



A letter from the publisher

A Bucket List Trip

(and other matters)

Dear Folks,

Here along the North Coast (that's the part of America which bumps up against the Great Lakes) it's been a strange summer. First we had weeks of rain, complete with flooding, which prevented farmers from getting in their fields, and then it turned dry, really dry, shortening the growing season even more. The good news is that prices for agricultural products seem to hover around an all-time high keeping the farm buying power in the stratosphere.

We are fast approaching The National Drive to be held at the Kentucky Horse Park, Lexington, Kentucky, October 4 through October 9. This will be a big week at the Park as the Kentucky Classic CDE will be held at the end of the week turning the Park into a major driving venue for at least three days. The Drive board of directors looked at moving next year's Drive back to the Indiana Horse Park but has discovered that facility is experiencing serious financial confusion which prevents scheduling in advance. Possibly the Indiana CDE may be in danger after establishing that event as one of the most popular in the nation. Participants and guests at the Kentucky CDE have been invited to join The National Drive in any of the drive's activities.

Early registrations indicate this year's drive may be the largest yet. So if you are interested and want some more detail go to the drive's website (nationaldrive.net) for more information. If you want to talk one-on-one about the magazine, I'll be there and so will Ann Pringle, our editor. The Digest also provides coffee, doughnuts and fruit snacks each morning. Join us to start your day. Head honcho of the Drive, Mike Lyon, gives a driver's briefing each morning and at noon to fill you in on any changes in schedule and sign-up requirements. He finishes the week with the Sue Lyon Memorial Mimosa Drive. It's fun.

Being in that phase of life where bucket lists have real meaning, we are learning to travel with the dialysis

handicap and as a result found ourselves in the Finger Lakes region in New York for a week on the neatest farm (backed up against the Grand Canyon of the East, Letchworth State Park).

Oakhill Farm & Ranch, owned by John and Mary Maahlendorf, is a retirement venture complete with a bed and breakfast apartment, a full size driving arena (for rainy days which we didn't have), separate paddocks with great fences, and a formal driving trail through the woods and around the farm. The farm's trails are even marked with signs denoting difficulty. It is located near Nunda, New York, a quaint community with a couple of tidy restaurants with strange hours. The farm may be reached at OakhillfarmNY@frontier.com or www.OakhillFarmNY.com. John is an accomplished CDE competitor with a hearty laugh for his well-remembered errors. The farm is also equipped to handle club drives or other events.

Driving in the park is fairly simple but unbelievably beautiful. Traffic was courteous and sparse (our "please pass wide and slow" sign helped). Parking was plentiful creating a handy trailhead from which to begin a morning-long drive. Restaurants in the area are plentiful, ranging from fast food to gourmet dining. It is a mecca for recreational drivers who are looking for places to turn out. The park is mostly paved roads but our horses encountered only a few hills, none too steep for novice drivers. This is deer fly season in mid and upper New York but a canned spray kept them at bay, allowing the horses to stay attuned to the box seat. For day trips (if you're close enough) or weekend stayovers, this is a super location. Modest prices help even more.

Autumn seems to be the busiest time of the year...make the most of it. Hopefully we'll meet at the National Drive.

Y'r obt. Ser,
Thom Mezick
Publisher