

FORAGE FIRST

"Published by the Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia"

Thirty Seventh Edition

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\$10.00

Another Winter Season of Successful Activities!!



Newly Minted: The first group of trained Environmental Farm Planners for B.C. outstanding in their field in early winter at Abbotsford. Our star is third from the left.



Country Grace performing at the February Forage Fund Raiser at Tower Lake in February.



Bob Ivey, President of Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders and Herb Lock, Farm Sense Marketing, Edmonton bonding with the audience at January Winter Forage Seminar in Taylor.

The Branding The Peace Country Association

The train is leaving the station with Branding the Peace and it is time to get on board!! AGM on Friday, April 16th in Grande Prairie at the new Holiday Inn 9:00am - 4:00pm.

If you are in the cattle or forage business in the Alberta or B.C. Peace River Country there is a seat reserved for you in first class; but, you have to get to the station on time to catch the train. Contact Doris, Frances or Bill at (250)782-5745 for further information.

peacebeef.superior

If you are interested in participating in a five year market development pilot project to sell cattle and beef in one of the following value added forms:

- ★ Preconditioned calves (weaned, a defined veterinary procedure including necessary vaccinations, put on feed for 8 weeks.)
- ★ Backgrounded Calves (available as short yearlings at 9 - 10 months ready to enter feed lot)
- ★ Grass Cattle (short yearlings that have been coasted thru winter to maximize summer green grass).
- ★ Grass Yearlings (long yearlings at 15 - 20 months).
- ★ Finished B.C. Peace Country Beef or Veal.

Please contact: Glenn Hogberg (250)843-7653; John Kendrew (250)786-5652; Bill Wilson (250) 782-2866

Thank You Advisory Committee

Each year our advisors individually and collectively are quite thoughtful and helpful in assisting our Forage Association with programs and projects.

So we are taking this opportunity to hand out a great **Big Thank You** to:

Doris Brocke, Kiwanis Enterprise Centre, Dawson Creek; **Rod Carlyon**, AAFRD, Westlock; **Rob Davidson**, Keddies Tack and Western Wear, Grande Prairie; **Jim Forbes**, BCMAFF, Fort St. John; **Karen Goodings**, PRRD, Dawson Creek; **Ross Green**, B.C. Ministry of Forests, Dawson Creek; **Brett Henschel**, PFRA, Dawson Creek; **Duane McCartney**, Western Forage Beef Group, Lacombe; **Bruce Rutley**, Boreal R & D, Fairview; **Tom Volz**, Lil Dudes Tack and Feed, Fort St. John.

Ladies and gentlemen your many efforts on behalf of our Association are greatly appreciated.

Environmental Farm Planning in the B.C. Peace River Country

Now that we have Julie Robinson trained as an Environmental Farm Planner, our Association members can take advantage of the program beginning in May. For Complete up to date information please check out our website.

Winter Forage Seminar Speakers Highlights

Please check our website for summarized and interesting information from our speakers on January 27th; Herb Lock, Bob Ivey, Sarah Davies, Andrew Breunig and Ernest Nimitz.



All the cows in the B.C. Peace River Country are Happy Cows. There is not a single angry cow to be found anywhere!

VIPs

R&D projects, seminars and tours made possible in 2003 by:

Funding Partners

Soil Conservation Council Canada (SCCC) -
GreenHouse Gas Mitigation Program (GHGMP)
BC Ministry of Agriculture Food & Fishers
(BCMAFF)
PFRA Agriculture Canada & Agri Foods Canada
BC Investment Agriculture Funds (BCIAF)
Peace River Agriculture Development Fund (PRAD)
Beef Cattle Industry Development (BCID)

In Cooperation With

Abbotsford Soil Conservation Association
Peace River Soil Conservation Association
North Peace Forage Association
South Peace Forage Association
Northern Lights College
Kiwanis Enterprise Centre
BC Agriculture Council

Industry Sponsors

Ducks Unlimited Canada
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Keddies Tack & Western Wear, Grande Prairie
Kenver Equipment
Pickseed Canada
Prairie Seed
South Peace Seed Cleaning Coop
Rolla Agriculture Services
Farm Credit
Dow AgroSciences, Edmonton
Eveco / Fibreco
Peace Tractor
Bale Jockeys, Prince George
EBA Engineering Consultants, Lethbridge
City of Fort St John
District of Taylor
Peace River Regional District (PRRD)
Dawson Co-op Home and Agro

Also made possible by the generous support of our members

Our Association is grateful to all of these very important people for their assistance.

Peace River Forage Association of BC

Goods & Services Auction 2004

Auctioneer Services donated by Weaver Brothers Auctions Ltd
 Beef Supper courtesy of Talisman Energy & Peace River Forage Association of BC
 Entertainment provided by Country Grace & Wayne Ezeard

ITEM	DONATED BY	BOUGHT BY
2004 Spider Benji Creature	Ben Hansen	Kelly Skelhorne
2004 Spider Baby Benji Creature	Ben Hansen	Pat Strasky
Surprise Box for Woman	Rainey Ranch	Tim VanDenHeuvel
Surprise Box for Man	Rainey Ranch	Tim VanDenHeuvel
Peace Country Honey (17 lb pail)	Peace River Forage Assn.	Harvey Wiles
Used Chain Harrows	Peace River Forage Assn.	Darwin Linford
Bundle of 20 Barley Straw Square Bales	Nick Parsons	Heather Fossum
Bundle of 20 Barley Straw Square Bales	Nick Parsons	Pat Gerlinsky
Home Made Pies	Wilma Hansen	Ruby McBeth
Home Made Pies	Wilma Hansen	Steve Rainey
Peace Country Honey (17 lb pail)	North Peace Apiaries	Harvey Wiles
1 Load Pit Run Gravel	Reg Norman & John Kendrew	Mel Jobson
Pro Goal Hockey Net, Red	Kiskatinaw River Ranch	Sandra Burton
Child's Hand Knit Cable Sweater & Toque	Gertrude Blank	Sue Hansen
2 Prints of Buckrake & Horse Mower	Wilp/Har Farm	Pat Gerlinsky
Horse Shoe Quilt Rack	John & Janine Welsh	Harvey Wiles
Bag (25 kg) Cattlemen's Grazing/Hay Mixture	G.Morrone, Pickseed Canada	Ben Hansen
Water Tank from Aerway (100 gal)	Peace River Forage Assn.	Heather Fossum
Water Tank from Aerway (100 gal)	Peace River Forage Assn.	Mel Jobson
Reed Canary Grass Seed (25 kg bag)	Gramineae Farms (Hadlands)	Arnold Bennett
Chocolate Dessert - (winner Chocolate Fest 2003)	Carla & Mike Cowger	Monte Bentley
John Deere Grandpa Lap Robe or Baby Blanket	Nelda Bennett	Doug Katerberg
Buy BC Beef Certificate	Peace River Regional Cattlemens Assn.	Connie Shortt
20 Bags (25 kg) of Fortified Salt	Keddies Tack & Western Wear	Dennis Madden
Wooden Child's Pouting Chair	Arnold & Nelda Bennett	Sandra Burton
Electric Fence Fencer (Stinger AC+ 110 volt)	Dawson Co-op Union	Julie Robinson
Wooden Crafted Work Bench (by Johnny Dennis)	Paul & Barb Cowger	Chuck Sutherland
A Rusty Old Fieldhand for a Day	Keith Carroll	Dennis Madden
Garden Manure (5 tonne load + delivery)	Sunrise Stock Farms	Arthur Hadland
Healthy Weekend Get Away for 2 in Tumbler Ridge	Michele Burton	Dennis Madden
Framed Picture on Hide of Elk (16" x 20")	John & Dorothy McCloroy	Conny Forbes
4 Green Feed Oat Bales (to be picked up)	Harvey Wood	Arnold Bennett
Homemade Buns	Margaret Wood	Ruby McBeth
Homemade Buns	Margaret Wood	Ernie Fuhr
Homemade Buns	Margaret Wood	Sandra Burton
Asian Meal for 8 (Thai, Nepali, Indonesian or Indian)	Kabzems Family	Barb Cowger
Oil Painting of a Deer (framed 12" x 16")	Lois Foster	Larry Fossum
Parkland Pasture Seed Mix #1 (55 lb bag)	Wayne Ezeard, Prairie Seeds	Dennis Madden
Discount on Usborne Book Party	Conny Forbes	Pat Strasky

ITEM	DONATED BY	BOUGHT BY
Hand Knit Baby Bonnet & Sweater	Gertrude Blank	Sue Hansen
Gravel (3/4 minus - delivery within 1 hr Taylor)	Tom Ostero	Dick Katerberg
Family Fun Day (dogsled rides & steak supper)	Allan Blair	Arnold Bennett
Genuine Homestead Barbwire (1metric tonne)	Kiskatinaw River Ranch	Allen Pratt
Box of Grass Fed Beef (25 lb sampler package)	Rainey Ranch	Conny Forbes
Bag (25 kg) Certified Boreal Creeping Red Fescue	Ken Emes, Goodlow	Dick Katerberg
Hand Painted Rock with Chickens	Bonnie Collins	Dick Katerberg
Dirt Ladies Outstanding in Your Field	Sandy Traichel, Julie Robinson & Sandy Burton	Rainey Ranch
2 Bundles of Raspberry & Strawberry Plants	Chuck & Pat Sutherland	Allen Pratt
Pen & Ink & Watercolour Wheel Painting	Barb McLean	Ruby McBeth
Hand Crafted Intarsia Hawk on Walnut Picture	Dale & Sue Hansen	Conny Forbes
Horse Training & Pleasure Riding Session	Kiskatinaw River Ranch	Pat Strasky
Feeding Rations Package (orientation +sampling)	Bill Wilson & Sandra Burton	Darwin Linford
Flight in a PA 12 Super Cruise over the Peace	Ernie Fuhr	Ben Hansen
Pen & Ink Drawing of Belgium Horse Team	Sally Beale	Arnold Bennett
Portable Buddex Calf Dehorer	Viggo & Doreen Pedersen	Harvey Wood
One of a Kind Bucking Barrel	Kiskatinaw River Ranch	Arlene Blair
SILENT AUCTION ITEMS	DONATED BY	BOUGHT BY
2 Bundles of Raspberry & Strawberry Plants	Chuck & Pat Sutherland	Carla Cowger
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Kelly Skelhorne
Hand Crafted Knife	Bill Studley	Lorne McBeth
Birch Bark Basket	John & Dorothy McCloroy	Sharon Bell
Hand Knit Men's Work Socks	Gertrude Blank	Ruby McBeth
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Ben Hansen
Stubble Jumper Game	HK Safety Ltd., FSJ	Colleen Linford
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Ben Hansen
Homemade Buns (2 dozen)	Margaret Wood	Sandra Burton
Hand Painted Rock with Cowboy Boots	Bonnie Collins	Connie Forbes
Brass Long Horn Bottle Opener	Lorne & Ruby McBeth	Jim Forbes
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Ben Hansen
Self Focussing Binnoculars	S. Hartnell & J. Robinson	Dick Katerberg
Oscar the Ouch	Chariot Sweet Creations	Dan Bell
Dinosaur Day in Tumbler Ridge	Michele Burton	Alec Robinson
20 Bags of Fortified Salt	Keddies Tack & Western Wear	Arnold Bennett
Hand Knit Baby Dress	Gertrude Blank	Colleen Giesbrecht
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Ben Hansen
Horse Training & Pleasure Riding Session	Kiskatinaw River Ranch	Jim Forbes
Fertilizer	Peace River Forage Assn.	Ben Hansen
Fertilizer Surprise Bags	Peace River Forage Assn.	Jim Forbes
Raggedy Judy Anne Doll	Judy Bentley	Sarah Davies
TABLE CENTER TOONEY DRAWS	DONATED BY	WON BY
Hand Made Soaps Basket	Maureen Hummel	
Bath & Spa Basket	Rainey Ranch	Christine Clarke
Gift Basket	Colleen Giesbrecht	Julie Robinson
Specialty Honeys Basket	Van Han Apiaries	Julie Robinson
Home Made Jams & Tea Basket	Barbra & Barry Sones	Barb Cowger
Coffee Lovers Basket	S. Davies & J. Robinson	Allan Blair
<p>Thank you very much to all our donors, purchasers and supporters</p> <p>who helped make our Association fund raiser a huge success.</p>		

Rainey Ranch: Gross Margins & Grazing Management

Sarah Davies gave a presentation at our annual January Seminar "Surviving in the Times: Innovative Ranching Strategies to Match the Changing Times and Demands of the Market" about the Rainey ranch and how it is managed to maintain a profit with the current changing cattle markets. The Rainey ranch is located in Lone Prairie, owned by Steve Rainey and Sarah Davies, and is primarily operated by Sarah. They own approximately 200 Black Angus cow/calf pairs and operate on 2000 acres. As the past 2 years have been dry and they are expecting another dry year, they have recently been adding more fences and watering systems. Challenges other than the weather include; single operator to do daily chores, competing with the wildlife and of course BSE.

First thing first; Sarah explained how they calculated the gross margin for the cow/calf (selling price minus input costs) on the ranch. She broke it down telling us that the fluctuating market dictated the selling price, but input costs were within the producer's control, emphasizing that we had to know what the primary expenses were in order to reduce them. The Rainey Ranch's primary expense was winter-feeding; so extending the grazing season would help reduce that cost.

In order to reduce input costs, they changed their calving from winter to May calving. May calving allowed the pastures to be growing and available when the cattle needed highest nutrients intake as opposed to winter calving when highest needs are when it is coldest and cattle are being fed. May calving also reduces calf losses due to weather conditions.

Changes in the fencing infrastructure also had to be installed to allow better utilization of the grasses. In 2003 seven miles of inexpensive permanent Electric fence was put in at approximately \$500/mile, this enabled utilization of every acre on the farm. By using the information gathered at seminars and schools the Rainey Ranch began to transform their ranch to a forage paradise. Next watering systems had to be installed, as they are the limiting factor as to where the cattle will graze. In 2003 a new central watering system was installed as well as

some summer watering lines that were plowed in with PFRA pasture pipeline plow. Sarah's goal is to have remote winter watering systems available to remote areas of the ranch to enable extended grazing.

The ranch is set up with alleyways to enable 200 head to move easily with one person. Sarah has trained the cows to move with a whistle in the summer. Swath grazing has also been utilized on the ranch to extend the time the cows are in the field and decrease the winter-feeding costs.

However as it is with all best laid plans there are always a few unexpected challenges as there was in late winter 2003. Snow came in October, putting 150 acres of stockpiled grass under snow and making it hard to utilize. The Elk moved into the swath grazing which forced the cows out into the field to compete for the swaths. All these changes have lead to the cattle being ahead of the feeding schedule but one thing about stockpiled forages is they should still be there for early spring grazing.

Changes were also made to the Rainey Ranch marketing strategies; they started marketing some grass finished beef, as well as selling backgrounded calves in May and yearlings in the fall as they come off the grass. Marketing at these times enables the risk of fluctuating market to be spread out as well as allow for a steady flow of cash. The marketing of grass finished beef was a way to get away from being reliant on the packer and the feedlots, this was a way to add value to the product and sell locally.

The survival strategies on the Rainey Ranch include minimizing inputs, increasing grazing days, changing marketing strategies, accessing new markets and preserving resources. Sarah stated that their ranch has to make a profit but not at an expense to the land and the environment. As the market and the demands of the people changes so must the producer and their management techniques

2004 Schedule of Services Offered by PRFA of BC

Nose Pumps:

Contact: Glenn Hogberg (250) 843 7653

There are 3 nose pumps (Eider, Lister and Aquamat) available from PRFA of BC. If you are interested in trying out any of these out for a season contact Glenn for more details.

AerWay:

Contact Chuck Sutherland (250) 780 2221

The 12' AerWay aerator with chain harrows and cement weights is available for rent. The current rates are \$2.50/ac for members and \$3.00/ac new members. Renters are responsible for transport from last location unless otherwise negotiated with Chuck (for example crossing the Peace River).

Wire spooler:

Contact Pat Gerlinsky (250) 759 4038

This 12 volt wire spooler is great for rolling up barb wire, and will work on high tensile wire also. Rate: \$25 /day

Pipe Line Plough:

Contact Brett Henschel (250) 782 3116

This enables placement of water pipe up to a 1 foot deep up to ½ mile from water source. It is currently available for demonstrations rent free. Contact Brett or Julie Robinson at (250) 759 4411 for more information on setting up a demo.

40' Dutch Anhydrous Applicator

Contact Art Funk (250) 759 4769

This unit enables placement of anhydrous ammonium into stubble or grass stands with less nitrogen losses to the air.

Breunig Ranch: Changes to Survive

The Breunig Buffalo Ranch is located on the Golatta Creek Rd, north of the Clayhurst crossing; and is managed by Andrew Breunig. The ranch consists of 6300 acres of cultivated land, 1500 acres uncultivated land and approximately 1400 head of buffalo. Andrew's presentation summarized his ranch management over the past 3 years, describing his critical decisions, the results of these decisions and the lessons he learned from managing livestock in a changing market.

In 2001 there was no indication of production cutbacks, no sign of products being marketed for the industry growth and a continual decline in fat prices. Andrew decided to keep open cows and hoped the prices would go up, this decision did not enable flexibility in ranch management and resulted in reduction in spending for the ranch as a whole.

In 2002 things were still not looking up in the buffalo market, costs had to be cut as income was non-existent; so the choice was made to stop the deworming and fertilizing programs for 2002. The stocking densities were left high and to top it all off the rain did not come when it was needed or in amounts necessary for sustainable pasture growths. The results were not encouraging, there were less calves, lighter calves, more open cows and overgrazed and damaged pastures in the fall of 2002.

It was time for action, they killed and marketed the whole cow herd, as the cost of raising a calf was \$350 and its value was \$60-\$150. They bought the calf they couldn't afford to raise and a heifer for every cow sold. By purchasing the younger stock the ranch had more options; it now had a marketable inventory that was capable of breeding when the market changed again. Young stock was both flexible and profitable with the current markets. It was hard to take the hit but in retrospect, he would have taken the hit sooner as it relieved the ranching management and personal stresses. Andrew says, "If raising the calf doesn't pay, sell the cow."

Changes in the grass management were made in 2003; stocking densities were adjusted to match optimal grass utilization by the buffalo. By utilizing all of the grass for grazing, and extending the grazing season, he was able to reduce winter-feeding. The results were great, even though low and late rainfall in 2003, the pastures grew when the rain came in late July. Andrew made sure not to overgraze the paddocks and was rewarded with double the pasture yields he would have had if he had hayed the land. He was also able to stockpile forages for winter grazing and early spring grazing. 300 head of Buffalo were on pasture until Jan 21, 2004 and 300 more head went out to ungrazed pasture in January and there is still stockpiled grass available for May grazing.

Andrew emphasized the importance of managing your grass and not overgrazing the pastures. He would rather destock than overgraze, as the consequences are far greater for his operation if his yields are reduced. His plans are to feed for 2 months of the year; reducing the costs of winter-feeding. His long-term goals are to prevent rejuvenation altogether as every time the field is worked the profit is decreased on the calf. By adding legumes to mineral mixes, he will be able to keep the nitrogen fixing plants abundant and decrease his fertilizer bill.

Currently Andrew had 800 cows and 125 breeding heifers to replace cows; 400 yearlings being fed for butcher; and 400 calves being fed, which will be going to grass early this spring. Presently the ranch is in survival mode, no hired men and a small margin of profit. Turning over stock has enabled the ranch to continue to make some money and accumulate inventory for market changes.

The key concepts Andrew shared from his experiences are; take the hit in the first year, purchase or own a class of livestock that is profitable and marketable in the current markets, watch the market for good times to buy in again, look at all your alternatives, and keep in mind selling hay is a profit that just might help you get through some tough times. He reminded the producers to think differently and that marketing your product differently can allow your ranch to survive.

2004 Schedule of Services Offered by PRFA of BC - Continued

Water Pumping Service:

Contact Brett Henschel or Brian Haddow (250) 782 3116

BC Peace Region Pump and Pipe Program continue to make this valuable service available for farmers and ranchers to pump water and recharge their dugouts. Three Berkley irrigation pumps and 3 miles of 6" irrigation pipe are made available to the public. This supply of equipment, pumps and the 30" lengths of 6" irrigation pipe have the ability to handle most dugout filling projects and many other pumping jobs. The Berkley pumps are driven by a 540 PTO drive. The pump has the ability to discharge 1000 gpm with an elevation lift of 10 feet. Longer pumping distances and/or increases in elevation will reduce the amount of discharge.

These rental rates apply to the 1st day of rental:

\$250/ 1 st day	one pump & one mile of pipe
\$250/ 1 st day	pump only
\$250/ 1 st day	one mile of pipe only
\$100/ 1 st day	additional pump <i>at time of delivery</i>
\$250/ 1 st day	additional mile of pipe <i>at time of delivery</i>

Additional days rental costs:

\$250/ day	one pump & one mile pipe
\$100/ day	pump only
\$250/ day	per mile of pipe

Note: a \$50 surcharge will be added to the total owing if the bill is not paid when the equipment is picked up. Please check for confirmation of rates.

20' Flexicoil 8000 Air Drill

Contact John Kendrew (250) 786 5652

This drill has double shoot Barton openers and is being used to direct seed forage crops and/or place fertilizer into forage stands. It will be available for rent by members, once demonstration plot commitments are met. Rates are subject to change dependent on tractor lease and operator costs. Travel costs are also paid by each renter.

Coming Events

- May BC Cattlemen's AGM May 13 & 14, 2004** in Prince George, BC at Prince George Civic Centre. Early Bird Registration must be received by April 7. Cost: \$125 single or \$200 couple plus GST. More info: glenbirnam@look.ca Hosted by the BC Cattlemen's Association.
- June Annual Summer Forage & Livestock Tour - June 19, 2004.**
Organized by the Peace River Forage Assn of B.C. This year we will be touring the Montney area. We will be visiting many farms including Bickfords, Cusacks and Cowgers.
- Lacombe Pasture School June 15 - 17, 2004** at Lacombe Research Centre For more info: (403)782-8030.
- July Workshop on Cost of Equipment.** Sponsored by PRFA of BC.
- Aug. Remote Water Systems & Riparian Management Tour Aug 11, 2004.**
Organized by the Peace River Forage Assn. of BC and Ducks Unlimited.
Featuring 10 different watering systems, tour of many riparian areas and a direct seeding site.
Areas to be visited will range from East Pine to Swan Lake.
For more info call Julie Robinson 250-759- 4411.
- Sept. Workshop on Nutrition & Feeding costs.** Sponsored by PRFA of.
- Nov. Lowcost Cow/Calf School Nov 9 - 12, 2004** in Lacombe, AB.
For more info go to <http://www.lowcostcowcalf.com> or 1-800-575-0864
- Dec. Western Canadian Grazing Conference Dec. 8-10, 2004** at Edmonton, AB
For more info call: 780-915-1751 or 1 866 -882- 7677.



Please check into our website regularly for updated information on our coming events.

www.peaceforage.bc.ca



2004 Directors of the Peace River Forage Association of British Columbia

"Dedicated to putting forage first in the hearts, minds and pocketbooks of livestock producers and other forage enthusiasts"

Chuck Sutherland	Darwin Linford	Bill Wilson	Sarah Davies	Ernest Nimitz	Michael Cowger	John Kendrew
President	Vice President	Treasurer	Secretary	Director	Director	Director
780-2221	827-3222	782-2866	788-1970	843-2300	787-1790	786-5652

Committee Chairmen: Wildlife Policy Paul Cowger 827-3859 ;R & D-Glenn Hogberg 843-7653;

Management Committee John Kendrew; Communications and Information - Ernest Nimitz;

Forage Coordinator -Sandra Burton 789-6885; Forage Fieldwoman - Julie Robinson 759-4411;Website Design - Kim Strasky 789-6885