

HOOFBEATS

in LEATHERWOOD MOUNTAINS

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published irregularly from Horseshoe Tower in downtown Darby, NC (just on the far side of where the sun sets)



Cousin the Christmas Squirrel

A Frequent Visitor

When I was in Jr. College, I had a pet flying squirrel. His name was Squakky and I kept him in a bird cage in my dorm room. Frequently, he would escape the cage at night and play throughout my room. For those of you who may not know, flying squirrels are nocturnal and thus, Squakky would often end up asleep in unusual places (having chosen to sleep wherever he was after playtime). For instance, once I was in the cafeteria for lunch and he unexpectedly appeared from my jacket pocket, climbed upon the table and helped himself to my salad.

Well, Squakky has a cousin who lives at Leatherwood. "Cousin" has now visited us inside our house in the meadow on three different occasions; always, at night. The first couple of visits were only a few nights apart. During Cousin's second visit, Trevor was house setting for us. Trevor appreciated Cousin's visit so much that he set him out a bowl of water and a snack of mixed nuts.

The next morning as Trevor was beginning to make coffee, he noticed the box of coffee filters wiggle. Sure enough, Cousin was sound asleep in the coffee filters.

Cousin's latest visit was last night. Around 3:00 o'clock in the morning, Connie heard something among the Christmas decorations and went downstairs to investigate. After turning on the lights and finding nothing, she assumed a mouse must have come inside among the many boxes of decorations we had sitting around the house. Then this morning as we were having coffee, we heard something drinking water from the Christmas tree stand. There was Cousin. After satisfying his thirst, he climbed back up the Christmas tree among the colored lights. **(See the accompanying photograph.)** After a few minutes, Cousin came back down the tree, scampered past Caroline, and climbed upon a window ledge in the dining room. We opened the window and he went back outside.

We're looking forward to Cousin's next visit.

MERRY CHRISTMAS,

Phil Whitson

Leatherwood Home Maintenance

Would you like to increase the curb appeal of your vacation home? We can help you get it done! Call the welcome center for details 336-973-4142 or 1-800-462-6867. After hours dial extension 108.

Services offered by Leatherwood Rentals, Inc. Home Maintenance Program

Monthly Investment protection Plan

- For \$40.00 a month Leatherwood rentals will keep tabs on your home while you are away. We provide regular inspections inside and outside your home for plumbing leaks, roof damage and other mishaps that can cause damage if left unattended. Minor in-home repair and handyman services are included.

(This is the same service we provide our rental homes.)

General home maintenance

- Got a problem? Need it fixed? Our general maintenance staff would be glad to help. Our in-house services include:
- Minor in-home repair and general handyman service
- Gutter cleaning
- Pressure washing*
- Deck staining and sealing
- Mowing
- Mulching
- Landscape design and management**
- Raised beds, retaining walls and walkways
- If we can't do it, we can put you in-touch with the right resources.

***Is your deck grey and brittle? We can bring it back to life! We pressure wash and clean the deck with a bleaching solution to eliminate mold and mildew. Then we stain and seal your deck in a clear coat or semitransparent color of choice.**

****Monthly rates for mowing,**

DEER REPELLANT

weed eating, weed management, watering, leaf blowing, pruning and other seasonal landscaping needs.

Pasture Management

Bush hogging, Fertilization, Fencing

Contact the welcome center to schedule a free estimate for one or a combination of our services.



Ladies of Leatherwood

By Shana Hall

I believe it was Robert Frost who wrote about the *Road Less Traveled*. It is my pleasure to introduce you to some of your local travelers. Lizzy Clayboss, Mary Lew Johnston, and Debbie DeVita spent some time brushing and shining their horses and teaching them that sleigh bells were not miniature, horse eating monsters. They put all this prep-work into action by representing Leatherwood in the local (Wilkesboro) parade. Tyrone and Debbie, Mary Lew and Gunner, and Lizzy and Star took the road very traveled for the simple pleasure of doing something that not everyone can. Reporting afterwards, each was pleased with their horses and the ride, except for no escort on the return trip through town.

We have another local lady that inspires, and deserves congratulations. Our very own Abbie Hanchey trained, under the watchful eye of Coach Bryan Parker to compete and complete her first 5K run. It takes a great deal of will power and grit to prepare for a run of any length while managing a job, a small child, and a husband. Once again someone I admire has raised the bar. You go girl! Also, Abbie, Hugh & Holt have opened their home & hearts to a new canine member named Muffin, who they adopted from the Avery County Humane Society.

Debbie Clark, as some of you may know, has been looking for a new endurance prospect. She has found and is taking a chance on Samarah, a nice Arab mare from Texas. We all hope she's as good as she is pretty.

I admire all of these ladies for the effort they put forth, and the chances they take. If you feel the same as I do, let them know. Congratulations to you all for taking the *Roads Less Travelled*.

BEAR TRACKS IN JOETOWN



**THIS TRACK
WAS FOUND
IN NOVEMBER**

**THE HAND IS
HUGH
HANCHEY'S**

'Twas the Night before Christmas at Leatherwood

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the barn
Not a creature was stirring, not even a cat, Darn!
The bridles were hung by the stall doors with care,
And all in the barn with hopes, that someone
to feed them soon would be there.

The horses were nestled all snug in their stalls
with hay,
With visions of sweet feed being brought down
the aisle way.

When out on the pasture there arose such a
clatter,
The horses stood up to see what was the
matter.

Away to the windows they jumped like a flash,
They tore open the stall windows with a great big crash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below.
When what to their wondering eyes should appear,
But eight miniature donkeys with great big ears.

They were pulling a sleigh so lively and quick,
The equines knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than thoroughbreds his jackasses came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

Now Theo! Now, Cooper! Now Beauford and Night Train!
On, Lad! On Pretty Boy! On Tyrone and Baby Train!
To the top of the East barn! To the top of the stall!
Now trot away! Trot away! Trot away all!!



A beautiful double Rainbow

So up to the barn top the donkeys trotted,
with the sleigh full of horse treats and St Nicholas nodded.

And then, in a twinkling, they heard on the roof
the prancing and pawing of each little jackass hoof.

As they were drawing in their heads, and
were turning around,

Down the hay loft St. Nicholas came with
a bound.

He was dressed in fur, his whole body for
sure,

and his clothes were all smelly with hay and
manure.

A bundle of alfalfa cubes he had flung on
his back,

And he reminded me of my brother, with
that bent over plumber's crack.



Faye Freeman's Ginger Bread Welcome Center

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And his little donkeys he-hawed when they saw him, in spite of themselves.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to work,
And filled all the mangers, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger aside his nose,
And giving a nod, up the hay loft he rose.

He sprang to his Sleigh, to his team gave a big HO! HO!
And away they galloped like a herd of buffalo.
But they heard him exclaim, 'ere he hoofed out of sight,
"Merry Christmas to Leatherwood, and to all a good-night!"

By Phil Rash

Horseback Adventures From Mary Lew

There are many reasons us horse-folk enjoy being around our equine friends. One of them is the excitement horses bring. You just never quite know what any ride is going to have in store for you and your horse. I've had several riding adventures these past few months. Sit back and relax and I'll share one of my stories with you....

One particular evening this past June comes to mind. I dated a gentleman for a few months this summer and this date was early in our relationship. He had never ridden a horse before, but was interested in learning how. I suggested we take a trail ride when the rhododendron were blooming. So, we tacked up two trusty trail horses and went to the riding arena so that I could give him a crash course (no pun intended) in horseback riding. He caught on fine except for the getting-on part. He had a little trouble swinging his leg over, but managed well enough. Off we went....

At the top of Dan'l Boone trail (at the pretty lookout

spot), we stopped for a few minutes to enjoy the view and a few refreshing beverages that we had packed in the saddlebags. After a while, the sun began to set and it was time to head home. My companion remembered the difficulty he experienced at the barn when he got on the horse, and was prepared this time. So was I. I went around and held the other side of his saddle to keep it steady while he got on. He took a big, big leap, went to swing his leg over, and his leg and the REST OF HIM came flying over the saddle, clobbering me and knocking us both to the ground. His horse took one look at us, realized he was no longer being held, and promptly ran off down the trail, leaving us stranded and taking the refreshing beverages with him.

After a long hike back down the mountain, we met Hugh in the meadow. He was on the four-wheeler and, upon seeing the horse arriving (sans rider) back at the barn, left the volleyball game to come and look for us. Everyone had a good laugh, especially the horse.

Agricultural Center Proposed for Wilkes County

Efforts have started for establishment of an equine and agricultural center in Wilkes County.

"We're only five weeks into the process so it's a grassroots effort at this point," said Mary Lew Johnston of Ferguson, chairman of a newly-created committee seeking the complex.

Ms. Johnston said the concept at this point includes a coliseum with a fully-enclosed main arena seating 3,500 to 4,000 people, as well as a smaller covered arena with open sides.

Both arenas would have riding rings and primarily be for equestrian and various livestock events. Horseback riders and other participants could warm up in the smaller arena to prepare for events in the larger one.

Ms. Johnston said the complex should have a significant local economic impact due to the number of people it should bring from out of town.

She said organizers envision a complex comparable to the Senator Bob Martin Eastern Agricultural Center in Williamston, NC.

Leatherwood Advertising Takes to the Skies !!

We are excited to announce that the Boone and Blowing Rock areas will be featured in the January 2008 issue of *US Airways Magazine*, the award-winning in-flight magazine of US Airways. Leatherwood Mountains is running an ad in conjunction with the articles!

This 20 page editorial feature is intended to inform a global audience how our rich history, natural beauty, and thriving tourism and business communities make us the Heart of the High Country! *US Airways Magazine*,

Profile: Boone/Blowing Rock will spotlight how our education and health-care resources, business opportunities, real estate, and tourism all create an outstanding quality of life here in the Appalachian Mountains.

US Airways Magazine (formerly known as *Attaché*) reaches an impressive audience of more than 3 million affluent business and leisure travelers each month and currently operates 4,386 daily flights to more than 200 cities in 36 countries.

A TIME TO GIVE *Local Family needs our help*

For the POA's Christmas giving project this year, we have decided to address a need in our community. Dennis "Clay" Watson's family are dedicated members of Buffalo Cove Baptist Church (across the street from Todd's Store). Clay (age 44) was diagnosed with cancer in October and sadly, died November 20. His wife, Cristal, 8 year old Dylan and 4 year old Cade, are left precious memories of a loving husband and father.

As our special Christmas giving this year, we are collecting financial contributions to be given to this family. Cristal said they would be very grateful. Contributing to this family would be a wonderful way to share love at Christmas time (or any time!).

If you write a check, please make it to Leatherwood Property Owner's Association and note that it is "Watson family gift" You may either bring it with you to the POA Christmas party, Dec. 22 at Saddlebrook, drop it off at the Welcome Center, or mail it to the LWPOA, Leatherwood Mountains, 512 Meadow Road, Ferguson, NC 28624.

Thank you so much for your caring and generosity.

"WELCOME", LEATHERWOOD

by Nancy Harrell

Late this Summer a cat came calling. He stayed at one of our rental homes and was being fed by the family that rented the house. Where he came from or what his history is we will never know. He finally ended up at the Welcome Center.

Vera and I were discussing our new family member & she suggested naming him Leatherwood. The name just seemed to fit. Leatherwood or LW has taken on the position of official Leatherwood Greeter.

He seems to love everyone, especially kids.

Next time you are at the Welcome Center drop in and see if Leatherwood doesn't do his job and escort you to the door. If you have a minute, reach down and give him a pat, and see if he doesn't give you a "Welcome to Leatherwood grin!"



Leatherwood the cat

A WEDDING IN THE WORKS!

Trevor Whitson of Leatherwood & Caroline Cruse of Winston Salem are engaged to be married! The proposal took place at Myung & Burdett Pulver's Creekside Cabin on December 7th. They set their special date for November 8th 2008. They will be exchanging their vows here at Leatherwood. Congratulations to the happy couple!

SWAP SHOP

Seminole's Windy - 12 Year Old Triple Registered Tobiano TWH-BEA Mare. \$3500 or trade for comparable Gelding. This Mare was purchased from a Leatherwood Home Owner who boarded her at Leatherwood about 4 years ago. She has lots of mountain endurance, great ground manners, loads and clips. Call Jim or Carol Preston 252-945-6284, carol_shick@yahoo.com

Leatherwood Horse Trail Rides has a few seasoned trail horses that have been in our riding program for sale. Please inquire at the barn or call Hugh 336-973-5044

LEATHERWOOD

MOUNTAINS

512 Meadow Road
Ferguson, NC 28624