

Medicine Hat Cowboy Life



December 2023 Official Newsletter for Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation

Event 2023 was Terrific

All reports concur that the MHCP Western Music and Cowboy Poetry event was a huge success, despite competing with Thanksgiving (that fell on the first weekend in October this year). You could call it a 12-hour event with musicians arriving as early as ten o'clock on Saturday, October 7th. It ended with a standing ovation from our Medicine Hat audience showing their appreciation for the headliner, Eli Barsi and her husband John Cunningham.

Preparations at Medicine Hat College began on Friday afternoon with a dedicated group of volunteers decorating the theatre and setting up in the hall outside the Theatre. The first thing folks saw as they entered was a silhouette cowboy waving to them (and a number of display boards). On the theatre stage



Photo by Cheryl Dust

the focal point was a mural depicting the entrance gate of the Drowning Ford Grazing Association, acknowledging them as our major sponsor. (Other sponsors were also acknowledged.) Louise Maier was the master decorator that artistically placed western cutouts, plants, and antique items to give a western feel. Even when it was after hours, guys from Al's Audio (were setting up equipment) and Carla (from the College) were there making sure and double sure the event went well. At supper that evening volunteers had a chance to socialize at the Redcliff Legion; the Legion has supported MHCP in the past so it was a way to reciprocate.

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From My Perch on the Corral: President's Message

As the year draws to a close, we reflect on and celebrate this past year's accomplishments, as well we're preparing for and looking forward to 2024. We are pleased with the success of our 2023 event, our 4th annual. This year it expanded in time (all afternoon & evening), space (MH College) and number (of 'homegrown' entertainers and local dignitaries).

Our "Paws and Poems" project came to a close with a book launch, thanks to the Medicine Hat Library for the room and to the attendance of special guests: several service dogs and their handlers.

It seems like we're always finding new stories we want to share (like Hilda Barns and Did You Know....About Horses). Thanks to all of you who visit our website and read our stories; we're seeing an amazing increase in traffic. Thanks too for the increasing numbers on our membership list and on our board-member roster.

We continue to encourage and support seniors write their memoir (Velma Pancoast's this year). With growth comes the need for change as is the case with MHCP having enough news every quarter to fill a newsletter. Change ultimately means a learning curve now that Shelley Goldbeck is stepping back. Some of the board members are taking her Zoom workshops on web training.

As I look back on the year (and the past five since we started), there is much for us to be proud of, thanks to the teamwork and the hard work every board member contributes. On the next page there's some "bull" about each of them.

To all, a Merry Christmas and the best in the New Year.



Jen Zollner, President,
Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation

Paws and Poems

A collection of stories and poetry about
service dogs in the Medicine Hat area



Top Hand by Gena LaCoste



Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation



Medicine Hat

Stories from Seniors

A collection of stories and poetry by and for seniors
who've lived and worked in rural areas around Medicine Hat



Cover Art: Precious and Person
by Gena LaCoste



Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation



Country Stories

A collection of stories and poetry by and for seniors
who have lived and worked in rural areas around Medicine Hat



Three Heads and Better Than One
by Gena LaCoste



Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation



Stories from Seniors and Country Stories
books are available for only \$15 each.

Paws and Poems: \$20.

To purchase contact Jen at
MHCPPresident@gmail.com.
Watch the accompanying videos
on our web site. Search stories.

www.MHCowboyLife.com

www.MHCowboyLife.com



A Bunch of Bull About our Board

Several of us on the board had a bull or two or three at one time, but no more.

Cheryl Dust still has cattle with Lucky Leaf being her herd name. Pictured is her bull, Challenger 3C who was of rare breeding; in fact his sire was exported. His story of survival is about being lost in the bush of Shell Lake fending for himself all winter. The good news is that he was found in spring; the bad news is he was sold and survives no more. Cheryl is on a shopping spree, on the lookout for another bull for her brother Merv (who incidentally attends our event every year, serves as a volunteer when he's here and is now a MHCP member).

Carol Eisenbarth and her husband, Bob, had Hereford cattle on their farm near Seven Persons. When Carol said MHCP website was busy, she "hit the bull's eye".

Donna Moore and her husband Ken had a red/white herd on their ranch west of Maple Creek. Was Taurus, her horoscope sign, the name of one of their bulls?

Shelley Goldbeck grew up in the Red Deer area where her dad, a cowboy, had mostly horses; her grandparents raised Herefords with the odd black whiteface thrown in. She says, "I've been called a bull-headed Taurus".

Harv Speers grew up on a farm by Sibbald (near Oyen). He "took the bull by the horns" when he agreed to help us promote the 2023 MHCP event and is now involved with applying for grants. He is our local cowboy poet and a new member on our board.

Jacquie Noerenberg's dad raised Hereford cattle. She and her husband still have a few cows at their place, their daughter's. Jacquie is a Leo. Was that the name of a bull of theirs?

Jen Zollner's husband Herb was a calf roper and later, a team roper. They raised Herefords, then Black Angus, and later Registered Red Angus. They had a set of longhorns on their dining room wall which now hang in the 'memory room' at her house.



Challenger 3C,
Photo by Cheryl Dust

Noel Burles (from Coalhurst) grew up on a large ranch north of Cowley where they raised Hereford cattle. Noel likes South Devon cattle, large British breed of beef cattle. He comes to us with a wealth of experience in 'putting-on' Cowboy Gatherings, and continually 'cranks out' poems and performs his western music, not just in Canada but also the US. He is another of our newest board members.

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Our mandate is to preserve, promote and
celebrate cowboy traditions and country
living in the Medicine Hat area.
If you wish to submit articles or
information of interest to our readers,
please send email, subject: Newsletter
MHCPPresident@gmail.com.*



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Event 2023 was Terrific

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Noon on Saturday was the event's official start time. It was amazing that so much superb talent would come from surprising distances to volunteer their time and talent -gas isn't cheap these days! A seasoned cowboy from Swift Current and a cowgirl poet from Meadow Lake, SK came. Talented western musicians hailed from Coalhurst, Taber, Bow Island and Maple Creek. We also had two accomplished Medicine Hat musicians on the program and two old-time ranchers (who had never shared their poems on



stage), two junior poets (who presented the poems about their story), the mayor of Medicine Hat (yes, she came with a poem) and the deputy Reeve of Cypress County. Audiences loved the variety that all these 'homegrown' entertainers provided. Folks received a 'royal greeting' from the Medicine Hat rodeo queen and princess, all decked out with their crowns and Western regalia.

The afternoon program was seamlessly stitched together by our own Shelley Goldbeck, the MC. Another of our board members, Noel Burles kept things running smoothly from the back stage. Thanks to photographer, Val Chaykowski and our own videographer, Cheryl Dust. (Raw footage of their performance is made available compliments of MHCP.) Carol Eisenbarth and Louise Maier kept things in order at the Registration Desk.



The biscuit and stew supper with pie for dessert was a hit. Folks needed to spill into the cafeteria from the Courtyard; that's how many folks opted to have 'chuckwagon fare' with us! Tables had centre pieces with trail drive info and western wisdom about food. After all, it was during the trail drives in the later 1800's that cowboy poetry and chuckwagons originated.

L to R: Shelley Goldbeck, MC, Stampede Princess and Stampede Queen, Jen Zollner, President MHCP, Photos by Cheryl Dust



Event 2023

Headliners Were Fantastic!

At 7:00 the headliners took over the stage: John Glawson aka Ol' Ugly from Nanton, AB and Shelley Goldbeck from Innisfail during the first part of the evening; Eli Barsi from Moosomin, SK for the second half.

You knew it was Ol' Ugly the moment he entered the stage. It wasn't because he's ugly either. It was that distinctive look we recognize: red shirt, suspenders, grey hair that grows all over his face and a beat-up hat (yes, it has duct tape inside the hatband). As expected his hilarious stories included his roster of characters: Aunt Tillie, her 86-year-old boyfriend Creaky Olson, his Older Brother Blue etc. And as usual he had the audience in stitches. What a storyteller with the gift and a style that puts the actions of his funny incidents in our heads! Shelley Goldbeck was also on stage with her 'man', her poetry and her music.

Medicine Hat was fortunate indeed to have the calibre of entertainment Eli Barsi provides. From farm girl to spending time in Nashville and Branson, she has chosen to have audiences like ours. She portrays such modesty despite the fact she's received many accolades and awards on both sides of the border. It's her passion for music that was obvious from start to finish, her true country yodeling opening her show. We witnessed her guitar playing ability and her experience with audiences, that rural sensibility that our Medicine Hat audience obviously enjoyed as they gave her a standing ovation, then an extended standing ovation.



Ol' Ugly

A dedicated MHCP volunteer, Diane Meyers was Eli's Grade 3 teacher in Kennedy Saskatchewan. It was a joy for them to connect and Diane felt it a privilege to 'man' Eli's table of merchandise: her CDs and her array of art work. Her art studio in Moosomin, SK is well known to artists, a tourist stop if you're ever travelling that way.

All the headliners said how much they appreciated the friendliness of the volunteers and the audience. Thanks Medicine Hat for sending such warm wishes home with them.





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Event 2023



Above: Diane, Eli, John

Above Right: Volunteers: Donna, Louise, Jacquie
Below: "Saw horse"



Right: Volunteers Carol, Cheryl

Below Right: Wells Fargo Stagecoach in Silent Auction
Below: Zollners girls L to R:

Pam, Penita, with Penella and her husband, Don





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Event 2023

Table Talk (from the Silent Auction Table)

Another item of interest at our event was the Silent Auction Table. Many thanks to the merchandise contributors: Remi Campbell, Cheryl Dust, Verna Dunwald, Josie Fitterer, Jim Koch, Donna Moore, Murray Chev Olds, Phoenix Land & Cattle (Paul and Jacquie Noerenberg), Jennifer and Rudy Schinschick, Harold Schnee, Happy Trails Birdhouses (Jerry and Sharon Schock), Summer Straub and Jen Zollner. Most of



of the donations were designed and handmade by locals. Also available were books written by local authors, and creations in the form of cards and pottery from local artists. Generating interest were the tablecloths trimmed with jean, lace and 'real' western pockets. Thanks for the support from everyone involved, the organizer (Jacquie Noerenberg), her helpers, the persons that donated and those who had fun bidding against each other. It certainly reflects the cowboy way.





Event 2023

Winning is in Their Family

Seems like anyone attending the MHCP event was a winner -first class entertainment that was reasonably priced. Two special winners were declared at the event, they whose tickets were drawn for the patio fire pit and the Western Wisdom blanket.

Harold Schnee, a member of MHCP and square-dance friend, won the blanket. His barn story is posted on our website and his stories about rattlesnakes are in our publication "Country Stories". He writes poetry too, one of which he shared at last year's MHCP event. He bought five tickets so he'd have a better chance; (It's the first ticket that had the winning number.)

The winnings stayed in the family with Harold's grandson winning the patio fire pit. Khalid Chahal had just moved back from Dubai a week before our event; his family came back in July. He had worked as the real estate manager for a bank there, but decided to pull up his roots to take over grandpa's farm in the Conquerville area, 67 km SW of Medicine Hat. Harold said, "It's a great relief to have someone in the family wanting to take over the farm."

Many thanks to Peavey Mart for the generous donation of the 22" Patio Fire Pit. It's the real deal with walls of double construction. As well it injects oxygen into the pit for a smokeless burn.

The Western Wisdom blanket is handmade, fuzzy on the backside and patchwork on the front featuring common sense sayings stitched on aida cloth; mottos like

Insist on a hackamore instead of a bit,
Keep the burrs from under your saddle,
Too much debt and another holds the reins,
Ride for a cause not applause and
Spur yourself to greatness.

Jen Zollner made a similar blanket for a graduation gift (Grade 12) as a way of giving timely advice. (You know how teenagers aren't always open to hearing advice and how grandparents like to give it.) If you'd like a 'memory blanket' especially designed for a special occasion or significant birthday, call Jen Zollner. Proceeds go to Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry.





Medicine Hat Cowboy Life

On Our Website

MHCowboyLife.com

Our president, Jen Zollner quietly adds new content to our website on a regular basis. For example, did you know we have a **“Did You Know....About Horses?”** page? Some articles include:

What horses can eat. What shouldn't they eat?
Canada's Horse Meat Industry
Donkeys and Mules to the Rescue

Stories, 100 Years in the Making

Out with the old, in with the new. The adage holds true as we post the last of the I-Alice stories in the old year and start having stories from Emilie Schmaltz in the new year. Bev Biggeman, a freelance writer, has agreed to interview Emilie and do write-ups for us to post regularly on our website. We've come to realize how important these stories are, especially once these elderly folks have passed away, as is the case with Alice Kanewischer, aka I-Alice at 94, and Harry Forbes at age 104. Emilie is a spry 100-year-old.

Ol' Ugly liked Medicine Hat so much he's agreed to share some of his stories on our website! Look for Yarns by Ol' Ugly under Stories.

I-Alice Stories The latest installment is The Chicken Hawk. The last I-Alice story will be posted by the end of the year: A Fable: has reference to a controversial Medicine Hat business.

Coming soon:

Harry Forbes' Stories

The One-Room School, school parties
Farm Chores

Hilda Barn Stories

Krause barn
Kundert barn
Austin barns
History of Buffalo Head Post Office
History of Austin's Store

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be on Monday, January 29th at 1:30pm at the MH Public Library. All members (and prospective members) are invited to attend.

Be sure to come early (10:00am) for western entertainment in partnership with the library and the Bud VanCleave **Video Launch.**



Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation 2023 Souvenir Coaster. The 2024 coasters are on their way. Get yours free with a 2024 foundation membership!



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Cowboy Poetry at Westminster Church

This year December 31st is on a Sunday, the day when church services don't have their usual format. As she does every year, Anna Marie Hancock will lead the singing of carols. There'll be an inspiring story about a blind man Jen interviewed and how he 'sees' the value of community. It's the perfect day to explore the most unusual (and even ridiculous) New Year's Eve customs when two people will use the conversation format to discuss amusing ways some countries around the world try to bring good luck in the new year. Cowboy poetry is often about stories (with a rural slant) and Jen composed a couple of poems for the occasion. One is about Jenny who should (but will not) have any of her hens in "The Church's Shepherd Pie" The poem on the next page is about a New Year's party that would have been a disaster had it not been for true friends that saved the day. The service starts as usual at 10:25 the morning of New Year's Eve.



Library Corner

The Medicine Hat Public Library serves as a community hub, providing convenient access to books, media, information and programs that help to educate, enrich, entertain, and inform. Anyone can use the library and its resources. As a library member, your library card allows you to take home books, e-books, magazines, DVDs, CDs, and audio books. **Some interesting titles:**

Ty Murray, King of the Cowboys

-autobiography with Steve Eubanks
NF 791.84 MUR, 2003

Ty invites you into his daredevil bull riding world and the life of a cowboy.

The Duke of the Chutes, Harry Vold's Sixty Years in Rodeo

-by Loren RI Whittemore, NF 791.84 WHI,
Through the life and recollections of a prominent stock contractor and his family, the author traces rodeo through the years and the lives of many rodeo people.

A Pictorial Record of the 1990 Cattle Drive

-by Canadian Rodeo Historical Association
-author and editor, Dorothy Willows 971.23 WIL
The commentary and captions add to the colour photos chronically the historic cattle drive. Folks from all over Canada came, altogether donated 468 cattle and trailed them to an auction ring to fund the building of Western Heritage Centre.

So Long; It's Been Good to Know Ya

Five years ago, a few old ladies had a dream...to bring Cowboy Poetry and Western Music to Medicine Hat. Looking back, it's incredible how far we've come. We've had several successful shows, we've published a number of books, and we boast a web site that's chock full of interesting stuff. It's been an amazing ride but it's time for me to move on. In future, you'll notice some changes in our newsletter and web site as we transition my duties to other people. If you have some website skills or want to learn, consider becoming our new Webmaster. Thank you to all the readers who commented on our website, newsletters and books over the past few years. I'm booked to emcee the 2024 show so I will see you again. Happy Trails!

Shelley Goldbeck, DTM



The Bachelors' New Year's Feast

by Jen Zollner

Paul and John with their overalls on
Were bachelors and proud ones were they,
Independent men,
They'd prove it again
With a supper to treat friends on New Year's Day.

They knew how to ranch successfully,
That year even raised their own turkey,
With two desserts at least,
They'd make a feast.

Advice, should have been a necessity____

But they've always been able to figure things out.
The guys they have coffee with, gave them a shout,
The turkey was steaming,
The coffee boys beaming,
They were hungry and ready to eat there's no doubt.

The knife for the carving was sharpened with care,
The turkey they roasted, it's in front of them there,
The first slice was tender____

With a browned look of splendour,
But the subsequent slices brought a look of despair.

Something was strange where the stuffing should be,
Intestines were revealed for the guests to see,
No dressing of bread,
But a stench instead.

You'd think guests would leave as they'd say, "Excuse me!"

Oh their stomachs were turning, their faces turned green,
Nothing worse had they smelled, nothing worse ever seen.

But they chose to be kind,
With the presence of mind
Helped to carry the turkey from where it had been. *continued*





The Bud VanCleave Video

The Medicine Hat Cowboy Poetry Foundation has just completed a heart-warming, informative and amusing video featuring Taber's famous Rodeo son -Bud VanCleave. Bud was inducted into the Canadian Professional Rodeo Hall of Fame in 1998. The video illustrates the events Bud competed in: Bull Riding, Steer Decorating, Calf Roping, Wild Cow Milking and Saddle Bronc Riding. Bud shares the danger, the hard-won trophies and the always-on-the-road life of a rodeo star. The "slice of life" video serves as a trip down memory lane with scrapbook photos of Bud's career, an entertaining interview and a tailored revealing poem created in his honour by President, Jen Zollner. Be the first to view this delightful and entertaining video at its Launch at the Medicine Hat Library on January 29th at 10:00 o'clock. Or watch for it in February on our web site: MHCowboyLife.com.



Bud VanCleave
Photo by Cheryl Dust

Bachelors' New Year's Feast

continued

You'd think that the flavour was gone from the feast,
But the New Year's party, it would not be ceased,
You see Paul and John,
Were true friends to count on,
Had no one else here 'cause their fam'ly's out East.

Like there's nothing wrong the boys heaped up their plate_
With turnips and potatoes that were mashed first rate,
The banana cream pie
That Paul made, they piled high,
Two helpings of John's apple crisp tasted great.

The cattle dogs found it, a surprise turkey treat,
The entrails were scrumptious and so was the meat.
This tale is still told
Though it's 70 years old
Of the party at New Year's that friends made complete.

