

The Leadline

The Voice of NATRC Region 1 Competitive Trail Riding



www.natrcregion1.org

Summer 2017

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Spring in the Redwoods

By Linda Thomason

What a beautiful weekend at the Spring in the Redwoods Ride! Great weather, great ride. Riders were introduced to two out-of-region judges who brought a somewhat different perspective than we may have been used to. Volunteering as the Rules Interpreter, I was able to travel with both sets of judges and their secretaries, covering quite a bit of terrain and observing the riders at various locations along the way. Most riders expressed their appreciation for the judges' interactions with them and that both judges were focused on the ride as a learning experience.

Jerry Weil, DVM, the veterinary judge, is currently from Arizona and has been judging NATRC for many years. This was the first trip to California for both him and his daughter, and they made it into a 2-week camping event. It's always thrilling to hear of someone's first ever look at the Pacific Ocean. This was also their first experience with a redwood forest. They made a trip to the Mariposa area to view the giant redwoods before coming to the Jackson ride. Living in California, we often take the ocean and the trees for granted. Hearing about their travel experiences made me appreciate the beautiful state we have. We are truly blessed to live in such a beautiful state with such a variety of terrain.

Patsy Conner, our horsemanship judge, hails from Arkansas now, but she has lived all over the country. She also has been with NATRC for many years, currently serving as sanction chair and historian. Patsy and Jerry commented that they have probably known each other for 40 years. Both served as president of NATRC and co-chairs of the judges committee at different times.

It was interesting to listen to Jerry and Patsy discuss the obstacles and what they hoped riders would learn from them. Some were quite simple. An example was the "back off the trail" obstacle. Riders approached the judges while on a slight uphill trail. Then the instructions were to turn the horse sideways and back off the trail a few feet, stop and then continue on. Although this sounds quite simple, most horses balk at leaving the main trail when they know that other horses are on it - the old herd mentality at work. This simple action demonstrates the rider's control of the horse and the trust between horse and rider.

I appreciated the time each judge took Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon to explain what

(Continued on [page 2](#))



(Continued from page 1)

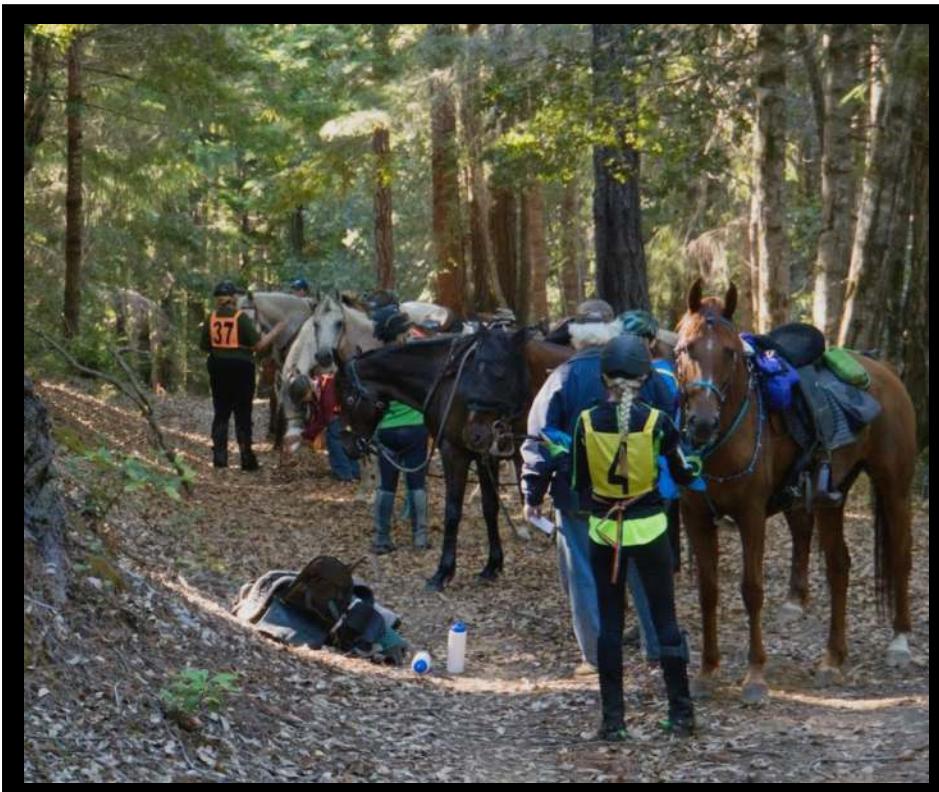
they were looking for at each obstacle and why. Patsy was very generous and even handed out her email address so riders with questions could contact her. Patsy's profession was as an educator and it shows when she speaks to the riders. It's important for her to make sure that riders always learn from each ride experience, that the judge's scorecard should be a helpful guide, never punitive, to improve their riding and relationship with their horse.

Both judges were very impressed with the riding ability of Region 1 junior riders. Each judge took extra time to talk to the juniors and make sure they understood what they were looking for and offered suggestions on how to best set their horse up for future obstacles. The feedback I heard from the juniors was pretty positive. I was very proud of all our juniors in action on the trail. I've watched many of them grow up in NATRC over the years, and it's exciting to see them mature and handle situations using their own judgement - and do so well!

It was a pleasure to be at Jackson and enjoy the scenery, the people and Brian's great food! Both ride management and the volunteers worked hard to provide an enjoyable ride.

It was great to be out of the heat for a short while. I have retired and moved to Rocklin, CA where it's quite toasty during the summers. I drove out of the cool redwoods and over the hills to Ukiah where the temperature registered 113!!! Goodbye redwoods, hello reality!

I hope more of you will be able to attend the Jackson Summer Ride - a second opportunity to enjoy this scenic area.



[NATRC Region 1](#)

Region 1 Board of Directors

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Trails Advocacy Representative: Position Vacant
See www.natrc.org for a complete list National Board members and Committees.



Chairman's Message. . .

Summer is Definitely Here

The heat is a real factor this year. Make sure you are packing water for yourself and hauling water for your horse while out on the trail conditioning or just pleasure riding. I know it's difficult to pack the water, but I have several friends who have been in the hospital this year due to dehydration. And don't pass up a chance to water the horse while you're out there.

If anyone you know or if you have considered putting on a ride, there is a ride [Management Manual](#) on the national website that may help you make the decision to go for it. There is a lot involved putting on a ride, but with help from friends and ride volunteers it really isn't as bad as it may seem. We in Region 1 are lucky as we do have a good volunteer membership that helps with all the rides.

Region 1 Chair,

Steve Meroshnekoff

Save the Date!!

Saturday, March 3rd, 2018

NATRC Region 1 Convention & Awards Luncheon

The 2018 Region 1 Convention will be held once again at the Sonoma County Driving and Riding Club in Santa Rosa, CA on Saturday, March 3rd, 2018. Stay tuned through the winter months for updates on speakers and registration information. Photographs from the 2017 R1 convention can be viewed on the [R1 website](#). This was a fun event last time, and we look forward to more good times, good food and a chance to catch up with friends and fellow riders before the competitive ride season begins. Please plan to join us.

Davern Kroncke will be the convention manager again in 2018. Please contact Davern (horsies4dk@gmail.com) if you know of any vendors who might wish to participate or if you have any ideas that she can use for the convention. Last time Stephanie Swain shared a warning about stinging nettles at Point Reyes and the dangerous allergic reactions a horse can have. If there are other trail stories or information useful to riders, please contact Davern so we can share it at the convention.

Help is always needed for rides and conventions. Events aren't just the responsibility of your R1 Board of Directors. Consider helping out and sharing in the fun. Your ideas and participation are welcome!

There will be a raffle and silent auction to raise funds for Region 1. Please keep this in mind over the winter and holidays and set aside any items you are willing to donate to the auction.

For more information, contact Linda Thomason at linda.thomason0610@gmail.com or phone 510-708-1439.

Region 1 2017 Ride Schedule

<http://www.natrcregion1.org/>

Sep. 30-Oct. 1	Round Valley Regional Park Gene Boicelli Sec: Linda Thomason	Brentwood, CA (925) 672-6491 (510) 708-1439	"A" O/CP; "B" N LIMIT 45 geneboicelli@gmail.com linda.thomason0610@gmail.com
Oct. 14-15	Fall Fiesta – Cache Creek Co-chair: Steve Meroshnekoff Co-chair: Jean Armer Sec: Maria Pilgrim	Williams, CA (707) 743-9973 (707) 795-8163	"A" O/N/CP; "B" N/CP; "B" N iambrewing@aol.com wolves1961@sbcglobal.net

Ellen Jacqueline Almedia Lovett

April 4, 1919 – May 27, 2017

Adapted from Region 1 Appreciation at the National Level – 2001
Ellen and Rufus Lovett by Peter Rich

Ellen was born in the spring of 1919, at Colfax, Washington. She had a sister and two brothers. Her father was a small farmer there, a Native American, and a strict, hard driving parent. They had a variety of mixed breed, grade, horses. At a young age, Ellen was competing in gymkhana, barrel racing, stock seat, Western Pleasure, and equitation classes at horse shows and rodeos.

Rufus Lovett was born in Tennessee in 1913. In 4 years of grade school, he managed to squeeze about as much out of the local school system as possible, then launched his career in agriculture. He moved west, first to San Bernardino, where he got a real close look at oranges, picking fruit up and down the state and repairing farm equipment. By 1938, he was working at the SFB Morse (Morse Code) in the Carmel Valley.

Rufus and Ellen met in 1939 at a dance at the Carmel Farm Bureau Hall and were married in 1941. Only months later, Rufus was wearing a U.S. Army uniform and was sent to "the front" in Germany and France during World War II. Rufus served as a medic and saw more action than he'd like to remember, including Normandy Beach on D-day.

Doing her part of the war effort, Ellen worked in San Francisco as a welder at Western Pipe & Steel and waited tables at a restaurant during her "off" hours. In 1947, back together, Ellen and Rufus resumed a life of farming in Dol Palos, cultivating rice, cotton, and milk cows. During these years they team-rope together, rode in horse shows, worked their ranch from horseback, and judged horse shows. Then, in 1957, they sold the property they had built and moved to Cool (near Auburn) to focus on cattle and horse breeding. By 1980, Ellen and Rufus had relocated to Grass

Valley, a higher elevation, cooler temperatures less traffic, and greener permanent pasture.



Around 1981, Ellen bought Sur Druz, a 15 hand, 6-year-old black gelding, at an auction. He was reported to have belonged to another woman who tried him at endurance but could not control him. Ellen started Tevis on Sur Druz in 1981 but pulled at Franciscos. She rode him again and finished in 1984 and rode to another finish in 1985 on Rod Cole's horse, Image.

In this time period, Ellen became friends with Irene King and Bev Barmettler who exposed Ellen to NATRC. As they say, the rest was history. Sur Druz won three NATRC National Championships and had over 3,000 miles of competition. As consistently as Sur Druz won Sweepstakes, Ellen would win a blue ribbon in horsemanship. In 1986 Sur Druz won the International Arabian Horse Association Grand Champion, National Championship event. Ellen had bought into the IAHA Sweep-

stakes program for \$1,250.00, and won \$6,250.00 at this event. In Sur Druz's short career, Sur Druz won \$25,000 for Ellen and Rufus.

One evening in 1987, someone left a gate open near Ellen's home. Sur Druz let himself out and trotted down the road. Tragically, there was a chain across the road. Sur Druz fractured both front legs and had to be destroyed. But Ellen was tough. She and Rufus went to another auction and bought another horse, a 4-year-old, 16-hand, spirited, beautiful gelding, with a mind of his own and who needed work. ENTER: Prince Alla Ba Ha, or just plain "Allie."

Allie and Ellen were consistently in the winner's circle. Allie won ten National Championships in 12 years. He put on 8250 miles in NATRC alone, was more often than not a winner in events within our region and overall year-end high points. In spite of the great distances of travel for Region 1 riders to get enough rides or out of-region points, Ellen and her horse were regularly in the top two or three, nationally.

Rufus accompanied Ellen to most of her rides and was always willing to help whether as gate keeper, driver, water boy, anything. Or, sometimes Ellen would team up with her buddy, Marilyn Hunter. Once out on the trail, something spooked Ellen's horse and bounced her to the ground. In a flash she was back in the saddle, looking at those of us riders who saw the spill, demanding, "Don't tell Rufus."

Rufus would wander around camp, or a lunch stop, always with a watchful eye for horses he liked. If you gave him an opening, he'd compliment or give a constructive criticism.

Often at the post ride vet checks, Rufus, Ellen, and dignitaries of the sport would *(Continued on page 5)*

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line up or circle their chairs under an old Oak tree to watch the horses being trotted out. When Rufus saw a good one, there'd be a look of approval on his face, no matter whose horse. If there was the slightest degree of irregularity in the horse's gait, Rufus' eyes would dance the dance. Sometimes an observer of Rufus would check to see if Rufus was holding his hat level, or if it was bobbing in synch with the horse.

For many years, Ellen rode with boots, pressed blue jeans, and a Western hat and shirt. She traded in her hat for a metal construction worker's type hat. It was once heard at a ride by an anonymous pundit, "We will know the days of the Wild West are truly over when Ellen Lovett trades in her boots and switches to the distance rider's fashion of the spandex-lycra tights and running shoes. Ellen did start riding with tights, some provided by Irene King.

Early in 1998, Rufus had bypass heart surgery. He bounced back and continued to help both Ellen and NATRC. Then in May 1999, Rufus was hit with a big one and passed on. Ellen pushed on, managing the ranch, was up early to feed, check fences, hauled large trailers of cattle to auction. Meaningless as it may seem to an urban dweller, she once confided lovingly, "No one could set

water like Rufus," meaning, he was a master at taking care of the irrigation.

In 2000, Allie, while running loose in his pasture, took a fall. His left front shoulder appeared sore. He was treated with Banamine and seemed to improve. The next morning, he would not eat, then went down, would not move, and died of a twisted gut.

Ellen had earlier purchased another Arab, a 5-year-old. This one worked cattle well and had been ridden in three NATRC rides by a friend. His farm name was "Buddy." Buddy also suffered an injury and unfortunately had an adverse reaction to the antibiotics and died.

Highway 49 through Grass Valley became a freeway. Housing developments increased. By 2001, Ellen had a mindset that there was no more NATRC in her future. She sold her main property, equipment, much of her stock, took her two Quarter horses and moved to Oregon where she bought the Oxbow Ranch.

Not one to sit still, Ellen joined friends for line dancing. She eventually sold the Oxbow (2012) and moved to O'Brien for a short time – just before surgery to remove part of her right leg. Then she moved into Cave Junction where the Cross family, who had known Ellen from the Oxbow days, became Ellen's family.

The Crosses wanted to farm, and Ellen made it possible. She taught them how to milk a cow and what to do and how to treat a multitude of cattle problems. She helped the children with their 4-H pigs, giving them the push they needed. She helped Stacey raise a bottle baby Jersey heifer, and Stacey still has the image of Ellen grabbing that heifer's head and giving her a shot in the side of her neck while in her wheelchair at the age of 97.

Ellen joined Stacey in the garden every evening. She was able to see the cows, hear the goats, and smell the flowers right up to the end. She was active right up until her stroke. In fact she played pool at the Senior Center 2 days after her 98th birthday.

In Stacey's words, "I find myself talking to her all the time while working or gardening out here. For me she is everywhere. I can hear her voice in my mind, 'Those gophers are coming back, they're gonna get the tomatoes.' She changed our lives, and I like to think we changed hers. Our family is loud and chaotic at times, but she had the hearts of my husband, our twin boys and my daughter who has had the hardest time with our loss of her. For me she has changed the woman I am. I will forever in my mind ask myself 'Well Stacey, what would Ellen do?'"

R.I.P., Ellen. We miss you.

Region 1 Board of Directors Vacancies

Two 3-year terms on the Region 1 Board of Directors are up for election. Any member wishing to be nominated to run for one of these seats needs to submit a short resumé to the R1 Recording Secretary, **Stephanie Swain, prior to January 1**. Stephanie's contact information is in this issue.

The health of our organization requires the regular addition of new faces to the BOD to get new energy and ideas. If you would like to give back to our sport and could consider devoting some time and energy to participating in its management (there are only four regular meetings each year), please consider submitting your resumé for consideration.

Votes will be cast and counted at our annual meeting next Spring, March 3, in Santa Rosa. If you cannot attend, you may request a ballot from Stephanie Swain. She must receive it back before the meeting.

Junior Rider Rebate

Junior riders who are NATRC members by the second Sunday in November of a ride year and complete 3 or more rides in that same ride year are eligible to receive a rebate of \$30 per completed ride for up to 3 rides. Please contact [Linda Thoma-son](#), R1 Treasurer, for more details.



RESUMÉ

FOR NOMINATION to NATRC NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS - ALTERNATE Three-Year Term – Region 1

In order to select a slate of nominees for this year's ballot, we need a resumé of your qualifications. Please answer the following, sign the pledge and return this form to the Nominating Committee Chair by **October 1, 2017**.

NAME _____ REGION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN AN NATRC MEMBER?

INTEREST IN NATRC (RIDER, MANAGER, JUDGE)

Please make a statement regarding your interest, qualifications, related interests and what you would like to do for NATRC. Be brief and please limit it to 200 words or less. The information will be used on our ballots to acquaint the voters with you. Use the back of this page for your statement or attach an additional page and return to the Nominating Committee Chair.

Results of the election will be presented at the fall meeting of the National Board of Directors. The 3-year term begins January 1.

As an Alternate member of the NATRC Board of Directors, you will be expected to attend a National Board meeting in the absence of the regular director. As a dual director serving also on the Region 1 Board of Directors, you will be expected to attend four meetings a year. Expenses related to the National Board meetings are largely borne by the Region, but you will have out-of-pocket expenses.

Thank you for your interest in serving on the BOD of NATRC.

PLEDGE:

If I am elected to the North American Trail Ride Conference Board of Directors, I agree to be present at all board meetings, if possible, and to accept the equitable financial responsibility as voted by the board on which I serve.

SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE _____

Please return no later than October 1, 2017, to:

*Donna Stidolph
420 Isbel Dr, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831/427-3646
donna@stidolph.com*

THE LEADLINE is the official publication of Region 1 of the North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC). The Leadline is published three times per year and mailed or emailed to all NATRC Region 1 members. It is available by subscription to non-Region 1 members at \$8 per year. Issues contain updated information from Region 1 committees, ride results, point standings, minutes of board meetings, and the current Region 1 ride schedule. Send subscription requests and payments (made out to NATRC Region 1) to Phil Young, 2384 Templeton Dr, Redding, CA 96002. Contributions are welcome and may be sent to Laurie Knuutila, 455 Ream Lane, Fairbanks, AK 99712 or email to wildroseph@yahoo.com. NATRC Region 1 and The Leadline do not necessarily endorse or support the opinions expressed in printed articles or advertisements. The Editor reserves the right to edit material as necessary. No letters to the Editor will be printed if not signed. NATRC and the staff of The Leadline are not responsible for errors in spelling of horses' or riders' names.

Deadlines:

Spring issue - Submission: April 15; Publication: May 1
Summer issue - Submission: August 1; Publication: Aug. 15
Fall/Winter issue - Submission: Dec 15; Publication: Jan. 1

Advertising rates per issue:

Full page—\$40
Half page—\$20
Quarter page—\$10
Business card—\$5

Classified ads are free to Region 1 members in good standing, one per issue, up to 30 words. Submit ads to the Editor via email or as hard copies via regular mail; hard copies will be scanned as submitted. Make checks payable to NATRC Region 1.

*Congratulations!
Trisha
Taniguchi
for graduating
from the
California
Department of
Fish and
Wildlife
Academy!*

**FINANCIAL HELP
for Ride Managers!**

\$ Apply for a grant of up to \$1,000 to help defray the upfront costs of your NATRC sanctioned CTR.

ONLY TWO REQUIREMENTS

1 Managers must be NATRC members.

2 1-page applications & supporting papers must be submitted 90 days prior to the ride.

To apply, please contact our **National Office**.

RIDE MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FUND

AFFIRM THEM AND TAKE CHARGE!

By Kay Lieberknecht

I was pretty frazzled, having helped my heat-sick and back-pained friend get within sight of camp at the end of a day on the trail. My horse, Feathers, had been held back to a 2 mph pace for a couple of miles, playing backstop for the other horse. Just now she'd tried a spook to get control of the speed, and when that didn't work, she kicked the other horse in the leg. Appalled, I jumped off (very spryly, thanks to adrenaline) and saw that my friend was no worse off than before, and her horse had no limp nor lump. Whew! Now to carry on . . .

That's when the safety rider, Josette, walked up. She told me that I'd done a great job helping, but she could handle things now while I go take care of myself and my horse. I heard her assure my friend that she was going to make it, and that she did know her horse better than anyone else could.

Josette guided the horse slowly into camp, and many people came to help. My friend was off and in the shade, getting cool water all over, being teased lov-

ingly ("wet tee shirt winner", etc), and given everything she could need (except they may have forgotten the peeled grapes).

After I did my own cooling off (blathering, crying, drinking, etc), with much loving support, I went to compliment Josette on the compassionate and confident way she'd handled both horse and rider, and even me. She replied, "First you affirm 'em, then you take charge."

That's succinct and sweet! Doing that, you would be a great EMT, police, boss, or (especially) parent!

Affirming someone lets them know you understand, accept, support and encourage them. It promotes them trusting you. And sometimes you do need to take charge of another being - for safety, for healing, for progress. By affirming who and where they are, you can guide them into being their better self, going in their best direction.

Now to apply that whole concept to my mare Feathers . . .

Just for Juniors

4-H Junior Rider Year End High Point Award

Are you a 4-H member? Know someone who is? Encourage your friends to do competitive trail rides. They and you can compete against each other to win NATRC's 4-H Junior Rider Year-End High Point Award.

To be eligible is simple. Just compete in any division, nominate yourself, and prove that you are a 4-H member! Here are the specifics.

- The award goes to the high point horse and high point rider **regardless** of the rider's division.
- Your self-nomination must occur before the end of the ride year, which is the second Sunday in November. (For 2016, that will be November 13th.)
- You must (1) be an NATRC member, (2) send an email to Sarah Rinne (natrc@natrc.org) stating that you are a 4-H member, and (3) have your 4-H leader also send Laurie an email verifying that you are a 4-H member.

Additionally, in a number of states (Colorado is one example), 4-H now recognizes competitive trail as an activity that qualifies as a 4-H member's project. How cool is that?!

Questions?

Contact Cindy Keen, cindytk@hotmail.com
Chair, Riders and Juniors Committee

National Board of Directors Meeting Summary

Kansas City 7/14-15/ 2017
Submitted by Jamie Dieterich

Bylaws. Proposed revisions for the NATRC bylaws were reviewed. Executive administrator will be changed to executive director throughout. There was a lengthy discussion about electronic meetings. Because NATRC is a California corporation, we have to adhere to California corporation code which allows electronic meetings if there is concurrent communication, all directors can hear each other, and each director can participate in all matters. This will be an important consideration for consideration in our R1 bylaws.

Proposed rule changes.

(1) The proposal to adjust mileage credit from 30 miles to 35 miles in B rides for Open and from 20 to 25 miles in B rides for Novice/CP was rejected. The proposal would have given credit for more miles for two B rides (70 for Open and 50 for Novice/CP) in one weekend than for one A ride (60 for Open and 40 for Novice/CP).

(2) The proposal to add a junior class to CP had included wording for mileage changes proposed above. With that proposal rejected, the wording for the mileage part was changed

back to what is currently in the Rule Book.

(3) The proposal to allow ice boots was carried forward with the following change in wording: The use of ice boots and other means of applying ice/ice water/cooling **agents packs** topically by various attachment methods whose primary function is to stabilize the ice/cooling method in place.

(4) Wording for the rest of the proposals was left unchanged. Please see the separate article in *Hoof Print* on the proposed rule changes to be voted on in November.

We have a total of 863 current national members.

Approximately 491 people that were members in 2016 have not renewed for 2017, and 202 from 2015 did not renew in 2016. This is based on member expiration dates in our database.

We have had 179 free new members to date in 2017. Out of 375 free memberships for 2016, 65 renewed as paid members for 2017 resulting in an approximate 17% renewal rate. The first-year-free for brand new members will be offered again in 2018.

Income for the year to date is \$45,440; expenses are \$48,806

for a net loss of \$3366. Full financial reports will be published in *Hoof Print*.

The report on NATRC's performance scorecard had generated a lot of email exchange of ideas before the meeting. Ridership has declined to about half of what it was 15 years ago, but the reasons are hard to identify. Is it due to our riders aging? Not enough time to condition? Do we need to promote our "adventure" aspect more? How do we appeal to pleasure trail riders? All agreed it's important for judges to be professional, tactful, and informative. We need to encourage and educate new and prospective ride chairs. Offering a short, introductory ride could provide an option for riders to get started.

A protocol was approved for conducting the CRI, but there is concern about the scoring system.

Historian, Patsy Conner, spent several days with Joan Throgmorton cataloging and scanning much of Joan's collection of NATRC materials.

The 2018 National Convention, hosted by R3, will be February 9-11 in Albuquerque, NM.

Reminder from the Points and Data Committee

1. To be eligible for year-end awards, membership dues must be paid by the second Sunday in November, the end of the ride year.
2. It is the responsibility of the owner of the horse to accurately report/ verify the horse's breed to NATRC.
3. Year-end breed awards. Many breed organizations sponsor year-end high point breed awards. Memberships in NATRC **and** the breed association are required.
4. Questions about the horse and/or rider records should be directed to NATRC, natrc@natrc.org.

“Rules” versus “Expectations”

By Laurie Knuutila

NATRC does not have a lot of rules as compared to other horse competitions. The Rule Book is small and only has about 50 pages, half of which pertain to things like awards, protests and prohibited substances. Please take the time to read the entire book. It won't take long. (For comparison, the U.S. Equestrian Federation Rule Book is over 750 pages, the Reining Horse Association Rule Book is over 130 pages, and the Quarter Horse Rule Book is over 150 pages.)

There are, of course, rules that must be followed during a ride. For example: you cannot proceed along the course of the trail unless you are mounted on your horse (you can't get off and lead, like you can during an endurance ride), you must use some form of a saddle and bridle, you must maintain forward motion in the last 2 miles of each day's ride, etc. Becoming familiar with these actual rules is vital to a good CTR experience.

During a competition, however, there are certain “expectations.” Sometimes these expectations become confused with rules. Sometimes competitors will lose points on their scorecards for things that aren't found in the Rule Book. So how do you know what these “expectations” are?

The “expectations” vary slightly from judge to judge, with the personal opinions of the individual judges dictating details, but they are basically the same across the board. They are what's “expected” of a good horseman. They could also be termed “common sense.” They fall into two basic categories – safety and proper horse care. Every judge is, first and foremost, concerned about rider and horse safety, with proper horse care being second.

A word about judges: When you sign up to compete in a ride, you are essentially asking for a judge's opinion of how well you are able to ride and care for your horse during a long dis-

tance ride. When you get your scorecards back, they will reflect the judge's opinion of you and your horse. Take them for what they are – that person's opinion, based on the philosophies and rules of the sport. Remember, when you paid your entry fee, you asked for just that. Think about what's on the card, learn from it, and please do not view it as personal criticism. Even though the scoring system is based on negative scoring, the judges really and truly want you to succeed and would rather NOT have to deduct points.

Take for example, crossing a river. You will not find any rule in the Rule Book that says anything about crossing a river. Keeping in mind the two basic expectations of safety and proper horse care, let's say that three riders all arrive at the river crossing together, one behind the other. Rider #1 enters the water. Rider #2 waits on the bank until Rider #1 is about half way across the river, then enters the water. Rider #3 follows Rider #2 immediately, without waiting. About half way across the river, Rider #2's horse stumbles on a submerged rock, caus-

We expect the horses to be well-behaved, sound, well-conditioned, and “handy.”
We expect the riders to ride well, to be courteous and safe, and to take care of the horse.

ing a loss of forward motion for a few seconds. Rider #3's horse, following closely, collides with #2's horse, causing it to stumble again. They all recover and finish crossing the river without further incident.

The judge was on the bank and watched this scenario. Rider #3 loses points on the horsemanship card for “following too close.” There is no rule that says how far behind to follow another horse across a river, or up a hill, or while just going down the trail. But safety and common sense dictate (expect) that you shouldn't follow close

enough to get kicked or to interfere with the other horse in any way. Therefore, the rider lost points for not meeting the “expectations” of a good horseman.

Let's take another example. At the ride, the weather is poor; the temperature is in the 60's and it's raining. The horses complete the morning's ride and arrive back in camp for their lunch break. Steam rises from them as they stand tied to their trailers. Some riders immediately put rain sheets on their horses, while others do not. Some riders lose points for “horse should have been blanketed/protected at lunch.” Why? There is no rule about using or not using blankets.

That particular judge's opinion is that the horses would certainly benefit from being blanketed in those circumstances. The expectations of good horse care, (common sense), also dictates that blanketing in those circumstances would be in the horses' best interests. They have just completed several hours of hard work, their muscles are warm, and they are now being asked to stand around for an hour while being soaked by a cold rain. Those hard-working, warmed-up muscles are likely to become chilled and tighten up as a result. A blanket would help prevent the horse from getting chilled, thereby making his subsequent work easier. When viewed from that angle, it becomes obvious why someone might lose a point or two for “not blanketing at lunch.” Even if your horse never needs a blanket at home, in these circumstances, blanketing makes sense and is appropriate.

When you look at any trail situation with an eye for safety and proper horse care, it becomes easier to understand why you might lose a point for something. Ask yourself: Even if not readily apparent to me, did I do something that was potentially unsafe? A common example is positioning your horse too close to someone on the ground, like the judge's secretary or the timer. If you cause that person to think that they might get stepped on or bumped, you were being unsafe and will probably lose a point for it if the judge observes it. There is no rule that says, Stay so many feet in all directions away from the judge's secretary. But the “expectations” of safety say (Continued on page 10)

Preserving NATRC History

Patsy Conner, NATRC Historian

After judging the Spring in the Redwoods Ride, Patsy Conner, wearing another hat as NATRC Historian, travelled to Gilroy where she spent several days. Joan Throgmorton, first to hold the title of NATRC Secretary, had invited Patsy to help organize and archive NATRC's historic materials she, Joan, had accumulated and saved since the early years. Joan's daughter, Denise Roberts, was instrumental in making arrangements and helping with this project – including taking vacation time and

buying a new scanner. No stranger to NATRC herself, Denise had won the President's Cup in 1972 on a P.O.A. named



Joan Throgmorton (left) and Patsy Conner, NATRC Historian, review photos.

Stormy. Chere Bargar, Joan's successor as NATRC Secretary, joined in the project one day.

Joan had already done most of the organizing, and the ladies proceeded to sort, document and scan scrapbooks, photos, newsletters, manuals, and Rule Books. What they didn't get scanned there was shipped to Patsy's home in Arkansas to finish up. Eventually, these historic records will be permanently housed in NATRC's national office.

Preserving our history is important not just for the sake of interest, but to help us understand our base for being. Kudos to these ladies for all their cooperation and work on this overdue project.

(Continued from [page 9](#))

you will. You may not have even noticed how close you were to the person, but you were still being unsafe.

When it comes to horse care, another question to ask is: Am I making my horse's job as easy as possible? An example of this is when going up or down hills. Being light on the horse's back, balanced side to side, not swaying excessively with the motion of the horse, and having steady hands all make his job of carrying you for miles and miles that much easier. At the end of the day, it will make a

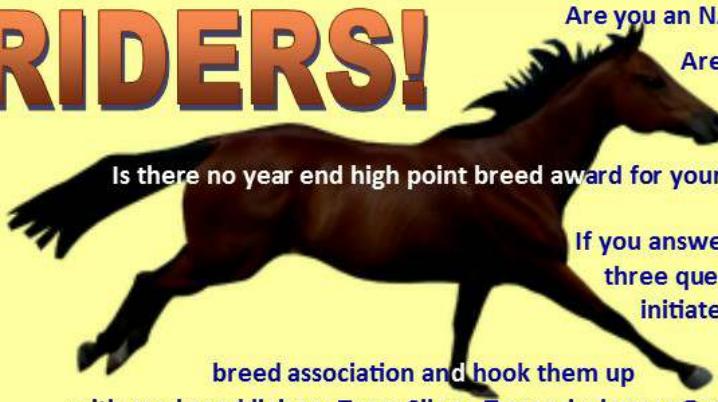
difference. Over the course of the trail, a lot of small things can add up to a big thing, like a sore horse. And along the way, if the judge observes you sitting like a sack of potatoes on your horse's back while climbing a steep hill, you will lose points because the "expectations" of good horse care during a long distance ride say you don't do that. There's no rule about it, but there are "expectations."

The best way to know what is "expected" of you during a competition is to, first of all, study the little teeny tiny Rule Book that governs an NATRC-sanctioned competitive trail

ride. Second, read all the information contained on NATRC's website, if possible, and on all the related links on that website, and any other information you can find. Third, hang out with experienced competitors, if possible. And fourth, when you get to the ride, ask questions of the judges and the experienced competitors. They don't bite, they don't even snarl, and even if you think the question is dumb, the only truly dumb question is the one you didn't ask. Come ride with us!

RIDERS!

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***** Mail completed form and check to : NATRC, PO Box 969, Beatrice, NE 68310 *****

A friendly reminder that you must be a current member to receive member rider fee discounts. To be eligible for year-end awards, you must be a member before the ride year ends. The ride year ends the second Sunday in November. See you on the trail!

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