

Big Valley Ranch (rode here because Mystery Cave/Forestville State Park was closed due to MN budget issues)

July 8 - 10, 2011

After dinner on Sat. evening, a few of us decided to take a quick ride before dark. It was Sharon Darrow, Marta Budworth, Karla Hurd, Carolyn O'Keefe and me, Gina Barden. We were on our way back to camp and had just started cantering slowly up a long, gradual hill when Traveler (Carolyn's horse) tripped on a rock and went down nose first. Carolyn went over his head and landed on her head and shoulder. No helmet, of course. She claimed that she was sore but OK. But Traveler just laid there unable to get up. I jumped off Cocoa and loosened his girth as Traveler was trying to catch his breath. I got the saddle off and he still didn't try to get up. We noticed that we couldn't see where his right rear leg was. So we were wondering if it was under him, broken.

After about 3 minutes of rest he was able to get up. He seemed OK so we put the saddle back on him and Carolyn was going to walk him home until she realized that she'd have to walk through the creek. So I helped her get back on and we walked the rest of the way back to camp; about 1/4 mile. Carolyn is very sore and could have a broken clavicle or a jammed shoulder but whatever it is doesn't appear to be anything too serious as she had pretty good range of motion with that right arm. I suspect that she'll be going to the Dr. Monday for x-rays if she's in pain. She wasn't having a ton of pain after it happened because she took ibuprofen, iced her shoulder and drank copious amounts of rum and coke. She fell asleep right away when she went to bed (imagine that) but was awakened to the sounds of a bat doing hot laps in her motor home. I wonder if the drugs and alcohol mix had anything to do with the bat hallucinations. Anyway she didn't get a lot more sleep after that unsettling ordeal. (Too bad all the rum was gone.) She never did find the bat that night. We'll have to stay tuned for the "rest of the story".

Sunday morning we awoke to very overcast skies and it was also very hot and humid. Most people opted to pack up and leave while the getting was good. However, Mike & Lori Scott and MaryAnn Hahn decided to get one more ride in so they saddled up and rode out. They got totally drenched. By the time they got back to camp, the rain was already letting up but they were already soaked. So they packed up their wet gear and headed home.

The rain storm was a fitting ending for the first camping trip to Big Valley Ranch. The weather was very hot a humid in the campground but much better on the trails in the woods. Our Missouri members, Ted & Sharon Bailey, were back for a visit and thought in July they'd get away from the summer heat of Missouri. We could have been more accommodating hosts and ordered a little cooler weather for them. Next time! It was great to see our friends again and welcome them back ANYTIME.