

PHAOA EDUCATIONAL & CHARITABLE FUND PROUD PLATINUM SPONSORS

America's Independence Day weekend was blessed with perfect temperatures in the 70's by day and mid-50's at night...at least this was true in beautiful Mt. Hope Ohio! The 2021 Horse Progress Days (HPD) took place July 2 nd and 3 rd at the Mt. Hope Event Center. Official numbers of the attendance have not yet been published, but since I was there I can tell you it was well attended with folks from many different states.

The PHAOA Educational & Charitable Fund, Inc. was one of the Platinum Sponsors of this event. Our presence was made known with a booth in the main building along with hundreds of vendors and four beginner clinics held in the main arena. During the two days of HPD's people were introduced to our organization and its purposes and goals. The PHAOA E&CF works to perpetuate the Percheron draft horse breed and to educate and inform new comers to the Percheron world and the youth of Percheron breeders or those who have an interest. It was also made known that all money and funds are used for conducting youth hostels, beginner clinics and seminars, and assisting individual state Percheron organizations with like projects. College scholarships are also awarded to many qualified young people.

As a fund raiser, raffle tickets were sold prior to and during the HPD's event. First prize was a Honda Generator Model # EU 2200 i. The generator was purchased at Holmes Power Equipment, Millersburg, Ohio. Our first prize winner was Myron B. Miller of Millersburg, Ohio. A second prize of \$250.00 was won by Loren Yoder in Millersburg, Ohio. A silent auction was held as bids were accepted on the beautiful painting The Horse Fair. Sue Mcl Lauren was please to place the winning bid and take this lovely painting home with her.

A very successful Beginner's Clinic was conducted twice daily on both days we were there. Raymond Raber of Walter Hill Percherons served as the official instructor and coordinator of the clinic. Raymond continues a Horsemanship School that was started in the late 1990's by Eli J.C. Yoder in Sugarcreek, Ohio. Many of us old timers remember Eli and how progressive he was in the draft horse world. The Horsemanship School in Eli's time was called Yoder's Beginner's Horsemanship School. The classes were held at his farm in Sugarcreek and Eli was

assisted by Alvin H. Yoder. These classes became well-known for helping people develop the ability to own, care for and drive their own horses.

After Eli J.C. passed away, Alvin continued the classes. Raymond Raber heard the testimonies of the countless people from all over America and Canada that had benefited from the classes and soon became an assistant instructor.

Raymond and Alvin were cousins and worked together until Alvin passed away in 2018.

Raymond changed the name to Walter Hill Horsemanship Classes and has continued the classes at his own farm which is 18 miles south of Mt. Hope, Ohio. These classes are held 3-4 times each year and usually last 3 or 4 consecutive days. Students are taught the basics that are necessary for safely using, caring for and enjoying Percheron draft horses. As a bonus, a home-cooked meal is served at the farm house each day for lunch. Clara Raber, Raymond's wife, makes this possible and no doubt contributes much to the classes.

Walter Hill Darwin's Nora and K-View Darwin's Becky made their appearance each day as Raymond used them to demonstrate his teaching points. These registered Percheron mares were bred and raised by Raymond and are used during the horsemanship classes at home on the farm as well.

Several students who had just attended the Walter Hill Horsemanship Classes were there to demonstrate what they had learned. Raymond's quiet and patient manner seemed to make everyone comfortable and many people from the crowd stepped up to attempt things Raymond was teaching that day. His main focus was THE BASICS and SAFETY. As Raymond's assistant and nephew, Elmer Raber presented the team hitched to a farm-type wagon. People saw how to safely unhitch from the wagon and the proper way to hitch to the wagon. Key parts of the harness were pointed out and basic driving of a team was covered.

Raymond's brother, Abe Raber of Fredericksburg, Ohio, graciously taught one of the morning sessions so Raymond could attend a funeral in his community. Abe did a splendid job and his time and knowledge were appreciated.

It was also a pleasure to have Barb Watson of Montpelier, Ohio participating.

Barb is well-known to many Percheron folks. She has been raising and showing

Percherons for many years. Barb is currently serving on the Board of Trustees of the PHAOA Educational and Charitable Fund, Inc. and is president of the Ohio Percheron Breeder's Association. She presented Shady Creek Wanda and Green Acres Kamara. This lovely team of mares was used as the wheel team in Barb's 6-horse hitch. She now uses them for weddings, funerals, parades and neighborhood family reunion rides. Barb drove Wanda and Kamara wearing breast collar style harness hitched to a red Leon Marathon carriage. She effortlessly maneuvered the team as she demonstrated pleasure driving. Raymond contrasted the differences between Barb's horses, harness and vehicle with his farm team and their equipment.

These two days were a real highlight and it was such a thrill to be part of it. We were able to introduce the PHAOA Education and Charitable Fund and demonstrate its purpose in person and in a very successful way. The booth was manned by some of the Board of Trustees: President Jerry Hancock, Winston-Salem, NC, Vice President Bill Heston, Salem, OH, Sec/Treas. Jim Whitford, St. John's MI, and Dave Hardy, Saranac, MI. Mary Ellen Williams of Greenwich, NY was unable to attend, but no doubt was there in spirit.

The PHAOA Educational and Charitable Fund, Inc. is a 501-C3 corporation with a defined purpose approved by the IRS. All donations are tax deductible. This organization has existed since 1991 and has successfully fulfilled its purpose. You are invited to visit our website www.percheronedu.org and check us out on Facebook.