

MDHMA - SPRING MEETING

MELSTONE, MONTANA - MAY 9, 10, 11

The time is drawing near for our Spring Meeting. We have a tentative schedule worked out and we need to know who is coming to finalize a lot of plans.

Ed Fryer will be our main instructor for driving, horse care, harnessing, and much more. Here is what he tentatively plans and some of his credentials:

"I will do some sort of organized presentation, Harness function and adjustment are a good topic, likewise on bridles/lines. General safety we teach on the ranch and why, over steering vs driving with impulsion, and my thoughts on getting horses to stand are all good additional topics. I am not a vet, but do have 50 years of experience with groups of horses that numbered from 50 to 100, all ran on grass, with only 1 close call, so I can at least comment.

I am a professional farrier with 50 years experience, graduate of the school of hard knocks, with the added benefit of working closely with many professionally trained farriers, some of them dating to cavalry days, so I can offer tips there as well. I do know my limits here, I will defer super technical issues with medical implications to the pros in those fields.

I am very particular on harness/bridle adjustment, which is often the root cause of an accident. I am truly amazed at the ability of some of the horses to compensate for human deficiencies. I will do more of that, and can plan a more organized presentation, which I would hope novices would choose to attend. And yes, I do enjoy the role of helping others with their questions, which in turn helps the horses."

Obstacle courses, logging, maze, and other usual driving events will be ongoing all day long.

Thursday:

Arrival Day – The first meal to be served will be dinner at 6pm

7:00pm – Driving / Horse care instruction

Friday:

8:00 Breakfast

9:00 driving instruction and practice – obstacle, maze, log pulling, etc

NOON: Lunch

1:00-5:00 – Individual Help and some friendly competition

6:00pm Dinner

7:00pm MDHMA meeting

Saturday:

8:00 Breakfast

9:00am hitch or saddle up for a drive around the area

NOON: left over lunch and head home.

There is no charge for this event. Meals will be provided and we will have a donation jar for meal expenses if you wish to help out. Our chef for the 3 days being Bev Fryer. Here are the details of the Fryer ranch and what you can expect:

As far as motels, 35 miles E of Roundup on Highway 12, then 5.5 miles S. on Melstone /Custer road, which is graveled, but can get greasy during prolonged rain. Melstone has a good Hardware store with a few staple groceries, a good gas station with tire repair capabilities, a café that is usually open during normal business hours.

*"My arena is large, on a slight slope, mowed native grass. Well water available around the several small corrals, I have certified weed free grass hay which we will use, **do not bring hay. Have horses on clean hay***

a few days prior. Our weeds are few, and we like it that way. We do have dalmation toadflax, but it should not be up much yet. Very few burrs or houndstounges. My horses will be on grass, and other geldings can be turned out as well, if the owners so desire. I have a 30X40 shop with concrete floor and electricity for socializing, indoor meetings, meals, indoor instruction. I have a stove, and will install it prior if forecast looks threatening. Will rent porta-potties. Plenty of camping room, a few electricity hook-up spots. I will set up a wall tent with stove, and may have one more w/o stove, I will check it out. Some room in our basement, shower and bathroom there. Bev is a highly experienced cook for all sorts of large groups, so will plan meals and get groceries. Everyone is great about helping out with prep and set-up, so all she needs is the customary help we have seen at other event. We have cooking equipment to handle our group, if short we will let you know. We will get tables and chairs locally.

Ambulance in Melstone, hospital in Roundup, Vets in Roundup, but do not know any of them. Terrain will be hilly, with some short sharp pitches, two track type roads.

In the do not have department, panels for overnight pens, do not want horses tied to trailers for extended periods of time digging holes etc. Only have a couple of water tubs, most folks bring their own anyway.”

So there is the outline of what to expect at the Spring meeting. Now, I need to know who is coming and what horses you are bringing. If you have specific things you want help with or instruction on, let me know as well. Ed is very willing to change/tweak the instruction or add time to help you individually.

How to get there:

“We are pretty easy to find. Follow highway 12 E from Roundup about 35 miles to mile marker 204. Turn to the S on the Melstone/Custer road (marked with a sign). Proceed up the good gravel road about 5.5 M, we are to the SW of the road. Sage green house, tan shop, plain wood barn, and an arena, all easily visible.

From the freeway, take the Custer exit, but go under the freeway to the N, (not sure Melstone/Custer is marked at that end). It is paved for several miles to the NW up over the hills, then turns to gravel. After it drops off the top going N, there is a branch towards Musselshell, which is plainly marked. Stay to the N on Melstone/Custer. House will be plainly visible as you approach. Probably around 30 miles total from freeway. Actually a good road, but might be a bit greasy in spots if wet. Distance from Billings maybe 5 M shorter from freeway, but more gravel.

Address is 555 Melstone/Custer Road. For those who like to use the GPS, allow an extra half hour, since it seems to always route folks the long way around through Musselshell.”

If you have items you are trying to sell or give away, bring them along and we can display them for you. Also, if you have needs of any kind for leather harness parts or need a harness, let me know and I can bring it if I have what you need. Finally, if you haven't paid your 2019 dues, send them my way as well. \$30 dues/year for a family or individual and \$100 for a business membership.

Ed Jorden
Sec/Treas
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