

ACCESS ADVENTURE Out and About in October 2009

“The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit, and fire.” ~ Sharon Lemon

Memories of Muir

Sunday the 13th of September through Saturday the 19th we held the third annual Memories of Muir trip to the Sierra National Forest outside Yosemite National Park. This is a Sierra Club outing led by Jan Lockie and Stan Pawlak. We had two base camps. The lower one near the Soquel Basin was near a magnificent grove of old-growth redwoods called Nelder’s Grove. Mr. Nelder was a contemporary and friend of John Muir. We camped three days there and went out on three different trails from our base camp on three successive days. The first day we went out on the Willies Loop, was an old railway bed cut into the granite face of a mountain which was hundreds of feet above a boulder-strewn river below. It was an exciting trip for our passengers with a spectacular view of the area. On the return from the Willies Loop on a precarious narrow road, we met a tourist family in a car trying to bump over boulders. Michael looked them in the eye, and said, “We’re not backing up, you are.” The father was clearly flustered, but the children were delighted to see him attempt to back down the mountain - two inches on one side, a granite cliff, and on the other certain death hundreds of feet below. It took him quite a while to maneuver to a spot where we could get by, but we did. That was our first full day of driving with the Memories of Muir.

The next day we traveled past a water fall to the old growth redwood forest, followed by a short hike through the grand old redwood trees. Everybody loved it and we had a picnic in the redwood grove. The third day our route took us to the other side of the valley where we could gaze across to the trail where we had been two days before. It gave us perspective on how deep and far it was to the river below. On the fourth day we shipped to our second camp at 7500 foot elevation near Cattle Mountain. On the way we visited globe rock and picnicked at Jackass Meadows. We took in the Cassidy Overlook which is a massive granite-faced mountain top that looks over the John Muir and Ansel Adams wilderness areas. On the last full day we drove our horses to the top of Cattle Mountain. All the local horsemen agree that a wagon has never made it to the top of that mountain on that trail before. For the third year in a row we accomplished this precarious drive, culminating in a spectacular view. We were accompanied by some local mule skinnners, pack horses and cowboys which gave an old-West flavor. On Saturday the group returned to Clover Meadows to load our vehicles and head home for hot showers and soft beds.

Many thanks Lloyd Stueve for again providing the horses for this challenging trip. The previous two years we used Penny and Dani, who set the bar very high for top performance in challenging conditions. They were headed to the Draft Horse Classic, so Penny and Barney stepped up for the job. Robert and Michael considered them the “B Team” with big shoes to fill. They rose to the occasion, performing flawlessly and willingly each day, with perfect manners in the camp each night.

Access Adventure Sonoma

Stuart Schroeder and his wife, Denise Cadman, hosted us at their wonderful Stone Farm, outside Sebastopol, Friday and Saturday September 4-5. The Access Adventure crew arrived Friday evening for a fabulous potluck dinner. Our crew outdid themselves with the delicious food they brought, with sweet delights from Stuart and Denise's organic farm. We had a great time, enjoyed our traditional campfire in their tee-pee and camped out scattered about the farm. The following day we met the volunteers of Access Adventure Sonoma, our first satellite program, and had a brief training session. Twenty locals arrived, several in wheelchairs, to join us on our trolley. Denise, serving as docent, took us out for a fantastic drive across the lands owned by the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation. Our mares, Reba and Ruby, were driven by Abigail Stockinger from her wheelchair. Stuart drove his team, Betsy and Bonnie, pulling Jim Lerum's big wagonette. Jim accompanied us as an outrider on a spectacular big black and white Shire colt.

Upcoming October Events

FHANA: We have a very busy October on our calendar, starting with a trip to Reno October 8-9 for the FHANA (Friesian Horse Association of North America) convention. We will hightail it over the mountain from Reno to be home for the Walk with Rock on Saturday, October 10th.

“Celebrate Adventure”! The Walk with Rock: We invite you to join North America's largest Percheron draft horse at a walkathon in support of the Access Adventure, Saturday, October 10, 2009.

Access Adventure is seeking individuals, families and teams to participate in the 2.5 mile walk, or simply to come to enjoy a truly unique experience. The venue is the historic 2070 acre Rush Ranch located near Fairfield/Suisun City at the northern edge of San Francisco Bay. You will enjoy the scenery, the antique farm equipment, the recently dedicated Nature Center and Native American displays. The walkathon will be followed by a fun-filled afternoon at the Horse Fair. Enjoy a delicious lunch, auction, raffle, entertainment and exhibitions including draft horse, mule and oxen hitched, free wagon rides, horse farming, logging and equestrian demonstrations.

“Rock” is the impressive attraction at the walkathon, a gentle giant owned by Simpson Percherons of Rio Vista. He has been well-named, not only for his size, but for his steady disposition. Most Percheron draft horses stand between 16-2 and 17-3 hands at the shoulder. Rock, the largest Percheron in North America, is over 19 hands (6'4”). Rock and the Access Adventure team will be on hand to lead the walkathon, meet guests and support the effort.

Access Adventure's team of mares, Reba and Ruby, will be the engines powering the wheelchair accessible trolley. These beautiful Percheron ladies work at Rush Ranch where the program is headquartered. They travel with Access Adventure, serving people

with mobility challenges and youth on multi-day wilderness trips in remote, scenic locations throughout California. Meet the beautiful imported Friesian stallion, Apollo and his dazzling son, Fandango and the other horses of Access Adventure.

Give wings to the dreams of people living with the challenges of disability. Enrich the lives of children with Nature's gifts. Bring your friends and family for Access Adventure's biggest event of the year. Donations from individuals unable to attend are welcome. Wagon rides and many attractions are free.

For more information, or to register for the walkathon, please call the Access Adventure office at 7070-432-0152, or go to the Special Events Calendar www.access-adventure.org.

Walkathon Registration: \$10

Event Schedule:

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| 9:30AM | Check-in begins |
| 10:00AM | Walkathon |
| 11:30AM to 1:00PM | Silent Auction, Raffle, Awards, Entertainment |
| 12:00PM | Lunch, awards |
| 1:00PM | Horse Fair, exhibitions and wagon rides |
| 3:00PM | Event Closes |

No pets are allowed except service dogs. Wheelchairs welcome; no bikes, please.

Directions to Rush Ranch: Take Highway 12 to Suisun City. Turn south onto Grizzly Island Road (Jack in the Box on the corner). Travel 2 miles to Rush Ranch, on the right. A large sign announces the entrance.

Pt. Reyes National Seashore: Monday October 12th we pack up and head to Pt. Reyes to meet Bonnie Lewkowicz and wheelchair hikers from Access Northern California. They will be scouting the trails to determine and recommend trails that are accessible. Joining us will be other friends who have difficulty exploring nature due to mobility issues. For some, it will be their first time. We will be taking Apollo on the Thornlea and Ruby and Reba on the trolley.

The Ken Burns PBS series "Our National Parks, America's Best Idea" has renewed interest in John Muir and his contributions as America's visionary conservationist. People Magazine has expressed interest in Michael's work, continuing the legacy of his great-grandfather. Accompanied by the magazine's writer, we will traverse the Bear Valley Trail and head out for places wild.

SAVE THE ACCESS ADVENTURE DATES!

- 10/3 Saturday 9AM: Rush Ranch Volunteer Work Day
- 10/6 Tuesday 7AM: Rotary program Livermore
- 10/7 Wednesday, 9:30AM: Rush Ranch, Golden Hills School

- 10/8-10/9 Thursday-Friday: Reno, NV, Friesian Horse of North America convention <http://fhanaconvention.com/>
- 10/9 Friday, all day: Rush Ranch, Walk With Rock preparations
- 10/10 Saturday, all day: Rush Ranch, Walk With Rock
- 10/11-10/13, Sunday-Tuesday: Point Reyes, event with Access Northern CA, and People Magazine
- 10/14 Wednesday 9:30AM: Rush Ranch, Golden Hills School
- 10/15 Thursday 4-6PM: RREC @ SLT office
7PM: Access Adventure program in Napa
- 10/16 Friday, all day: Disability Tech Expo, Santa Rosa <http://access-adventure.org/calendar3.html>
- 10/17 Saturday: fundraiser with Xenophon, Shattuck Theater in Berkeley, Rupert Isaccson will introduce a film based on his book The Horse Boy <http://www.horseboymovie.com/Film.php>
- 10/21 Wednesday: 9:30AM Rush Ranch, Golden Hills School
- 10/22 Thursday: 11AM-2PM Rush Ranch, Roberta Boardman Day
4-6PM Rush Ranch Management Team meeting
- 10/24-10/25 Saturday-Sunday: Rush Ranch, Bay Area Outreach Recreation Program campout
- 10/28 Wednesday: 9:30AM Golden Hills School
- 10/31 Saturday: Napa Valley AIDS Walk, Yountville

For a more detailed Special Events Calendar see
www.access-adventure.org/calendar.html

Michael Muir and the Volunteers of ACCESS ADVENTURE

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