

Spring 2004 Newsletter

President's Message

by Karin Peterson

Happy Spring to All!

As I write this letter, I am wondering if spring will actually come to the Midwest this year. It's snowing outside my window! -At least it doesn't seem to bother the horses as much as it bothers me.

If you didn't get to come to the winter event, you missed a great weekend. Many thanks go out to Sophie Fiedler, Patti Jo Walter, Wanda Hase, and Sharon Falck (sorry you missed it Sharon) for the excellent location, hospitality and planning.

I would also like to thank Beth Beymer, who graciously shared her knowledge of horse shows and the NFHR evaluation performance tests with all of the attendees.

Finally, I would like to thank all the brave souls who agreed to bring horses and equipment so that the rest of us could get a good understanding of the requirements for the evaluation performance tests.

Are you thinking about the Blue Earth show yet? Before you know it, the materials will be arriving on your doorstep.

I encourage you to bring a horse if you never have, or just come if you have never come to the show.

This is one place in the Midwest that you will get to see nearly 100 different Fjord horses and many of the variations within the breed, so go ahead and reserve the dates - July 26-28.

Blue Earth Basics

submitted by Pat Holland

The MWFHC Show Committee has met, and plans for the 2004 Upper Midwest Fjord Horse Show are up and running. The show will be July 26, 27, and 28 in Blue Earth, Minnesota.

Few changes were needed, but because of the size of the show in general and some of the classes in particular we had to divide a class or two for safety reasons.

We now are offering three sections to the Youth Showmanship: 7 & under, 8-12 and 13-18 age groups. We are excited about offering the 7 & under class with special rules and class description conducive to the age, and hope those of you with young children will use this venue as a platform for family participation.

Due to popular demand, a new class was added, an "in-hand" trail class and again we hope this class will grow with high participation as all of the new classes we've added over the years. For the first year the structure of the class will be somewhat loose to allow the class to develop from what YOU as the participants want with it.

For example, usually these classes are offered to young stock, prior to riding age, but we are allowing all age horses (and exhibitors) to participate. The only stipulation is that the horse and person leading the horse in the in hand class cannot show in the riding trail class - as a team. The horse with another person can show in both, for example, the wife can show the same horse in the riding trail, as the

husband shows in hand.

Also, due to the great interest in showmanship there will be a small showmanship clinic given on Tuesday July 27th. Karen Cabic will conduct with Linda Syverson-Kerr and Pat Holland as demonstrators.

The MWFHC annual meeting will be on Monday, July 26 at 10:30 a.m. in the 4-H building at the show grounds.

If anyone would like a pre-package sent to them, please contact:

Pat Holland
3601 South Irish Hollow Road
Hanover IL 61041

815-591-3658
pholland@internetni.com

I will be happy to help in any way, with any questions. One added note, if any of you are attending the show without horses and would like to help with the show please contact me.

Have a good spring, and think about JULY! I am looking forward to seeing you all in Blue Earth.

AUCTION! AUCTION! AUCTION!

Submitted by Dan Nauman

Hello, MWFHC members. A new committee has been created to better help fund the events for our association, namely (and appropriately) the MWFHC Fund-Raising Committee.

It all started with an idea verbalized by yours truly at the Elkhart Lake meeting. My idea was to hold an auction at the early 2005 event.

We have many talented folks in our midst who can create fine works that could be donated to this fund-raiser. Already I have received word that there will be an original Fjord Horse painting donated. Rich Hotovy said he will try and secure the services of a real auctioneer as well.

Here is what I would like all of you folks to ask yourselves..... "What can I do to help?"

If you have a specific talent or trade, consider creating something and donating it to the auction. If you are not of the arts and crafts type, you might consider securing items from a tack shop to donate. Some of you are in the business of horse training and you folks might consider donating some lessons or training sessions. The donations do not necessarily have to be Fjord or even horse related.

Folks, this has all the makings of a great fund- raiser, as well as a fun event, which could also draw a larger attendance to the meeting. By the enthusiasm I have observed in the short time I have been with the MWFHC, I am sure we will have a successful event.

Please contact us ASAP with a pledged item(s), so we can advertise the contents of the auction in this newsletter.

Beyond the auction, if you have any ideas or thoughts regarding other fund-raising activities, please contact me (Dan Nauman) or one of these committee members:

Chuck Kelly: coyote@acegroup.cc
Carlene Schwartz: emmas@execpc.com
Syl Weyker: crfarm@execpc.com
Dan Nauman: bighorn@alexssa.net

Thanks in advance and I look forward to serving on this committee of fine folks.

Have You Heard the One About Ole and Lena?

The True Story of Fjord Twins

Submitted by Guy Martin



These yearlings aren't conjoined twins, but they are indeed twins! Scott Swain plays around with Ole and Lena while the twins' mother, Marta, watches her miracle babies from afar. (Photo by Guy Martin)

Foal twins don't come along very often. In fact, it's very undesirable to have twins with horses because of the high chance of complications. Such problems include spontaneous abortions, increased birthing problems, small foal size, and lack of mother's milk for the two growing foals.

Because of these potential problems, veterinarians strongly recommend against continuing a pregnancy when a mare is known to be carrying twins. The typical remedy is to pinch off one of the embryos if the mare is in an early stage of pregnancy or abort both fetuses and re-breed if possible.

There was an excellent article about twins in a recent issue of Rural Heritage. It can be viewed at: www.ruralheritage.com/horse_paddock/horse_twins.htm

With the chances of twin foal survival so low and the chances of complications with

the mare so high, it is nothing short of amazing when they occur. This amazing event is just what happened last summer at Bergdalen Farm, Deerfield, Wisconsin. Scott and Sue Swain's then eight-year-old mare, Marta and stallion Karibu are the proud parents of Ole and Lena, born May 2, 2003.

Due to the recent arrival of their own daughter, Scott and Sue had drastically cut their Fjord herd, selling their stallion (Karibu) and several younger horses and mares. They had not expected to go from one horse to three horses that foaling season!

The adventure began one spring morning when Lois Swain, Scott's mother, went to do chores. (Well, actually it started about 11 months earlier but it started for the Swain's that morning) Lois' description of the event was "It was the most exciting thing that's ever happened with our horses. We were all running around so happy and excited about what a miracle it was."

Actually, when Scott first found out he thought, "I'll be darned, twins."

Being dairy farmers, having twins is nothing new to them. Many farm animals have multiple births. Since twins were a common event in his dairy barn, Scott wondered how it would play out with his horses.

"I didn't think too much about it," Scott said. "But when the vet showed up with his camera and started taking pictures, I started wondering." The vet told the Swain family how rare it was to have twin foals and that most of the time, even without vet intervention early on, the mare will abort in the winter.

The Swain's new foals, a colt and a filly, are appropriately named Ole and Lena. They were both small at birth, Lena was tiny. The vet had concerns that Marta couldn't feed them both, so Scott bought some foal milk replacer, but that was an exasperating event.

Scott is the kind of person who believes that "if things are meant to be they will be." So they left the horses alone and it must have been meant to be. Ole and Lena did great. Marta did great.

"In fact," Scott said, "that darned horse, being on short pasture, with no extra hay or grain, and with two foals sucking, still managed to get fat over the summer."

Editor's Note: When Registrar Mike May, of the Norwegian Fjord Horse Registry was asked if other twins had been registered before Ole and Lena, he shared the following: "Not that I am aware of. I know there was a set born up in Canada a few years back but they did not get registered with us."

Winter Meeting and Clinic

Submitted by Sophie Fiedler

Over eighty participants attended the MWFHC meeting and clinic held in Elkhart Lake, WI on February 28 & 29, 2004. It was a great time to renew old friendships, welcome new members, and make new friends.

Meeting highlights. President, Karin Peterson, covered all the agenda topics in record time with "ja" replacing "yes" in the voting process. This recommendation came from Janne Myrdal who traveled all the way from North Dakota to attend.

Pat Holland presented information about the Blue Earth Show. The present members approved using Avalon Photography as the show photographer again and charging \$5.00 per lunch during the summer meeting, with the club picking up the balance.

Phillip Odden told of plans for an Evaluation in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on August 28 and 29, 2004. Thanks to DeeAnna Weed, the MWFHC now has a website (<http://mwfhc.org>). Complete evaluation information and required forms are conveniently located in one spot on our website.

Clinic tips. Beth Beymer did an outstanding job of continuing our education for use in the show ring and the Evaluation.

Just a few key comments Beth made during her presentations include:

"This is about showing. You don't need a lot of money to show. The important thing is to be neat."

"Put your [show] gear on your horse. Take a picture and if it's a pleasing picture, leave it that way. Otherwise go back to work."

"Show like you're going to win!"

"Know what the judge is looking for before entering the ring."

"Keep your eyes up and out, be aware of what's going on around you."

"Watch the warm-ups. See who to stay away from."

Club members are looking forward to the Blue Earth Show and the La Crosse Evaluation to put their newly learned skills to use.

Martha Martin contributed to this story.