

EQUINE FOUNDATION OF CANADA

Trail Ride at Pritchard, BC

Saturday, July 18/09

It was a HOT morning when 25 riders gathered to ride in the Pritchard Uplands to raise funds for the Equine Foundation of Canada, which donates monies to the veterinary schools of medicine across Canada for research and treatment modalities that benefit all horses.

The BC Interior Morgan Horse Club and the BackCountry Horsemen of BC had joined together to encourage everyone to get out and enjoy the gorgeous scenery at Moulton Creek Ranch, generously hosted by Terri and Don Boscher. The riders headed out the trail which opened up into the vast, high meadows overlooking the South Thompson River where the Pritchard bridge, far below, looked about two inches long. Riding west, the view also encompassed the whole of the opposite ridge of ranches and farms with the river below. The wind, while really brisk, still had some coolness to it which really helped the horses and riders deal with the heat. Unfortunately, it was this same wind which fanned the terrible fires in the Kelowna area that same day.

Turning upward, the group climbed up into the arboreal forest with some welcome shade and then split into two, with some riders choosing to take a shortcut back to camp making their ride about seven miles and the others continuing on for another four.

After sluicing off the horses, providing lots of water and hay, we gathered for a super potluck and awards. As the ride had raised over \$600, actually bringing in \$785, we were able to award the Equine Foundation cooler to Lori Bewza, our trail boss, for the most pledge money obtained from others. Most riders made their own donations over and above the \$10 entry fee and promised to canvass more next year for a bigger/better money-pot.

While riders came from the whole Thompson-Okanagan region, no one could top the award of who came the farthest, namely Veronika Hainzl and Maria Ratheiser from AUSTRIA. These two teenagers arrived in Canada two weeks ago to visit friends and were really pleased to receive their Morgan coffee mugs.

The oldest horse (24) was ridden by Lee Morris and neither had any difficulty keeping up with the group and the award for the gutsiest rider went to Grace Brasseur, who had only been riding three weeks and did well managing her frisky mount. There were a number of candidates for the oldest rider, suffice to say we had about five in their 60's and 70's. The award for largest single donation went to Pat Crema, the ride organizer and Foundation director for BC who was desperate for the ride to make the \$600 mark. (She should have waited and topped up the amount instead of giving first !!!).

The Boshers were great hosts, donating their homemade wine to the potluck, filling their water troughs and making sure we had everything we needed for a successful ride. Our thanks to them. Thanks also go to the riders who were careful on the trail keeping all the horses and each other enjoying the ride and SAFE. It was gratifying to see that about 20 riders of the 25 wore helmets whether they used English or Western tack and they were quick to point out that helmets did not blow off in the wind and need chasing across the meadows!!!

Pat Crema
BC Director
Equine Foundation of Canada