

Rabold Shares Horse Pleasure Through Carriage Rides

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family
Features Editor

NEWMANSTOWN (Lebanon Co.) — Ruth Ann Rabold grew up helping her dad with horses. The Myerstown farmer used horses in plowing demonstrations and circus parades. Ruth Ann showed horses and competed in barrel racing.

After her marriage to Donald Rabold, Ruth Ann lived without horses for four years, but her heart yearned to handle a horse again. So much so that she purchased a horse on impulse and hid it in a closet.

When her husband was searching for something, his hand groped the horse, and he asked, "What's all this strap stuff?"

He did not share her love for horses, but he conceded to her wish, and Ruth Ann soon had a horse for trail riding and showing.

Horses brought Ruth Ann so much pleasure that she wanted to share them even more with others. For years she harbored a secret desire to provide horse and carriage rides for weddings, parties, proms, and other affairs.

That meant loading the horses and carriages on a truck to transport them to the site specified by clients. It was a hefty job. Her husband said that if she wanted to do it, she could, but not to expect any help from him.

"He was busy with his heavy construction work, and he doesn't enjoy horses," Ruth Ann said.

So she learned to drive truck to transport her horse to shows.

"Not many women were doing that 25-30 years ago," Ruth Ann said.

"Today my husband often helps me by driving the truck. He'll even hook up the horse and carriage," Ruth Ann said.

The couple had three children, who are now adults and have provided them with five grandchildren. Somewhere along the way, Ruth Ann purchased several miniature horses and donkeys for her grandchildren. Soon she was taking the miniature animals to birthday parties.

Ruth Ann had purchased a Paint draft horse from her father's stock that was disbursed after his death.

"I like Paint because it is unusual. Draft horses are normally solid colored. You can cross a draft horse and a Paint and hope to get a Paint, but it is never guaranteed," she said.

According to Ruth Ann, Painted breeds are in vogue among horse people now, but the "hot" colors go in cycles.

Ruth Ann provides horses and carriages to match formal or western themes. She enjoys decorating the carriages to complement the colors of the bridal party. She also dresses in a white or black suit with a top hat for formal affairs, in gowns for those with a renaissance flavor, and in a cowgirl hat and clothing for western occasions.



Ruth Ann Rabold, dressed in black hat and tails, uses horse and carriage to transport a bridal couple to the reception.

"I like meeting people and going to different (Turn to Page E13)



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