The Horse

“No other animal in history has contributed to our modern era more than the horse. This natural bond speaks to us of the ability of man and animal to commit to work together and care for each other in the spirit of love.” Douglas Williams

The Ute Indians acquired the horse from the Spanish in the 1630s. Since then, the story of horses and humans in Northwest Colorado developed out of interdependence, necessity, hard work, and love. While humans shaped horses to suit our evolving needs, working together, horses and humans have shaped our history and region in remarkable ways—horses helped build our towns from the ground up. While horses are less relied upon for work and transportation than they once were, our long relationship with these majestic animals remains strong in recreation, on area ranches, and in our proud western identity.

Join us as we explore the profound relationship between horses and humans in Northwest Colorado in the Tread of Pioneers Museum’s newest exhibit: The Horse. The exhibit opening reception and Annual Meeting for members is Thursday, June 18 from 5:00-7:00pm. The event will include refreshments, longtime locals speaking about their relationships with horses, and live horses hitched in front of the museum. The exhibit will be open through May 2016.
The Man was Remarkable with a Horse…

By Trenia Sanford, Granddaughter of Quentin Semotan

If you haven’t been to the Tread of Pioneers Museum yet to see the newest Foundations of Steamboat exhibit featuring the Semotan family, be sure you don’t miss this unique piece of Routt County history.

Did you know that the Quarter Horse breed got part of its start here?

Quentin Semotan was born on a homestead near Clark. He and his wife, Evelyn, had a dream of what a horse should be…smart, good looking, adaptable, and strong. Quentin was a pro at making a “Nick” (matching dam and sire together) to produce the best offspring in horses and cows. Eventually, everyone was coming to little old Routt County to see Semotan stock. Champion of Champions Quarter Horse Stallion, Star, belonged to the Semotan family, be sure you don’t miss this unique piece of Routt County history.

Quentin and Evelyn ran the ranch, showed their cows and horses all across the western United States, judged shows, went to endless meetings as they built a new horse breed, raised four daughters, and found time to volunteer all over town. They helped found the Quarter Horse Association, the Rocky Mountain Quarter Horse Association, and also helped develop the Cattleman’s Association.

But if you knew him, you wouldn’t be surprised by all this. He was a “do-er” as they say. He was all quiet grins and “Aw shucks…” about it.

Come to the museum to see this horseman’s life as he lived it.

1,100 Steamboat Springs students will participate in the program this school year.

“The storytelling component of My Place, My Home is a powerful and integral part,” says Anna White, Strawberry Park 5th grade teacher and My Place, My Home creator. For example, fifth graders stand at the foot of Howelsen Hill and imagine Carl (Howelsen) gliding through the air bringing people from around the world and money to the valley. Then they hike up to the Sulphur Cave and learn history that is not in textbooks. This allows them to take pride in their childhood home!“

As a tour guide and cultural history interpreter for over 12 years for the Tread of Pioneers Museum, Marianne Capra researched, wrote, and performs the stories. Each one is told from the first-person perspective of a historic Routt County resident and correlated to Colorado Department of Education Social Studies Standards. Students connect to the past by visiting historical sites, homes, the sacred mineral springs, and by learning about the life of Luile Crawford, Margaret Duncan Brown, and Marcellus “Celly” Merrill.

“My Place, My Home encourages today’s students to know their heritage so they will be more resilient; knowing what’s come before them and where they belong,” says Jessica Charpentier, Strawberry Park Severe Needs teacher.

Quentin and Evelyn lived it. He was a “do-er” who influenced the creation of Routt County history.

A Look Back

Marianne Capra with local students in front of the Crawford house

Ann Root

Born and raised in England, Penny Deilh moved to Steamboat Springs 17 years ago “to be a ski bum.” Penny had formerly taught French and lived near Fox River Grove, Chicago, where coincidentally, Carl Howelsen started a ski jumping club and built a ski jump before coming to Steamboat. Penny also volunteers for the United Methodist Church and Strings in the Mountains. Every year since moving to Steamboat, Penny has gone on a mission trip to the Dominican Republic. “For me, volunteering is a privilege in return for being able to live in such a beautiful place. What I like best about working at the front desk is the opportunity to meet and talk to people from all over the U.S. and the world. Every week I learn something new about our museum from its visitors.”

Webster Jones

After living in Fort Collins and working as an engineer and manager for several water utilities, Webb and his wife moved to Steamboat Springs in 2005. He teaches skiing and serves on several boards in the area. Webb says he quickly learned there was something special about Steamboat Springs when he felt so welcomed by the community.

He wanted to be a part of sharing the stories of the pioneer families that created Steamboat Springs. Webb says he found the exhibits and displays at the Tread of Pioneers Museum deepened his understanding and appreciation of his hometown, so he became a volunteer at the museum as a way to give back to the community that has given him so much. Webb works at the museum’s front desk and serves on our Board of Directors.

Jack Spr Angel

Fondly known by many as the Tread of Pioneers Museum’s ambassador, Jack Spr Angel has called Steamboat Springs “home” for 75 years. After high school Jack attended Colorado A&M College (CSU), then joined the army, and eventually graduated from CSU in 1956. When Jack returned home to Steamboat Springs, he began his career at the Routt County National Bank. He retired as vice president in 1991 and started volunteering at the museum. “I enjoy volunteering at the museum because I get to meet many different people from all over and talk to them about Steamboat and the history of my home town.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Tread of Pioneers Museum. The capacity and reach of our organization depends on over 40 volunteers who contributed over 2,700 hours in 2014. The majority of our volunteers staff the museum’s front desk or serve on the Board of Directors; others work on special projects and events, lead school tours, and more. If you would like to join our team of volunteers, contact Tamra Monahan at 879-2214 or storemgr@springsips.com.

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