

September 5, 2001

To: Whom It May Concern

I am writing to report on the Stock Dog Clinic that the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund (PRADF) helped to sponsor. It was a very successful venture with much more interest than had originally been anticipated.

I had applied to do two clinics; however, ended up having three because there was so much interest.

We had ranchers from Flatrock, Montney, Buick Creek, Bear Canyon, Grande Prairie, Chetwynd, Fort St. John and the Pink Mountain areas. Everyone went home feeling that they had benefited by learning how to work their dog and the stock properly.

The clinics were held at Pink Mountain at my ranch from the 1st to the 9th of June. During this time, we worked dogs rain or shine. We have an airplane hanger so we were able to stay dry while watching our instructor. Herbert (the instructor) worked with everyone on an individual basis. He would go into the field with each person, evaluate them and their dog and explain how to get the dog to work properly. Everyone else listened and watched so they benefited from the other people's instructions as well.

We used three sheep per person and learned how to bring them, drive them, or move them to a selected location.

As a direct result of these clinics we did a demonstration and dog trial at the North Peace Fall Fair this year. The clinic gave most of us enough confidence to go out in front of a big crowd and show the people what a trained stock dog can do. Most people have no idea what a useful hired hand they can be. We had very positive feed-back from the spectators at the Fair and have been asked to come again next year. This is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to the agriculture community what a valuable asset a working stock dog is. They are truly a useful and integral part of handling livestock properly.

We have had lots of inquiries about this type of clinic for next year already. Hopefully we are able to tap into the resources of the PRADF and bring a trainer of this caliber into the country again. Herbert is currently one of the top handlers in North America and is judging the US Supreme trials this year. We feel privileged to have been able to learn from his expertise.

On several occasions since the clinic we have met at different places, worked our dogs and helped each other. By doing this, the beginner handler continues to learn from the ones more advanced. It also allows us to pass our knowledge on to other interested people. It makes a win-win situation.

I will close by saying we had excellent clinics, and again, we were pleased that we had more people involved than was originally anticipated. The clinic was affordable to the rancher and farmer because of the grant we received from the PRADF. We would like to thank you for the opportunity we had, and say everyone went home very happy and much more knowledgeable.

Thank you.

Pam Boring

*Pam Boring*

August 5, 2002

To: Whom It May Concern

I am writing to report on the Stock Dog Clinics that the Peace River Agriculture Development Fund helped sponsor. Once again we had very successful clinics.

We drew people from all parts of the agricultural community. As a result of the advertising through Kate O'Neil of the Peace River Agriculture Strategic Planning Society people attended from Flatrock, Dawson Creek, Baldonnel, Montney, Pink Mountain, Hudson Hope, Onoway, Alta. and Sunset Prairie, Alta. Without exception, every one of us felt we learned a tremendous amount and went home to work our stock properly.

The clinics were held at my ranch at Pink Mountain from June 25th - July 1st. We applied for three clinics but because of time scheduling with Herbert (our instructor from Texas) decided to condense it into two clinics with longer days. We still covered the same amount of time.

Herbert works everyone on an individual basis. He starts the clinic out by getting everyone to work their dogs on the sheep and he watches. He then evaluates the dog and the handler and shows him/her what to do and the next step in the training program. Everyone else watches, listens or asks questions. In this way everyone is learning and not just the person and dog that is working.

We use three sheep per person/dog pair. We learn how to bring the sheep, how to drive them away from us and how to put side command on the dogs. This year we had several young dogs that were very aggressive. We ended up holding the sheep in one spot and having the pups circle the sheep so things didn't get out of control. The young dogs learned how to lay down, stay back, not dive in and bite the sheep and bring the sheep to the handler in a quiet and non-aggressive way.

The older dogs that had some training on them were of course better behaved and carried on with their training. They learned how to pace, how to work at longer distances, and how to work on whistles and voice commands. It is amazing how smart the stock dogs are and how fast they learn if the handler just has the knowledge to teach them. That is what the clinics are for; the handler, as well as the dog.

This year we are once again putting on a demonstration and small trial at the North Peace Fall Fair. The clinic enabled us to have the control to be able to take the dogs and sheep out into a crowd and have the confidence to be able to work them. This shows the agricultural community just what a trained stock dog can do. Most people do not realize what a valuable asset a working stock dog can be. By demonstrations and small trials we can show more of the agricultural communities how to move their stock in a quiet and orderly manner.

On several occasions we have met and worked dogs since the clinic. The more advanced trainers have helped get the younger dogs started. Several of us have gone to some of the small agricultural days like Beaverlodge and Bonanza. By doing these demonstrations and small trials we continue to show the agricultural communities how to use dogs as a working partner. We have had a request from Dawson Creek to put on a demonstration there. These things are all direct results of our grant from PRADA.

The clinics were affordable to the ranchers and stockmen because of the PRADA grant. It is nice to be able to tap into some of the resources that the more populated communities take for granted. As a result of the grant, we could afford to bring Herbert (a top instructor) to our rural areas. We would like to thank PRADA for giving us the opportunity to bring in an instructor of Herbert's caliber and making it affordable to the rancher.

Sincerely,

Pam Boring