

HALTON'S PEOPLE

Dave '2RC' Boyd's horses understand him



Dave Boyd, owner of the 2RC Ranch, demonstrates his unusual training methods by riding an unbroken horse without a bridle or saddle. Mr. Boyd said he believes the slow approach is best when training horses, and the most important element of

training is opening a line of communication with the horse. He says his training style is neither western nor English, and he calls it Canadian.

(Herald photo)

By LORI TAYLOR Herald Staff Writer

Dave Boyd's 2RC Ranch is not just an ordinary riding stable.

For starters, while most riding instructors teach English and Western-style riding, Mr. Boyd doesn't teach either. He calls his style Canadian.

"Anyone can make a horse snap to attention and quiver with fear," Mr. Boyd says in the brochure advertising his ranch. "To make him snap to attention with a smile on his face is a different ball game altogether....It is very important to get the co-operation of the horse. Then if he gets scared, he will turn to you, not try to run away from you."

Mr. Boyd's ranch is located on Winston Churchill Boulevard, north of Norval. This is his third location since going into the riding stable business.

Mr. Boyd's training method might best be explained by his comment, "You can train a horse to do anything you want if you can explain it to him."

"You've got to get a good line of communication with the horse," he said. "The method of 'You can learn it if I hit you hard enough' just doesn't work. The slow approach is best - as soon as the horse realizes that's the way it's going to be, he'll do what you want him to do."

TOO TIRED
Mr. Boyd doesn't agree with the riding methods which call for a horse to be broken to the saddle by carrying a rider until the horse is too tired to buck any more.

"You know what I do if a horse bucks when I get on his back? I get off."

Mr. Boyd has two ponies and five horses on the ranch, in addition to two dogs and a couple of cats running around. One of the dogs is a 180-pound St. Bernard.

"I call him my theft insurance - he's alright with strangers if they aren't nervous of him, but he sure lets me know when someone's coming," Mr. Boyd said.

It was his other dog, Captain Kidd, who originally got Mr. Boyd involved in riding. He was living in Toronto and when he got Captain Kidd, he took him out for walks for exercise. But one day, he went out for a trail ride at one of the Toronto stables and Captain Kidd went along for the run. The dog loved it, and eventually Mr. Boyd found himself having bought two horses to ride himself.

With the cost of keeping two horses, he found himself rent-

ing them out to help cover the costs, and he was off and running.

WARTIME RADAR
Mr. Boyd was originally involved in electronics. He was "in radar during the war", and went to work in electronics when the war ended. He quit the job he was in and studied advanced electronics for some time, running a rooming house to earn his keep.

But he found when he had completed his studies that he was over-qualified for his old job and that with no work history in the more advanced field, he couldn't get a job.

He still holds part-time jobs from time to time apart from training his horses, including a stint at the moment as a school bus driver.

Mr. Boyd has big plans for the future of his ranch. He hopes, for one thing, to hire the mentally and physically handicapped to help as stable hands. He plans to build a barn which is known as a "loafing barn" with only a few stalls for feeding the horses. The barn would include an automatic overhead track to help the physically handicapped get a-

round, and the mentally handicapped would be able to do whatever legwork was necessary.

"I've been told no handicapped person could handle a stable," Mr. Boyd said. "But my horses are so gentle and quiet that there won't be a problem."

People taking riding lessons usually range between the ages of nine and 19, Mr. Boyd said. But his biggest problem can be the adults who think they know all there is to know about riding and want to do it their way.

COMMAND CHAIN
"Every business runs through a chain of command, and my method is that nobody rides unless they do it my way," Mr. Boyd said. "You get somebody out here who says they're an expert on horseback riding, and they get on one of my horses, and that horse will make a fool of them."

"The chain of command is the secret. I get the horse to know the rider represents me, and if the rider rides the way I do, there's no problem."

Mr. Boyd said most people don't understand the psycho-

logy of a horse, which makes training the animal more difficult.

"One of the things most people who ride don't understand about the psychology of a horse is that running is a reward for a horse," he said. "If you want to get a good working horse, work it at a slow pace, and then, as it behaves, increase the pace, and if the horse misbehaves, slow the pace again."

The 2RC Ranch operates on the basis of memberships. Members treat the horses as if they own them, catching, grooming and saddling them. First class members can reserve the horse any time, and because they have become familiar with Mr. Boyd's riding style, they are permitted freedom in where they ride on the property.

"I keep people riding in this field, under my eye, until they are ready to ride on their own," Mr. Boyd said. "I expect the horses to behave well, and of course, I expect the rider to behave well."

There is no real limit on the age of the rider, other than taking into consideration the

child's sense of responsibility.

RULES ON AGE

"I don't lay down a rule about ages. The youngest rider I've ever had was a five-year-old, but that is really too young," Mr. Boyd said. "I don't lay down a rule. It's the parents who really decide if the kid is capable enough."

"They've got to have some sense of responsibility, and I can safely say I've seen some eight-year-old kids who have more sense of responsibility than some adults."

Mr. Boyd says he has only just started to build the kind of ranch he would like to see in this area. He plans to have his own bus or van to pick up and drop off his riders. He also has hopes of a recreation area centred on horseback riding, where riders can ride along a trail and come out to a restaurant on the other end. The restaurant should be accessible from the road too, so that riders can meet friends there for lunch, he said.

"I think horseback riding can be an important part of the recreation available to the people in this area," Mr. Boyd said.

About the Hills

More building starts

The number of local building starts continues to exceed that of last year, according to Statistics Canada. There were 440 dwelling units under construction in Halton Hills by February 29, compared to 187 underway by the same date last year. February itself saw no new construction undertaken, however, while February, 1979, saw 55 units begun.

Shortfills business as usual

Shortill's General Store should be open for regular business again Monday, according to co-owner Morley Shortill. The tack shop was never actually closed following last week's fire, but the post office will return to the store Monday and fresh stock is expected to arrive that day as well. All items packaged in cardboard or plastic were discarded, he said, and fresh supplies will be available for customers this week.

Talent scouting

Milton Jaycees are looking for talented youngsters aged 18 and under to take part in a cable television junior talent show. Halton region youngsters with any type of talent will be considered for the show. A rehearsal has been scheduled for May 28 and the taping date is June 7 in the Milton public library. For further information or applications, call 878-8214 or 878-4282.

Ratepayers meet

The Georgetown Area Ratepayers' Association (GARA) is holding its annual meeting next Wednesday at Georgetown District High School. The meeting will include an election of officers for the association and a review of the Halton Hills master plan for parks and recreation. The GARA executive wants to remind members of the public that although there are no major issues outstanding, it is important to keep the association active and to attend meetings. The meeting will begin at 8:30 p.m.

Upper Canada picnic

Upper Canada College's Outdoor School near Norval will hold its 41st annual Norval picnic May 31, weather allowing, at Stephen House above the village. Highlighted by an annual boat race at 11:30 a.m., the picnic is a culmination of the school's program, which involves an ambitious reforestation project. Information is available from the Upper Canada College Secretary at 220 Lonsdale Rd., Toronto, M4V 2X8.

Diabetes and alcohol

Harvey La Feve of Jordan Wines will be the guest speaker, discussing diabetes and alcohol, at a June 10 meeting of the Brampton and District Diabetes Association. The meeting takes place at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium of Peel Memorial Hospital.

Recollections of world tour begin with kangaroo hunt down under

Around the World in 380 Days

Part of a series

By STEPHEN FROST Herald Staff Writer

In high school and university, I used to pursue a common pastime, sitting around with friends and talking about how we'd like to travel around the world and spend the cold Canadian winter lazing around on a warm beach somewhere in the Southern hemisphere.

None of us really thought we'd actually make the transition from dreaming about travelling to the reality of buying a round-the-world ticket.

In October, 1978, however, a friend from Wales, John Pladdy, and I finally took the plunge when we climbed into a Cordoba and started on the first leg of a journey that was to take us more than 40,400 miles through 12 different countries.

In the next 13 months, I travelled through the United States, the Tahitian Islands, New Zealand and Australia, the Third World countries of Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and India before coming 'round to Israel, Greece and England.



Throughout this voyage of discovery, I kept a regular journal in which I recorded the highlights of my life "on the road", as it were, setting it aside only during those times I rested at length in places where I sought occupation.

Chief among these were New Zealand, where we stayed and worked for five months, and Australia, which consumed another four months of our time.

Looking through the journal, it's easy for me to pick out high points in the trip, and it is about these I'll be writing at length in the future.

In New Zealand's Mount Cook National Park, I found myself hanging 200 feet up a rock face, pondering my mortality and wondering what on earth I was doing there; Australia saw me hunting kangaroo from the back of a lurching Land Rover late at night; in Thailand, John and I went on a day-tour of the famous River Kwai and surrounding Allied graveyards.

Bangkok's Pat Pong Road

makes Toronto's Yonge Street, even in its more notorious days, look like a kiddie's matinee, contrasting sharply with Singapore's puritanical attitudes and mores, which many claim are only skin deep.

My most vivid memory from Sri Lanka is lying on the beach in Kikkaduwa and being approached by a group of young boys wanting to sell a small cobra they had in a bottle. No one was taking, so the boys drowned it out on the breakwater, saying the cobra is an evil and bad animal.

In Israel, we spent a day travelling from Jerusalem to the Dead Sea, in which we could float about without sinking. As a matter of fact, it's impossible to sink because the water is so salty.

Planning these activities when travelling is generally left until arrival in the country in question. However, plotting the overall trip is a different matter.

The trip was planned by first deciding where we wanted to go and then considering alternatives. With an itinerary in hand, we visited Col. John Barber at the Barber and Henley agency in Georgetown and asked him for advice on the various routes we had planned. He was more than helpful giving us the cost of different routes and advice on the various options open to us. The total cost of the flights from Los Angeles to London

through the countries mentioned was \$2,000 American. On checking back recently with travel agent Marie Simonyi and Mr. Barber, I've learned that the price today would amount to roughly \$3,140 U.S.

To get to Los Angeles, John and I got in touch with Toronto Drive-Away Services, which specializes in the delivery of other people's cars to destinations all over North America.

The company, situated on Yonge Street, conducts a large business in the winter months delivering retired couples' cars to Florida. Generally, the cars belong to elderly people who don't want to drive south, but want their car once they reach their destination.

The Cordoba we drove to California belonged to a fellow who had been transferred from Toronto to L.A. by his company, but didn't have time to drive out himself.

When we picked the car up, we made a \$150 Canadian deposit with the Drive-Away service, and when we delivered the car five days and 3,200 miles later, we received \$150 back in U.S. funds, with \$50 for expenses. The drive itself was a real eyesopener.

In the following weeks I will be writing about these experiences and more. Next week I'll start at the beginning and talk about the drive across the United States to Los Angeles and the time spent in Tahiti.



famous, burnt-out Tintern Abbey. Contrary to popular belief, many parts of England are quite beautiful in the fall season.

(Herald photo by Steve Frost)



No, this isn't a scene out of Apocalypse Now. This is a scene from a small fishing village on the Malaysian island of Penang. The island is a short ferry ride off Malaysia's west coast.

(Photo by John Pladdy)