



# FEED BAG



Editor: Myra Mumma

September 2008

## President's Message.....

What a busy year it's been for BCH members! Following are just some of the projects—past, present and pending.

Over Mother's Day weekend in May, Paul Evenson and five other former smokejumpers along with former Forest Service Chief, Dale Bosworth, gathered on the Rocky Mountain



Ranger District for volunteer work. Every year a contingency from this group does trail work but this year heavy snow shut them out of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area, so the group got the Ear Mountain Guard Station ready for the season by replacing fences, clearing rocks, and gathering up old scrap metal. Pictured left: Front Row—Ian Bardwell, Riikka the bear dog, George Weldon, Jerry Williams and Dale Bosworth. Back Row—Brad McBratney, Paul Evenson, Nels Jensen and Norm Kamrud.



On June 27th, Mike Speake, Alan Meyers and Paul Evenson packed in hay and food to Burnt Cabin for the Monture Creek Trail Project. On June 28th Mike Moore led this project crew including Alan Meyers, Dan Tuxbury, Scott Tuxbury and Don Schusted. Mark Colyer and Patty Martin had gone in early the morning of the 28th to make sure the trail



Mike Moore on the left and Don Schusted, right. Don provided this picture.

was open to Burnt Cabin. The first day was spent clearing Limestone Trail above the cabin. Second day Scott and Dan cleared the main trail to Hahn Pass and Alan, Don and Mike cleared the Middle Fork to snowline. The crew sawed and bucked downfall timber as well as cutting branches away from the trail so that an opening was cleared one axe handle wide on both sides and one above to make way for pack animals. They all came out Monday morning, the 30th. Dan Tuxbury rocked all eight miles of trail back to the trailhead!

On June 28th, Gary Salisbury, Caroline Bauer and other BCH members attended the Dean Solheim benefit at the Alberton School library. Gary auctioneered and there was a great turnout—the library was packed full. Dean is the Animal Packer on the Nine Mile Ranger District.

On June 29th Mack Long and Paul Evenson packed in food, duffel and tools to Camp Pass, (which is Smoke's old camp), for a group of 6 girls aged 13 to 17 with 3 counselors from the Big Sky Bible Camp in Bigfork, a Bible-centered ministry for children and youth. This group, called Summit, is a partner with the Bob Marshall Foundation. Just for reference, the goal of the Bob Marshall Foundation is to provide an opportunity for volunteers, especially young people, "to develop team building skills, learn new skills, including Leave No Trace back-country ethics and develop wilderness awareness while participating on volunteer projects." They packed them back out on July 6th.

On July 13th Mike Speake, Richard Tamcke and Paul Evenson packed in nine former smokejumpers to Sarbo Creek where the jumpers opened an old trail on Sarbo Creek from the North Fork to part of Cabin Creek. Richard Tamcke, Randy Kappes and Paul Evenson packed them back out on July 18.

On July 18th Gary Salisbury held a bridge and water crossing refresher for several BCH members.

July 22<sup>nd</sup> Dan Tuxbury and Paul Evenson installed a heating stove in Prairie Reef Lookout as the propane heating stove was not keeping the lookout warm when it gets cold.

.....continued on page 6

## Welcome Creek Guard Station Repairs

**The second in a series of the epic adventures of Paul Evenson, Forest Service volunteer packer. In this adventure Paul shares his knowledge with three friends while assigned to repair Forest Service facilities in the Scapegoat Wilderness Area.**

.....BY NICK KAUFMAN WITH SCOTT AND DAN TUXBURY.  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT TUXBURY AND NICK KAUFMAN

***Editor's' Note: You'll remember the first installment of this story was in the June 2008 FEEDBAG. We had to leave "the boys" at Welcome Creek Cabin until this issue.***

### ANOTHER EARLY START

Breakfast was served with hot coffee, red potatoes, bacon and eggs. We took our time catching up the remuda and saddling them for the days ride. Because Scott's horses needed the experience we took the whole herd with us. The lower part of the trail follows an easy creek grade through meadows with second growth lodgepole pine and high meadows as the back drop.

Java was stepping out nicely, with Jester, the 1,400 pound, seventeen-hand-high giant right behind him. I guess I would step out too. I believe Java thought Jester might mistake him for a mare and Java kept a good twelve-foot distance between his rump and Jester's nose. Java needed to be more secure in his masculinity. Of course, I will admit, that after seeing Jester star in the pipe laying event described during the first day, I pretty much backed out of the corrals when Jester was around.

With the pecking order established, subject to uncertainties about Jester, we ambled up the trail stopping frequently to saw out deadfall.

### AN OBSERVATIONAL NOTE ABOUT BEAR SIGN

On this, the third day of the trip, I was in the lead as we were clearing trail up the Dearborn River. Now I began to understand about being in the lead on a trail crew. The person in front always gets to move the logs out of the trail. In any event, we were on a long flat grade with few obstacles. We had just passed through a high mountain meadow where we took a short break. The horses were moving in rhythm and we were making good time.

The trail took a turn to the right and entered some second growth lodgepoles. From my time in the woods I have learned to look for animal sign, bear sign in particular. I looked down to my left and casually noted to my companions that there was some pretty good claw marks on a log that was tore up along the side of the trail. Since this was not a nature hike I received only casual grunts of recognition. I was relaxing into the ride and the scenery. Riikka was up in front of me and was giving her squirrel-chasing yap-bark. *And then her bark changed* . . . it became instantly more serious! Java's ears perked forward, his nostrils flared and his body tensed. I relaxed in the saddle to counter the apparent tension in the horse. Scott reassuringly noted that he was glad I was in front!

### THE BALL OPENS

Right in front of me a **BIG** blond grizzly bear erupted from the lodgepoles and he was heading for higher ground, taking those big long leaps where his hind feet land way out in front of his front legs as his claws bite in for the next huge leap. The whole crew got to see this



Look close for the bear.

beautiful bear. Paul was looking for his dog and asked if we could see a black and white streak behind the bear. No Riikka. She was somewhere up in front of us barking her bear-bark and moving up the trail. I could only guess that there were *two* bears and she was chasing the second one. **ISN'T LOVE GRAND!** In any event the first bear took to running on logs and the six-foot to twelve-foot lodgepole parted in wonderful smooth waves like tall grass in the wind as he made his retreat up the steep hill.

This bear was all humps and rolls; he had definitely wintered well and was starting to put on some summer fat. Now at this point I remembered my beagles from days of old and how they always bring the rabbit or the deer back to the start of the chase. I listened carefully for Riikka, making sure she was taking the second bear away from the riders. I need not have worried. She did a fine job and we did not get to see the second bear.

We stopped for a while before continuing to let Riikka get some distance between us. When we continued, the south end of the Chinese Wall and the base of Scapegoat Mountain come into view.

### A BRIEF NOTE ABOUT MULE DEER

At the top of the pass, tucked right up against the east buttress of Scapegoat Mountain where the headwaters of the Dearborn are mere rivulets of clear, cold, sparkling water cascading off the face of the hundreds-of-feet high limestone cliffs, you feel small and insignificant. No matter how small or insignificant you feel it does not stop you from spotting game. And there were hunters with us on this off-season trip. Dan spotted the big buck first. The deer was bedded down in the shade above the talus along the lower reaches of the limestone cliffs.

A short time later we were all peering up into the shaded area of the lower cliff for the buck and wondering how he got up there through the steep rocks to his bed. Paul came over and was squinting but could not see the deer. After a short while, Paul announced that the deer was laying in the shade much lower on the cliff than we all first thought. The rest of us had correctly spotted the deer and then let our eyes fool us into supposing he was bedded higher on the cliff in an obscure

shadow. I guess we learned who the woodsman in the bunch was. The scenery was exquisite. Towering cliffs against bright, blue sky with green grass and Glacier lilies peeking up to greet the day. As we rode north along the base of the wall, we entered Half Moon Park.

**A PURSUING NOTE ABOUT LEAVING YOUR HORSE**



Half Moon Park is not necessarily a good place to dismount and ground-tie your horse, especially if your horse does not ground-tie.

Scott near Half Moon Park

Paul was able to catch Java before he made it most of the

way down off the pass.

**THE LONG TRIP BACK TO THE CABIN**

Our exploration had taken us far afield and it was several long hours before we crested Straight Creek Pass and headed down into Welcome Creek and the guard station. We tied up the horses and gave them pellets, threw out hay, and split up to take care of the dinner and wrangling chores.

We had planned another trip for the next day to head down the Dearborn to clear trail on that route. Dinner was great with red potatoes, some kind of meat and a good salad. We slept like babies. So did the horses.

**MORNING HAS BROKEN**



Paul woke me with a cup of hot, steaming coffee. I was a

Breakfast at Welcome Creek Cabin.

bit slow rolling out. Breakfast was sizzling on the stove—bacon with red potatoes. The whole crew was waking a bit slower than we did on the first day. We made the monumental decision to repair the upper pasture fence instead of clearing on the lower Dearborn River Trail. This may not have been the best decision we made on this trip.

You can easily walk up to the mountain pasture. It is located just north and up the hill from Welcome Creek Cabin. We started optimistically and took all the tools up with us—shovel, bar, saw, large hammer, brace wire and nails. We started at the corral gate and worked our way up and to the west to the top of the hill. We did a pretty good job on the fence for the first few hundred yards (as long as the wind did not blow too hard and as long as there was good grass in the pasture!)

**A DISPAIRING NOTE ABOUT FENCING**

After surveying the pasture fence, we were second guessing our decision to repair the “fence” around the pasture. This jack leg fence encloses about twenty acres and has not been serviceable for a number of years. In some places all you could see of the fence was a trail of rotted sawdust along the ground. In other places, where the fence was actually standing, blow down had broken the rails and made a real jumble of it.



In the upper pasture on the fence line.

All the trees around Welcome Creek Guard Station burned in 1988. The blow down from the fire is somewhat rotted and not good for fencing material. The new growth is lodgepole pine and is about six to ten feet high and is lacking the diameter for good posts or rails. Conclusion: In about ten years when the lodgepole gets some girth, the jack leg fence can be repaired. After working on this somewhat impossible job for a good part of the morning we decided to take a breather.

**A QUIET NOTE ABOUT AFTERNOON NAPS**

In the hills there are not too many distractions. Just hard, honest work that gets you dirty and makes you sweat. In the afternoon, after a trip to the creek to wash up, it feels good to find a bed roll and stretch out in the shade. Men and dogs

Dan & Riikka, after some hard work.



alike enjoy this time of quiet, spirit building respite. We earned it.

**MORE WORK**

In the late afternoon we split up. Paul and Dan repaired the rickety hay shed doors and Scott and I cut the last of the big logs out of the corral. With Paul supervising, the work went smoothly. As our time together extended to several days, I heard his familiar: “Wait, now wait just a minute!” less and less. Either he was growing more patient or I was getting better at listening. As we fixed supper that night we were all simply delighted that we had some red potatoes left. We cooked them with some meat and made a big salad. The day came to a close with a magnificent sunset bathing Scapegoat Mountain in golden light. We bedded down thinking of the next day and the trip out of the mountains. Sleep crept easily upon us.



Scott & Paul  
clear a big  
log out of  
the corral.

Dan repairs  
the hay shed  
door.



### UP AND AROUND

The next morning we were up before the dew was off the grass. The aroma of breakfast cooking drifted from the open front door of the cabin—you guessed it red potatoes with bacon and eggs. Don't forget the hot coffee.

It is always easier to pack up when you are going out, the loads are lighter and some of the pack stock can even go bare. We caught up the stock, brushed, saddled and loaded them in good time. We cleaned the cabin, swept and mopped the floor. Then we did one last check around the cabin and the corrals and saddled up for the long ride home.

### A NOTE ABOUT BIG HORN SHEEP

On the trip home as we climbed up the west face of Welcome Creek Pass, Dan looked off to the south and noticed a small herd of mule deer grazing in the steep sun drenched rocks above us, or perhaps he was not sure what they were. They could be mule deer. A closer inspection indicated that the three bucks in the herd were all two-pointers and had three-quarter curls. Dan mumbled something sheepish about the effects of drinking Paul's coffee for three days as we rode up and over the Pass. Scott kept looking over his shoulder to find the sheep and mumbled something about the effects of eating red potatoes for three days. Custer brayed and Java and I just kept the remuda moving.

### AN NEAR INCIDENT AT DEEP POOL GROTTA

We were moving easily down the trail along the south side of Smith Creek. In this stretch the trail climbs up above the cascading creek and *hugs* the top of the solid, rock ledge. On the creek side of the trail there is about one foot of free board and then solid ground gives way to a quick thirty foot drop, straight down into a beautiful, clear, blue pool with a mossy, green back drop complete with a spring-fed waterfall. After moving by this scenic feature, I led the string about thirty yards up the trail to a wire gate and dismounted to open it (just one more disadvantage to being in the lead). As I was opening the gate, I heard Scott say something, Paul repeated it for me: "Scott asks if you could move forward, sooner would be better!" I led Java

up, hopped up into the saddle and led the string out. We stopped to let Dan, who was riding drag, close the gate. What I found out while we were stopped waiting for Dan to close the gate, is that the horses had bunched and Scott's pony was inching closer to the rock ledge that dropped so abruptly into the abyss above the sparkling blue pool. Because Paul did not have a life vest to loan Scott, he politely requested me to move the string ahead and spread the horses out. Lesson learned: "When you are in the lead, always keep moving when there is exposure on the down hill side of a narrow trail; and, look back once in a while."

### HELPING TO BREAK IN WHITE PACKERS

A few miles from the trailhead Dan's horse came up lame with a stone bruise. Rather than switch saddles with a pack horse or ride a pack saddle for the relatively short distance back to the trailhead, I volunteered to walk and gave my horse to Dan. I figured that it would be a good way to break in my new pair of White packers (the boots silly). This is also a good way to have a wrangler with new White packers turn up lame at the trailhead.

Nick's view as he  
begins the break –  
in period with the  
string stepping  
out ahead.



### BACK AT THE TRAILHEAD

The USFS truck and stock trailer was there and our rig was parked where we had left it. In short order we had the stock unloaded, cooled out and the saddles and tack stored. The smell of wet saddles blankets was a pungent reminder that our trip was over.

Paul and I took his stock and Custer to the big pasture at Willow while Dan took Scott and his horses back to Augusta. Scott was going on to a job in Lewistown and the rest of us loaded into Dan's truck for the ride home.

Our thanks to the Lewis and Clark National Forest, the Rocky Mountain Ranger District, the staff of the Augusta Ranger Station and to Custer, Hank, Jester, Java, Checker, Summer, Cedar, Lightning and Facana our steady and honest stock and to Riikka for keeping the bears safe.



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.....**President's Message, Cont'd. from page 1**

On August 13th, Richard Tamcke got permission from the Lolo National Forest to clear several downed logs on the Crooked Trail up Pattee Canyon, the largest in diameter being about 30 inches.

August 18<sup>th</sup> Alan Meyers, Mike Speake, Randy Kappes, and Paul Evenson went to the Welcome Creek Cabin in the Scapegoat Wilderness to clear the Lost Cabin Trail. There was a lot of down timber and although they kept two saws going most of the time they didn't get it all cleared. It was hot the first day but they still removed LOTS of trees. The second day it rained all day so the crew worked in slickers. The Forest Service received authorization to build a hay shelter at the cabin using volunteers and donated materials, so the group also took measurements for this shelter.



Above: Welcome Creek Cabin. Mike Speake and Paul Evenson are on the porch. Right: Alan Meyers and Mike Speake on the crosscut saw. Photos courtesy Randy Kappes.



On September 6th, Richard Tamcke will hold a log and water crossing plus riding at Erskine Fishing Access. This will start at 10:00 a.m. Bring a lunch. Come even if you don't need log and water crossing help, because there will be a ride as well. Call Richard if there are questions—258-6621. Erskine Fishing Access Site is located 15 miles west of Missoula on I-90 to Frenchtown Exit, then through Frenchtown, then 2 miles west on Mullan Road.

On September 12-14 a State 4-H Horse Show will be held at the Sapphire Event Center near Corvallis. Richard Tamcke suggests it would be great to have an MBCH member there to hand out award ribbons to the class winners. BCH of Missoula is sponsoring a trail class for this show.

Work is scheduled for this fall on the Blue Mountain Trailhead. Once the contract is awarded, the project will be completed in 45 days. I believe BCH of Missoula volunteers will be putting in the fence around the new facility.

Our next scheduled MBCH Board Meeting will be held on September 3rd at FW&P, 6:30 p.m. September's general meeting will be September 17th at 7:00 p.m., FW&P. Try to come since we haven't been together as a group since the last meeting in May and because Paul has an excellent program planned. Mike Speake will demonstrate lightweight camping, including a stove and tent that weigh 13 pounds. We have several issues to discuss and vote on. One important issue on the agenda is the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project. Advance information is at [www.backfootclearwater.org](http://www.backfootclearwater.org). See you at the meeting!

.....**Connie Long, President**

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

Sept. 3	MBCH Board Meeting, FW&P, 6:30 p.m.
Sept. 6	Log & Water Crossing Plus Ride, Erskine Fishing Access (details page 6)
Sept. 12-14	State 4-H Show, Sapphire Arena (details page 6)
Sept. 17	MBCH General Meeting, FW&P, 7:00 p.m.
Sept. 27	MT State BCH Board Meeting, Deer Lodge
Oct. 1	MBCH Board Meeting, FW&P, 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 15	MBCH General Meeting, FW&P, 7:00 p.m.
Nov. 5	MBCH Board Meeting, FW&P, 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 19	MBCH General Meeting, FW&P, 7:00 p.m.
Dec. 3	MBCH Board Meeting, FW&P, 6:30 p.m.
Dec. 13	MT State BCH Board Meeting, Smoke's Barn, Missoula
Dec. 13	MBCH Christmas Potluck, Smoke & Thelma's Barn

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**Editor's Notes**



Costco Marketing Department contacted Smoke with the following invitation: As a member of the Back Country Horsemen of Missoula, Costco invites you to be a member of our club! If you bring this ad in to our membership desk to sign up for a **new** membership between September 8 and October 19, 2008 we will gift you with a \$10 cash card! So from us to you, "Welcome to the club!" Please note that members of your club must bring their copy of the newsletter in with this ad to take advantage of the \$10 cash card.

Smoke mentioned at one of our meetings that he varies the type of salt blocks he offers his horses and mules to increase their salt intake. A couple of members were interested so I got this from him: In the early spring he feeds sulphur salt (not for mares with foals or injured horses) because of lice, ticks, fleas, etc. In the summer he feeds plain salt. In the fall he switches to trace mineral salt because he feels they need extra minerals for hunting season. In December and January he offers his animals iodized salt for their immune systems.

Natural Horse, LLC Stable is hosting a Brandon Carpenter Gaiting Clinic on October 4 and 5. The cost is \$150/horse & rider both days or \$30 to audit both days. Natural Horse LLC Stable is located about halfway between Lolo and Florence on the east side of the highway. Brandon Carpenter is a fine person as well as clinician. Call Candace Erickson at 544-9238 for more information.

On September 27th Gary Salisbury and his brother Max Salisbury will hold a Select Horse Sale in Port Angeles, Washington. They will sell about 20 registered performance horses, all trained by Max. Sale starts at 5:00 p.m. Call Gary at 273-6967 for more information.

For Sale: I have an eight-year old sorrel gelding for sale. Three-fourths Tennessee Walker, one-fourth Quarter Horse, very well trained, 16 hands, 1100 lb., \$2700. 542-7443.

My grandson has this Code of the West hanging in his bedroom, a Christmas gift from his parents.

Live each day with courage.

Take pride in your work.

Always finish what you start.

Do what has to be done.

Be tough, but fair.

When you make a promise, keep it.

Ride for the brand.

Talk less and say more.

Remember that some things aren't for sale.

Know where to draw the line.

Thank you all for the many contributions to this newsletter. You're great! Next newsletter comes out December 1st and the deadline is November 20. Have a safe Fall!

**Myra**

**You can read this newsletter online and in color at [www.bchmt.org](http://www.bchmt.org)**

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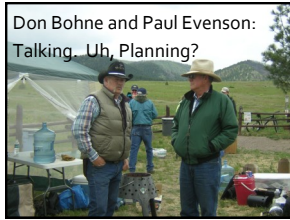
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Sara Wilson submitted these photos that sequence the setup and breakup of the National Trails Day camp at Blue Mountain Trailhead on June 7th. A Leave No Trace camp, Dutch Oven lunch for the workers, booths for handouts, water and snacks were provided for all trail users. Michael Moore organized trail maintenance crews to clean trails in the Blue Mountain Recreation Area. This local celebration recognizes the importance of our recreational trails and the recreational enthusiasts who use them and maintain them. Thanks, Sara, for sharing!



Don Bohne and Paul Evenson: Talking. Uh, Planning?



NTD Chair  
Barbara Koepke



Left: Setting up the Information Booth. Judy Ward and Connie Long, forefront. Michelle Hutchins and Barbara Koepke in the background. Below: Camp all set up.

# National Trails Day



Judy Ward and Barbara Koepke warming their hands.



Don Bohne doing his Dutch oven cooking with Lola Mae LeProwse (left) and Sara Wilson (right) watching.



Breaking Camp



Don Bohne packing up his Dutch oven. Right: Nothing left but the talking: Lola Mae LeProwse, Connie Long, Barbara Koepke, Judy Ward, Paul Evenson and Mack Long



# August Potluck

Upper Far Left: Smoke Elser discusses the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Project. Gloria Curdy is pictured in the foreground. Bottom Left: Left to Right—Mike Chandler is telling me how many desserts he just sampled—either four or five. And that was before the steaks were even turned over. Next is Smoke Elser—discussing something with with Don Schusted—probably hunting! Center Picture: Mark Colyer is busy cooking some great steaks with his son's friend looking on. Following is Patty's recipe for the muffins she brought to the potluck, but she substituted bacon for the pepperoni.



## Patty Martin's Asiago and Pepperoni Muffins

- 2 cups flour
- 4 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 tsp sugar
- 1 egg slightly beaten
- 1/4 cups milk



- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 cup shredded Asiago cheese
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pepperoni

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Grease twelve 2 1/2 inch diameter muffin cups. Stir together flour, baking powder, salt and sugar in a large bowl. Beat together egg, milk and melted butter in a small

bowl; pour over flour mixture. Stir to combine, but do not beat. Stir in cheese and pepperoni.

2. Spoon into muffin tins, filling 3/4 full. Bake for 25 minutes or until muffins are high and golden. Remove to wire rack.



## Care of the Old Horse

.....from "Health Problems of the Horse" by Robert M. Miller, DVM

Veterinarians engaged in a pleasure horse practice are very frequently confronted by a situation both comic and tragic. During the course of an examination the owner is started when he learns that his horse is about 10 years older than the horse trader claimed he was when purchased. Usually the animal was supposed to be 12, and his teeth reveal him to be of voting age. It is commonly believed that a horse cannot be accurately aged after the age of 11, but actually, careful examination of the teeth will reveal most horses' ages with considerable accuracy until 25 or 30.

Upon learning the true age of his mount, the owner is discouraged and unhappy, not because he was "took," but rather because he now owns an "old plug." Such an attitude is not necessarily justified. The great roping horse, Badly, was still carrying top rodeo cowboys into the money when past 20, and on cow ranches all over the West, aged ponies are still earning their oats the hard way. The old horse of 16 or 19 or 23 years may continue to make a good mount, and sometimes the wisdom of age makes him superior to the youngsters.

However, if he is to lead a useful life and provide a maximum of service, the old timers needs proper care even more than the horse in his prime. He must have a diet containing sufficient protein and vitamins.

If his old backbone and withers are a little sharper than they used

to be, use an extra blanket under your saddle and be sure that the fork of the saddle is high enough to clear his withers without rubbing.

Horses which have been plagued by a constant population of strongyles or *blood worms* all their lives frequently have the arteries supplying their intestines damaged. The irritation caused by the worms over the years produces little pockets in these arteries called *aneurysms*. Clots form in these pockets and deprive a portion of the intestine of blood. The resulting pain produces colic, and many old horses are colicky because of these aneurysms. Of course, a big clot in a major artery will finally cause death. Now, even though it's too late to correct the damaged arteries, you can take extra precautions to maintain a healthy digestive tract by feeding and watering generously and carefully. Feed smaller portions more frequently. Don't grain or water when the horse is warm. Give a bran mash once weekly. Feed some alfalfa hay. A slightly laxative state is desirable.

Keep the feet well trimmed. Change the shoes every six weeks. Expert horseshoeing can do a lot for feet and legs sore with years of abuse.

Geldings should have the sheath cleaned out often enough to prevent accumulated secretions from causing irritation and infection.

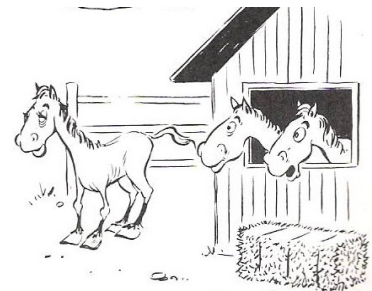
Horses' teeth, unlike ours, grow constantly throughout their lives. When the opposing tooth fails to keep it worn down, a tooth may grow out as a spear-like point or sharp edge. These points interfere with chewing and may lacerate the tongue or cheeks. The pain makes the horse

reluctant to eat and some such victims actually starve to death. These points are removed with a "float," which is a special dental rasp. Old horses suffer other dental diseases and dentistry constitutes an important—and sometimes dangerous—part of horse practice.

Lastly, treat the old horse with compassion and common sense. Warm him up gradually before vigorous exercise. Give him frequent breathers on the hills. Spare his brittle joints on hard-surfaced roads or rocky trails. Protect him from cold and dampness.

Explain all these things to the kids. Children often learn to ride on an old horse. Just when he's ripe for retirement, he's turned over to an eager youngster who rides him TV style all over the countryside. I certainly agree that a gentle, honest old horse is ideal for a kid's mount, but children should be supervised and instructed in sensible and humane riding.

The aged horse which is sound of wind and limb need not be relegated to the fox farm or turned out to pasture. Respect his seniority, but give him a job to do. He'll probably enjoy it. After all, "there's life in the old hoss yet."




● "Don't believe a word of it when she tells her age. I happen to know she served several hitches in the 5th Cavalry!"

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