingers into tight places. Second, always use calm, sensible horses for your adventures.

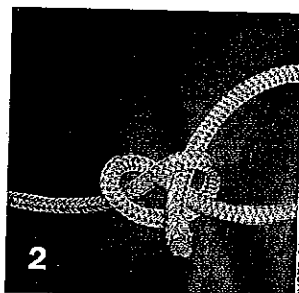
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Hondo Knot

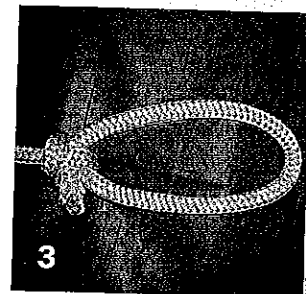
The hondo knot is great whenever you need a small standing loop. It is used to make a lasso or lariat and can be used to tie your lash rope to the lash cinch (however, if it is a three stranded rope, splicing it on is better).



1 With the tail end of the rope, pass the end back over and then under the rope to make a loop as shown.



2 Place the tail end of the rope inside the loop nearest to the end.



3 Pull fixed end of the rope to tighten the knot.

Inline Bowline

The inline bowline is used to tie a loop at any point in a length of rope. It is great for making a high line and for securing loads on vehicles. Like the regular bowline, it can easily be undone after use.

At any point in the rope, make three loops around your hand.

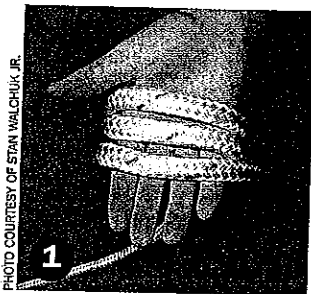


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

1

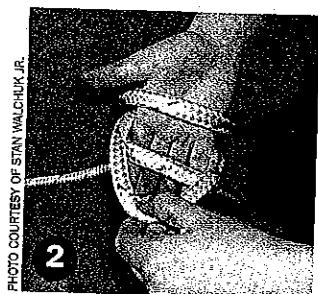


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

2

Pull up the center coil of the rope and lay it to the outside, towards your fingers.

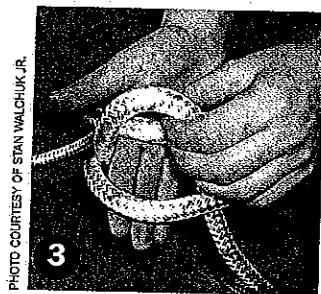


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

3

Lift up the new center piece and lift it over to the inside, towards your wrist.

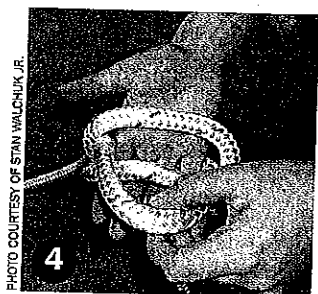


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

4

Take the new center piece and lay it to the outside again. In total, you should have lifted the center piece three times.

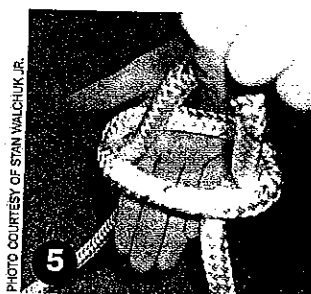


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

5

Pick up the center piece and remove your hand.

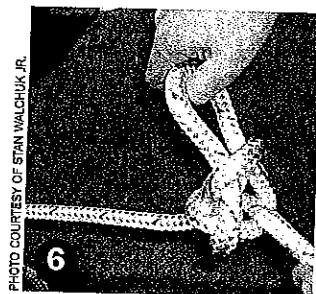


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6

Pull the center piece to form a loop.

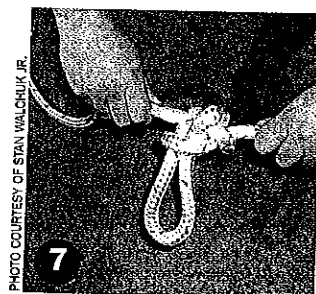


PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

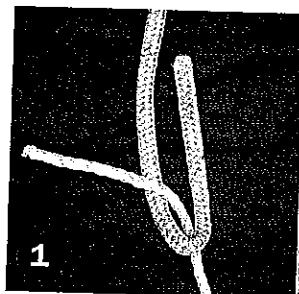
7

Tighten the knot by pulling the rope from both sides.

Sheet Bend

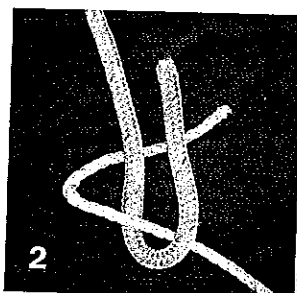
The sheet bend is useful for tying two ropes of different sizes together. It becomes more secure if the small rope is wrapped around the big rope twice rather than just once.

Create a hook with the larger rope, and then pass the smaller rope underneath it, as shown.



1

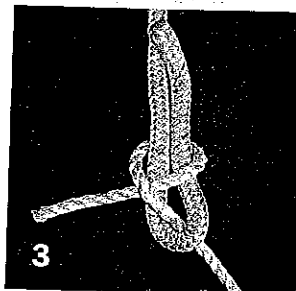
PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.



2

PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

Pass the smaller rope underneath both ends of the larger rope as shown.



3

PHOTO COURTESY OF STAN WALCHUK JR.

Pull the smaller rope back underneath itself, and pull to tighten.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

On the lighter side, once we had just finished a knot tying session at one of our clinics and the group headed up the mountain. The next day a couple of eager guys were determined to put the tail tying knot to good use. They tied several packhorses head to tail, admired their knots, mounted up, and began to head several miles down the mountain. For some reason, and we'll never know why, the lead packhorse was not led, but just given his own nose. It seemed to work fine; the horses all followed like links in a sausage, until the group of men stopped for a bathroom break. The lead packhorse, apparently, did not need to relieve himself and continued down the trail, walking at first, then trotting, and finally breaking into a mad dash. Of course the riders panicked and followed the sizzling sausages, but they were long gone. To the great relief of everyone, the horses stood waiting at the bottom of the mountain like wayward kids.

There are a few lessons here too: tail tying is useful but you are usually better off tying horses head to tail with a breakaway string. That way if they wrap themselves around trees or get into a wreck the string will break before serious damage is done, and you will not need to cut lead ropes and tail hair. Can you imagine the wreck that may have developed if these were not calm, reliable horses? Trail riding and horse camping is an adventure and things do happen, so calm, reliable horses are not just an asset — they are central to the success of your ride, and your safety. (For instructions on tail tying, see the January 2009 issue.)

Well, here's hoping that you learn a few good knots that can keep you out of trouble next season. Happy Trails!

*