

# Kid's Korner

## Farewell, Mr. Blacksmith

A customer came into the shop with a relative I had never met. He had left home in his youth to work in a distant city. After this man came in, the usually quiet mare would not stand still. The visitor recognized her as his old buggy mare. They had a happy reunion after which she was calm. It would have broken her heart not to have been remembered. They had not seen each other since she was 5 or 6 years old. She was then about 12.

The horse's action in the presence of his current or former owner gives a most reliable and unbiased appraisal of the owner's character. The character of the horse is more evident than the character of the human being.

While horses seem to remember people indefinitely, they seem to be less able to remember other horses. After a separation of up to six months a horse may not recognize his former teammate or a mare recognize her own colt. The horse's reunion with the family and family dog would, chances are, just simply resume as if he had never been away. If he had liked the family dog he would be delighted to see him again. If he had disliked the dog he would resume his efforts to kick him into orbit. He could easily be fond of one dog and dislike another.

A customer bought a team of practically worthless bay geldings for nearly nothing. They were handsome five-year-olds in good shape, but they pulled a wagon like a plow (slowly), and balked at much of a load. In a few months they were a premium team and he sold them back to their former owner at a premium price. This first owner soon learned he had bought back exactly what he had previously sold. Some people cannot get anything but trouble from a horse.

Too much help can enslave some people, thus becoming counter

productive. This is never a problem with horses. Horses are eager to please and always delighted to respond to a kindness. They share the owner's grief or laughter. The person who has difficulty working with a horse seems to expect the horse to be as smart as he is. In his case, he may be right.

We had a large dapple gray gelding I'd like to tell you about. He was black when he was colt and completely gray at about 12 years of age. One day when we had him hitched to a sled loaded with a roll



of fence, two men stopped to admire him. They asked about his cooperation and I offered to demonstrate. In advance I told them that by voice I would direct him to and around a well about 100 yards away. While he was circling the well he would stop, take two steps, stop, start again and return. Enroute back, even though he was fast gaited, he would slow to a creep when most horses would normally speed up. He proved as good as I claimed. He was glad all over when we congratulated each

other. He knew we were showing off and got as big a bang out of his performance as I did. His name was Prince.

Prince was teamed with his full sister. She was a blood bay and one year older. Her name was Beauty. They delighted in amazing me with their understanding and capabilities. To be more effective in starting a heavy load I noticed that Beauty would anchor and Prince would start it. It is fun when you realize your team is teaching you. Their names, which became so appropriate, were suggested by Mama shortly after their births. They never know other than a mutual love and respect for our family. It is always pleasing to honor a mutual bond of faith.

The advent of the truck gradually decreased the demand for shoeing horses and setting wagon wheel tires. In the late 1920's and early 1930's the tractor became prominent. More ground was being utilized. More plowshares were being pointed by the smiths. They were probably never busier than in 1940 just before World War II. During this war, the farm implement manufacturers introduced a recyclable plowshare. This was the final curtain call for the blacksmith shops in the farming communities.

The recyclable plowshare was designed because of the many times this boy's back became tired from pointing them. From day one of this hard work I knew there had to be a better way. I made the first

three, and the first observers considered them to be ridiculous. Had it not been for the shortage of labor during World War II it may never have been accepted. A better way, when accepted, is always progress.

The last of the smiths I knew passed away in 1972. Each one was a friend of mine. If we could salvage their dignity and pride, our crime and welfare problems

would be reduced materially.

While the career of most smiths began after they were 30, mine terminated at 22. For me, every career and profession since has been interesting, but in my heart I never left the blacksmith shop. I hope the current generation enjoys its youth as much as I did and can have fun sharing it as I have with you. It was a delight for me to participate in this era.

## Raisin, the pet Dalmation



Ryan, 11, Anna, 8, and Ben Cruzan, 6, have a pretty spotted friend. This Dalmatian, christened Raisin, likes to warm his toes by the fire. They write that Raisin is their favorite animal because they've had him the longest and they can play with him. He likes to pull on a rag while they hold the other end. He can even pull their mom. Their parents, Diane and Daniel Cruzan, also let the proud owners of Raisin have a rabbit, a duck and several chickens. Thanks go to the Cruzan children for sharing a picture of their pet with us. Now kids, how about you? Don't you have a picture of your pet with us. Now kids, how about you? Don't you have a picture of your favorite pet. Share it with us. Send it to Kid's Korner along with your age, name, address and a little information about your pet.

# 4-H

## COLOR THIS!

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|-----------|---------------|
| 1. BLACK  | 6. PINK       |
| 2. RED    | 7. GREEN      |
| 3. YELLOW | 8. LT. BROWN  |
| 4. BLUE   | 9. LT. BLUE   |
| 5. BROWN  | 10. LT. GREEN |

**MARK TWAIN: HIS REAL NAME WAS SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS, BUT MOST PEOPLE KNEW HIM AS MARK TWAIN. HIS FIRST LITERARY SUCCESS WAS "THE CELEBRATED FROG OF CALAVERAS COUNTY." HIS BOOK "THE ADVENTURES OF TOM SAWYER" WAS AMONG THE MOST IMPORTANT BOOKS EVER PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES.**

