



"Sharing The Legacy of a Transportation Empire"

NSFWA Newsletter

President's Message

Greetings NSFWA Members!

We hope that your summer activities were filled with fun & joy! One activity scheduled for your entertainment was the Farm Team Competition at Lyndon, Kansas on May 13-14. While the event was hosted by the Lyndon Saddle Club, NSFWA participated by cooking a Saturday evening Chuckwagon Dinner and sponsored some of the educational components. This event was full of fun and educational activities. An article about the event from a Kansas reporter is contained in this Newsletter.

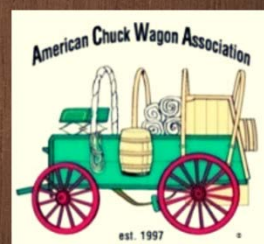
I would like to draw your attention to the fact that our usual number of events have been fewer the past few years. With this in mind, your Board of Directors went to work and asked Ashlee Ganoung, a founder of our Organization, and also an excellent planner of the very best Conferences that we have had, to become our Events Coordinator. Ashlee, along with a member committee, is now at work planning a magnificent conference at Virginia City and Nevada City, Montana. This conference will probably be held mid-spring or early summer in 2024. Solid plans and all information needed will come your way soon by letter and/or email, and will also be posted on the website. My planning image of this event looks spectacular!!

I'll leave you with a bit of information that our membership is steadily growing, and we are beginning to host a Round Table Q&A section on our Facebook page. It deals with questions asked by many wagon and stagecoach folks. As a group, we will answer to our best ability and further discuss the questions.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you in the near future.

-Jeff McManus, NSFWA President

The NSFWA and American Chuck Wagon Association (ACWA) have agreed to share mutual advertising space in upcoming newsletters in support of both organizations. Visit www.americanchuckwagon.org to see their mission, history, and upcoming events.



American Chuck Wagon Association

www.americanchuckwagon.org

Email: acwa@chuckwagon.org

Monida and Yellowstone Stagecoach Conservation

Rawhide Johnson

This number 20761 Monida and Yellowstone stagecoach is now back home at the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, Montana after an extensive conservation project that took about 4 months. It provides a great example of an intact coach. After 10-12 years transporting tourists through Yellowstone National Park, it was sold to the Madison Fork Ranch, a guest ranch near West Yellowstone, in about 1912. The Madison Fork Ranch repainted it blue to show that it was no longer a Monida and Yellowstone stagecoach, since that company still serviced guests in the Park.

One of the greatest challenges in this project was to clean off the dirt, grime, and slopped on blue paint that had been covered over with spar varnish, as you can see in the photo, and to save the original paint on the running gears. The rocker leathers even had blue paint! I first brushed the loose dirt and dust off the coach, sanded down the grime and varnish, and vacuumed the entire coach. A thorough wipe-down with paint thinner removed the last of the dust. The running gears and wheels received a soak with a linseed oil and turpentine mixture.





I took great care to save the original letters of Monida and Yellowstone, and used stencils to add back to the coach its correct name- Morning Glory- as indicated by original paperwork. I changed the back shading of the other letters from dark blue to a deep orange in order to better match the yellow.

The lower seat cushions were long gone and needed to be replaced, as was the leather boot cover and side panels, but the wood and joints were all sound. I repainted the coach with the correct colors and it is now a fine example of an early Monida and Yellowstone stagecoach used in Yellowstone National Park. It is in useable condition and could go back into service.



NSFWA Call for Board Members

If any NSFWA members are interested in joining the Board of Directors, please share with us why you are interested and what you might bring to the Board of Directors. You can send your information to info@stagecoachfreightwagon.org or contact Jeff McManus directly.

NSFWA Event Coordinator

NSFWA welcomes Ashlee Ganoung as our Event Coordinator. With previous experience planning conferences for our organization, we welcome her back to help plan and organize upcoming events. We hope, with her guidance, to get back to regular gatherings for NSFWA.

Farm Team Competition

By Jeff Jacobsen- May 15, 2023

This article may be found on the author's blog page, along with his professional photos, at:

<https://actionimagesphotography.com/farm-team-competition/>

The ability to come together to achieve a common goal defines the word "team" in school, business and sports. Coaches have long strived to find the key to building a team, some with success and others with failure. Imagine taking on the challenge of creating a team with draft horses? Remember that the word "team" in its Old English originated from teaming two draft animals together as a team.

These majestic animals weigh between 1,800 and 2,000 pounds and are tall in stature. Picture the beloved Budweiser Clydesdales for reference. They also don't come cheap. The horses range from 12 to 15,000 dollars.



Frank Burkdoll, Jerry Palmer, and George Parsons at the Lyndon, Kansas Farm Team Competition. Image courtesy of Frank Burkdoll.

However, the Farm Team Competition held over the recent Mother's Day weekend on the grounds of the Lyndon Saddle Club taught those in attendance about another member of a Farm Team known as the Teamster, or the driver of a team of animals, and that person's importance.

"What we try to communicate to the crowd is the importance of communication between the team and the driver," said event organizer Frank Burkdoll. "We communicate to the team through our voices and the lines without much jerking."

Once achieved, the competition for the nine teams commenced with the Cultivator Race, followed by the Obstacle Course Race, the Log Skid, the Feed Skid and finally, the Barrell Race. Every event found its roots in the needs of farmers and ranchers from the past.

Perched on the metal saddle seat of a cultivator that Burkdoll said "ranged from 100-120 years old," teams attempted to guide the cultivator blades between two long rows of water bottles set closely together. This mimicked work in farm fields where rows of crops need to be straight, and dirt must be displaced properly to help nourish plants and not hinder growth.



Image courtesy of Jeff McManus

While speed was critical, knocking down bottles led to penalties that negated most fast passages. The winner of the event on Saturday finished the course in 36.06 seconds. However, time was added for the 17 bottles knocked down for a final time at 3:26.06. One competitor knocked down 81 bottles adding 13:30 in penalties.

Lining the course in chairs or sitting on pickup beds, spectators enjoyed each team's efforts. Aging farmers and ranchers quietly nodded their approval for the best as times and penalties were calculated before the next competition, the Obstacle Course.

Aboard modern pull carts, a "Navigator" was added as the course was explained to the competitors. Every direction, turn, and obstacle posed challenges for the team to negotiate. Two different backing stations were where the horses pushed the cart through a narrow chute lined with traffic cones with golf balls on top. Knocking one of the balls off resulted in a penalty. However, almost in a spiteful move, the cart had to go far enough back to knock down two cones and golf balls before proceeding.

"Each obstacle had its unique level of difficulty," Burkdoll noted while talking about the rural mailbox stop and the communication needed from the team. "On the first pass, the driver must use the reins to guide the team to a stop that allows the driver to reach in for the mail and lower the red flag with his right hand," Burkdoll said. "On the second pass, the left-hand puts mail into the mailbox and raises the flag."

Even today, the Amish community of Lyndon continues to pull logs with a team of draft horses or mules. The Log Skid tested competitors in the same way. A tree log weighing up to 600 pounds needed to be hitched to the driver's cart and pulled by the team around a course with numerous tight turns and penalties for any cone knocked down. Finally, the log is returned to the starting point, where the clock is stopped once the hitch is released.

For the Feed Team race, a wooden sled hitched to the cart bore three bales of hay, grain, a feed bucket and a replica salt lick. At the first stop, a "Swamper" jumps off the sled and unloads the contents in a precise order. After negotiating other stops, the sled returns for the Swamper to reload the sled again in exact order. This continues to another unloading and a sweaty and weary Swamper. The same is done today for cattle and horses using more modern transport.

The final competitive event was a Barrel Race. Unlike the barrel racing at Kansas rodeos, this event found only tight twists and turns to be negotiated, allowing the team to show that even massive horses can be fast even though they cannot break into a full gallop.

Finally, after a long warm day, men, women and horses could rest and relax. The Stagecoach and Freight Wagon Association, out of Greybull, Wyoming, brought an authentic chuckwagon to the competition site like the Old West cattle drives.

Two massive pots of "Son of a Gun" stew filled with vegetables, potatoes and prime rib were cooked above two wood fire pits set up by the crew. Hard-tack biscuits cooked inside cast iron pots set on a small grate over a ground-level fire and topped with blazing wood coals were perfectly cooked. Others provided desserts which capped a wonderful time savoring delicious stew and remembering how blessed everyone was to step back in time and savor life.

NSFWA Directors Patrick Goodknight, Jeff McManus, and Jerry Palmer preparing the chuckwagon stew. Image courtesy of Jeff McManus.



Frank Burkdoll and Jerry Palmer at the Farm Team Competition. Image courtesy of Frank Burkdoll.

Here's a follow-up note from your NSFWA President, to add to this nice article written by Mr. Jeff Jacobsen.

I would like to say that the consensus of each NSFWA Member present was, "we really enjoyed this old time event." I also would like to give a big Thank You to the ten NSFWA Members in attendance: Patrick Goodknight, who brought his nice Chuckwagon; the cooks - Jerry and Linda Palmer; George Parsons; Jeff and Barb McManus; Rick Henderson; John Ewing; and two organizers of this event- Frank and Peg Burkdoll. Thank You to all. Respectively, Jeff McManus