

Alberta Donkey and Mule News, Sept, 2016

As I write this we are just anticipating our 27<sup>th</sup> Alberta Longears Show, at a new venue and with lots of exciting guests! Watch for photos and stories in next month's report!

A very successful series of clinics with Jerry Tindell of California, wrapped up at the end of July with lots of enthusiastic participants. To read the reviews, visit our website [www.albertadonkeyandmule.com](http://www.albertadonkeyandmule.com). The club also hosted a Trail Ride at the end of July and several members also participated in the 103 running of the Bruce Stampede. For an entertaining first-hand account of the "Great Canadian Mule Race" at the Stampede read the article by our president Russ Shandro in this issue of Saddle Up.

Our website and club Facebook page often gets inquiries on donkey and mule care, training and behavior. Most inquires can be answered by referring to the articles that we have posted on our website which will be undergoing some revamping to make the "answers to common questions" easier to find.



Carlo Toews of Hythe, AB. schooling his mammoth breeding Jack through an obstacle course.

One of the most recent discussions has been about handling an intact Donkey jack. This is one subject in which the safety of the Jack, the handler and the mare or jenny must take precedent over any personal opinions! An intact donkey has the same hormonal urges as a horse stallion and often has not received suitable

training! An intact mature Jack, especially in breeding season, is NOT for everyone to handle! Even miniature jacks can be a handful and cause damage if not handled with care. In NO situation should an intact Jack be kept only as a pet! A Jack used for breeding purposes needs to be schooled and trained to mind it's handler at all times. Yes they can be taught to ride or drive, but they will always require an attentive, knowledgeable handler.

The best advice for those folks that want a donkey to ride, drive or to be a pet is to GELD him if he is still intact. The reality is that very few Jacks are of good enough bloodlines and quality to keep for breeding purposes and will require separate accommodations from the herd. Hand breeding or artificial Insemination are highly recommended breeding practices as turning a Jack out with horse mares or jennets can cause injuries to either or both and once a Jack has been hurt, he will often quit breeding for the season or entirely. Also Jacks can be even more vicious than horse stallions and most breeders care too much about their stock to risk death or injury to either!



Dusty Cooper of Wildwood, AB. riding his newly acquired mammoth breeding Jack at a recent Jerry Tindell Clinic. Intact Jacks benefit from training and having other jobs!

Please visit the articles on our website regarding handling donkeys and also the article about castration for mules and donkeys which you and your vet need to know about as the procedure and sedation can differ from horses.

Our Semi-Annual Meeting is coming up on Sunday, October 16 in Ponoka, AB at Ponoka Neighborhood Place. This is where our Club Plans for 2017 will take shape so your input is wanted!

Marlene Quiring