

Muskoka Mosaic: Introducing Rosie Barager



IT'S ALL ABOUT HORSES: Rosie Barager pauses for a photo with one of the seven horses living at her Hwy. 60 stable. Dotty is a 25-year-old spotted Appaloosa. PHOTO BY PAMELA STEEL

By Pamela Steel

Rosie Barager is a Huntsville girl. She grew up in a home on Britannia Road with her five brothers and her sister. Her mother was Marie Fischer, who stayed home to take care of the seven children while her dad, Ross Fischer, did the hard and dangerous work that was logging.

Barager's father had a team of two big draft horses and Barager grew up learning to love the four-legged friends that have been her companions, her workmates and a great part of her life.

For Barager, it's all about horses. If she's not at her stable, the location of Rosie's Trail and Sleigh Rides out on Hwy. 60, she's thinking about horses, shopping for horses or riding horses. The only time she takes a break from the trails is during hunting season.

"I find it's safer to stay out of the woods that time of year," says Barager.

Her first job at the tender age of 14 was waitressing at the Britannia Hotel, but when she discovered that Deerhurst needed help at their stables, she headed toward her destiny.

"I went to the stables to apply for a job and everything fell into place," says Barager.

She worked at Deerhurst for 10 years and eventually bought her team from Alvin

Aldridge. In 1994, she struck out on her own. For three summers she provided trail rides to guests at a petting farm on Millar Hill Road, then in 1996 she picked up the team and did sleigh rides for Delta Grandview Resort.

Now, all of the area resorts are happy to send their guests to Barager for a fun and relaxing ride.

Of course, horses aren't the only characters in her story. Her two children and three grandchildren are all happily entrenched in Huntsville. Barager's family has always been very supportive of her endeavour and her nephews remain a big help at the stable.

"They're not riders, but they help me out taking care of the horses," said Barager.

Her equine family is made up of seven horses: Ben is a Belgian and Doc is a Clydesdale, and these two big fellas have all the muscle needed to pull a heavy sleigh through any winter wonderland. They do double duty as trail horses; boys this big can be a little intimidating, but Ben and Doc are gentle giants.

Dotty is a pretty 25-year-old spotted Appaloosa and her best friend is another Appaloosa, 30-year-old Frosty. The younger mares include a paint called Ginger, and a Percheron quarter horse Morgan Rose, named after Barager's granddaughter. Raven is a Clydesdale-quarter horse cross.

Barager says the horses have a good life

on this land. "They get lots to eat and lots of water."

It's a relaxed stable and all year long, when weather permits, she's out on the trails. Come winter, resort guests visit her for a 40-minute sleigh ride followed by a bonfire.

It's not surprising with all her time spent in the bush, that from time to time she runs into a black bear. The last time she recalls was a couple of years ago; the bear was up in a tree (they love to sit high in the branches and munch beech nuts) as Barager's group of riders trotted past and didn't really pay much notice to them until the old trail dog started to pay attention to the bear. Fortunately, the riders were past and the bear decided to high tail it in the other direction.

Last year Barager spent more time off her horses than on due to a broken arm.

"I was playing around with a four-wheeler," she says. "Should have stuck with horses."

The lady is content with her stable and her families, both the human and the equine. And Huntsville is her home now as always.

"I wouldn't move away," she says. "I like this area and my guests are very nice."

The horses are happy too, even during the recent snowstorm.

"As long they've got hay and shelter, they're good," says Barager. "They look nice running around in all that fluffy snow."

Thanks to Linda Martin for suggesting that Rosie Barager be profiled.

Announcement



The Sarjeant Company
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We are pleased to welcome Dianne Thorogood to Leeder Fuels, a division of The Sarjeant Company as our Sales Representative in the Muskoka region.

Dianne brings with her an extensive background in customer service and sales. She is very familiar with life and the community in Muskoka as she has lived and worked here for many years.

Dianne welcomes the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your home heating, diesel, gasoline or lubricant needs. Give her a call at 705-646-0758 or mobile 705-801-6336 or email her at dthorogood@sarjeantco.com.

We're Moving Muskoka Country Furniture & Gifts

Well, the building's been sold,
"You're leaving," I'm told

But do not panic, do not fret
I'm not ready to retire just yet.

We're packing our "stuff," and movin' on down
Just 3 doors past on this main street of town

Cranberry Kids has offered us space,
So we'll happily be sharing some of their place.

The big move is set for the end of the year,
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Beginning January 1st

MUSKOKA LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION - MLA
My land, My legacy, My decision.

IS IMMEDIATE RESTRICTION OF ACCESS TO PRIVATELY OWNED LAND THROUGH CLOSING OF SNOWMOBILE TRAILS NECESSARY? WE HOPE NOT! you decide....

We must take a stand now and demand that The District Municipality of Muskoka; Towns of Huntsville, Gravenhurst, Bracebridge; Townships of Lake of Bays, Georgian Bay and Muskoka Lakes immediately remove from all Official Plans and strategy reports all designations, including but not limited to; species at risk, wetlands, open space area, natural heritage areas, ecological and any others that remove or restrict the rights of property owners to own, use, benefit, enjoy or manage their property.

We are losing our land, our legacy, our life. WHY.

These new Environmental Designations could mean that you can't build or put up any type of structure or do any type of landscape or alteration work on portions of your property, even though it will not impact or alter the property in any manner. These restrictive protective applications, in most cases, are not even appropriately assigned to properties, for example, recently a hundred acre parcel of farm homestead, with an elevation well above flood plan levels was designated wetlands. This means that the land can no longer be used to pasture livestock or raise and harvest crops to sustain the landowner or others. How are these designations identified and confirmed when the trespass law states that no one, including government agents can enter onto private land without permission from the landowner or a warrant. Landowners all over Ontario are continuing to lose their land rights, their land equity and sustainable values, their retirement dreams, their investments, their businesses.

As private landowner, Mr. M. Brown rightly stated "MY BUSH IS MY BANK"
This is happening to private landowners throughout Muskoka and neighbouring Ontario communities.

Gord Adams, appointed District Chairman stated and included in a December 09-2009 correspondence, the unanimous "hope of the council" including the clear acknowledgement of, "Private Landowner as being the sole owner (s) and decision maker (s) overall for their property also includes .. appreciation and support to the private landowner to "continue their efforts". Yet in another breath, our politicians state that these Environmental Protection restrictions and designations on private land "is for the greater good of all and that no one really owns the land".

So is our private land really ours?
If politicians want to put such extensive land use restrictions and controls on our private land then they should be required to fairly compensate each and every individual landowner for their losses.

HYPOCRISY IN MOTION.
Yet government amendments have been put in place to allow non-profit organizations, clubs (i.e. snowmobile, hiking, cross-country skiing) etc. continued trail access over private land where E.P. designations are in existence. This is to ensure that there is a continued economic benefit to Ontario and to ensure that the natural resources are available to maintain this important sub-system of tourism.

So concessions and amendments can be made so that our government and all others can make money and benefit from the resources and the property, but the owner of the property cannot due to E.P. restriction.

The District 7 snowmobile club believes that the rights of private property owners should be properly recognized and protected in municipal policy documentation. They have encouraged people to sign a petition and send it to their office in support of such future action.

The Muskoka Landowners Association (MLA) and every chapter of the Ontario Landowners Association (OLA) with our far reaching and extensive membership will always preserve rural identities, traditions, security, prosperity and the fundamental principles of natural justice where overreaching public interests on privately owned land are unacceptable, unreasonable and unnecessary.

The sustaining landowners of Muskoka and every area of Ontario are committed to a set of principles that contribute to the environment and society and will always continue to be the best stewards of their privately owned property.

Approximately one year ago today, the following notice was given by private landowners to the public at large through the media and to the District Municipality of Muskoka.

If a private landowner's gesture of good faith to reopen the gateways of Muskoka for the greater good fails to be recognized as such by the government the landowner reserves the right to restrict the public's access to private land and close all access including District 7 Muskoka Snowmobile/MSR region trails system permanently in 2009/2010.

DO YOU AGREE? LET US KNOW....

This movement of landowners protecting their rights is gaining province-wide support and it is now up to our governments, our Politicians, our supposed representatives to do what is right and honorable and stop taking away our land. It is in their hands and only they can prevent private land access restrictions on our private land by removing the Environmental Protection designations as stated in Municipal Policy Documentation .

WHO ARE THE POLITICIANS THAT HAVE THE BACKBONE TO SUPPORT AND PROTECT LANDOWNERS RIGHTS ?
Call your local politicians and say NO to all Environmental Protection Legislation Policies or laws that take away your right to enjoy, use, benefit or manage your private property.

Our forefathers and mothers sacrificed EVERYTHING to protect our rights to life, liberty and justice and if we do not continue to uphold these values and freedoms then their suffering was for not.

THANK YOU

UNITED WE WILL STAND.
Respectively honouring your rights
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