

Traveling the old-fashioned way

Group drives wagons down Iron Horse Trail

By RACHEL DE WAAL

Journal Staff

A horse-drawn wagon may not travel as fast as the average car, but that's exactly what the members of the Western Canadian Wagon Train enjoy.

"It's a nice, relaxing holiday," said organizer Ben Ganter. "We enjoy it. There's no panic and we get away from the rat race."

"You see country you wouldn't in your vehicle," said Lorraine Wayne, who drives a wagon with her husband that they built.

The train of four wagons and two outriders left St. Paul Aug. 6 for Elk Point via the Iron Horse Trail, after spending the night at the Ag grounds. The group, whose members come from Redwater, Newbrook and all over, began its week-long trek in Ashmont on Aug. 5 and travels an average of 18 miles per day.

The group planned to be in Heinsburg Aug. 7, then truck to Bellis to hook onto a trail that would lead them back to Redwater by Aug. 11.

Ganter, who participated in his first wagon train trek in 1992, said the Iron Horse Trail has nice scenery and that the staging areas in most towns offer a good place to stop. He said the group does meet people riding quads along the trail, but that all drivers have been courteous.

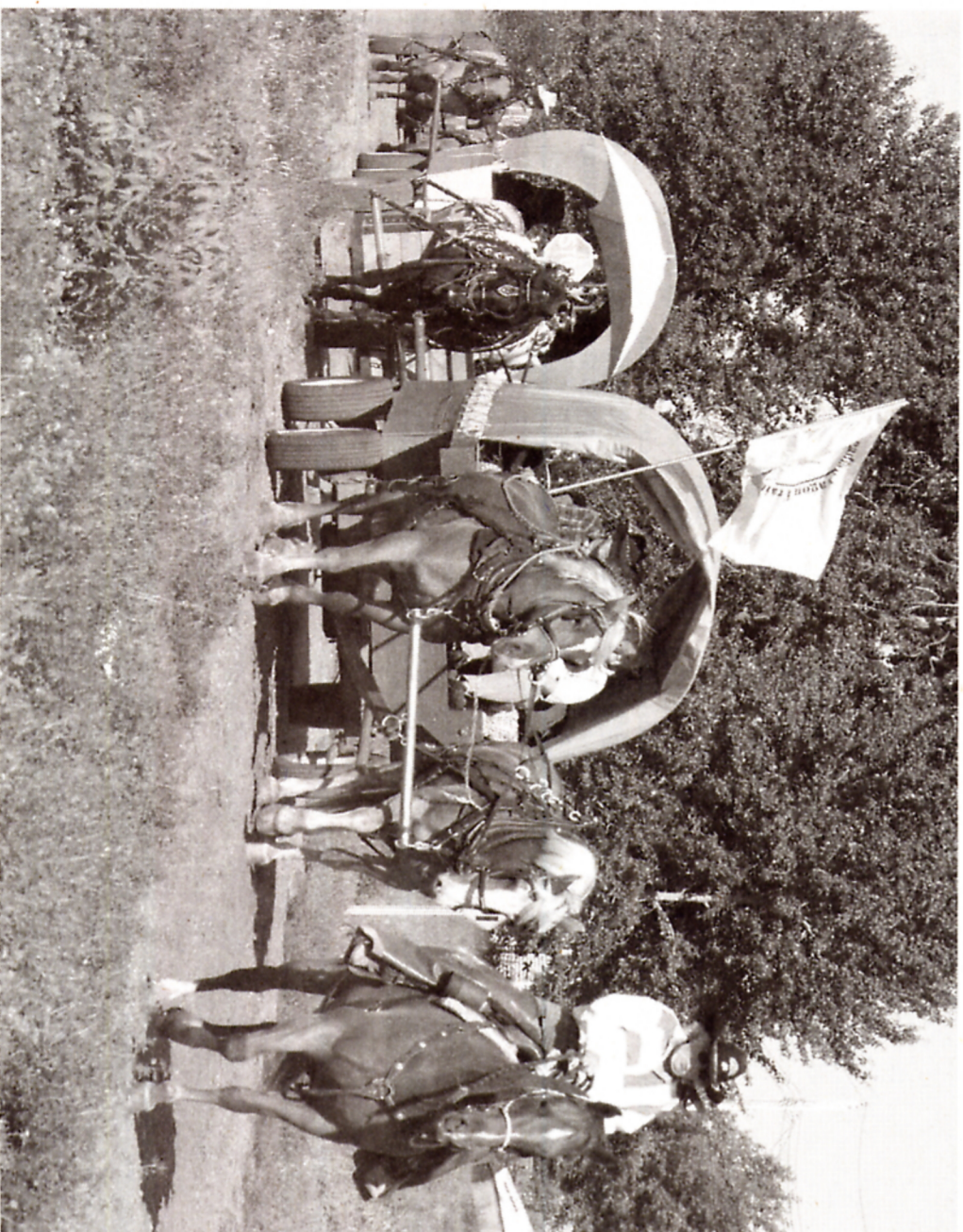
"We've never run into any trouble with any kids. The local people in St. Paul . . . are really nice."

For Ganter, traveling by wagon doesn't have any downsides, "except when it pours rain, but you dry out."

However, he does admit that the group "cheats" by sleeping and storing their food in RVs.

The trip was a first for Karen Herzog, who rode as an outrider and also spent some time driving Ganter's team of horses.

"I'm loving it," she said.



Rachel de Waal photo

The four wagons of the Western Canadian Wagon Train drove out of St. Paul the morning of Aug. 6 on their way to Elk Point via the Iron Horse Trail.

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