



BLACK SWAMP DRIVING CLUB

SPRING 2012 NEWSLETTER

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Hello friends,

Winter of 2011-2012 has everyone shaking their heads. While it was great not to be shoveling and plowing so much snow and we're glad to see those heating bills not as high as the previous year it still became a disappointment for those wanting to get out with horses and sleighs. The weather would change so suddenly and the couple of inches of snow we would get would be gone again in a few hours. For the group that was working so hard to plan the 1st Annual Maumee Bay Sleigh Festival, checking the weather forecast way too many times a day, snow was not to be. In spite of no snow the Sleigh Festival went on and was a great success as you can read about in this Newsletter.

So now as we turn our calendar over to March we are all getting excited to plan this year of driving club events. Maybe there is a driving location that the Club has not been to for a while or a new location that you absolutely love and would like everyone to enjoy seeing - please don't hesitate to tell us about your ideas.

So bear with me. This is a long Newsletter with lots of catching up to do.

Take care,

Jackie

MARCH 12 MEETING – “HAT DAY” – YOU DON’T WANT TO MISS THE FUN !!



OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Will & Shirley Stevenson and family on the passing of Shirley’s mother.

Julie, MaryAnn and Travis Emmons on the passing of Julie’s father.

Dale, Molly and family on the passing of Dale’s mother.

Connie Gillfillan, hope you are up and about quickly after your surgery.

Ann Bell, back surgery sure hasn’t slowed you down.

RECENT EVENTS

NOVEMBER 5, 2011 – MAUMEE BAY STATE PARK DRIVE: The first Saturday in November turned out to be a beautiful sunny, crisp day. Set in the midst of 1,850 acres the ten turnouts (one team) could drive all paved roads along scenic meadows and marshes at the Maumee Bay State Park.



NOVEMBER 12 - ANNUAL BANQUET – The Annual Banquet held at the Plaza Inn was a fun evening for members.

The 50/50 raffle netted \$91.00 with \$45.50 going to winner, Dale Owen. Thanks to Molly - she put Dale's winnings right back into the auction items. The auction took in \$431.00 for the club treasury.



Election of new officers took place. Congratulations to new officers Kim Mack and Mark Newman.

Thank you to out going officers Julie Emmons and Sandy Young.

The highlight of the evening was Gary Gillfillan presenting a beautiful slate hand painted by Molly Owen from a picture of Joe and Ann Bell and their ponies. Congratulations Ann on receiving the Lifetime Member Award and thank you for everything you do for the club.

DECEMBER 17, 2011 – CHRISTMAS ON THE FARM – KENTON, OHIO – In 2010 there was lots of snow and sleigh rides for this event but snow was not to be for 2011 at Yost Farm. As we drove closer to Kenton the snow changed to rain and sleet. Hardy members of the club brought sleighs to display in the barn and Julie and Ted gave rides as did Pam and Bernard Baker, Annetta and Tom Shirk with their minis, and Jackie and Mike Minges with their donkeys.

JANUARY 15, 2012 – ORGANIZATIONAL BOARD MEETING - Your Board met to select new officers. They are:

President: Angie Hohenbrink	Director and Equine Journal Reporter: Roger Higgins, Jr.
Vice President: Mary Elliott	
Secretary: Molly Owen	Director: Kim Mack
Treasurer: Jackie Minges	Director: Mark Newman

FEBRUARY 4-5, 2012 – 1ST ANNUAL MAUMEE BAY SLEIGH FESTIVAL

The 1st Annual Maumee Bay Sleigh Festival (Feb 4-5) was a rousing success even without the traditional snow. Upon becoming convinced that Mother Nature was not likely to cooperate, the Festival Organizers developed alternate plans to accommodate wheeled vehicles for the driving portions of the event, while staying with all the other planned sleighing related activities. The participants made this adjustment without a hitch. In fact, temperatures were quite nice for driving.

The Festival program included several well prepared and on-point presentations by various experts; displays of various sleighs and sleighing accessories, all brought by participants (and People's Choice Awards in each category); driving opportunities, including a timed indoor cones course; and a well attended banquet complete with a slide presentation on the history of sleighs.



In the first presentation, Charlie Poppe, CAA,

discussed sleigh bells and chimes. He brought several wonderful examples as well as a variety of other pristine sleigh related items. Charlie did a splendid job explaining differences in various bells and what to look for when shopping for antique bells and chimes. His enthusiasm and willingness to share his vast knowledge really got things off on the right foot.

Next in line was Anita Alden (Odyssey Training Center) who provided an excellent discussion/slide presentation on Sleighing Safety, covering topics such as matching sleigh to horse, proper harness and hooking techniques, awareness of snow covered hazards, dangerous (to man and horse) weather conditions, etc. She introduced information that many of us wouldn't have even thought of!



Kathleen Haak of Pittsburgh did a splendid job explaining shoeing considerations for winter driving/sleighing. As her family operates a large farrier supply business in Afton, NY, she has access to the latest in high traction shoeing options as well as a variety of accessories to minimize snow and ice build-up in the feet. She fielded a wide variety of questions from a most interested audience.

The final presentation of the afternoon was by Mary Elliott, who shared years of experience and knowledge of sleigh blankets/robes and warmers. Just a small portion



of her extensive collection filled one whole wall! She traced the evolution of robes from simple skins (buffalo, cow, horse) through to the primary suppliers of the colorful mohair robes we more likely think of today. As for warmers, Mary addressed the whole gamut, from simple crocks full of hot water to ornate charcoal fired warmers.



A social hour allowed participants to mingle, ask more questions of the presenters, and prepare their ballots for the Peoples' Choice awards in the following categories – sleighs, blankets/robes, bells, chimes, warmers, and appointments – all items brought by the participants.

At 7:00 the group gathered for the banquet at the Maumee Bay State Park Lodge. After dinner, the crowd of 70+ attendees was treated to a wonderful slide presentation by Roger and Sue Murray, "Sleighting in America". Roger and Sue have been active in CAA for years and have a wealth of knowledge to share. Prior to calling it a night, winners of the various categories in the "Peoples' Choice Awards" voting were announced and awards presented. And, finally, it was time for door prizes. We were fortunate for the many prize donors, including Maumee Bay State Park, Driving Digest Magazine, Mainstreet Ventures Restaurants, Bickmore Products, artists Molly Owen and Mary Elliott, and Equine Journal Magazine.

Sunday's presentations began at 9:00 with Dale Wendt discussing how to find a sleigh and buy it right. Dale brought several of his finds in various stages of condition and repair. He has a collection of about 70 sleighs, mostly bought "as is" and has done a fine job of salvaging many a "basket case".



Following Mr. Wendt, Charlie Poppe took center stage to discuss "Sleigh Restoration: Should I Preserve, Conserve or Restore My Sleigh". Then, to wrap up sleighs, Dale and Charlie were joined by Roger Murray, Rick Beach, and Mary Elliott for a panel discussion and "ask the experts" on all aspects of sleigh restoration, preservation, etc.



Phil Roth of Toledo's Roth Furs brought an outstanding display of furs for sleighting – fur blanket/robes, coats and hats – from the "early times" to the present. Phil is a treasure trove of information on furs and was happy to answer any and all questions. We're still wondering if Suzie Poppe ever talked Charlie into that red mink that looked so good on her!

After a break for lunch, it was time to drive Maumee Bay State Park, on the shore of Lake Erie. This park is a jewel in the Ohio State Park System. It is kept in pristine condition and boasts a wonderful lodge. Many of the participants stayed there Friday and/or Saturday nights and all were quite pleased with these accommodations.

No recap of the Festival would be complete without a few words on the host facility, Vail Meadows. Joy Vail and her entire crew were absolutely wonderful. No matter what was asked, Joy always responded, "We can do that." Their facility includes a large, heated arena and very spacious second floor viewing/meeting room where most of the presentations and displays were held. Vail provides traditional boarding, riding, and lessons. But, most importantly, they also offer extensive therapeutic riding programs for handicapped and at risk youth. The proceeds from this 1st Annual Maumee Bay Sleigh Festival was for the benefit of these therapeutic riding programs.



The Festival Organizers thank everyone involved in this 1st Annual event – our sponsors and donors, the presenters, Vail Meadows, Maumee Bay State Park, the volunteers, Beth Covert (photos) and, most of all, the participants. We are planning next year's event and would appreciate any thoughts as to how we can make the 2nd Edition even better! Stay tuned at www.sleighfestival.com and Facebook – and THINK SNOW for 2013!



Ask Gary and Connie about the sleighs that won them 1st & 2nd "Best Sleighs"



Photo by Dan Robinson, Kenton Times

FEBRUARY 12, 2012 – GENERAL MEETING – February's meeting was well attended by 31 members. Ideas were discussed for the coming year's events. Roger and Sue Murray treated us to a very interesting slide presentation from the CAA trip to Williamsburg. What a great trip that must have been.

FEBRUARY 19, 2012 - FINDLAY SWAP MEET – The Findlay Swap Meet at the University of Findlay Western Farm was very busy! BSDC had an information booth with lots of driving club information available and some interesting displays. Mike Minges designed our new brochure which was ready for the booth. Thanks to everyone that helped to set up and greet folks to the booth.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH 11, 2012 – BSDC GENERAL MEETING – Time 2-4 PM, Good Hope Lutheran Church, Arlington, Ohio. Please bring a snack and don't forget your hats! Mary Elliott and Molly Owen are crazy for hats. They will be happy to show you how to create your own special hat for Spring. Any fun hat will do and if you have ribbon, feathers, flowers, hatpins and anything else you can think of to make a one of a kind hat. Think Spring and have fun!

APRIL 12, 2012 - CARRIAGE DRIVING CLINIC with Anita Alden of Odyssey Training Stables at the Hancock County Fairgrounds, 1017 E. Sandusky St., Findlay, OH. The clinic is free to the public from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. Learn all about harnessing, fitting, putting to the cart, despooning, etc. with an opportunity to ask your own questions from our expert.

In the morning from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM we will offer private lessons with Anita Alden. Do you have a driving problem, need your harness fitted or need pointers before your next show or pleasure drive? Anita will work with you and your horse. Private 30 minute lessons before the regular clinic will be offered. The cost of lessons is \$20.00 for BSDC members, \$45.00 for non-members which includes a one year BSDC membership. Please pre-register for your lesson as there will only be eight lesson times available. Contact Angie Hohenbrink for questions or to schedule your private lesson times: PH: 419-274-1122 or email groom@carriagedog.com. Checks should be made to Black Swamp Driving Club, and sent to Angie Hohenbrink, D529 Road 10, Hamler, OH 43524.

Snacks will be available. If you are coming for the entire day please bring a sack lunch or there are restaurants near by in Findlay. Bring a chair and enjoy the day.

APRIL 27 & 28, 2012 – MARTIN CARRIAGE AUCTION – Lebanon Fairgrounds, 80 Rocherty Rd., Lebanon, PA. 17042. Members have showed quite an interest in planning a trip to Martin Auction in Lebanon, PA. A bus had been considered but it was decided that a carpool trip might work better as members could plan their own time to head back home if they couldn't stay the entire auction. The auction starts at 9:00 AM each day. More information and pictures are available at www.martinauctioneers.com or PH: 717-354-6671. Angie has a list of motels in the area. We will be discussing the trip in more detail at the March Meeting. Questions: Contact Angie Hohenbrink, PH 419-274-1122 or email her at groom@carriagedog.com.

Angie shares the following information, “The Knights Inn, 107 East Main Street, Palmyra, PA, 717-838-1324 rooms there are around \$49.00 if you call in advance. This is about 12 miles from the fairgrounds and the one I like to stay at. It looks like a 1960's type motel but the rooms have all been refurbished and have refrigerators and microwaves. The breakfast they advertise is only coffee and a tiny doughnut. But Martin's Auction has good food if you want to eat there.

One of the closest motels is the Quality Inn, 625 Quentin Road, Lebanon 717-273-6771, rooms there are around the \$82 -107 range. All rooms only had one bed, not two, free continental breakfast

Julie said the Travel Inn in Lebanon is already booked. Rooms around \$55.00. (But just as well, it's a place that looks like they rent it out by the hour.) But Mary, Linda, Al & I stayed there when we went to Martin's Auction together. The car was OK when we left and nothing was stolen. But it would be my last choice.

There is a Hampton Inn close to the turnpike exit, around 6 miles from the fairground.. Rooms there are in the \$103 range. They advertize a good breakfast.

The newest motel in Lebanon is the Holiday Inn Express. They are in the \$107 and up range and offer a free hot breakfast. 717-273-3900 2205 East Cumberland Street, Lebanon, PA. Book online or call: 1-800 467 1538 “

MAY 12, 2012 – HOLMES COUNTY DAY TRIP – Mary Elliott is hosting our fun day trip to Holmes County. We will plan to meet at the Mt. Hope Auction, 8076 St. Rt. OH 241 and Co. Rd 77 at 8:30 AM. Then we can visit Mary's favorite harness, carriage and antique shops in Holmes County. Mary has a lot of stops for us so make sure you eat a hardy breakfast because we will go all day until we stop for dinner at 5:00 PM either at Mrs.Yoder's in Mt. Hope or Der Dutchman in Walnut Creek. Further info please call Mary at 419-468-6016 or cell # 419-561-1332.

MAY 20, 2012 – RIVERBEND PARK DRIVE, FINDLAY, OHIO – Oh we are so ready to start driving! Please join hosts Mike and Jackie Minges at Riverbend Park in Findlay for a Spring drive. Drive is all paved roads, approximately six miles around the reservoir and includes a covered bridge. SMV sign suggested. Potluck will be at noon at Shelter House #5 with parking across the road at the horse and trailer staging area. Directions from south of Findlay: I-75 north to exit 157 (OH 15/West Main Cross). Go east off exit ramp onto OH-15/West Main Cross. Follow Main Cross to Main St. Go south on Main St. Left on Sandusky St/OH 568. Follow 568 out of Findlay to Twp Rd 241. Right on 241. Twp Rd 241 will dead end into Twp Rd 208. Left on 208 into Riverbend Recreational Area. 16618 Township Rd. 208, Findlay, OH. Watch for BSDC signs. For more info: call Jackie at home: 734-856-6122 or cell 419-356-6651.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS: Sandra Tebbe, Bowling Green, OH, John and Deb Beagle, Mt. Blanchard, OH, Rick Beach, Findlay, OH and Claire Prada, Greenville, PA.

TREASURER'S REPORT: As of 2/9/2012 balance is \$\$\$3,215.08

LENDING LIBRARY: Angie will have the library at the March Meeting if you would like to check out a book or have one ready to return.

DATES TO REMEMBER

March 6: Mid Ohio Draft Horse Auction, Carriages at 2:00, Mt. Hope, OH
<http://www.mthopeauction.com/>

March 10: 1st Annual Carriage & Tack Auction, Clinton Co Fairgrounds, 958 W. Main St.,
Wilmington, OH 45177

March 13: Topeka Draft & Carriage Auction, Topeka, IN <http://www.auctions-usa.com/schedule events.html>

March 17: ADT Windy Knoll Farm, Sullivan, OH

April 12-15: Equine Affaire, Columbus, OH <http://equineaffaire.com/ohio/> Saturday and Sunday driving clinics with Andy Marcoux at Equine Affaire.

April 27-28: Martin's Auction, Lebanon, PA

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Jackie Minges
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Temperance, MI 48182