



Photo Courtesy North Dakota REC Magazine

A white heart is perfectly positioned on the head of North Dakota's most famous horse, "Heart", owned by Peter Petersen.

"NEVER BEEN SEEN BEFORE AND PROBABLY NEVER WILL BE AGAIN"

A Horse With Heart

By Frank McCahill

North Dakota's most famous horse is a thoroughbred filly which nature adorned with a perfectly shaped white heart that's perfectly positioned on her forehead.

"The Jockey Club of New York, which has registered thoroughbreds since 1894, tells me the unique marking has never been seen before and probably never will be again," notes Peter Petersen, breeder and owner of the famous filly who's appropriately named "Heart".

Newspapers and periodicals across the United States and Canada have bombarded him with requests for pictures of Heart. Gov. George Sinner named her an official centennial princess during North Dakota's statewide centennial celebration last year. And there's talk of her appearing in a movie called "Dakota Dawn."

Petersen, who operates a horse-breeding ranch near Douglas in north central North Dakota, attributes Heart's unique marking to heredity, the result of mating Will's Lark with Chapter. "Chapter's father had three-quarters of a heart on his face. I figure it just kicked down through the genes," says the veteran horseman.

He adds that, "Heart has a personality to match her unique marking. She calmly

allows children to ride her, tourists to take pictures of her and parade spectators to gawk at her. She isn't scared of anything and she's got a lot of fire."

The filly also has a physique to match the large heart on her forehead. "She matured out twice as fast as any ordinary horse — I've never seen anything like it. When she was a yearling, she was already the size of a 2-year old."

Now about 1-1/2 years old, Heart weighs 1,000 lbs. and stands 15 hands tall. "I'm going to try to get her into some TV commercials and let her mature, then try to run her when she's three," says Petersen, adding that he later plans to sell a majority interest in Heart, keeping only a small share for himself.

For now, Petersen is galloping Heart several miles each day on his 300-acre spread and feeding her the "power diet" that budding racehorses require. It includes vitamins, minerals, alfalfa hay and "good North Dakota-grown oats, the best in the world," says Petersen.

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Photo courtesy Country World

Byers' in-field sharpening service saves farmers a trip into town.

TAKES HIS DISC BLADE SHARPENER RIGHT TO THE MACHINE

This "Blacksmith" Makes Field Calls

By Tim W. McAlary

A Texas farmer turned blacksmith who specializes in sharpening disc blades has developed a thriving business making "field calls", eliminating the need for farmers to transport big equipment.

Preston Byers, age 67, combined mobility, specialized equipment and the keen eye of a farmer to hone out a skill that was once relegated to the confines of a blacksmith shop.

"My son, James, and I have been doing this off and on for about 9 years," he explained while working on a 64-blade disc slung low behind a huge Deere tractor. Byers got into the business when he and his son bought out an existing business.

The two men depend on steady customers for business. "A man who works a lot of ground might have me out twice a season. Just depends on how often you run the equipment, and how much ground you cover."

Preston prefers to have the plow sitting on firm, level ground when he comes to sharpen. Then the height of the disc has to be adjusted with the tractor's hydraulics, or a step-jack. Once the height is just right, Preston starts the 5-hp. engine that powers the sharpener, gets the right angle on the blade, and levers it forward so the two round

knife-files up front make contact with the blade.

"It takes a while to get an eye for this," says Preston. "You learn what to look for, and how to feel the edge as it comes on."

Preston works on all makes of discs. Front gangs take longer than rear gangs because the tongue and hydraulic hoses up front get in the way. "You have to know that the implement is set and won't move once you get up under there. I always have someone with me just in case I get in a bind and might need help. But this sure beats taking each blade off and carrying it to a blacksmith or machine shop."

On really big jobs, Preston and James work as a team. They have two portable roller-sharpeners and the work goes quickly when conditions are right. A gang of disc blades costs about \$2.25 per blade. Sharp discs can mean savings on fuel, says Preston. A dull disc is harder to pull.

"A disc is like a pocketknife. If it's dull, you have to scrape and scrape to get it done. A sharp blade is a pleasure to work with and you can always count on it as long as the edge is there."

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STAYS 3 OR 4 DAYS IN EACH TOWN

Traveling Shoe Shop Housed In Old Bus

Many small towns in Iowa that no longer have their own shoe repair shop welcome the sight of Larry Wilson's converted school bus when it shows up in the middle of town some time every month.

Wilson used the rear half of a 42 passenger bus to house his repair equipment. The front half is furnished with a booth and table as well as counter space to wait on custom-

ers.

The mobile shop has a regular route covering a number of small communities each month. Wilson parks it in a store parking lot and plugs into an electric outlet for the 3 or 4 days he stops to take care of local shoe repair or heavy sewing of canvas and other materials. Wilson says business is almost always good.



Photo by the Tupper

Larry Wilson converted a 42-passenger school bus into a traveling shoe repair shop.