

Reflections of a first time Ride Manager: By Leslie Russell

EKAHA's 2001 Hill and Dale CTR is over and I find myself reflecting on its success and the reasons. This was my first year as a ride manager and I really don't feel like I managed to do anything but show up and watch all the wonderful people that contributed their time to make this ride a success. They are "key players in the running of a smooth ship" as was mentioned by our Veterinarian judge, Dr. Randy Burgess.

First and most important, I want to emphasize that a competitive ride cannot be successful without the competitors. And we had a FINE group this year. We started 63 horse and rider teams and finished with 60. Among those, we started eight Junior riders, ranging in age from 11 to 17, which is exceptional. I believe these young competitors are critical to our sport and I especially want to thank the parents that continue to encourage and support these wonderful juniors. They're a great reminder that having fun and learning about our equine partners is the key to success in this sport.

This year we were also fortunate to have two excellent judges. Dr. Randy Burgess, our Veterinarian judge from Arkansas, was accompanied by his wife Kita. It was wonderful to have them both. I remembered Randy from a ride I competed in several years ago and I was impressed with his thoroughness and his patience, not to mention his delightful Southern accent, so the chance to have him judge Hill & Dale this year was good fortune indeed. Bill Sherfese, our Horsemanship judge, is from Georgia. Bill is also known throughout NATRC as Bill "Sure Fussy", but the only thing he's really fussy about is making sure the horse and rider teams have a safe ride and a bundle of fun in the process. And just to give you an example of Bill's idea of fun, he invited riders and their horses to join him Saturday morning to do the "hokey pokey" on horseback.

I attribute all the compliments we received on the condition of the trails to Ginny Peterson, Mary McDevitt, her husband, Ed, his magic chain saw, and Sara, their daughter, for her wonderfully illustrated signs and imaginative 2-mile marker. It's because of their ongoing work to keep the trails at Hill & Dale clear of obstructions and marked so clearly for the riders that we had such a flawless ride. In addition I'd like to thank the Colby family as they also ride the trails regularly and contribute to their maintenance.

Ed McDevitt and Lin Ward offered their services to keep the times for our riders, braving the hot sun several times a day to make sure everyone got out of camp, back in for lunch and released afterwards to complete the day. They also provided a valuable service on Saturday by taking orders for bags of ice as each rider returned to camp.

Chuck Edwards made a trip from Nebraska to serve as our Rules Interpreter and ended up having to deal with a flat tire to be with us. He also saved us by picking up some much needed "white out" for our judges and their secretaries. Thanks Chuck!

Jo Kendall put together all our rider check-in packages that included the right vest for the riders and number tags for the horses, meal tickets, and a ride schedule. Thanks Jo!

The Gerald Peterson Memorial Trophy was awarded for the first time this year thanks to the Colby family – Mike, Mary, Garrett, and Shelia. This is a fabulous traveling trophy that will be awarded each year to the high point horse and rider combination. The horse must be a registered Purebred Arabian or Half Arabian to qualify. Lucy Hirsch and Winchester Charm were our first recipients. Our thanks again to the Colbys for sponsoring this wonderful award in memory of Gerald.

And last but not least, there's JR Kendall. I could spend an enormous amount of time listing all the things that JR does for this ride every single year, so I won't, mainly because Kim couldn't afford the reams of paper it would take to print that list. What he did do that meant the most to me was stay on my heels, offer encouragement, reminders (sometimes so many I'm embarrassed to mention the number) and support that could never be equaled by anyone else that didn't love the tradition of this ride and the sport of NATRC as much as he does.

Between JR Kendall and Ginny Peterson, they are by far, the two people that make EKAHA Hill & Dale CTR the success it is each and every year.

I learned first hand this year – no ride is successful without a tremendous group of organizers, and second, to NOT forget the "white out"!!! Thanks again everyone!!!!



## CLASSIFIED

Registered arab, bay mare, 4 years old

Natural Horsemanship training

Loves to get out on the trail

Wants to see what is over the hill

\$1500, Gary or Mary McCoy

402-56504205