

# 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.

Our guest instructor is Dave Watkins from Manning, North Dakota. Dave has given multiple classes at EXPO for many years and will join us to teach Diamond Tufting. That's a common pattern of the upholstery on many wagons and carriages. It is also used on a lot of furniture. The class will be a two day event, starting at 10:00am on Thursday and finishing on Friday afternoon. Thursday will be instruction on fastening cushions, and making the diamonds. Everyone will build a seat cushion and layout and make the diamonds. Day two will be a group effort building an actual buggy seat from start to finish. The cost for this program is \$90 dollars per person but the association is sponsoring part of it so the entire two day event will be \$60. (Your dues money at work for you!!)

The class will be limited to 10 people so we need you to commit to the class right away. You will need to send me a check for the \$60 to hold your spot in the class. You also must be a member to join the class so if you haven't paid your dues for 2019, you will need to send that in as well.

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."*

The schedule is planned so everyone can be there for the first hour of Ed's instruction and those not taking the Watkin's class can stay with Ed for more instruction during the day. Obstacle courses, logging, maze, and other usual driving events will be ongoing all day long.

Thursday: 9:00am-10am: instruction on driving: we can all be there for this hour  
10AM-noon: Diamond Tufting  
Noon - 1:00pm lunch  
1:00-4:30 or 5:00pm Diamond tufting continues  
1:00-5:00pm. Obstacles, contests, driving, etc.  
6:00pm Dinner

Friday: 9:00 driving instruction  
10:00 Diamond tufting continues  
10:00am—all day working with horses with some instruction or individual help, contest, etc.  
NOON: Lunch  
1:00-5:00 Cushion building and diamond tufting continues and finishes up along with the driving part.  
6:00pm Dinner and meeting

Saturday: 9:00am start to the drive around the area.  
NOON: left over lunch and head home.

Meals will be provided, with 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 houndstounge.***

*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/tweek the instruction or add time to help you individually.

We've put a lot into this meeting, and hope you will attend. Only 10 people can take the Diamond Tufting class so get your money in to hold your spot. 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.

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