

## **MULE CROSSING: *Pre-Pasadena Rose Parade Press Release***

By Meredith Hodges

New Year's Day 1987 brought another first and a giant step forward for mules and donkeys when the American Donkey and Mule Society was represented by our West Coast riders in the annual Rose Bowl Parade held in Pasadena, California. Led by donkey jack, Black Bart, the mules each portrayed a different type of equestrian. Dressed to a tee, mules once again exhibited the



potential for a wide variety of uses. Spectators were awed at the beauty and grace of our modern-day saddle mules and old myths about Longears were soundly refused.

In 1988, Colorado is proud to announce the participation of four Longears riders and their mounts. The American Donkey and Mule Society entry in 1988 will be led by donkey jack Blue Zebulon, the 1986 World Champion Standard Jack. "Zeb" will be ridden by his owner, Fran Howe. Fran and her husband, Larry, raise "colored" mules on their 20-acre ranch, the Bitterroot Mule Company, in Bennett, Colorado, just 20 miles east of Denver, and are active directors of the Colorado Donkey and Mule Society. Though they both hold fulltime jobs, Fran and Larry spend most of their free time training, breeding, and promoting mules and donkeys. Their successes are amply portrayed by their show records, but their participation in the Rose Parade is a dream come true and a wonderful opportunity to once again do more in support of Longears. We can be proud and thankful for the support and hard work of these dedicated folks.

Representing the Sidesaddle Equestrian will be Joan Triolo of Longmont, Colorado, riding Rambling Rose, a lovely sorrel saddle mule owned by Hal and Diane Walston, also of Longmont. Joan has ridden and driven Rose to many a victory at numerous shows, recently capturing the A.D.M.S. National Championship in "Ride & Drive" and "Trail" at the A.D.M.S. National Finals in Minnesota last July. Hal and Diane Walston run the Mountain Shadow mule Ranch and stand their large Standard jack, Mountain Shadow Music Man, to outside mares. Trainer Joan Triolo sees to it that Rose represents her breed to perfection. Their authentic Mexican sidesaddle outfit complete with an original decorative horsehair bridle will be a sight to behold on such an auspicious occasion! Those from Mountain Shadow mules are active contributors to the success of our own Colorado Donkey and Mule Society.

Though the mules have always been my own primary interest, I must give my adoring husband credit for taking the time and effort to become a dedicated mule rider. Gary Hodges, riding Lucky Three Mae Bea C.T., will represent the English Equestrian, smartly dressed in a dark blue coat, gray jodhpurs, black hunt cap, and boots. Gary recently captured a well-deserved second place in the English Pleasure class at the Denver Queen City Donkey & Mule Show held the last weekend in July. Gary has shown his dedication and love of mules by building our 80-acre Lucky Three Ranch into what it is today, with barns, pens, pastures, indoor arena, and even helping to farm the 58 acres of alfalfa that feeds our stock. Gary is always ready to help to support Longears and their organizations and is an active director of the Colorado Donkey and Mule Society; his primary contributions include working on show committees and doing screens for mule and donkey clothing sales.

Lucky Three Sundowner and I will be representing the Dressage mule riders. "Sundowner" will be dressed in traditional dressage tack. I will be wearing the black coat with white jodhpurs, black boots, and a short black top hat. The traditional "tails" and top hat are reserved for those who have achieved the upper levels of Dressage; as mules are just beginning to enter the Dressage arena, I feel it would be too presumptuous to dawn the garb of my superiors.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to Diane Hunter of South Pasadena for putting together the ADMS entry for the Rose Parade. This woman has always worked long and difficult hours for the promotion of mules and donkeys. Her contributions as an ADMS co-founder, inspector, judge, and promoter cannot go unnoticed or unappreciated since they have been so numerous and so important. We thank you, Diane, for allowing us to take part in this very special event. As Diane is loaning her lovely sorrel mule, Tea Party to one of the other riders, we are bringing "Lucky Three Ciji" for Diane to ride "to the hounds!" We hope you will all tune in on New Year's Day when mules and donkeys do the Rose Bowl Parade!

For more information about Meredith Hodges and her comprehensive correspondence training program, *Training Mules and Donkeys*, please visit **[www.LuckyThreeRanch.com](http://www.LuckyThreeRanch.com)** or call **1-800-816-7566**. Also, find Meredith Hodges and Lucky Three Ranch on Facebook and Twitter. And don't forget to check out her children's website at **[JasperTheMule.com](http://JasperTheMule.com)**.

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