



ATRA ON THE TRAIL

October 2017 Newsletter

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ATRA was established in 1973 for people interested in recreational riding & driving.

2017 Club Executive

President: Shirley McFall
Vice-Pres: Maggie Portas
Secretary: Allison Downer
Treasurer: Cindy Hanas
Membership: Cindy Hanas
Directors: Marjorie Phillips, Tracy Campbell, Murray Few, Regina Landeck, Doug King, Cam Stevenson, Alexys Mishak, Paige Stocks

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ATRA is a non-profit family oriented organization that encompasses a variety of equestrian activities that promote safe horsemanship, ongoing education and responsible use, maintenance and development of trails.

It's a Mystery — Who's on the Stage—What's in the Box?

Be bold, live dangerously, challenge yourself to come to hear a surprise speaker.

Thursday October 19 at 7pm is ATRA's annual evening to come out and hear a distinguished speaker at Kirk United Church .



Invite a friend who is not an ATRA member, enjoy a social time with friends from all horse clubs, share stories, register for the upcoming clinics, renew your membership to be eligible for a fabulous draw (worth \$100) and win some great prizes for sharing your evening with us.

ATRA meets at 7pm the 3rd Thursday of the month Jan-Apr & Sept-Nov upstairs at Kirk United Church, 13535-122 Avenue, Edmonton.

Visitors are welcome at any meeting. Website: www.atra.ca

Membership for the calendar year is \$20 single, \$35 family.

Riding members must have current ATRA and AEF memberships.

Upcoming Events

ATRA Clinic: Building Plastic Round Bale Feeders with Lisa & Dave Harrison, 22441 Hwy 14, Sh Park (in garage)

Date: Thursday, Oct 12 from 10am to ~4pm. Maximum 4 participants that will take home feeders and maximum 4 assistants. **Cost:** \$250 without net, \$350 with net. No charge for assistants. **Registration:** Cindy 780-962-2690 dich@telus.net. Cheques payable to ATRA. **Bring:** lunch, gloves. If you have: hack saw, cordless screwdriver, 1/2" wrench



October 15 Sunday ATRA Trail Ride at Blackfoot Staging Area. Access from Hwy 16 only (please note this is not the Waskahagan or Central Staging Areas), turn south on RR 195. Pack a lunch for the trail. This is a walking trail ride. No dogs, drinking or smoking.

Thursday, November 16 General Meeting with guest speaker Joel Wilkinson, Reg'd Psychologist, Success Coach and Leadership Consultant. Topic: **Building Resiliency, Mental Toughness and Personal Leadership.** His diverse background includes being an elite athlete, leadership and sport coach. He has specific expertise in helping his clients understand and overcome the limiting effects of psychological fear, stress and anxiety. In particular Joel will discuss how managing fear and anxiety is critical to the development of leadership both for our horses and for our personal lives so that we may live purposeful lives reaching our fullest potential.

Saturday, November 18 – Interactive Workshop Building Resiliency, Mental Toughness and Personal Leadership – 10 AM – 2 PM (including lunch), Kirk United Church

\$70 with workbook, includes subsidy. Registration deadline Oct 20. 30 participants max.

Joel brings a passion for assisting people in reaching their full potential through overcoming performance anxiety, managing personal limitations, developing confidence, channeling energy and focus and building optimal capacity. This workshop will have individual and group exercises designed to develop greater awareness. It will have practice tools and strategies to overcome fear, build resilience and develop greater personal leadership. Contact Shirley to register: shimcf@mcsnet.ca or 780-662-4747

November 19 Sunday ATRA Trail Ride at Ministik Bird Sanctuary. Directions: From Hwy 14, go south on RR 215 (which becomes RR 220). After 3.5 miles road bends right, staging area is on your left. Or from Hwy 625/Hwy 21 head east & turn north on RR 221. Turn east on Twp Rd 504A for 1 mile. Pack a lunch for the trail. This is a walking trail ride. No dogs, drinking, smoking on the trail. Cancelled if forecast is colder than -10.



NOV 4 & 5

EMERGENCY EQUINE FIRST AID & ADVANCED EQUINE FIRST AID

TAKE 1 DAY OR 2 – at Double C Farm, Tofield

Both courses are a combination of lecture & hands on practice covering a wide variety of equine first aid emergencies & techniques. Day 1 covers: vital signs, conditioning, wrapping, digestive emergencies, eye injuries, punctures, hoof injuries, respiratory disease & more. Day 2 covers: preparing for the trail, euthanasia, foreign body injuries, broken bones, severe gut wounds, natural medicine, toxic plants, heat stroke, hypothermia, ulcers, emergency plans & more.

COST: Day 1 = \$100, Day 2 = \$135, Both = \$200

REGISTRATION: Cindy 780-962-2690 or dich@telus.net. Deadline Oct 5, 2017.
Cheques payable to ATRA (non-refundable)



EQUINE FIRST AID CERTIFICATION

Be ready for
anything, your
horse will
thank you!!!

Knowledge is
power & could
save a life!!!

When seconds
count, knowing
what to do is
essential!!!

FOR THE LIFE
AND LOVE
OF A HORSE

JENN BURGOWNE

Certified Instructor
Equi-Health Canada

(780) 999-5726

doublecfarm@hotmail.com

Past Events

July 20-28 Panther Trail Re-Development report by Shirley McFall:

2 Years of ATRA Volunteer Trail Work is a Great Success

The extreme spring flooding in the mountains in 2013 left the Panther area SW of Sundre in really poor shape for recreational horseback riding and wagon use. Familiar campsites became unusable, sink holes opened up in wagon trails, gradual grades in to the river became almost impassable and some trails were blocked off to riding and wagon access. In the past three years there have been fewer equestrian users in the area due to these accessibility issues. Over the years many members of the Alberta Trail Riding Association (ATRA) have enjoyed this remote and pristine area which is also a non-motorized use Public Land Use Zone (PLUZ) area.

In the summer of 2015 the flood rehabilitation project began with funding from the National Trails Coalition, Alberta Equestrian Federation, Alberta Trail Riding Association, and Backcountry Trails Flood Rehabilitation program. Input from the Alberta Government Bighorn Backcountry Management Committee was valuable in the planning process. The proposal was to repair and improve wagon trail access which would also create access for other non-motorized user groups.

When I heard there might be Federal and Provincial funding for flood rehabilitation in the Panther area it lead to a discussion with Jay Mills who was coordinating the applications and permitting for the government funding. A new design and relocation of the wagon trail was proposed and intended to eliminate many of the often difficult water crossings. Other factors in the design by Jay Mills were the degree of slope and environmental sustainability to withstand future flooding.



ATRA has been involved in trail development and management in a collaborative way in the Hummingbird, Whitehorse Equestrian area near Cadomin, Silverberry and Drayton Valley areas to name a few of the bigger and more recent efforts. It was suggested ATRA might put together a plan to provide "some people power" to put up signs to assist in safe navigation in the flood damaged Panther zone. This is where Winston, Maggie, Jay Mills, Judy Orr and two tea cup dogs Odessa and Penny came to be camping friends of ATRA.



In 2016 our trip was at risk right from the beginning when we heard from Panther River Adventures Outfitters that the Panther River was flowing too fast and high to safely cross by horseback, wagon or pack horse. Undaunted by the news we carried on to staging area to wait for the river to drop.

The ATRA group consisted of Doug and Mary King, Cam Stevenson, Tracy Campbell, 4 horses and myself. Jay Mills and Judy Orr drove Winston and Maggie (Belgium/paint team) pulling a dune buggy like high vehicle with a short wheel based and big tires. This rig was loaded with metal poles and all the tools for installation of 24 sign posts. Odessa and Penny our miniature 'guard' dogs were carried safely on top of the wagon in a carry case. 3 pack horses were guided in by Cody, Dusty and Carter. The guides patiently waited at the river crossings to ensure Winston and Maggie could make it through the current. On one tough crossing Cody came back to hitch a tow rope to the front of the wagon to ensure the team and wagon got across safely. You could call this 12 foot horse power.

After the 'high adventure water crossings', a total of 16 river crossings and miles of boulder strewn gravel beds we were all happy to see a grassy wagon trail that finally took us to the Panther River Adventures 'Top Camp' where we were hosted for the week. The comforts of the outfitter tent, bunks and wood floor were surpassed by the pleasure of a hot shower and sauna and food being provided. Panther River Adventures Top Camp is about ½ mile east of Ice Lake turnoff on the Panther Trail.

The sign part of the Panther project started months before with research into Government of Alberta approved sign and sign post design and with the ordering of supplies. Post pounding of the signs began at the first of many major trail intersections to help direct riders and wagons to the best and safest routes. It was group effort. The team was



driven to the chosen spot where the fence pounding took place from the side of the buggy. It was precarious hard work but the results look good. We met a number of groups who had positive comments on the signs.

The floating bridge that was installed over a wet spot in 2015 was driven and ridden over and checked for design effectiveness. The bridge seemed to be adjusting well to the changing stream flow through a previously deep boggy section in the trail, but time will tell.



Past Events continued

We explored some of the wagon trails to discover many are impassable. Some of the familiar campsites will likely never be used again because of the depth of flood silt still keeping the sites wet. A ride was made up to Ice Lake to install a directional sign. Ice Lake is a stunningly beautiful mountain lake that will only remain pristine if riders respect the Alberta Government signage - 'Horses are not permitted beyond this point' - and do the final ascent to the lake by foot. The delicate high mountain flora is easily damaged by horse hooves.



The coordination of the trip back out included re-packing of all gear to be able to access post equipment for the installation of 5 more signs providing direction through the numerous river crossings west of the gap. Throughout the mountains flowers were in full bloom. At the conclusion of this trip we expected there would be additional trail development required as there was still a lot to be done to keep and re-open the saddle trails.

Extensive planning for a follow up Panther trip in 2017 began early with coordination of summer dates with the teamsters Jay Mills/ Judy Orr and Duane/Lucille Landals. Gear for a group of 8 ATRA members (Larry Niblock, Doug and Mary King, Ken Komm, Sheila Sharko, Allison and Pleman Downer and Shirley McFall) was transported in 2 wagons over two days using the newly completed wagon trail which cuts off 13 of the 16 river crossings. Ralph Stewart, a heavy duty equipment operator and contractor from Edgewater, BC joined us to volunteer for a number of days backhoe work. Our 'in camp' guard dog, Brook provided relaxing pet therapy at the end of the day.



The wagon trail was the final leg of the joint Federal and Provincially funded flood rehabilitation project of 2015. The new wagon trail is estimated to cost in excess of \$200,000 and has a 'primitive trail' designation meaning it has some grades of more than 10%. The original design was for a semi-developed wagon trail (grades $\leq 10\%$) but to date funding left this unachievable. For a loaded wagon and shod team to successfully manoeuvre the grades they need to be in good condition, brakes are recommended and there is a need to stop and rest the horses on some of the longer pulls. The new river crossing is a few minutes ride east of the Panther Recreation staging area. It is approximately a 2 hour ride/drive to the lunch spot at the gap. With an additional 1 hour of travel we made it to the old Trail Riders of the Canadian

Rockies (TRCR) campsite on the North side of the confluence of the Dormer and Panther rivers. From the Panther River Recreation staging area it is approximately 16 km to the Panther River Forestry cabin, an approximate 3 hour ride.

Key to the trail development projects for 2017 was the planning and permitting for a small rental backhoe with bucket to work on heavy tasks. The tractor improved the trail entrance for the wagons into the TRCR base camp, moved large rocks on the trails and above the Dogrib creek bed crossing allowing wagon access to the Dogrib camp (now called Bench camp). Approximately 1/3 of the Bench camp was lost in the 2013 flooding and has not been accessed by wagons for a number of years. Ralph Stewart on the backhoe put in several long days with the backhoe clearing trails.



Through many long hours of trail clearing and going out in small groups on saddle horses we were able to cover over 43kms including 8 kms of saddle trails where heavy hand and chain sawing of deadfall and debris was needed along the JI summit ridge trail. This trail was previously privately cleared after many years of inattention but it needed to be re-cleared and reflagged. The JI summit trail incorporates from east to west the Upper Dogrib Creek Trail to the corner of Bench Camp. The Ribbon Flats wagon trail is now easily driveable to the Bench camp. Many of the saddle trails are in the burned area where annual blow down can be expected.

One day of riding and clearing was punctuated by an encounter with mature female grizzly with 3 - two year old cubs grazing in the willows on the Dogrib Airstrip. The sow being upwind was surprised by the horses and further surprised by a mature Whitetail buck coming towards her. In her excitement we realized she was now going into high alert because the other two cubs were coming at a full run down the trail towards us. Our hollering made the young bears move off but also excited the horses. We think this was a case of being in the right place at the wrong time, but the grizzlies were impressive. Bear awareness is key to being safe in this wilderness. The trails (saddle and wagon) look like a moon scape from the bears moving boulders for grubs. We now think the airstrip should be called Grizzly Valley.



On two outings we came across the Parks Canada Bison Steward biologist rangers patrolling on horseback after having been in to observe the newly released bison. There were a total of 16 bison released in 2016 and of the 10 bred cows relocated there are now 10 healthy calves are at their sides. The bison seem to have adjusted well to the fenced grazing area in the Upper Panther Valley of Banff National Park.

Past Events continued

Signage was put up at the Heartbreak Look-out which is now cleared and rideable. A crew cleared the Dormer Lake Loop trail along Winchester Creek to Dormer Lake and Dormer Lake to Panther Forestry Ranger Cabin. The tractor also worked on wagon access on the Panther Trail, across for the Panther Forestry cabin to the Ice Lake trail camp (also known as Ken Fraser's Camp, (5 km east of Top Camp). One crew cleared and re-blazed 80% of 7 km. old loop from Brown's camp south of the Panther River and South east to the Dormer River.

A Dormer River saddle trail to the Banff Park boundary we expect to be completed by the Back Country Trails Flood Rehabilitation program. It has now been on their books for 3 years and should be relocated onto higher ground to be sustainable.

For Allison and Pleman who have never participated in a wilderness mountain camp they said, "We feel privileged to have been part of such a rewarding experience! Though not a restful eight days into the wilderness, it was a chance to team up with other ATRA members and friends and make a difference in the overall project."

2017 was an exciting time for the entire crew to see the extent of trails and campsites we were able to improve. The safety of people, horses and food was our focus. There was a lot of good grazing at TRCR camp because it has been unused for many years. The weather was hot during the day and froze many nights. The electrical storm that blasted



us late one night left us wondering what else was going to happen. All the planning and coordination was worth it when we each realized that our efforts were going to make the Panther area more accessible to all non-motorized user groups, especially equestrian users for years to come.

The project costs for the two years were approximately \$25,000 and funded totally by the ATRA. There was tremendous satisfaction in completing this large a trail development project in our 44th year of club operation. ATRA is - a non-profit family oriented organization that encompasses a variety of equestrian activities that promote safe horsemanship, ongoing education and responsible use, maintenance and development of trails.

September Long Weekend Ride

A few members enjoyed camping and riding in the great weather on the riverside horse trails near Drayton Valley.

Trail Ride Against Cancer May 27

This was our 39th 'Trail Ride Against Cancer' and once again Bruno & Elsie Neuville graciously offered their Ranch by Lily Lake to facilitate the ride. Cindy and I planned a more simplified

version which required less planning time, volunteers and cost. We opted for a 'Ride out at your own leisure' style and provided a free Hamburger/hot dog BBQ which directly followed ride.

General feedback was riders preferred this style of ride.

To summarize, it was a lovely sunny day with 35 Riders and a total of \$7,260 raised. To date, we have raised to date a total of \$1,298,729. Report by Alison Downer.



Did you know? from Shirley and Cindy: Most of the expenses to run the club are able to come out of the casino funds. Our general account has been slowly increasing and is being managed by the Board like a contingency. This account is back up funding in case casino funding changes. Detailed financial reports are available at the meetings.

Classifieds

For these items, contact Cindy at 780-962-2690 or chanas@finning.com to bring to a meeting or ride.

Ad Rates	#	Classified	1/4 Page	1/2 Page
Member	1	\$5	\$15	\$30
Member	3	\$12	\$34	\$63
Non-Member	1	\$10	\$20	\$40
Non-Member	3	\$24	\$45	\$84

ATRA Coffee Mug \$15

ATRA Tush Cushions \$10

ATRA Trailer Decal \$10-30

ATRA Jacket \$65



Upcoming Events Calendar

<i>DATE</i>	<i>LOCATION</i>	<i>DETAILS</i>
<i>Oct 4/5</i>	<i>ATRA Fundraising Casino —volunteer— shimcf@mcsnet.ca</i>	<i>780-662-4747</i>
<i>Oct 12</i>	<i>ATRA Clinic—Round Bale Feeder</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Oct 15</i>	<i>ATRA Trail Ride. Blackfoot—Blackfoot Staging Area</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Oct 19</i>	<i>ATRA General Meeting</i>	<i>Page 1</i>
<i>Nov 4</i>	<i>ATRA Clinic—Emergency Equine First Aid</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Nov 5</i>	<i>ATRA Clinic—Advanced Equine First Aid</i>	<i>Page 3</i>
<i>Nov 16</i>	<i>ATRA General Meeting: Building Resiliency & Leadership</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Nov 18</i>	<i>ATRA Interactive Workshop from Thursday meeting speaker</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Nov 19</i>	<i>ATRA Trail Ride. Ministik Bird Sanctuary</i>	<i>Page 2</i>
<i>Dec 16</i>	<i>ATRA Christmas Party</i>	<i>Nov news</i>
<i>Jan 18</i>	<i>ATRA Annual General Meeting</i>	<i>Nov news</i>
<i>Jan 20</i>	<i>ATRA Trail Ride: Blackfoot Central Staging Area</i>	<i>Jan news</i>
<i>Feb 15</i>	<i>ATRA General Meeting: Rebecca Giminez-Horse Rescue</i>	<i>Jan news</i>
<i>Feb 17/18</i>	<i>ATRA Clinic: Rebecca Giminez-Horse Rescue</i>	<i>Jan news</i>

If you have an event we should know about, call Lisa @ 780 237-7587 or lisa_f@mailcan.com

For insurance purposes, each member joining our rides/clinics is required to hold a current **AB Equestrian Federation** membership. Renewal forms are available: www.albertaequestrian.com

All riders ride at your own risk. We recommend helmet use for all riders & **STRONGLY** encourage it for those under 18 during ATRA events. For the safety of all members, ATRA's policy on riding with dogs is: On single day rides or weekend rides with a large group, no dogs are permitted. On longer overnight trips, dogs may be permitted if all riders in your group are in agreement.

