

DAPNet

Draft Animal-Power Network

CONNECTING ANIMAL-POWERED FARMS, FORESTS, PEOPLE, AND IDEAS

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2014 Annual Gathering Review

By Rebekah Perry, Photos by Jen Judkins

The 2014 DAPNet Annual Gathering was held in late September at the Cummington Fairgrounds, Cummington, MA in anticipation of the 2015 DAP Field Days to be held in the same location in the fall of 2015.



It was a glorious fall weekend and many folks turned out to watch, learn, ask and help with the various activities offered. David Fisher and Bill West were plowing in a neighboring field and several folks got to try their hand on a walking plow for the first time, ask questions and see experienced plowmen turning over unknown ground. What an opportunity for learning!

Tom Jenkins had a team of oxen that demonstrated the obstacle course and were on hand for an oxen handling conversation led by DJ Cleary that drew a big crowd. There was also a lovely team of Percherons owned by Don and Faith Bisbee that offered wagon rides and obstacle course demonstrations.

Neal Perry worked with a Belgian team on Saturday. He was working on trust, communication between the horse



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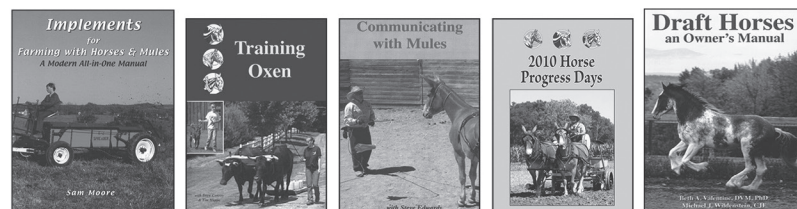
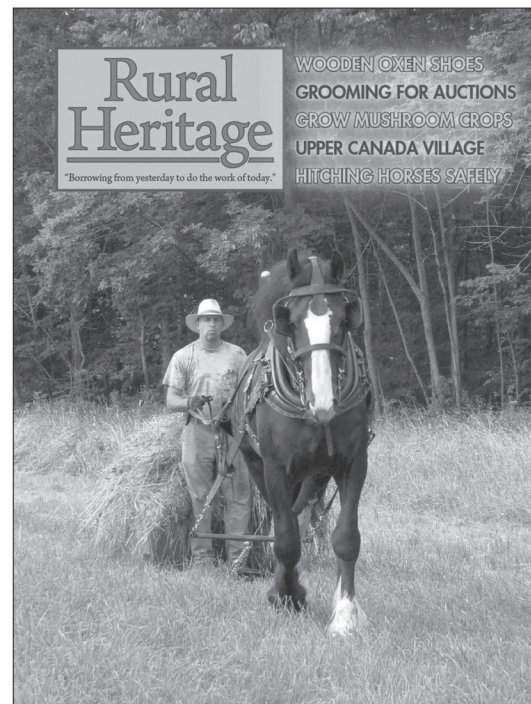
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Our Mission:
Advancing the use of draft animals and promoting sustainable land stewardship to build community through education and networking

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Les Barden Memorial

By Carl Russel

I grew up around working men; farmers, woodsmen, and carpenters. These were thoughtful intelligent men who labored physically for their livelihood. They took a lot of interest in their animals, crops, forests, and the land that supported them. Prominent among them was Les Barden.

In late December 2014 Les passed away. He was in the company of family, in the home he built, from timber he grew on his Barden Tree Farm In Farmington, NH. In recent decades Les became well-known for exposing the effectiveness of the D-ring harness, as well as his personal log-cart design, and several other innovations. He was also a highly respected horseman, dairy farmer, educator, and tree farmer.

Of course there were the standards that he set, the attention to detail, the precise innovations that many have found valuable. There was also the free and generous way that he shared his points, not as advertising, or for personal gain, but because he took his role seriously as a land steward, animal husband, and craftsman.

A well-adjusted harness didn't reflect to him your ability, or achievement, but the comfort and functionality that it afforded the horse. Those attentions to detail were not dogma for him, they were the expression of his art. He made it clear that serious thought and caring is at the root of working the land with animals.



Many who reached out to him for guidance came away with the inspiration to strive to improve understanding, and to put that into play as we perfect our craft. For him it wasn't enough to have information to share, it was part of the great commitment he made to his land, his animals, and to the work and equipment that connected them.

He was not a man of pomp and ceremony, so the most appropriate memorial from the large community of people who learned from him about working the land with draft animals, will be to continue to explore and apply the vast knowledge, guidance, innovation, and example that he shared with us over the last 50 years.

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Benefits of DAPNet membership include:

- The knowledge that you are supporting growth of the practical application of draft animal-power
 - Access to the online forum including viewing photos & posting to the forum
 - Print Newsletter available by email or USPS (\$20 or more, \$30 for Canadian addresses)
 - Enhanced connections within the broader community of interest
- A voice in the organization: one member = one vote

Yes! I'd like to join DAPNet or renew my membership:

- Basic - \$20.00
- Family/Farm - \$30.00
- Business - \$75.00
- Supporting Member - \$100.00 or more
- Other amount of your choice: \$_____

I work with or am interested in:

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Blinders or No?

By Neal & Rebekah Perry

Rebekah: I once watched a young horse start to turn a corner pulling a hay loader, see the hay loader behind her and start to worry, then turn her head so the hay loader disappears behind the blinder and visibly relax – she preferred not to see what was behind her. Because most driving bridles come with blinders, it never occurred to me to take them off, or for that matter, to start a young horse without blinders. But then I met Neal Perry.

This winter we had a mother/son team of Fjord horses for training. The mare had been worked before but her 11 yr old son had not. Though he got a late start with his training, he was a quick learner in the round pen and under saddle. We started him in an open bridle (without blinders) and he took it all in stride, no problems. After a few sessions we put blinders on and this team is going great.

Our Morgan colt has been handled from day 1 and is smart and easy going. We started him with no blinders, hooking to a forecart. He is so much more connected and engaged with the driver than his Belgian teammate who is wearing blinders. The Belgians ears turned toward us, but Bonum is looking at us waiting for a signal to go. It doesn't seem as if this colt will ever need blinders, though by default he probably will at some point.

We have a Morgan/Percheron gelding that we bought last spring. The horse had been in a few wrecks, judging by the scars on his hind legs and his fearful response to noises. We hooked him last spring (with blinders) and while none of the experiences were catastrophic, they were not relaxed. He jumped at every noise behind him and never dropped his head. After 6 months of general handling and riding he was ready to drive again. We tried an open bridle on him to see if he would be less worried about things that he could see. He started out a little nervous, but the concerns washed away as he realized that he could see everything around him. After some ground driving we hooked him to the sleigh and he stepped off, relaxing more with each step. It was fascinating to watch the worries dissipate. This horse may never go well in blinders, but he sure goes great without!

Neal: So what is the purpose of blinders? One of my mentors explained to me that blinders are mainly to create straightness. By taking away the horses side vision with blinders, the horse looks straight forward and is focused on where they are going, not on what is happening around them. So my greatest concern in choosing whether or not to use blinders is straightness rather than protecting the horse from fears. I have used an open bridle for many of the horses I have started for harness. Usually I switch to blinders at some point for various reasons, mostly because of tradition.

The late great Dr. Beery would train horses to drive with no bridle and control them with a whip and voice commands. While this may seem far fetched and unnecessary for most of us, the idea that a driving horse could be so focused on it's handler that it can be controlled with so little aid is very appealing to me.

I do not want to use blinders to hide anything from the horse. If the horse is fearful of something hooked behind them, I unhook it and work with the horse to eliminate the fear. There are far too many stories of wrecks where a horse pulls a bridle and is spooked by what they see behind them.

Rebekah: Interested in trying your horse in an open bridle? Do so with great caution. Take them back to the beginning and ground drive first. Work in an enclosed space like a round pen or paddock and walk behind them dragging things that they can see and that make noise. The first few hitches should be in the pen also. Go slow – repeat the same step as many times as necessary until you have a relaxed response.

Neal: I like to use a riding saddle and drag ropes and plastic jugs before hooking something to a harness. I also require the horse to keep his attention on me while I am doing this so that when I do hitch to a log or a vehicle he is already accustomed to me being the most relevant object in his vision.

In Conclusion: There are advantages to both bridles. The open bridle allows a visual connection to the horse. Some horses are more relaxed with less stimulation – they prefer to not see what is happening, making blinders preferable. We have bridles with and without blinders and choose which to use based on the horse, the task at hand, our expectations and other factors.

2014 Annual Gathering, from page 1

and the owner and on essential ground manners such as lifting feet and standing for harnessing.

Stephen Leslie, David Fisher, and Erika Marczak discussed and demonstrated cultivating with a variety of implements, a single and a team. There was an eager group there watching and listening as they covered adjustments, modifications, technique and mechanics.



DAPNet was so blessed to have a donation offered by Blue Star Equiculture: a large donation of harness parts and pieces, fly masks, collars, bridles, etc. Will Stephens had been visiting them and loaded up his van and brought it all to the event, so we sorted and priced and laid it all out for sale/donation. This fundraiser contributed about \$500 to the weekend so a big THANK YOU to the folks at Blue Star!



There were other conversations as well: a slide show and review of Horse Progress Days, mower adjustment and rebuilding, women's teamster skills and more. Of course it wouldn't be an Annual Gathering without great, homegrown food and music and the inspiring DAPNet Annual Meeting! Thanks to administrator, Karen Pettinelli for all her hard work in pulling the weekend together.

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Draft Animal-Power Field Days: September 24 – 27, 2015 in Cummington, MA

Photos by Emily Langer

Well, it's that time again... time to get fired up for the Draft-Animal Power Field Days! This year the event will be held in Cummington, MA on September 24 – 27 with most of the activity on Friday and Saturday, the 25-26.

We'll get warmed up with a selection of all-day intensive workshops on Thursday the 24 (see accompanying article) and we'll cool down on Sunday morning with the DAPNet Annual Meeting, an Obstacle Course Challenge and more. Friday and Saturday will feature the array of workshops, demonstrations and events that you have come to expect at a DAPField Days event!



At any given moment there will be activities and demonstrations featuring oxen, horses and mules with learning opportunities for beginners as well as more in-depth discussions for more experienced teamsters. Do you know it all? Come and join the fun, sharing your knowledge and experience with others.



Bring the family! This event is designed to be family-friendly with camping and food available on-site. Check out the DAPNet website, forum and facebook page for details about presenters, workshop sessions and schedules.

An event of this size and scope can't happen without a few key players bearing the brunt of the organizational challenge. Rebekah Perry, organizer of the 2013 event in Barton, VT has handed the reins to Emily Langer, the 2014 Perry Farm intern. Emily comes to the event with a love of draft animals, an oar in the DAP community and a background in non-profit management. She is hard working, creative and fun with a can-do attitude and a commitment to do things right if they are to be done at all. "I wasn't going to hand this event to just anyone," says Bekah, "but Emily can take on this task if anyone can!" Emily will have support from the DAPNet board including Bekah Perry, Equipment Organizer Bill West, Financial Guru Reva Seybolt, Presenter Organizer Donn Hewes and others.



Fund raising for the event began last fall and we are delighted to announce that between a private grant, an Indigo-go online fundraiser and several generous contributions we have raised almost \$15,000 toward the event! It would be easy to think that an event like this must pay for itself given all of the attendees, sponsors, etc, but this is not the case. A successful DAPField Days has a budget of around \$40,000, and only half of that is raised by the event itself (in a good weather year!). In order to assure that we can continue to offer these events, we need to raise another \$15,000 this year. If you can add a few dollars or a few hundred to your membership dues this year, please do!



Have questions about the Draft Animal-Power Field Days or want to sponsor the event? Maybe you would like to volunteer at the event or on our planning committee? Contact Emily Langer: fielddays15@gmail.com for more information, or check out the website: www.draftanimalpower.org

2014 World Percheron Congress, from page 8

There were other great teamsters from near and far. Kris Fraiser of Maine, farrier, grass and beef farmer, Army Veteran, bull rider and father of 6, this guy managed to haul a team and family down for the week. The last day of the event, the kids did some youth competitions in the morning, evening brought the Professional Heavy Weight Pull. Kris's farm team lasted to 9,000 pounds and they made it back to the barn in time to saddle up for the Barrel Racing Championship. He ran three rounds of barrels to win the Grand Championship. This New England Cowboy certainly won the hearts of many and made his family proud.



Andre Palmer taking 2nd in the 4 Abreast Hitch

The one competition that stands out as a real demonstration of honest horsemanship, the kind that gets one through real life work in fields and forests, was the Barnyard Pull. Pulling sometimes has a poor reputation, but not this pull, this was the most gentle and focused of all the pulls this author has ever seen. 15 teams took turns working up to 8,000 in the end. The class format was, hook your own evener, no line slapping or touching of the horses allowed. If a load was hit too hard, a ball on a pipe may knock off the sled, if that happened, it counted as a hitch. The kindness of the teamsters kindness and the patience of the horses prevailed, there was great beauty in watching these teams exert themselves in such an honorable fashion. The winning team of Richard II Redifer's walked off on a quiet "come up" and after the final whistle, stopped on a "whoa," the 20' feet between his words, were poetry in motion.

Late Saturday at the exhibitors party, Sam Rich was able to meet and personally thank Albert Cleve of Blue Ribbon Farm for sponsoring the Farm Team Championship. The Cleve and Day Families had just won the big Six Horse Hitch Championship. It was interesting to learn that Albert (former President of the Percheron Horse Association of America) had many farm teamster mentors, rotationally grazes beef, and when younger, he milked cows and knows the hardships of hand milking when the power goes out. We learned that across the financial divide, between Farm and Hitch Teamster, lays a common ground of hard work, relationship building, good people and good horses. The Percheron horse brought us all together at the World Percheron Congress, and in the end, it is this common ground that makes an event of these proportions so successful.

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Thursday Intensives at the Draft Animal Power Field Days: September 24 – 27, 2015 Cum- mington, MA

By Donn Hewes

One exciting element of the Draft Animal-Power Field Days is all day workshops on the Thursday preceding the main event. These four workshops will give participants a chance to spend the whole day in a small group, learning from experienced teamsters and gaining some hands on time and face-to-face question/answer time. The fee for the all day workshop also includes a pass to the rest of the Field Days weekend and will cost \$120.

Beginning Teamsters – For anyone thinking about farming with horses, or someone that has recently started, but would like a good review of the basics. This class will include: Safety Practices and Qualities, Understanding the Draft horse or Mule, Harnessing and driving. *Instructors: Donn Hewes, Sue Brennan, and others.*

Beginning with Oxen – Oxen have long been the favorite of NE homesteads and woodlots. Today many oxen are finding increasing use in market gardens and small farms. Gain some hands on experience and find out if oxen are for you. *Instructors: Erika Marczak, Anna Peck, Ray Ludwig and more.*

Draft Animal Powered Forestry – Horses, mules or oxen working in forestry are a tool. The question is how best to apply that tool for the maximum benefit of the woodlands, standing timber and landowners. Draft animals have a unique opportunity to reenter American woodlands and act as an agent for positive change, potentially resulting in long term health and growth of the forest. This demonstration will be open to State Foresters, land owners and beginning teamsters. Hands on experiences will be limited but there will be lots of opportunities to ask questions see many aspects of this fascinating management tool. *Lead by: Tom Jenkins and others. Presented in a wood lot across the street from the fair grounds.*

Train the Trainer – This workshop will explore methods and techniques for teaching beginning teamsters. Many new farms would like to add interns, friends, and family members to the ranks of those that can “drive the team”. This program will consider what and how to make this step safely, keeping the best interests of the horses as a top priority, while maximizing production capacity: We will discuss and demonstrate many proven ways to help new teamsters understand the mechanics and psychology of working with horses that minimizes negative effects on the horses. Bring your questions and topics of discussion! Content will be tailored to individual questions and needs. *Lead by: Neal & Rebekah Perry*

BEGINNERS CLINIC

Held at Breathing Space Farm by Suzie Brennan, 300 New Concord Rd, East Chatham, NY 12060. Just 3 miles south of I90 exit B2. June 27 & 28, 2015.



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Reflections on a Forestry Demo

By Jay Fisher

November 29th, 2014 dawned cold and blue and warmed up into a perfect sunny day for showing off the beauty and grace of working horses in the woods. I had the pleasure of hosting eight people who arrived to see the horses Lee and Zeke in action in the woods. Higher turnout was expected, but the cold start kept some people at home. Two attendees came all the way from Maine. Another, from Vermont had recently been to a Maine Organic Farmers' and Growers' Organization event, and a third fellow was from Massachusetts. We started the day with introductions and gained an appreciation for how widespread DAPNet's impact is in New England.



Filled up with hot coffee we moved into the woods where some trees had previously been felled. This area served to showcase the maneuverability of a team in the woods navigating around the trees left behind- small trees of high value species and shape. We were hauling out pine to saw on the farm's mill, making siding to finish the sawmill structure. Working relatively close to the mill, we were able to haul out several logs in short order. Everybody was able to see safe and efficient hitching, and several procedures of such. We discussed the economics of horse logging, and the value of the forestry product that is left behind when a good team comes through.

Directional felling was another skill folks wanted to see and discuss. We chose another nearby pine that would have no commercial value at the mill and had a great dis-

cussion of why removing it, while not earning the landowner any money, was still a good idea. More light is left for the remaining, better quality pines means faster growth, an investment on future returns. We talked safety gear and felling plans, notched, back cut, and stopped so folks could have a look at a tree set to fall but safely held for the logger's wish. Safely back went the group and timber went the tree. We moved those logs too, before lunch.



A hot lunch of chili and cornbread was just what the day needed. We discussed what else people wanted to see, and then returned to the woods for some single horse skidding before putting the mill to work. Using the single horse we were able to get into tightly forested areas and remove only the material we wanted.



Running the sawmill gave us the opportunity to see into some of the logs we'd harvested and let folks see the timber harvesting process from tree to board. Everyone was interested in how the simple mechanism turned out good boards for the farm. All of the large diameter, and most of the high quality timber I cut is sold to a local mill, but the smaller diameter or less valuable timber stays on site. It makes for a sustainable harvest with very little waste, and showcases the efficiency of one draft-animal powered system. At the end of the day everybody came home to help cool down and brush the animals. We had a short discussion, and called it a day.

Denise and Lyle from Maine stayed over another night. We enjoyed a farm raised beef roast for dinner, followed by a screening of the video "Root, Hog, or Die" about draft-animal and agricultural lifestyles of the past.



**DAPNet & We-Li-Kit Farm
Plowing Clinic with Sam Rich
April 25, 2015**

REGISTRATION FORM

**Thank you for Pre-registering by April 1st – it helps us plan and saves you money!
If we do not receive sufficient applicants by April 1st, event will be canceled, participants refunded**

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Number of people attending: Adults: _____ Children: (please include ages): _____

Accommodations (circle one): Camper, Tent, Hotel/Motel, other

**Take advantage of the lower registration fees by joining DAPNet now:
draftanimalpowernetwork.org/membership or fill out and send in the membership form in the Newsletter.**

PREregistration: DAPNet Members paid by April 1:

Teamsters - \$175 includes breakfast and lunch: \$ _____

Auditors - \$50 includes breakfast and lunch: \$ _____

Members Subtract \$25 for participating, \$10 for auditing \$ (____)

After April 1 Please add \$10 per person to registration \$ _____

Registration total: \$ _____

Meal Donations:

(Meals are half price for kids with half sized appetites)

Saturday: Breakfast # ____ @ \$6 = _____

Lunch # ____ @ \$8 = _____

After April 1 add \$5 per person per meal: \$ _____ Meals Total \$ _____

Total registration & meals: \$ _____

Teamsters that want help setting up plows correctly or that need minor repairs should arrive after 3pm Friday, April 24th for some extra shop time (extra charges for materials used). All attending teamsters need to contact Sam and Erika ahead of time to discuss their plow and animal(s). We want you get the most out of the clinic time.

There is no stabling at the farm, you will need to have plans for keeping your animals tied to the trailer, picket line, or temporary paddock. There are no hookups, all camping must be self contained.

Please read and sign: I/We understand that I/we will not hold We-Li-Kit Farm, Sam Rich, participants or organizers of this event or any activity, responsible for injury to myself or my family, or loss or damage of any of my/our personal belongings, animals or equipment.

Signatures of all adults attending, please _____

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Homesteader Gathering Richton, MS • April 16, 17, 18	Beginners Driving Class Dalton, OH • August 19, 20, 21
Beginners Driving Class Dalton, OH • May 20, 21, 22	Fall Plowing Clinic Dalton, OH • September 23, 24, 25

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2015 Plowing Clinic with Sam Rich

April 25th (rain date May 2nd)

Take advantage of this fantastic opportunity to learn the technical details of the art of plowing with draft animals from an experienced plowman and teacher.

Sam Rich is a farmer/builder/logger that works both horses and an oxen. He is a former National Walking Plow Champion, and won the 2014 World Champion Percheron Farm Team award.



Room for up to 6 teamsters with their teams, auditors welcome! Pre-registration is required for teams, appreciated but not necessary for auditors.

Discount rates are offered for DAPNet members, if you haven't already become a member this is a great reason to do so!

Teamsters who want help setting up plows correctly or that need minor repairs should arrive after 3pm Friday, April 24th for some extra shop time (extra charges for materials used). All attending teamsters need to contact Sam and Erika ahead of time to discuss their plow and animal(s). We want you get the most out of the clinic time!

There is no stabling at the farm, you will need to have plans for keeping your animals tied to the trailer, picket line, or temporary paddock. There are no hookups, all camping must be self-contained. Bring a dish to pass for supper on Friday evening, all are welcome.

Saturday April 25 - Plowing Clinic Schedule

7:00 - 8:00 am: Breakfast at the Sugarhouse

8:30 - 11:30 am: Shop (go over plows, safety check & tips, ready animals and head to the field to work on techniques)

12:00 - 1:00 pm: Lunch at Sugarhouse

1:00 - 1:30 pm: Harness and hitch up

1:30 - 5:00 pm: Brown side up!

Plowing open ground or start your own land, we will cover what you want to learn (plowing for the first time, skim, vertical, competition, how to turn a stone out, etc)

For more information please contact Sam & Erika:
518-441-9870 or abingtongrown@hotmail.com

DAPNet News

By Rebekah Perry

For a variety of reasons, we have some administrative changes happening at DAPNet.

With Neal and Bekah Perry listing their farm for sale, the DAPNet address needs to change. Former DAPNet administrator Jean Cross has offered to be the official DAPNet address, forwarding mail as needed. So effective January 1, 2015, the DAPNet address will once again be: 271 Plank Road, Vergennes, VT 05491.

In order to control expenses and keep the budget balanced, the board decided to focus administrative funds on an organizer for the DAPField Days. Emily Langer, a former intern at the Perry Farm and enthusiastic agriculturist, was selected as the DAPField Days organizer. She is already well on her way to getting the event details nailed down with help from many board members and we're looking forward to a great event!

We extend our sincere gratitude to Karen Pettinelli for all she did for us in 2014 and wish her all the best in her future endeavors. DAPNet administrative duties have been divided up among the board and committees and we are moving forward with "all hands on deck". It is an exciting time for DAPNet!

Another change is that the Newsletter will be printed twice per year instead of 4 times. This will save on postage but also the time investment to write, edit and produce the newsletter. When I (Rebekah) stepped down as administrator, I agreed to continue putting newsletters together through this Winter 2015 issue. I will be passing this duty on to the Communications Committee after this issue in order to focus my time on supporting Emily with Field Days planning and other Vice Presidential duties. Not to mention that we're hoping to move our farm this year and we have a foster child living with us. Life keeps us hopping!

2015 Fundraiser: Foal Raffle

Would you pay \$3 for a registered Suffolk Punch foal? Well, okay, let's rephrase that... Would you pay \$3 for a chance to win a registered Suffolk Punch foal? Get your tickets now! DAPNet's 2015 fundraiser is in full swing and we invite you to join us. John Hammond and North Star Livery are donating a 2015 foal for the raffle, which will be held at the DAPField Days in September.

Once the foal is weaned it will go to Neal & Rebekah Perry for a few weeks of handling and baby training, then it will be at the Field Days to meet it's new owner! The winner need not be present to win, but we hope you will be there to meet the foal!

For more details visit the website: www.draftanimal-power.org Tickets will be available at DAPNet events throughout the season or purchase tickets when you renew your membership with the enclosed renewal form. Get a single ticket for \$3.00 or 5 tickets for \$10

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2014 World Percheron Congress

By Erika Marczak

The 2014 World Percheron Congress (WPC) is an event that showcases the Percheron Breed, it was recently held in October at the Big E Grounds in Massachusetts. There were spectators in attendance from England, Australia, France, Italy, Germany, Japan, Columbia and beyond. Horses and handlers from the States and Canada came from as far as California, Georgia, and Alberta. The competition was the big focus, but there were also seminars, a great draft horse trade show, daily recognition of our armed service branches, and a couple of entertainment shows featuring Percheron Horses. The DAPNet crew headed by Reva Seybolt, manned a DAPNet booth at the trade show, letting the Percheron world know that using working animals is still a viable option for many people in this modern world.

Volunteers were a huge part of this event. Some manned our DAPNet booth, some volunteered their time to make the WPC a success, some helped fellow teamsters with a variety of details. Reva Seybolt, Jean Cross, Emily Langer and Jay Fisher were a few of our members that helped out. There was harness loaned, roadside rescues, picture takers, borrowed equipment, and many helping hands that made this event possible. Stacie Lynch (WPC Co-Chairman) from Goshen, CT was the super volunteer of the year, she ran the website and event office, kept track of all the show records and information, and she somehow managed to get out of the office to compete a couple of times and to watch her young daughter sing the National Anthem.



Sam Rich with his with his trusty Oliver 84 and gelding team

Several people in the DAPNet circle of friends competed at the World Percheron Congress. Current DAPNet Director, Sue Brennan (NY), brought 4 head that she and her father (VA) took in the show and farm classes, her beautiful antique hunting carriage was a sight to see. Past NEAPFD teamster, Andre Palmer and daughters (VT), brought the whole stable they showed in every youth and hitch class possible. The girls excelled in the youth and riding classes, and Andre was ecstatic to place in the 4 Abreast and 6 Up classes. Our working horse advocate friends, Blue Star Equiculture (MA), represented urban carriage horses

in the opening ceremonies with the French dignitaries in tow. Jose, a Blue Star volunteer, took top honors in a youth riding class. MOFGA Low Impact Forestry regulars, Pete Stratton and daughter Kathy Simmons (ME), brought farm horses. It turns out that Pete is a speed demon, winning the log skid and feed team races with an older pair of mares that proved to be the most rugged of the light weights in the barnyard pull. Past NEAPFD teamster and Biological Woodsman, "Farmer" James Brown (PA), did well in several farm classes and brought home the title of Reserve Champion Farm Team. Past DAPNet Director, Erika Marczak, and past DAPNet presenter Sam Rich (CT), brought his and hers pairs. Erika had fun dabbling with some show and farm classes, her McCormick Deering cultivator was second best in the Farm Vehicle Class. Sam and his geldings were close to winning a couple classes including the sulky plow and farm pull. In the end Sam and his boys were the most consistent, and the seasoned trio won Grand Champion Farm Team. Working horses and DAPNet were well represented.



Father and son from Virginia, Richard and Richard II Redifer

Over 140 exhibitors brought 500+ Percherons to compete for over 100 different awards, these included classes for confirmation/breeding, youth exhibitors, registered and grade horses, hitches, pulling, riding and farm horses. One great aspect of an event of this magnitude, are the new friends that one makes. This event brought 30+ farm teamsters from a range of eastern states and Missouri. The Virginia Percheron Association (VPA) had 16 exhibitors representing them at Congress. The majority of these folks were serious competitors in the farm classes, and the VPA financially sponsored 5 of the 13 Farm awards. The Virginia folks are excellent teamsters and with their collection of left handed plows they deservedly took top honors in both plowing classes. VPA Vice President Gary Kisamore and friends were huge help to the Farm Class Committee by stepping up and helping to organize the flow of 20 to 30+ farm teamsters waiting to compete in each of the classes. The Redifer Family (Father and son) were a pleasant presence, Richard brought a very well behaved stallion and gelding team, they did well for father in the Barnyard Pull, but Richard II took his young team (new to competitive pulling) to victory crossing 20' at 8,000 pounds with ease.

continued on page 13

New BoD Members

Lizzy Koltai



I started Helios Horsepower Farm with my team of Halflingers this past spring (2014). I grow organic vegetables in Bowdoinham, Maine for The Good Shepard Food Bank as well as some smaller retailers and processors. I found my team while working for another horse powered farm here in Maine, and a favorable lease situation soon followed. In the coming years I hope to expand my vegetable production, eventually find a piece of land of my own and broaden my horse powered operation to include logging.

Lauren Bruns



Lauren grew up in Gray, Maine, where she was exposed to the craft of metal work through her family's business, a skill that she has continued to pursue. She moved to Pennsylvania to attend Dickinson College, where she quickly became invested in learning about agriculture on the Dickinson College Farm, first as a part-time student employee and later as a full-time apprentice. Alongside farming, she spent summers and semesters traveling abroad in Nepal and India where she got a glimpse of beautiful cultures making use of traditional agricultural practices, as well as across the U.S. by bicycle, with two other women, with a mission to educate youth of the importance of local agricultural. She returned to New England in 2013 to learn about farming with horses at Natural Roots Farm, which is where she developed a great interest in draft power and became connected with DAPNet.

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