

August 1, 1989



## LETTER FROM THE ROAD #4

The Ride Across America is making some real progress. We were recently in Amarillo, Texas and we will be shooting for Springfield, Missouri on the 26th of August. At that point we will be more than 65% of the way there. As they say in the pits in Indy, "the team is focused and moving."

We have learned a lot in this first stretch and as a result we have made some strategic changes in the support and logistics area. We have added several people, horses and rigs to the team. Cheryl Studley and Patches left the team in Northern Arizona and have been reassigned to another project at Al-Marrah. Joyce and Brad Braden are from Texas and have joined the team. They have been involved in the horse industry for many years, both as trainers and managers at various farms around the country. They bring 35 years of experience with Arabian horses to this event and their reputation and reknown will be a big help as we hit the Midwest and on into the East coast.

We have also added another horse and rig to the team. March Along is being ridden by Brad every other day during the last leg of the day to pull Willy and I along over the last 12 mile stretch of the day. We also have Bob and Bea Shepard along for an indeterminant period of time. They are from Connecticut and will spend several weeks with us filming the balance of the event as a video project. We will be providing these videos at the end of the trip for all those who are interested. Bob has been sending videos with our location to Channel 9 in Tucson and they have been showing these cuts on the 5:00 p.m. news each Thursday. The pace we are setting is fast and consistant, the team we now have (five people, two horses and three rigs) is in good shape.

We have had some tough days and some fun days. Our ride up into Yucca, Arizona was 117 degrees with four water stops. Thanks to Anne at the Honolulu Bar in Yucca we had plenty to eat and drink and a place to stay at the end of the day. That same day, Brad got his truck stuck in the sand dune looking for Willy and I. I had found the trail rough going and took off across country and came into camp about two hours late.

We saw a lot of elk and antelope in Northern Arizona and New Mexico. We had a chance encounter with a pack of coyotes and a deer carcass which they weren't about to give up to Willy and I without a fight. We allowed them to keep their carcass. From John and Sharon Winnicki's we trailored in and out of an Indian reservation for about five days and then

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moved into the reservation on July 4th weekend. Our camps in the reservation were minimal at best and we were visited each evening and throughout the night by stray horses and cows. Thanks to the Winnicki's we had a great time. We really appreciate their support and help. The people in Ganada and throughout the reservation were also a great help and assisted us along the route. They gave us water whenever we could haul it and as much fry bread as we could eat.

Most of you can probably visualize the rigors and realities of this ride. It is as much a mental event as it is a physical one. We never start later than 3:00 a.m., often in weather so cold you can see your breath in the trailer. The same day can end in temperatures over 100 degrees. The temperature extremes and weather conditions often vary on an hourly basis. We started using Bullfrog sunscreen on Willy's nose as we head east each day into the sun.

I've never seen anything as exhilarating as the view coming up over a rise. Literally fifty to seventy-five miles of open and deserted territory with sage or juniper stretching to the next range of mountains. Nothing moves. It is so quiet as you ride through this land that it overwhelms you. It is an eerie feeling to know that over that ridge our team is waiting. It has incredible impact. On the depressing end I know it will take me three days to reach that ridge and I know on the other side is simply another ridge and another stretch of the same stuff. Often I will see the exit for our last mile that day and know it will take fifteen to twenty minutes to reach that ramp when the cars going by will be on that ramp in sixty seconds. Patience and persistence.

Sometimes I get off the saddle and I can't feel the ground because my lower body is numb and I can't walk. Depending on the terrain, it will take me an hour or two to work out the kinks at the end of the day. We are constantly attacked by swarms of flies and gnats as well as grasshoppers the size of clothespins that attach themselves to you in a similar fashion. The fly spray doesn't work because the sweat causes it to drip right off both of us. Willy gets cut daily on sage and cactus. Meanwhile the rest of the team are trailoring back and forth with water, bringing up the second horse March Along for Brad to ride the last stretch, or breaking camp. The day is full from start to finish and we usually hit the sack around 7:30 p.m.

The pace and routine have really forced me and the rest of the team to focus. I call it just one of those situations when you put your head down and go for it. You don't look up until your day is done or a specific stretch between cities, sometimes seven or more days, has been completed.

Sometimes we spend several hours simply looking for water. Coming out of the Colorado basin we had temperatures in the trailer exceeding 105 degrees and had to bring Cheryl to the hospital one evening for heat exhaustion. In certain stretches day and night fade into one another and during these



stretches I have asked myself what day and date it is. Cheryl once asked me what year it was!

We are pushing very hard to set this record. In my research I found undocumented that one man and one horse did a crossing in the 1950's in two years and more recently a rider with several mounts did a ten month crossing. It remains to be seen which record we break.

It hasn't been all problems and hard work. We have also had a lot of fun. The weekend fundraiser at the Barclay's was a big success. Leslie Barclay has along been one of the most active board members and we really appreciate the help. I want to thank the Barclays for their help and support. Thank you also to Louise Serpa and the beautiful 8 1/2 x 11 glossies she donated of me and Willy. Everybody loves them.

My purpose in passing all this on to you is not to extol the arduous task ahead or to impress you with the rigors of this event, but simply to make a point. And the point is that we have a very important purpose. We are working very hard to 1) make people aware of the rainforest issue, 2) raise money for the cause 3) finish the ride. With this in mind, our motivation remains high and we can maintain our pace. We have had very good local press coverage and Francesca has been working very hard at handling local media and fundraisers along the way. We have had over forty articles written and dozens of T.V. and radio interviews. We have reached several hundred thousand people with the message. The rainforest is getting a lot of coverage.

That leaves me with objective number two: fundraising. We are now over 45% of the way through the ride. I think we can do better than this and we need to. I am asking all of you to get involved. You are receiving this letter because you've shown an interest and we think you can help.

We now have a new brochure and we have included three of them for you. If you would go out and recruit three people at fifteen dollars each, the total would be \$45,000. But more importantly we would add 3000 new people to our mailing list for the next mailing and they would also become members of the Rainforest Action Network. You are the nucleus of our event. Go out and talk to three people about the rainforest issue, ask them to donate fifteen dollars and become a member. With only 20,000 members we are a significant force in the world. More members means we save more valuable rainforests.

Also we are asking everyone we see and all of you to send this postcard (enclosed) to T.V. personality Willard Scott. He is a national meteorologist. Tell him your friends are riding across America to bring attention to the rainforest issue. Mention you think this is an important issue. Don't forget to write your name and city. We would like to get some national attention and we thought this would be a good way to accomplish that.

I want to leave you with one quote and one thought. Pat Riley on the day the Lakers got their tails kicked by 34 points at The Garden (by Boston in



game two of the "85" series), told his team a quote his father had once passed on to him, "Somewhere, someplace, sometime you're going to have to plant your feet, take a stand and kick some (tail)."

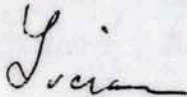
That quote gives me chills because I firmly believe, without scaring you all that environmentally that time is now. With the destruction of the rainforests, we are involved in a dangerous environmental experiment with no clue of the outcome. Our society is just going to have to, take a stand and gain control of our destiny. Any change is going to have to start at home. I believe that these changes will have to happen within our lifetime because at this rate we are not leaving the generations behind us a whole lot to work with. We broke it and now we need to fix it. It is going to require that as individuals and as a society we make certain sacrifices.

In the time that we have been involved in this event we've lost over three hundred thousand acres of rainforest and several hundred species of unknown and undocumented plants and animals. Once destroyed, this delicately balanced ecosystem is gone forever. Get involved. Stay involved. We all need your support.

These are my thoughts at this point in the ride; very serious, very focused and very happy to be doing it. Not often are people allowed the opportunity to do something of real significance. My opportunity is this event and that time is now. From the team, each day we become evermore focused and evermore committed. We are all looking forward to the rest of this ride and your support.

By the way, the Lakers went on to win it all.

Your team in Texas,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Lucian', with a small dot above the first letter.

Lucian..... signing for Willy, March Along, Brad, Joyce, Bob, Bea, Francesca