



Brass Oak Driving Society

January 2024

Happy New Year!

Hello Fellow Drivers,
& a Howdy to the grooms as well,

Jenifer Rhynes, your freshly-minted and wet-behind-the-ears President launching into 2024. Yes, my name has but one "N" and you all are probably among the few to understand my mother's thought process. She was sure that I'd be nicknamed. In fact, she was the only one to call me Jeni. My counterparts with 2 "N"s would be nicknamed Jenny, and of course, we all know that as a female donkey. She thought she was saving me from the schoolyard taunting.

I have lived all over the county from Atascadero to Arroyo Grande. I have a brother in Nipomo and a nephew in 'Squirrel Hollow' (the almost Shandon part of Paso). I moved here in 2001 with my two horses – a quarter/thoroughbred cross and a quarter/Arab cross. We mainly trail rode and camped along with the occasional pack-trip. Short after arriving I bought an Icelandic Mare. I had fallen in love with the gaited, living version of My Pretty Pony. I retired 10 years ago from the YMCA and set up a little side gig doing some coaching since.

I've had a lot of wonderful horses grace me. I'm especially fond of the Icelandic horses in my life. My newest addition, Archie, the 10 y/o Shetland Pony who is fairly green to driving, is winning my heart. The horses reside in Arroyo Grande, and I split my time between Cayucos and Arroyo Grande. My pony isn't the only one green to driving. I was introduced in 1975 as a camp counselor in Arizona and became fascinated. A year ago, I was able to begin lessons with our own Diane Kastama. It's a bit of a transition from Diane's Horse & Carriage to my Pony & Cart. Under Diane's watchful eye, I'm feeling much better about my skills.



I hope this year we are able to promote a variety of opportunities for our members from lectures and clinics to playdays and outings. I have a friend in Tollhouse who is a member of a driving group, and they seem to have a grand time including some charitable outings with demonstrations for kids in special circumstances, as well as parades, easter egg hunts and costume contests.

I'm looking forward to learning what ideas you'd like to champion this year.

Jenifer Rhynes

2024 Dues are due!

**See form in this
newsletter.**

Brass Oak Driving Society Presents:

Carriage Fun Games

When: Saturday, January 20, 2024

Where: Ann McClure's Place-235 Cimarron Way,
Arroyo Grande, Ca. 93420

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Bean Bag Toss, Gambler's Choice/No Choice & Reverse
Psychology. Driving, Ground Driving & Riding all welcome.

Members Free/Non Members \$10.00

Pipe Corrals available for day or overnight use.

Bring your own lunch.

Helmets are required for drivers & passengers!!

For more info email mooremules05@gmail.com or call 760-920-3206

**MANY THANKS TO OUR OUTGOING BOARD
MEMBERS FOR THEIR TIME AND TALENT
OVER THE PAST YEAR(S)!**
**LILLA HEWITT,
STEPHANIE SZABO, AND
KATIE VALENTE.**

2024 Board

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December Fun Day

By Lil Clary

Lots of folks enjoyed the Fun Day held at Ann McClure's on December 2. Twenty-two signed up to attend. Huge thanks to Diane and Lilla who coordinated the event. Thanks also to the members who helped out by setting up cones and doing the 'gopher stomp' (Disa, Liz and Jackie) the day before. Additional thanks go to the crew who staffed the check-in station (Liz, Gloria, Lynn) and to Ann for providing us a place to drive. I didn't get all the names down, so apologies if I missed you.

There were horses, minis, and donkeys pulling all kinds of rigs. I like to wander around and look at the ways people handle hauling critters and their rigs. Hats off to those who have to detach truck and trailer in order to offload carts or carriages or wagons. Lots of effort involved.

We had a great lunch, provided by the club and supplemented by Lilla's homemade cookies.

Next up: January 20th at Ann's. Watch for the announcement.



CW from top left: Liz, Gloria, and Lynn; Janine Newby; Deborah Snyder; Jeff Durling; Janine Newby; Linda Tucker; and Scott Ryan

Unattended?

(The photos in this article are for illustration purposes only and were staged in an extremely brief period of time and edited to show examples of good and bad practice. We would rather not have had to stage photo examples of an unattended turnout, but our experience tells us that many people better understand best practices from visuals.)

More people looking to social media for help with their new carriage driving activities. Along with this, we are able to see firsthand the number of people who are truly unaware of the dangers of turnouts (the combination of horse and carriage) being *unattended*. Many beginners want help learning how to adjust their harness, how to put their horse to the cart, or just share the excitement of putting their



This pony is completely unattended. This is incredibly dangerous and should never be done.

horse to the vehicle for the first time. In these cases, many beginners will hitch their horse, stand back six to ten feet, and snap a photo to quickly upload to the web, only to be met with "Please don't leave your horse unattended while put to the vehicle" comments by experienced drivers. They may respond back with, "Thank you. I didn't know that," but there are instances where the person responds with, "He is attended. I'm right there taking the photo!" This article is meant to address what "unattended" means, considering that American Driving Society rules are many times cited as the authority for driving safety practices.

The ADS rulebook addresses "unattended" in a couple of places in the General Rules:

"Having the horse under control at all times is a safeguard not only for a driver and his passengers, but for everyone involved in the sport." (Article 5.1) (Emphasis added by author)

"The horse must never be left unattended while put to a vehicle." (Article 6.2)

"The ADS strongly recommends that no turnout should rely solely on a groom or other attendant standing on the ground to control the horse or horses, with the exception of hitching and/or unhitching. If a driver dismounts for any reason other than to make minor adjustments to harness, vehicle, or to unhitch, the reins should be given to a driver seated on the vehicle." (Article 5.7)

So what does this all really mean? I tell my students that as soon as that horse is safely put to the vehicle, there needs to be a "warm body" on the seat with reins and whip in hand. Those of us who have been around the carriage driving world for a while have witnessed the results of loose horses with vehicles attached, so the spirit of the rules is to reduce the likelihood and instances where turnouts do not have persons holding them from the box seat.

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Above: The driver is in the trailer only a few feet away from the pony, but she is looking at her phone. This pony is unattended in more ways than one!

If no one is holding the horse at all, or the horse is tied to something while the vehicle is attached, and that horse happens to get away, the results are much more disastrous than if it were just a loose riding horse. That vehicle becomes a *weapon* which has been known to take out anything in its path...if it even survives the experience. We've seen twisted, mangled metal carts, and completely splintered wooden vehicles as a result of loose turnouts. Experienced drivers (and insurance adjusters) have seen smashed fences, cars, trailers, injured people, and even other injured horses that had to be put down as a result of being tangled with a loose driving horse put to a vehicle. Again, the spirit of the rule is to reduce the amount of time that a horse is put to a vehicle without someone on the box seat. With someone on the box, there is a

greater chance that the turnout can get under control before something more major happens.

This also goes along with the last rule (recommendation) I cited above, that no turnout rely solely on a person holding the horse from the ground. Why is this stated as a *recommendation*? All rules have to be enforceable with some sort of consequence, hence the term "rule". There can be many instances where the driver needs to get out of the vehicle to make an adjustment and there will not be anyone on the box, which makes a rule of this nature hard to enforce. However, if that same person gets out of the vehicle to go to the bathroom, for example, and leaves the turnout being held by someone on the ground, that is against the recommendation. It really isn't that hard for a hitched driving horse to get away from a handler on the ground. Since the horse knows it can't spin around the handler like it would if it were being held in just a halter, it will throw itself forward or back, knocking the handler over, and breaking away from the handler.

Many new drivers will cite the practices of the Amish in terms of justifying tying their hitched horses, "The Amish do it all the time..." The difference between the average Amish horse and the average competitive or recreational driving horse is that the Amish horses are working horses who travel for miles every day or exert plenty of effort in the field. They aren't companion animals that are worked once in a



Above: Sometimes adjustments do have to be made, but the driver's time on the ground should be very limited and strong caution should be taken.

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while for an hour or two. And their drivers are lifelong horsemen. That being said, I know of a few Amish who have been left at the store while their horse somehow untied itself and trotted home! Just because one group does something does not make it *best practice* for the entire driving community.

The other comment we hear is that "My horse knows how to stand, he won't move." This is great! We all love driving horses who stand like rocks. The spirit of the rule, however, addresses the "what if". Horses are naturally *flight* animals. If it reacts to a sudden loud noise, it may not stand. If the horse gets stung by a wasp, it may not stand (and who would expect it to!). We've seen horses who react to something and expect the driver to be there to take ahold of the reins. For that split second, the horse pauses after they react, almost like they are looking for reassurance. When the contact does not happen after they pause, they continue into panic mode, looking for the opportunity to save themselves considering that their driver wasn't there for them. With the driver in the seat, (s)he is there to give that trusting horse the reassuring hold it needs to stay in the spot in which it was told.



Above: Even though the driver and her friend are only a few steps away, if the pony would decide to pull back and break away from the trailer, it could quickly get away before they could do anything about it, resulting in a large disaster.



Hopefully, this helps clarify the intent of the "unattended" rules and reduces the number of instances of loose turnouts overall in the driving community regardless whether or not the turnout is at an event. Please be safe...and get in the seat.

Right: With the exception of putting the horse to the vehicle, unhitching, and making quick adjustments, on the box seat is the only place the driver should be when the horse is put to!

Written by Myrna Rhinehart. Adapted for use by the American Driving Society Education Committee, 2020.

Members' Marketplace

For Sale:

4-Wheel Marathon Cart –
\$2,500 obo
The 5th Wheel has new
Teflon inserts.

Two horse-sized harnesses:
one Zilco, black with stainless
and
one Smuckers russet.
Open to offers.



Contact Barbara Meek at 805-369-9601

Cart for Sale \$450

Amish made,
purchased from Morgan Carriage Works.
Call Julie
805-929-2134



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For Sale

Pacific Carriage Company "Dartmoor" marathon carriage. Well used but well maintained and ready to roll. Carriage has a second set of shafts to fit a pony, but the wheels for that size are missing. Price includes 3 forty-pound weights and a side-facing navigator's seat. \$2800



Also available 3 sets of harness in both synthetic (Smucker's) and leather.

The synthetic was used on both a 16-hand Friesian and on a 14-hand mule, so it is very adjustable. Condition is excellent. \$600

The leather harnesses fit my 14-hand mule. One will easily adjust for a larger critter; it is very worn but still useable. \$200.

The other is in very good condition with some scuffs that could be minimized with leather dye. \$450

Located near Santa Maria in northern Santa Barbara County.

Email to mzlil2988@gmail.com or phone 805 937 3811 Lil Clary, member Brass Oak Driving Society

For Sale:



Meadowbrook Cart by Morgan Carriage Works. Very nice condition. 6-foot shafts and 24 inches wide between the narrowest part.

Kept covered inside – in very good condition. \$1800

Contact: Jill von Ilten 805-458-2448, jillsquilt@gmail.com (located east of Arroyo Grande, Huasna)

Newsletter Advertising –

Advertising of horse/driving related items/services is free for BODS members.

Non-members may advertise in one month's issue for free.

Contact Kathy or Gloria for more information or to run an ad.

About Brass Oak Driving Society

The Brass Oak Driving Society exists to encourage, educate and inspire its members in the world of carriage driving. We recognize that every member has different goals, and we are committed to providing opportunities for every member to participate, learn and grow in a safe, friendly and fun way.



Brass Oak Driving Society Membership Form

Yes, I/we want to join the Brass Oak Driving Society. Memberships are for one year beginning January 1st and ending December 31st. New subscriptions or renewals paid after November 1st will apply to the following year. No refunds on membership. Make check payable to BRASS OAK DRIVING SOCIETY.

Please mail to:

Gloria Walter

6268 Hog Canyon Rd.

San Miguel, CA 93451

\$35 membership with newsletter via email

\$50 membership with newsletter via USPS

NAME(S):
STREET ADDRESS:
CITY, STATE, ZIP:
Email:
TELEPHONE(S):

Check here if you do NOT wish to be included on the club roster. This roster is distributed to club members only.

BODS Newsletter Advertising Rates

CLASSIFIEDS (3 ISSUES): *No charge for members. \$5 for non-members with a 25 word maximum.*

BUSINESS ADS (6 ISSUES): *No charge for members. Non-members: \$25 business card ad
\$50 quarter page ad
\$75 half page ad*

Driving events around the region: Contact venues for current information.

January 13 HDT Prep Clinic with Alex Gibson

Lake View Terrace. Contact Marc DiLeo freisianfire@gmail.com

January 20 BODS Carriage Fun Day

Arroyo Grande. See flyer on Page 2.

February 17&18 Sweetheart ADT

Galway Downs Equestrian Center, Temecula. www.whiprsnappers.com

Gina Miner is our Pacific Region ADS representative.
Gina can be reached at vwminer@me.com

Next Meeting:
TBD



Have an Idea?
Anyone can organize an event or activity!
Simply write out your idea and send it to a board member for board approval. Include what is requested of the club (insurance, seed money, etc.). We can help hash out the details. Questions? Please reach out!



Brass Oak Driving Society has a Facebook Page! Please like our Page if you are a Facebook person. If you aren't a Facebook person, you can still view the page by going to www.facebook.com/brassoakdriving/. It is a work in progress but the idea of it is to be one more place to reach current and prospective members. Content will include club event announcements, other driving events in the state, and a place for club members to post photos of their latest horse escapades. There is also a link to the clubs website so that prospective members can find out more information about the club.