



MnDRA News

Brrrrr,

Yes, I used the headline last year.



Some of Teresa Fett's horses enjoying the snow and cold.

Howdy all,

I had this title for last year's Jan newsletter and it seemed more appropriate this year. While the cold does get tiring, keep telling yourself that it's better than freezing rain and ice. Twenty pounds of clothes and life is good. I do know this winter has made me a devotee to Muck Boots Chore series. My feet have yet to get even chilled.

In this issue, I give a perhaps more coherent recap of the UMECRA convention. It was nice this year in that it wasn't that far away from many of us in the central area and the motel was quiet; there was not a repeat of last year's family reunion from heck. The speaker was good and the awards were fun. Next year is when it is in Michigan. We will be pricing busses to it to see if that is an option for us. We'll get more back to you later in the summer, but start thinking about coming on a first ever, MnDRA road trip.

There is also information about the MnDRA Banquet and what seems to be becoming a tradition, my annual 'rant'. This year I just offer some thoughts on how we can all help make rides more enjoyable for ourselves and others.

Hope you are finding time to ride.

=;{}} Happy trails. Ken

In This Issue

PAGE 2

- State of the Club Address From Teresa
- Banquet News

PAGE 3

- Banquet Flyer

PAGE 4-5

- My New Year's Wish List

PAGE 6-8

- My minutes of the UMECRA Convention

PAGE 8

- MnDRA Membership form

THE STATE OF THE CLUB ADDRESS FROM OUR PRESIDENT.

Happy 2014 to everyone! This winter has been a complete turnaround from last year with the early snow and cold weather. Hopefully we will see a normal spring and not be shoveling for MNDRA I.

The cold weather causes much discussion of blankets, feed, and shelter as everyone has a personal preference. I had an old vet tell me early on that most things we do for our horses is more for our peace of mind and not so much for the horse. I thought I would relate my approach to the winter months and what has worked for me since I started this sport in 1987.

My horses have no barn but they do have trees for windbreak. I feed a bit of horse feed and use square bales so I can watch intake and keep them from getting too fat by spring. They have pasture access and spend time digging in the snow for grass which keeps them busy and not chewing up my corral fences and trees.

I quit riding after Point Chaser and don't ride again until the snow is gone. I feel they need the winter to rest up after a season of competition and I just let them be a horse.

I have spent the winter trying to get my thumb healed up from a hard tumble at Charity Cup. I have now purchased a "Cowboy" saddle (don't laugh) and hope the horn will help me stay on as I am getting too old to keep picking myself up off the ground.

Thanks to the MNDRA people that attended the UMECRA meeting and picked up awards for those of us that couldn't make it. The MNDRA banquet will be coming up and there should be full information in this newsletter. Thanks to Ken and Theresa Meyer, our hosts this year. Be sure to get your reservations in ASAP to make their job easier.

See everyone in March and stay warm until then.

Teresa Fett

MNDRA Spring Banquet News Update

Remember the Spring Banquet is March 22, 2014 at Captains on Long Lake. Some nearby hotels can be found at this url, <http://www.gogobot.com/captains-on-long-lake-isanti-restaurant--nearby--hotels>. There is also a nice hotel in Cambridge which is close by that can be found here: <http://www.grandstayhospitality.com/find-a-hotel/locations/cambridge/overview>

We are hoping for nice weather and fun times. It is a little off the beaten track, but the facility is great for our meeting. See the next page for more details and the reservation form to be filled out and sent to Sharon Hahn.



MNDRA ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET

Saturday, March 22, 2014

Captain's on Long Lake, Isanti, MN

27821 Bay Shore Dr. NW Isanti, MN 55040

(763) 444-5897

DIRECTIONS:

From St. Cloud – Take MN Hwy 95 east to MN Hwy. 47. Turn right and drive south 9 miles. Go left on 277th Ave. NW/Bay Shore Dr. Captain's is on the right after about 1 mile.

From the Southeast Metro: Take US Highway 10 to Anoka. Exit Right on MN Hwy 47. Turn right onto MN Hwy 47. Drive north 19 miles. Right on 277th Ave. NW/Bay Shore Dr. Captain's is on the right after about 1 mile.

From Southwest: Take US Hwy 169 North to Anoka, stay straight in Anoka to MN Hwy 47. Proceed north on 47 19 miles. Right on 277th Ave. NW/Bay Shore Dr. Captain's is on the right after about 1 mile.

From I-35 and MN 95 in North Branch (i.e. near Wild River): Exit 147 and take MN 95 west approx. 1 mile. Turn left on Isanti Trail/ Hwy 5. Continue west on Hwy. 5 for approximately 17 miles, crossing MN 65 and into Isanti. Left (south) on Lily St. and go 1.6 miles. Turn right on Bay Shore Dr. Captain's is on the left.

SCHEDULE:

2:30 pm MnDRA I, Sisu on the Border,
Maplewood, Mosquito, Thistle
Ride Mgrs. Meeting
3:00 pm Executive Board meeting
4:00 pm General Membership meeting
6:00 pm Buffet dinner
7:00 pm Awards
After awards: Stay and socialize!

BUFFET DINNER MENU:

Bourbon Beef tips
Oven roasted chicken breast
Stuffing and volute' sauce
Baby red roasted potatoes
Green beans
House salad (Romaine & iceberg lettuce, Granny Smith apples, Parmesan Cheese, Craisins, and sweet poppy seed dressing)
Rolls
Strawberry shortcake
Coffee and soda
(Other drinks available for purchase at the bar)

REGISTRATION FORM (RETURN BY MARCH 8):

Name(s) attending: _____

Adult buffet	# meals:	@ \$32	=
Child buffet (12 & under)	# meals:	@ \$15	=
		TOTAL	
		Check payable to MNDRA	

Mail form with payment by March 8 to: Sharon Hahn, 22175 Cedar Dr. NW, Oak Grove MN 55011.

EDITOR'S WISH LIST

As we approach a new season, I would like to offer a series of suggestions to perhaps make the season even more fun for everyone. First, a caveat. I am not an expert at this sport. I'm a mediocre rider who does this as a competition with low expectations for success. This past year, I rode pretty much alone in LD for the first time in my UMECRA career. Because of this, I had a number of interesting things happen that might have been avoided if I, the RMs, or the Vets did something different. Also, my time in the vet area let me observe stressful situations that I think could also simply be avoided. So, with that in mind, I offer the following suggestions as just that, suggestions. I hope others will offer more for future issues or question mine.

Riders: I start with us because we may be the weakest link. Many of our difficulties arise from us just using common sense. I think the first thing we need to remember is that while everything that is happening in ride camp is for the riders, it is not happening just for you. Every rider is just one of a group who the ride manager (RM) needs to please if s/he wants them to return next year. So if something isn't happening fast enough for your own personal experience, take a breath, look around to see that other riders are being served and wait for your turn.

Last year, more than previous years, I saw frustration in the vet area when riders, especially LD or endurance riders, are not getting checked when they want to be checked. There are legitimate reasons to be concerned about delays; your horse might tighten up or it's getting hotter and you want to pulse down, or your hold is almost over and you need to do your exit CRI. But often, these situations are as much a result of poor planning on our part as what is happening in the vet area. If you come in at the midway with a lot of other riders, you should plan for a crowded exit CRI. Maybe come back a little early, or keep your eye on the vet area for a lull toward the end of your hold. Also, know what position you are in and how far the others are away from you. Do you need to get out right away? Are you racing?

Second, please realize that all three rides; endurance, LD, comp, are equal in importance and each has its own unique bottleneck where time is very important. I do ask riders to read my vet suggestions to see these bottlenecks and their priority and to think about where you are at that point in time. There have been a number of times last year where I have heard riders make comments that made it clear that a large number of folks think of comp as the poor sister of the rides and they should wait until the LD and endurance needs are met.

Another important job of riders is to attend the ride meeting and PAY ATTENTION!. Too often we get the feel that we are

experienced enough that the ride meeting is just to hear criteria and time. We use the rest of the meeting to chat with our friends. What we need to realize is the RM has ridden this trail within the past couple days and is using this time to give you hints as to landmarks and trail conditions. We should listen carefully and be marking our maps with these hints. They can save a ton of frustration on the trail.

And perhaps the most important thing riders should resolve to do; USE THE MAP. Don't just glance at it before the ride during the meeting and then tuck it into your pack. Look at it, study it. Note the landmarks or unique features so you recognize them on the trail. Then, on the trail, if in doubt, stop and pull the map out. (RMs, please read your part about maps.) It takes time and money to make the maps, but they are a resource that should be used. It is our job to stay on the trail. We riders need to quit claiming that the trail was mis-marked or not marked. RMs put in too much time marking to do it in a sloppy fashion. Yes, vandals and wind do happen, but usually, a missed turn happens because of inattentiveness. When approaching an intersection, slow down.

One last thing, riders; do not monopolize the vets by getting a free diagnosis from them when other riders are trying to finish. When the vet is done with you, thank them and leave. Come back later if you have questions. If there is anything serious that needs to be done with your horse right away, the vet will let you know.

If you have more suggestions as to how we can make RMs, vets, and other riders' lives easier, let me know and I'll share them.

Ride Managers: Actually, your list is pretty short. We are blessed with a group of rider-centered RMs in MN. I only have three things I would suggest. First, hold the ride meeting in the morning before the ride. The folks in the NW and many others from the central region who have to work on Friday often can't get to your ride until 7 or later and then need to take care of their animals first. While it may be easier to hold the meeting the night before, it is your responsibility to see that every rider gets the same information. So if a rider comes after the meeting, you need to give them all the information again, and not just a shortened version. By holding the meeting a half hour or hour before the ride, you solve this problem. Yes, riders will complain because it uses up some of their pre-ride time, but they should plan ahead for the meeting and add the meeting into their pre-ride routine.

Second, unless your trail is pretty much defined by nature and there are no intersections to throw riders, make a map and hand it out during registration with the suggestion the rider looks it over before the meeting, Deflect any questions about the trail

and map until the meeting (riders, don't ask, just wait until the meeting.) It would be great if the map was to scale and had landmarks, but those are hard to find. Also, please put all the trails on one map. Sometimes a rider may get confused because a trail that shares loops may not have all the ribbons for the loops in one spot and if the map doesn't show the loop for which the rider is seeing ribbons for, they have no idea what to do.

Third, mark your trail ribbons as consistently as possible. Try to put all the ribbons on one side and if any trail shares loops, make sure every time you have a ribbon you have ALL the colors there. Last year I was going down a trail by myself and the color ribbon for the loop I was on disappeared. I kept going, but that loop's ribbon was not in the next three sets of ribbons. I turned around to find where I had missed the turn. I didn't see anything. I pulled out my map and it looked like I was on the trail but was hard to tell as it was a park map not drawn to scale. The endurance loop that I could see ribbons for was not on my map because my map was for LD.. I spent a half hour going back and forth looking for the missing turn and then just decided to follow the loop I was on. My color ribbon came back intermittently for the rest of the loop with the other loop's ribbons showing up twice as often. If you have help marking trail, make sure everyone is on the same page as to how to mark it.

And the last is usually done, but don't forget the confidence ribbons after an intersection and every once in awhile down a trail no matter how unlikely you think someone will veer off. Remember, you are marking for people who think that trotting for two to six hours is fun. We don't think like normal people.

Vets: While I hesitate to make any suggestions to the vets, not because I worry about retribution, but because of the amount of work they already do, I do have a couple suggestions. First, if you can find a volunteer to triage for you in the vet area, your life would probably be simpler. With a set of eyes other than your own to keep track of who is approaching and for what, who was there first, who needs to have something done now and who can wait a minute, you can concentrate on the horses and yourselves during those brief minutes when you have a break.

Two, please let riders know if you see something at the mid checks that may affect their horse. While that may start a discussion on how serious it is, you can cut off the discussion by just saying "it may not be anything, just thought I'd let you know," This may be even more true with comp this year with the milage only for grade three lameness.

Three, do ask riders who are using boots, or the new easyboots to remove the padding above the coronary band during the final check and look for lesions. While you probably won't find anything, it will help ease the perception that the new easyboots give an advantage,

Fourth, as you are deciding who is doing what between the vets at a ride, keep the following things in mind: two of the 'MUST DO NOW' aspects of our sport are: endurance and LD Best Condition and the comp final trot out. These two things are point specific and must be done at a universal time for everyone to keep the competition fair. Delaying either is potentially a game changer. So the person who is judging these parts of the competition perhaps shouldn't be the treatment vet. While everyone will put the life of a horse above the competition, sometimes a non-life-threatening treatment can cause these two things to be delayed and the outcome of the competition changed. All other aspects of our sport can be delayed some and the impact isn't so critical, but especially the comp trot out needs to be done in a timely manner as it often determines the final standings of the whole day and if a horse stiffens up because it was waiting, may even cost them a completion. Endurance and LD have a large window to do their finals and they just need to pass so they should take deference to these other two situations, where points are awarded based on how the trot goes. The riders should pay attention when they come in and ask the pulse takers when are the comps due or are any best conditions coming up soon. Then they should plan accordingly.

Finally, in comp, please use the points. Take enough fatigue points on the first horses so you have room to go up or down. If they turn out to be the best, then score everyone lower. But when you only take a couple points on the first horses, you now have boxed yourself in and perhaps the horse you thought was the best might not win.

ALL OF US: We do this because it is fun and we like being around each other and we love being on our horses. Keep that in mind, and don't worry about the rest. Sometimes you will win and sometimes you will lose. The goal is to have fun. Stepping back and taking a breath will take you a long way toward that goal.

2112 Annual Meeting Minutes

The Jan meeting was nice this year. I thank my table-mates: Carmen and Victoria and the Mowrer family for keeping it fun. It's time to recap my play by play minutes for those of you who did not follow on facebook to give you all the pageantry and drama, so you can feel as if you were there. Next year I will be going back to Twitter so the material stays in order. More on that later. The fun meter is back:

1:02 Meeting called to order.

1:03 Roll call. And we are off.

1:09 Minutes Approved

1:16 etiquette rules being reminded. Limit discussion length within meeting rules. 1 minute length. **Q:** Does it apply to everyone? **A:** yes **Q:** does a question to someone and their answer count on your answer? **A:** Yes Passed



1:15 Treasurers and Secretaries report: Still lots of money. The report was abbreviated. If you want a detailed report you may send an email to Jill. Feller: **Q:** shouldn't a treasurers report include awards? **A:** Sorry, I didn't get it printed out. **Q:** How much money from auction last

year went to convention? Was the money from the auction for the convention used for the convention? **A:** We don't know what the convention cost yet. The money set aside for the convention will be used. Motion to accept, second Passed



1:20 Board milage reimbursement: Should board be reimbursed for milage to meetings. Proposed drivers get .25/mile. Passed in morning meeting. Can be rescinded by future boards.

1:21 Old business motion: to be a board member, must be 18 years old and member for 2 years. **Q:** amend change member to ride manager seconded

Explanation for the wording change: a rider rep candidate was less than 18. Reason for the second motion was a concern is this changes all board members to not have to be ride managers.

The goal is to make sure all members are 18 and have 2 years experience

Lots of confused discussions. In the middle of which Ed Hauser said, "You are making sense, now" to another RM. Found mistake in original motion. We needed to add the words "as a rider rep" to the above and it will solve

the problem. New words added. 2nd amendment withdrawn and new amendment add to include new words so it applies to only rider rep. Everything now passed. To be a rider rep, you need to be a member for two years and 18 years old.

1:37 Stallion rule. Stallions may be tied with a single halter and rope **if** enclosed in a charged fence or campground pen. Also ride manager may allow alternative options.

Q: Why do RM now need to enforce this? Is it our job to now go around and police our riders? **A:** It makes RM liable. **A:** RM can exclude stallions from their ride if they don't want to deal with this. Passed

1:43 Comp rider punishment clarification. If a rule is broken where points are not assigned, such as not maintaining forward motion in final 2-mile or sponging in camp when it is not allowed, the options for consequences are completion only, miles only, or DQ. The choice of which of the three applies is up to ride manager is implied in the rule.

Lots of angry discussion (one minute rule works)
Background: This came out of a protest where riders rode backward on the two-mile and were given a minimal penalty by the RM. It was discovered that there were no set consequences for breaking these rules. UMECRA was founded partly to create a standard set of rules so riders could expect similar experiences and competition at all UMECRA rides. This rule attempts to help with that goal. Vote passed.

(Continued on next page)

1:57 Rule - Boots with straps or coverings that are a permanent part of the boot may be worn without penalty in comp. This allows the new easyboots to not be penalized. The boots must primarily be functional as shoes. Bell boots do not meet this criteria. Judges may observe the area covered by the attached strap, keeper, or gaiter at any time. **Q:** Are we penalizing folks who are using shoes and not boot riders. **A:** Purpose, is for a boot that protects the sole, not leg. Passed.

2:11 Weight limits Motion to move cut off for heavy weight to 186 lbs with tack.

Q: Discussion is why the change. **A:** aligns better with AERC. Passed

IT DOES NOT BECOME EFFECTIVE UNTIL THE 2015 SEASON. So you don't have to start pigging out yet.

2:15 Random rant

2:16 rule - allows heart rate monitors for vet checks
Discussion centered on ride managers may use this technology. It adds options. Passed



2:27 rule Rules for using heart monitors. Must be on 30 sec, horses must be 10 ft apart. Actual

reading on card. Stethoscopes must be used for recheck.

Q: a previous ride rule keeps us consistent. This rule changes that since RM get to decide **A:** They are already being used. This makes it official and sets standards
Passed

2:39 rule - completion grade 3 or 4 lame will receive milage only.
Background - A vet proposed this so horses lame horses do not have to trot more than straight out since it will be obvious if they are lame immediately, It is a horse welfare issue.

A concern that this is just making comp harder and will push more horses into LD was expressed and lameness is possible to miss on a straight out trot. Since that is all comps do at the mid-check, perhaps the rider will get no warning that their horse may be off. Passed



2:45 - rule - This was a bit of language change to try to fit with AERC. UMECRA has had a novice division, but the past couple years some rides have been having LD style 'fun' rides. No points or miles were awarded since UMECRA had a novice division. AERC is coming late and loose to the party and this just clarifies that these rides should

follow the AERC guidelines for their 'introductory' rides.

2:54 rules done. Ride schedule.
Look online soon. Two rides gone - Zumbro Boogie and Brushy Creek Fall. Passed.

3:10 reminder, ride managers please have experience on the trail with the riders who are doing novice or beginner rides

3:11 ride insurance the bill is the same. UMECRA pays half.

3:13 new form for next year to nominate yourself for a board position in the future.

3:15 -Promotions Report. They are going to try to make the website more involved and reach out to publications and horse association. Also videos on how to do ride camp etc will be made available. Clinics. Other ideas? Full report online.

3:24 2015 convention in Claire Mich.

3:27 - ride membership cards. You need to put your UMECRA ride number on your entry form. It helps keep the milage and bookkeeping straight. Also, make sure you put the same name for your horse on the form from year to year.

3:34 Rider Reps: Maxine Bernsdorf, Bonnie Mielke, Elizabeth Laurie, and Joselyn Seefeldt are rider reps

(Continued on next page)

UMECRA CONVENTION PLAY BY PLAY CONTINUED

3:35 elections:

President Theresa Meyer,
Vet stays Dr Olivia
MN rep is Diane Schmidt
Wis rep is John Wagner

3:37 AHA reminder It was pointed out that there will be a significant membership dues increase for AHA after April 1st. It was suggested that if you wish to be a member, you should get your dues in before April 1st. They have a three-year membership and that would give a huge savings.

3:49 Thank yous and we are done Meeting adjourned



MnDRA Membership form

Name _____

Family _____ (\$25.00) Single _____ (\$15.00)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email (PRINT NEATLY) _____

Please make checks payable to MnDRA and mail membership renewal to:

**Sandra Fett
35976 Co. Hwy 4
Frazee, MN 56544**