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Diamond of the Year: Becki Jackson

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Newsletter: Kim Downing

Ride Book Info: Kim Downing

Ride Book Set-up: Ruth Mesimer

New Members & Publicity: Elizabeth Braznell

Web Site: Mike Wallis

Vest's & Numbers: Kim Downing

Historian: Becki Jackson

Sale Items: Chuck Edwards

these rides every chance we can. Without them we would have no Rides! So at the next ride make it a point to really tell them how much you appreciate their efforts, and their dedication to our sport. Get involved with a ride near you, even it is marking trails, helping put up or take down a tent, P & R's, secretary for a judge, or managing a ride, whatever you decide---DO IT!!! So volunteer and give a hand if you can't ride. Lets all pitch in and have a ball the rest of the season. See you on the trails! Ty

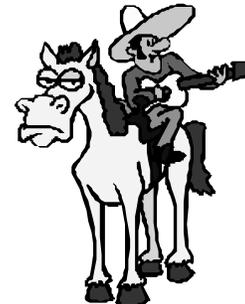
ATTENTION: IF YOU ARE GOING TO THE KANOPOLIS RIDE

Bill and Jenny Smith is providing and cooking dinner for everyone Friday evening. You can be sure to expect a wonderful meal.

**NATRC NATIONAL CONVENTION
 FEB 14-16 AT THE EMBASSY SUITES
 BY THE KANSAS CITY AIRPORT
 MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND PLAN
 TO ATTEND
 GUARANTEED A GOOD TIME**

WHERE'S THE TALENT!!!

I am looking for the hidden talents of region six. It is time to unveil yourselves. We need entertainment for the Friday evening portion of the convention. If you can sing, dance, do a skit, tell jokes, or tell some funny stories come forward. Kim Downing wants you.



PRESIDENTS LETTER

What a summer! The ride season is halfway over, with Whispering Pines, Rendezvous, Benefit, Sand Ridge, Missouri Waltz, Hill & Dale, Cedar Creek, and Brushy Creek done. I have been told that management has done great jobs at all of these rides and most of the out of region riders know now why we have full rides. We have been blessed with some extremely hard working people that have done wonderful jobs in their respective rides. We need to make sure that we thank all the ride management and workers that help put on

Marshall Smith Passes Away from Lucie Hess

I was very saddened to hear of Marshall's passing, I talked to Mary Pat at the Benefit ride and she had said it was a matter of time. Marshall had been seriously ill for quite a while, but was always there at Mary Pat's side. He drove the (very Large) trailer and would be there to help her in any way he could. Even when he was so ill he always made sure she got to the rides. There were times he wasn't feeling well so he stayed in the trailer most of the weekend, but he would come to awards just to cheer Mary Pat on. He was quite proud of her and her accomplishments. He will be missed.

MISSOURI WALTZ:**By PRISCILLA LINDSEY**

Years ago, an NATRC ride was held regularly at Greensfelder Park near St. Louis. Then for several more years, no one was available to manage a ride there. I had heard stories about what a beautiful place it was to ride, but I'd never had the chance to do it. THEN, a relatively new rider to our ranks, Elizabeth Braznell, showed a true competitive trail rider's spirit and rose to the challenge to become a first-time ride manager!!! And, what a splendid job she did! At long last, I was able to ride the trails at Greensfelder. What an impressive place! A huge chunk of Missouri hills and woodlands located right on the edge of the city and right next to the Six Flags amusement park. Large, luxury homes are right across the road from the campsite! An equestrian complex, including stables, arenas and cross-country jumps, are part of the park as well. Arriving Thursday evening gave me time to set up camp and relax before previewing the trails on Friday. After a couple of hours on the trails in the cool of Friday morning, I was thinking what a delightful ride this was going to be! What a surprise was in store for us! The weather forecast when I left home was calling for highs in the low to mid-80's all weekend, but sometime before I arrived, it changed! I'm not sure how hot it got, but it was surely in the upper 90's, and the humidity made horses and humans alike gasp for air! It was like riding in a sauna! It was truly a

"survivors" type of ride! It was tough for the riders, but most did a fine job of caring for their horses. I think there were 10 pulls out of a full ride, so that wasn't bad considering we were just not prepared for the first heat wave of the season.

This type of ride makes it easy for the vet judge to separate the horses-- they do it themselves, with the really well conditioned horses rising to the top. And true horsemanship shows with how well the horses are able to perform in such extreme conditions. Our judges were some of our own Region 6 buddies-- Jerry Weil, DVM, and Mike Colby. We knew they would do a good job.

The judging started early Saturday just outside of camp for the Open riders with a steep downhill, step over logs and rocks, then turn and climb a steep ascent with additional logs in the trail. An excellent place for the judges to observe eager horses and riders.

Then we fairly flew down the trail, trying to make good time before the heat really set in, although the judges had warned us not to ride too far ahead of our time window or we would miss observations and be penalized.

After a few miles of excellent trotting trails in the bottom of a wooded valley, we suddenly came to a BIG hill to climb. Nearing the top, we ran into a long line of riders. There was a judging obstacle ahead and there was a line! The judges had planned to just watch us climb the hill, but the front-runners had met them at the top, so a quick change of plans. It was a fairly simple obstacle: A log about knee-high on a short horse; Novice just step front feet over the log, stop and count to ten; Open & CP stop and side-pass a few steps along the log. Should have taken only a few seconds per rider, BUT Open and Novice had arrived there at the same time. As a few horses started refusing to step over the log, or refusing to stop and having to try a second time-- the time per rider started to build. Some of us waited in line for 20 to 30 minutes! We really did not need the rest that early in the ride! And the heat and humidity were really starting to build!

Finally we were on our way again. The trails are beautiful! Nearly all in shady woods, most of them wide enough for two abreast, and most of it good to trot. BUT, now it was really hot, and we knew a P&R was coming-- somewhere. Then we had some rocky

up and down trails that we needed to walk anyway, and we were afraid to trot too much on the level spots, as the horses were really feeling the heat and starting to pant. The judges saw us again, just for a quick metabolic check by Jerry and Mike watching to see how well we controlled the horse while being checked.

Finally we reached the P&R. Saddles were yanked, water was poured on, and fans were fanning!

Anything we could use for a fan was fanning! There was hardly a breath of air stirring. Trey squeaked by with a 12/6. We were on our way again, this time moving as fast as we dared to make up time and get into camp for the lunch break.

The judges had planned for a "rider's choice" obstacle during the lunch break. It sounded like fun and a good plan. We had to pick ahead of time from a mount, a back up or a side-pass, and do it anytime during our 45-minute lunchtime. But, again, Novice and Open were all together, and it seems everyone came to the judges at the end of their break time, so here we were waiting in line again! Again, I waited 30 minutes!

Although the rider could choose the type of obstacle, the judges chose how you would do it. The mount was to back the horse in-hand between a tree and a picnic table and then mount from the table. (Wish I had picked that one!) The back was in-hand around a tree and the side-pass was over white plastic pipes set in a V-shape. I had chosen to do the side-pass, and we did a respectable job. Only turning the hindquarters around the point of the V, Trey clipped a pipe with a hoof and sent it flying! But she stood like a rock while Jerry put the pipe back in place and then we completed okay.

The afternoon ride was only 10 miles, and went by fairly quickly, except for the long, slow hill climb to the P&R. There was a "scenic overlook" partway up the hill, with room for several horses and riders to rest awhile. We enjoyed the slight breeze coming up from the valley, but it was still steamy! The P&R was near the top of the hill, in a road, but surrounded by trees-- no breeze. Again we were fanning like crazy to get respirations down. Trey's respirations came down, but pulse was a 14! Oh, well, it was only our second ride of the season, and I knew we weren't in top condition yet.

Although the ride was paced at barely 5 mph, we

found it hard to stay in our time window. Water was scarce on the trail, so the few places we found it, we took time to sponge a lot. When we got inside the 2-mile marker, we had the lovely bridle trails through the cross-country jump course. It was in the bottom of a creek valley, and felt relatively cool, so we cantered through the jump course! We passed up jumping the jumps, however!

We made it in on time, did a quick trot-by for the judges and headed for the water hose to cool down and then rest!

Sunday was a repeat of the same trail. It worked well, as the trails were new to most of it and us was easy to get confused. This helped us pace ourselves better for the P&R's, as the heat and humidity were as bad or worse than the day before! Management had put us on trail by 7 am. But it was already hot! It might have helped a little to go out at first light, about 5:30! The judges had promised us "no hold-ups" for obstacles. They started with a trot-by before timing out, trotting a "figure 7" instead of an "8". Went much faster and still showed up any slight lameness. Then, the judges met us at the big hill climb that they intended to use the day before. No hold up there. After the first P&R, (which we came through with an 11/6) they had planned a quick metabolic check and a mount. Guess what! Another hold-up! For the mount, they asked us to position the horse next to some trees with marking ribbon making a sort of "stall". There was a nice sturdy stump there for those of us with "elderly knees" that need all the help we can get for mounting! The problem came with some horses not wanting to get close to the marking ribbon-- it must have looked too much like electric fence tape! So, again, I had another 30 minute hold. Trey was probably thankful for the extra rest, as she was in good spirits for the rest of the ride after a rather "grumpy" start in the morning.

We sailed through the final P&R and trotted in the last 2 miles to make our time. We made it! The judges were ready for final check out right away, so we just quickly stripped the saddle, hosed down and went to the line. It was good to finish up quickly and then go to the trailer to rest before awards.

Overall, the ride was well planned, well managed and fun, in spite of the discomfort of the weather.

Lucie Hess, Trailmaster, did a wonderful job putting together a variety of trails, both tough and easy-going,

chose good P&R locations and good judging spots. The trails were well marked and well timed. The P&R crews were very professional and efficient; well trained by Florence, I'm sure! So, I say congratulations to Elizabeth for a first time job well done! Only suggestions: put in your order for better weather! :-). If you can't do that, then start us on trail as soon as it is light enough to see the ribbons! Just hand out granola bars for breakfast and feed us lunch after the ride is over! :-). Then both horses and riders can nap through the heat of the afternoon! That is the only improvement I can think of!

Congratulations to the winners, too! I feel lucky to have placed in such a big class with such tough competition and circumstances. I will certainly plan on riding that ride again!

MISSOURI WALTZ REPORT: By CHERI JEFFCOAT

I want to praise new ride manager, Elizabeth Braznell. She was organized, good humoured and everything ran on time. If she said ride briefing was at a specific time.....by golly it was! The trails were beautiful. Plenty of different types of terrain.....everything from "you can make time" bridle trails to long, rocky climbs. There were two main challenges for the weekend. It was HOT AND HUMID! So humid it felt like a weight on your chest. Vet Judge Jerry Weil said he hadn't seen so many metabolic points lost in many years. A number of people pulled on Saturday in the best interest of their horses. It was tough! The only other challenge was that with a wonderful equestrian park there were so many trails that even with lots of ribbons and pie plates with directions at various junctions it was still challenging to try and stay on trail. But, Trail Master Lucie Hess was often at the junctions trying to keep us all going the right way! She was jumping around all over trying to help us. I have to give good sportsmanship accolades to Nancy Mueller, Open Lightweight rider for saving a bunch of us from getting lost since she lives nearby

and knows the trail! She saved me, Ken Wolgram, Dave & Maggie Spilker and even Kim Downing.....without her help.....wow, I might still be out there. The judging observations were good.....some fun stuff. So, thank you Elizabeth, Lucy and all your volunteers. You made a tough weekend (weather tough).....a survivable and fun experience.

MORE ON MISSOURI WALTZ From BECKI JACKSON

Priscilla and Cheri both gave excellent reports, so I will only add a few brief comments.

First, hugs and accolades to ride management. They went out of their way to make riders feel welcome and appreciated. Riders received goodie bags with their packets, which contained neat samples of horse products. Elizabeth did a great job of getting many items donated. She was there with a carrot for the horse and hug for the rider at check out on Sunday. I'm sure she was exhausted, but she had a smile on her face every time I saw her.

Lucy Hess had recruited good help from her Columbia and AERC friends. One of them took photographs. Thank you one and all.

It was fun to see several out of region riders, several from region 5 and the Wolgrams, who are adopted Region 6 members.

Elizabeth Braznell came all the way to Kansas last year to help me put on my first ride and I felt compelled to go to ride her ride. I had no idea there was such a place in St. Louis. The only negative to the whole weekend was the weather, and we all know that can't be helped.

Thank you to all my buddies, who knowing what a hard time I have in the heat were constantly asking me if I was OK. Judges Mike Colby and Jerry Weil also kept their eye on me. It is nice to know that they are concerned with riders and well as horses!

REGION SIX RALLY

JUNE/JULY 2002

Open JR

- 1/2 Melinda Sadler
- 2/5 Caroline Mueller
- 3/1 Stephanie Peterson
- 4/3 Diana Sadler
- 5/4 Ann Malloy

Open Lightweight

- 1/2 Klare Chapman
- 2/ Brenda Ferguson
- 3/ Cheri Jeffcoat
- 4/6 Carrie Porter
- 5/1 Lucy Hirsch
- 6/ Maggie Spilker
- /3 Kristi Chapman
- /4 Kim Downing
- /5 Mary Anna Wood

Open Heavyweight

- 1/2 Ken Wolgram **SWPKS**
- 2/3 Bill Hinkebein
- 3/1 Gerald Ferguson
- 4/4 Martha Kunkle
- 5/5 Priscilla Lindsey
- 6/ Dave Spilker
- /6 Becky Arheart

Novice JR

- 1/1 Samantha Peterson
- 2/2 Sara Baker

Novice Lightweight

- 1/3 Christine Motley **SWPKS**
- 2/2 Dana Esbensen
- 3/4 Barb Schmidt
- 4/1 Mary McCoy

Novice Heavyweight

- 1/3 Sharon Eberlin
- 2/5 Jeff Songer
- 3/1 Vickie White
- 4/4 Barry Cotham
- 5/2 Gary McCoy

Competitive Pleasure

- 1/ Marlene Buttrey
- 2/ Betty Wolgram

3/1 Judy Kayson **COMBO**

- 4/6 Jackie Hathhorn
- 5/4 Stephanie Windsor
- 6/3 Christine Wallis
- /2 Pamela Kuder
- /5 Becki Jackson



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HILL&DALE by CHERI JEFFCOAT

I can't say enough good things about the trail conditions, the trail markings, trail timing and probably the best map we have ever had at a ride! I do not know who did the map and wrote the directions but there were the easiest to follow I have ever seen!! It was great!!

We were fortunate with temperatures in the mid 80's and manageable humidity.

The Vet judge Paul Gritch from Arizona and Marguerite Sloan from Kansas.....what a superb team. Good observations and they really kept things moving. Early on Saturday, we rode thru a two posts and then asked to back thru them. Then off down the trail where the judges were waiting to watch down a really rocky, steep downhill in what is called 100 acres woods. Then off around some wide-open places where you could make time after the woods. There the judges were waiting for Open with an open and close a gate. They had a face a certain direction and go from there. Of course, the key was to keep your hand on the gate and turn on the forehand and back around and close the gate. The day began to warm up as we came around to the first P&R. So far, a fun day and staying on minimum time. After the P&R, we had an off side mount. Then in to lunch. Gad, I was hungry! Hosed off my horse as we went toward the trailer. Then out again. The day is really starting to heat up.....but not miserable! The judges were waiting at a mud crossing and uphill. And, then there they

were again for a log crossing. We got thru the 2nd P&R, which was a little bit warm, but we escaped without loosing any points. It was great to have Dr. Paul there checking metabolics and posting the P&R cards on the spot. It was great to see that! By the time everybody was back to camp, the vet was up-to-date and ready to check horses.

A lovely evening that cooled down, plenty of grass area to walk and graze horses. And, very important allowed but the competitors time to socialize and share stories. Sunday, the vet checked back and legs then we tacked up. As we were timed out the Paul and Marguerite observed us trotting out. With riders going out at 30 second intervals the judges had time to observe no delays in getting us out on trail early enough to ride in the cool for awhile. We had a nice downhill and then Marguerite had a trot and halt. After the first P&R, Paul checked metabolics and we had a back in-hand past a juniper tree and then an "L" turn. Then on down the trail just generally having a good time. When we got to camp, had time to hose my horse down and then checkout moved right along. It was great to have finished and felt really good about the ride. When the trail is good, the map is good, the judges excellent what more can a rider ask for. Even better, my horse and I were "clicking" together this weekend!!! Thanks to all for a good ride.

To all you wonderful people in NATRC Region 6, I extend thanks for the help and support my daughter and I received while dealing with colic and subsequent loss of my daughter's mare at the Hill & Dale ride. Not only did you help tremendously at the time, but also we have received several communications expressing sympathy and support. And help with the grieving process. Even though I loved her, I would never have thought the loss of this mare would have affected me so deeply. The more I am around horses in general and the ones God has entrusted to our care in particular, the more I appreciate these magnificent creatures and stand in awe of how much they give to us humans - how much basic survival, instinctive behavior they suppress in order to please us. I appreciate all of

you "horsey" people too! You are the greatest bunch of people on earth.

Jan Swalley

Open Heavyweight

- 1/1 Ken Wolgram
- 2/2 Mike Colby
- 3/ Rich Bott
- 4/4 Bill Hinkebein
- 5/3 Martha Kunkle
- 6/ Becky Arheart
- /5 Ty McCullough
- /6 Dave Spilker

Open Lightweight

- 1/2 Trish Cleveland **SWPKS**
- 2/1 Cheri Jeffcoat
- 3/4 Lucy Hirsch
- 4/5 Maggie Spilker
- 5/3 Mary Colby
- 6/ Kristi Chapman
- /6 Elizabeth Kendall

Open JR

- 1/1 Melinda Sadler
- 2/4 Stephanie Peterson
- 3/5 Kate Smith
- 4/3 Ann Malloy
- 5/2 Diane Sadler

Novice Heavyweight

- 1/1 Karen Everheart
- 2/ Mike Jones
- 3/3 Annette Pulliam
- 4/ Gary McCoy
- 5/ Gail Stevens
- 6/2 Vickie White
- /4 Carol Kutz
- /5 Judith James
- /6 Mike Reis

Novice Lightweight

- 1/4 Kay Stitch **SWPKS**
- 2/3 Kay Wolfe
- 3/5 Christine Motley
- 4/2 Mary McCoy

exceptionally frisky! I had to stop on the trot out to try and enforce a little discipline!

Management and the trail master were very cognizant of the stress of heat and humidity on riders and horses. They planned the trail at a speed and timing that allowed the riders to take advantage of every little bit of water and shade. Plus, ride out and in with no lunch hours. Thank goodness for this because the heat index was over 113 degrees.

Horses and riders were challenged but the riders worked very hard at trying to help the horses. In addition, after some rider heat related problems at Cedar Creek, the riders were offered suggestions and cautioned to take care of themselves! After all, the horse can't be helped by a rider with heat exhaustion or passed out!

Saturday, the first observation was right out of camp, a slanted log across the trail and you had to go between 2 ribbons. With some frisky horses, there were a few "leaps" and some rear ends doing all different kinds of things. Then, as we approached the river, there were the judges with a nifty stop in the trail, do an "L" back into a little depression and back to a branch with a ribbon. Bend down and touch the ribbon. I bent down and held on.....and was waiting to be told to release just got a grin from Gerald. So went on down the trail. Then, off we went. There is a lot of trail to make time on.....so early while the temps were still in low 90's, we made some time. Fortunatly, out on the Open loop, Mgr Martha Kunkle showed up with some horse water. This was the longest part of the trail without water! Martha got lots of gratitude from us! Coming back, there is a long uphill. When my horse starting peering into the woods.....I was suspicious that Gerald was hiding there.....YUP! At the top, Dr Mike was there to do a metabolics check. A good thing because things were getting tougher. Then out to the next Open loop.....with access to the river and a great creek. Lovely trail, riding thru tunnels with trees overhead.....and even a slight breeze. Note: all observations described are OPEN observations. Back, and there were the judges. We had a back around the tree, keeping hand on. But, the kicker was first back and position over a little log! Boy.....were they a sneaky pair!

What fun! Off to camp. Made it thru both P&R's without loss of points. But, had to pour a lot of water and fan. Saturday ended with an easy horse check-out, hiding inside with the a/c running.....a new friends coming to visit. Mmmm wander if the access to electricity and a/c had anything to do with all the visitors???

Sunday, they got us out even earlier.

Great.....because it seemed even more humid.

The judges greeted us about 2 miles out with a step your horses front two feet upon to a bank, stop, reach and tie a ribbon. I looked at that and knew there was no way I was going to make it with my short horse and short arms. But, we took a stab at it anyway. Wasn't pretty.....but it means I have to figure out a way to stretch!

We had an off-side mount.....in a good place with choice of terrain. Told the judges that it was a "test the old broads" obstacle.....it was the last umph for me that day. Later, a metabolics check and trot by. Back to camp and check-out.

A great ride..... with Ride Manager - Martha Kunkle, Trail Master Rick Schaff.....and all the staff did a fantastic job. However, when Rick told me I would be the ONLY rider required to take a lunch hour..... well my sense of humour failed for a few seconds!!

A note of caution: on Sunday a safety rider's horse was unable to continue due to heat factors. Later, collapsed in trailer but was well taken care of and cooled out. This is perhaps a cautionary tale for ALL ride management about using horses that may not be in best condition. Or, maybe we need to do a better job coaching non-CTR riders on how to care for and manage their horses. I know it was a significant reminder to me to ensure that ALL SAFETY HORSES be checked at the P&R's at the Rock Creek Station ride that I am managing in a few weeks. We fully anticipate heat/humidity. THANK YOU, IOWA TRAIL RIDERS FOR PUTTING ON ANOTHER GREAT RIDE!!

BRUSHY CREEK by NORMA NEWTON

Another hot July Iowa weekend. We knew it was going to be hot, but did not expect the hottest weekend of the year...so far at least. What a

wonderful group of riders and workers we had at the Brushy Creek Sink or Swim!

The judges for the ride, Gerald Ferguson and Dr. Mike Coker, both arrived early at the ride site. The Cokers pulled in early Friday morning, and the Fergusons even before that! So management had the luxury of spending some time out on the trail with them getting all the observations planned! (hee, hee, hee) The big ITRA tent was set up Thursday by a wonderful group of helpers, the picnic tables hauled in...everything was ready and the riders checked in and went to the judges.

All 61 competitors were in camp and checked in Friday night!

What a treat! Everyone came for a tasty supper as they had time, and briefing was finished before dark. Super!

Saturday morning started early. The breakfast cooks have to get up well before everyone else...which usually means about 4 AM if you want to get out on the trail at 6:30! Riders timed out in 15 second intervals and encountered their first observation just up the trail where a tree conveniently had fallen across the trail. Early in the ride, we crossed the creek a bit, which was nice since that section is also less shaded.

Rick Schaaf, the trailmaster, and his wife Kristi, did a wonderful job laying out the trails, and the people who helped ribbon did such a wonderful job that it was quite a chore deciding who might be eligible for the Lost Trail Root Beer award. [The sag wagon driver, Phil Shook, took home the honors due to going to the wrong area to pick up a tired, heated rider and their horse (who was fine).]

Onward to the first P&R check. Even as a safety rider, the P&R crews did check our horses, which was a good thing as Sunday one safety rider's horse was in trouble at the second P&R and was hauled back. Unfortunately, it lost it's footing in the trailer on the way to camp and there were some tense moments trying to get it back on it's feet and out of the trailer for concentrated cooling efforts. Thanks

to Dr. Coker and a busy crew of helpers, the horse recovered enough that by the time the local on call vet arrived, he had difficulty seeing the 'heat distressed horse' that was grazing quietly under a tree with a handful of people still sponging and spraying. Then down to the southern loop of trail ...but wait another observation...side passing onto a log and over to a bag of candy tied to the tree. (Fortunately there was enough for the safety riders, too.)

Another early day Sunday with 57 remaining teams after a really early breakfast and trot out. About 2 miles out of camp, and an opportunity to take a breather in the shade! The judges asked the novice riders to step up on a bank and count to five. One rider asked me to interpret as she counted in German! Riders, remember to count quickly! One observer was quite amazed that so many counted so slowly. After the first P&R, since everyone did have to get on again, the judges decided to observe that. Novice and CP just did a short loop around a band of trees and headed back. The second P&R was just before the 2 mile marker, and it was back to camp for lunch, clean up, and check out.

Dr. Mike and his wife Dr. Rose (who is also a vet but came as his secretary) were a wonderful team to work with, as were Gerald and his wife Brenda (who also scribed for her hubby). What a wonderful team of volunteers we had overall, all the comments overheard were in praises of the wonderful food, P&R teams, and overall fun. Thanks to everyone!!

Open Heavyweight

1/4 Ken Wolgram **SWPKS**

2/2 Dave Spilker

3/1 Debra Porter

4/ Priscilla Lindsey

5/3 Wayne Tolbert

6/6 Bill Hinkebein

/5 Ty McCullough

More Diamond of the Year Nominees

Cheri Jeffcoat is our nomination for the Diamond of the Year award. She has been an inspiration, teacher, a mentor, a shoulder to lean on, and just an overall good friend. When Elizabeth became horseless, it was Cheri to the rescue. Tempt Me became Elizabeth's new steed. When Dave was struggling to learn how to be Trail Master and resurrect the Rock Creek ride, Cheri was there with her knowledge and expertise and unwavering energy. When Maggie gets to a ride with her horse's evil stepsister, who comes to the rescue? Cheri, of course. It was Cheri, who talked Dave and Maggie into competing and not just riding drag. It is Cheri who is always our sport's best cheerleader in recruiting new members. Cheri believes in NATRC and what NATRC has to offer to people and horses alike. She is unwavering in her commitment to our sport. Thank you, Cheri, for always being there with a helping hand. We love you. Maggie Spilker

I would like to nominate Mary Pat Smith. Mary Pat is always available to help first-time competitors, often riding with two or three of them at any one ride. She spends time with them both in camp and on the trail, offering suggestions, assistance, and support to our most anxious new competitors. Sometimes she looks like a mother hen, surrounded by her chicks! She always has enough time, enough patience, and enough generosity of spirit to help all those who ask. And she helps with the not-so-new riders as well. She is always on the look out for those who need a word of encouragement, a place to dry off, or something more tangible.

This year at the benefit ride, I pulled into the campground on Thursday evening. No one was there but Mary Pat and her husband, Marshall. I pulled in next to them, and Mary Pat comes over to help me set up my tent because a storm is brewing. Some of the clothes in my suitcase got wet on the drive up, and she hung them in her trailer to dry. Shortly after we got the tent up, the storm broke, and she retired to her trailer telling me to come to her trailer to sleep if the storm got really bad.

Well the storm did get bad. About 11 that night, Mary Pat ventured out in the storm to check on me and again invite me to her trailer. I was snug in my tent and elected to stay, but it touched me greatly that she came out in the pouring rain, thunder, and lightning to check on me. The next day, Mary Pat insisted I use a waterproof jacket she had, and she gave me a butane starter for my camp stove when my failed.

I am just one of the many people Mary Pat has helped. It was my good fortune that she was there that night, but it's the good fortune of all of us that Mary Pat is a member of Region 6.

Elizabeth Braznell

I would like to nominate Vickie White. At my first ride this season (a MOTDRA competitive ride), my horse waded out a few feet into a lake to drink. The lake was very high and unknown to us the area we were in was a bog. My horse sank and went under water several times. Vickie and several other riders stayed and encouraged my horse and I until we were out. After that, Vickie held my horse for me while I recovered (bathroom stop, etc.), and then stayed with my horse and me while the others took off to try and make up time. Vickie stayed so that my horse would have company and would stay calm and take slowly while she recovered. Instead of being first at that ride, which she easily could have been, Vickie and her horse were second.

At the next ride I went to, Diamonds in the Rough, I saw Vickie again. My horse was absolutely wired, lathered before the ride ever started, and I was absolutely panicked about water crossings. Once again, Vickie stayed with us and helped both of us stay calm—with no apparent thought to how it was affecting her placement in the ride. Since that ride, she has been riding with me around our homes and local parks. She has been very encouraging and supportive and generous with her time. She has really encouraged me to rejoin NATRC and to go to more rides this coming season even though my first ride felt like a total disaster. I know that she has been a mentor for other people as well as for me. I want to be just like Vickie when I grow up—patient and kind and not at all condescending to those who know so much less.

Rhonda Levison