

AMERICAN CREAM NEWS

VOLUME 2, NO. 1

SUMMER, 1992

A Day to Remember

The 'not so gentle' sound of rain drops on the self-draining aluminum patio roof outside our bedroom window at 4:00 a.m. the day of July 8—Annual Meeting and the Draft House & Mule Association of America tour—gave us both a good feeling, as we desperately needed rain, and a sinking feeling . . . how could we show outside if the yards and drive were standing in water?

We had groomed almost since the day in January when Phil Farrell had called to ask if we would welcome 80 or so on the tour July 8 and the American Cream Draft Horse Association members had agreed on our annual meeting that day and a 'show' for the tour folks.

Don and Linda Johnson of Russell, Iowa, had pulled in late afternoon Tuesday with a R.V. and horse trailer bringing a mare and two fillies. The mare was a 'saver' out of the 'kill' pen which Don had rescued and drives with Nellie, his three year old filly from Dick Eads. They tied, June, a two year old filly, purchased from Clarence

Ziebell along side and hitched them to the wagon.

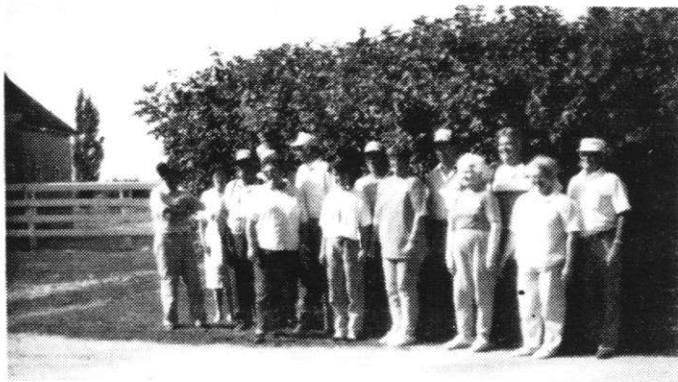
Frank Sperlak, Ellsworth, Wisconsin, had arrived late on Tuesday evening with two fillies he planned to leave in Iowa for breaking. Nellie was purchased from the Eads at Lanark, Illinois, and Judy from the Ziebells. Penny and the children had not made the trip as one of the children was not well.

Dan and Brenda Williams with daughter, Shari, Gilman, Iowa, were to come Wednesday morning with two mares purchased as fillies from Beatties of Lanark, Illinois, and a stud colt out of Sperlak's stallion. Along with the Ziebell's grandmother, Cookie, and four daughters—two of them with foals at side—a mother, daughter duo purchased this spring from Ridgeway, Iowa and a new mare recently purchased from Mercers of Ohio, and the four year old

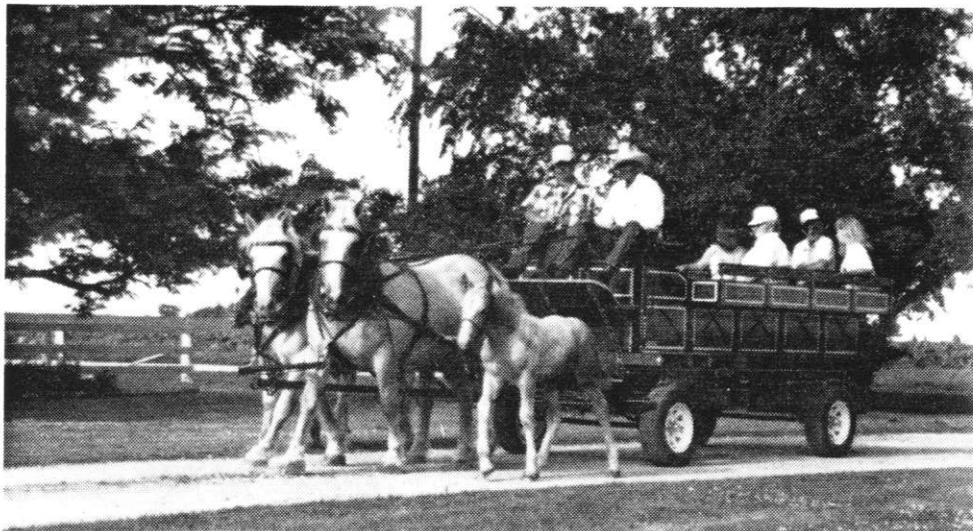
stallion, Dick, we would have nineteen animals in the 'show' for those on the tour who had asked especially to see Creams.

The cook had been blessed shortly after noon on Tuesday when daughter, Mary, and granddaughter, Sarah, arrived to help make fixings for Wednesday's picnic lunch. Potato salad, pea salad and the ham loaf all went together in quantities large enough to demand the use of grandmother's big bread raising pan. Baked beans went into the electric roaster and sunshine salad and seven raspberry pies—together with all the other food to be kept chilled, crowded the two refrigerators and ice chests. Fourteen-year-old Sarah heard how, as a bride, I had helped cook for 16 threshers in this same kitchen in hot August. No running water or drain, no refrigeration, no gas range (or backup in the basement), no ceiling fan to circulate air, but instead the hot cook stove, hugh wash tub in the basement with ice for setting jello or keeping meat, butter, milk, and cream cold. She wasn't at all sure she would have been a farmer's wife if that was the way things were. (What stories will she tell her granddaughters?)

By the time Linda and Don Johnson had arrived and turned their three out in a small lot we were zeroing in on the kitchen cleanup. Don said the next morning his



Members and friends who pulled together to make the tour a success pose for a group picture.



After the tour, members and friends enjoyed a relaxing ride in Brad Messersmith's wagon. Don Ritter drove, while the Ziebell's mares, Cindy and Cathy, did the pulling with foals at their sides.

horses hardly touched the hay bags, they were so hungry for green grass—they nibbled it down. Many farmers in southern Iowa had been without moisture and pastures since early May and hay fields were turning brown.

The garage had been hosed down to make a clean spot for the meeting and picnic lunch and by 10:30 A.M. the rain clouds had vanished and the sunshine and power washer had almost magically turned dirty Creams into things of beauty. What a sight to see—nineteen Creams, all in one yard. Perhaps the most on one farm since C. T. Rierson's time.

Fortunately, the tour busses came at 3:45 P.M. rather than 3:00 when they had been expected to arrive. (We saw them go East into Charles City. By the time they saw the Fair Grounds buildings, they knew they were too far East and turned around.) We had just completed our business meeting. Four directors were present and five other members just made our necessary twenty-five percent to conduct business. By-laws also allow for four directors to meet to do business. These members, together with Associate Members spouses and family and our many horse farmer friends who helped groom and show and their wives and families, made 46 for lunch. The south breeze made the full sun tolerable and the ice tea and lemonade were just the thing to quench the thirst.

As the tour buses turned up the one-third of a mile of gravel road from the highway the little gatherings near the shed and under the tree in the shade came to life.

Phil Farrell's parents were bus captains and all were greeted by President, Frank Sperlak, and host, Clarence Ziebell. The guests were invited to gather on the concrete floor outside the barn as the owners led their animals out and answered many questions. Members and animals all behaved beautifully to make folks from 22 states happy they were on the tour.

I had a minute to visit with the secre-

tary of the Draft Horse and Mule Association of America and were assured next time the breed secretaries get together, we will have an invitation. Many were very supportive of our struggles and joys of trying to again increase numbers of Creams and members of the Association.

Photo taking was difficult with so many wanting to see the Creams. A friend with video equipment tried to catch the crowd and the animals for those who could not attend. It was a last-minute decision and we neglected to afford him a high perch from which to tape so the results are not professional.

As the tour buses pulled onto the highway, heading back to Waverly, excited sounds from the barns confirmed that two teams were being harnessed for hitching to wagons. Granddaughter, Sarah, and Liz, the daughter of Association Member, Bob Mueller of Northfield, Minnesota, had hit it off the minute Liz arrived and had been sitting in the hitch wagon between trips to the barn to check the kittens. They made certain they had a seat in the wagon. Paula Cummings Mollenhauer, daughter of Paul Cummings of Paula Ann Stables at Austin, Minnesota, and her husband, Lowell, together with others rode in the hitch wagon behind the Ziebell's cream mares with foals at side. She said it was the first time she had ridden behind creams since her father had disposed of his stallion, Ardmore Bonceur, and mares in the fifties.

Don and Linda Johnson hitched their team to the farm wagon and for an hour the homeward-bound neighbors were greeted by smiles and waves from contented folks riding in the two wagons.

It had to be late by the time the members and guests arrived at their home, weary as we were, but satisfied that the day had brought a renewal of acquaintances and we had succeeded in doing our part to make the Draft Horse and Mule Association Tour a success. Our neighbors are asking "when will we do this again?"

—Elizabeth Ziebell, *Secretary*

Letters

February 18, 1992

Dear Karen,

I have only recently been smitten by the American Cream Breed but I am a life-long lover of horses. My husband and I have just purchased 39 acres which we hope to farm using horses and raise a few horses as well. We are very interested in bringing the American Cream to Florida.

I do have a few questions that if you or any of your readers could answer I would be grateful.

1. To eliminate a certain amount of cross-breeding is it allowed to out breed a cream stallion to registered mares of another breed. If so, which breeds are preferred?

2. In line-breeding, are there any particular problems to watch for, say mother-son or father-daughter crosses?

3. Is there a detailed "description" of the "perfect" American Cream like there is for Quarter horses or Arabians?

At the moment I am working with friends who farm with drafts, learning all I can about working, breaking . . . ect., a draft horse. (Even showing a draft horse is so different). Hopefully we can get our first team by the end of the year. I would very much like for that team to be American Creams.

I am looking forward to the color brochures and learning all I can about this breed. Hopefully I can be a part of bringing this bit of American history back from near extinction!

Thank you!
Jo Bockhaus
2547 Sapp Rd.
Cottdonale, FL 32431

April 23, 1992

Dear Karen,

Here is the blood type. Sorry to take so long. Also, here is a list of the Creams that we have typed. Frank Sperlak is sending in six more.

The work I have done to date has not been directed specifically at the American Cream but has included them. Comparison with other breeds shows that, based upon gene marker data, the Creams form a distinct group within the draft horses. Relative to the Belgian Draft, the Creams are no more similar to the Belgian than are Suffolks, Percherons, or Haflingers.

There are a variety of possible explanations for this result. One is that the Creams are a distinct breed with little genetic input from modern Belgians. The second explanation is that Creams are derived from Belgians but have been separated from them long enough to be geneti-



The Draft Horse and Mule Association members gather close as the presentation of Creams begins.

cally distinct. A third possibility is that the Creams represent a mixture of draft horse breeds that combined together form a genetically distinct mixture.

This is where things stand now. Thanks for your help in obtaining samples of Creams.

Sincerely,
E. Gus Cothran, Ph.D.
Director
Equine Blood Typing
Research Laboratory
University of Kentucky

April 6, 1992

Dear Karen,

The present thinking of the AMBC is that the American Cream Draft Horse is indeed one of the high priority horse breeds. There is a need for more complete information, but the preliminary results from the blood typing indicate that the American Cream is in fact a unique breed of draft horses. Since they are an American creation, as well as genetically unique, they are double interesting to the AMBC. Further blood typing of all horses would help to place the American Cream securely in its position among horse breeds. A third aspect of their importance is their size and conformation. No other horse in North America fits this niche, and therefore they are very, very worthwhile.

A few things will help the breed and the breeders. One thing that needs to be accomplished is an analysis of the breed structure. This involves going through all of the living animals and arranging them by pedigree into families. I have done this for other of the AMBC breeds, and would be happy to do it for the American Cream. The sooner this is done, the better, because the results can indicate which portions of the breed are the most rare. The need now is to expand numbers, and also to ensure that all portions of the breed participate in the expansion.

Another question facing the breed is to know the details behind the color of the

breed. One of my interests is horse color and its inheritance. I suspect (and at this point this is only a suspicion) that the American Cream is an interesting combination of the gene causing palomino that has been put on a very blond sorrel background. If this suspicion is correct it means that it will be impossible for these to breed true to color. If that is the case, then some consideration needs to be made for the blond sorrels and the glass eyed whites produced by mating Creams. Since these off colors are probably an unavoidable product of Cream breeding programs it seems a shame that they are lost to the breed. What are the present registry rules concerning this question?

The important issues currently are that the American Cream appears to be unique, both genetically as well as conformationally and in size. Further work needs to be done in blood typing, blood line analysis, and in a carefully guided expansion of numbers. If the breeders act energetically and purdently over the next few years this magnificent American horse will be available for future generations to use and enjoy.

D. Phillip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD
Professor, Pathology and Genetics
Vet College, Virginia Tech
Chair of Technical Panel,
American Minor Breeds Conservancy

New Articles with Creams

Small Farmer's Journal – Fall 1991
P. O. Box 2805
Eugene, OR 97402
(503) 683-6486
\$6.00 per copy

Horses All – January 1992
P. O. Box 9
Hill Spring, Alberta TOK 1E0
\$1.00 per copy

The Reach – 1992
884 Old Mail Rd.
Crossville, TN 38555
(615) 456-6886
\$7.00 per copy

Horse and Horseman – July 1992
Box HH,
Capistrano Beach, CA 92624
\$5.00 per copy

The Carriage Journal – Summer 1992
R. D. #1, Box 115
Salem, NJ 08079
(609) 935-1616

Corrections

Photographs in Winter 1991 issue were incorrect as follows:

*Person with *Silver Lace* by stall was *Goldie Lenning* (not *Adeline*).

**Amus Lenning* was person with foal (not *Galord*).

Special Note:

Betsy Ziebell would like to remind members to send in your membership fees which were reinstated from July 8 meeting. The only way the association presently has to raise funds for the new color brochures is through membership and registration fees.

Classified

For Sale: Two mares (12 & 13), full sisters, bred back for 1993, both well broke, older mare has stud colt at side. 3 yr. old mare, broke, bred for 1993, nice conformation. Frank & Penny Sperlak, Ellsworth, WI, (715) 273-3048.

For Sale: One stallion, 7 yrs. Mrs. Eads, Lanark, IL, (815) 494-2950.

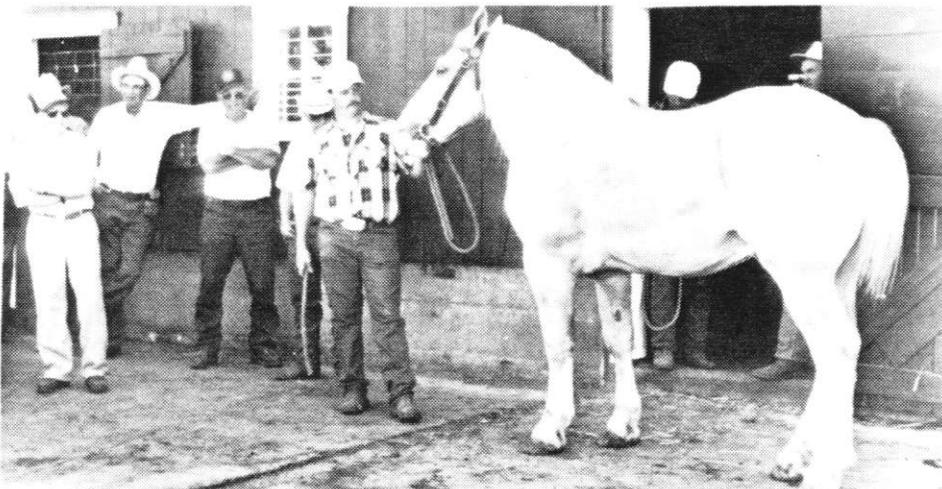
For Sale: Two stallions (2 yrs.), pair of geld. (3 yrs.). Darrel Aden, Blue River, WI, (608) 537-2053.

For Sale: 1 mare (5 yrs.), bred back for 1993. Carol Semard, The Dalles, OR, (503) 298-4980.

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Karen V. Smith, Editor
Mary Masengale, Production



The Ziebell's stallion, Dick, was just one of nineteen American Creams presented on the tour.