

Sonoma County

Complimentary

HORSE JOURNAL



Volume 20 • Issue 2, Spring 2023
Published by the Sonoma County Horse Council

Jennifer Knef

WINE COUNTRY & EQUESTRIAN ESTATES



Jennifer Knef approaches luxury real estate marketing from an investor's perspective even if her clients are buying or selling their primary residence. She helps homeowners sell at the highest possible price in the least amount of time and also helps buyers uncover hidden opportunities for upside potential. With a professional career that spans over 30+ years in Real Estate, Banking and Finance, Jennifer's focus is representing the most distinctive wine country, rural and equestrian estates of Sonoma, Napa and Marin Counties.



707.537.2370 d
707.483.7345 c
JKnef@cbtnorcal.com
JenniferKnef.com
DRE#01503867



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The Horse Journal Editorial Committee

Managing Editor

Patti Schofler
schc.pschofler@gmail.com

Graphic Design

Lynn Newton
newton5@sonic.net

Copy Editor

Eileen O'Farrell

Photography

Marcie Lewis
marcielewisphotography@gmail.com

Jak Wonderly

www.jakwonderly.com

Printing

AD-Vantage Marketing, Inc.
ad-vantagemarketing.com

SCHC Board of Directors

President

Henry Beaumont
president@sonomacountyhorsecouncil.org

Vice President

Sahar Bartlett
vicepresident@sonomacountyhorsecouncil.org

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Elizabeth Palmer
schc.epalmer@gmail.com

Directors

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Contact Us

Sonoma County Horse Council
PO Box 7157
Santa Rosa, CA 95407
www.sonomacountyhorsecouncil.org

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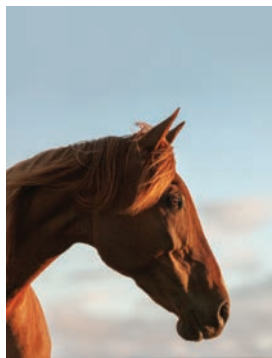
Volume 20 • Issue 2 • Spring 2023

Published by the Sonoma County Horse Council - Home of the Equus Awards

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COVER PHOTO BY JAK WONDERLY



Thirteen years ago, during a long winter, 19-year-old Thoroughbred Mindy was left to fend for herself in a muddy paddock with no shelter. The owner only occasionally fed her and never treated a large chronic wound on her hind leg. She was a 2 out of 9 on the Henneke Body Condition Scoring Scale, which means that she was several hundred pounds underweight.

Perhaps because she was a chestnut mare, she made a full recovery, grew a shiny and healthy coat, and showed herself to be a happy, sound, kind, gentle, affectionate horse who loved attention. She was put into the care of the CHANGE Program. She was safely transported to a

foster care facility for her long and involved rehab.

Award-winning and National Geographic editorial and commercial photographer Jak Wonderly captured the spirit of Mindy that had proven to be an absolute treasure.

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CONTRIBUTORS



Amy Young is the equine outreach manager at the University of California, Davis, (UCD), Center for Equine Health. After completing her master of science in genetics at UCD, she spent several years researching genetics and health of companion animals, horses, and livestock at the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine and Department of Animal Science. She is a hunter rider and a judge for the Sacramento Area Hunter Jumper Association, Interscholastic Equestrian Association and Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association. Information about the Center for Equine Health is available at: <https://ceh.vetmed.ucdavis.edu/>.



Ariana Strozzi Mazzucchi grew up along the coastal Marin Headlands, training horses and winning champion awards in dressage, jumping, eventing, gymkhana, reining, and working cow horse. She is a successful entrepreneur, zoologist, artist, author, and founder of Equine Guided Coaching. Her passion is to encourage people to heal themselves and the earth. Ariana started her coaching career pioneering Leadership & Horses™ in 1989 and created the Equine Guided Education and Coaching model that now exists worldwide. The author of four books, Ariana also enjoys helping with real estate transactions, where her extensive knowledge of animal husbandry and the local region is a real asset. www.arianamazucchi.com



Robin Everett is a free-lance bookkeeper and 35+ year resident of Petaluma. She has been a board member of the Golden Gate Arabian Horse Association since 2004 and holds the position of trail coordinator. Although horse-crazy her entire life, she did not purchase her own horse until age 50. Her equine sport of choice is endurance, and she has an AERC record of 4,745 miles since 1998. She currently owns two retired endurance horses and hopes to soon find a new partner with whom to hit the endurance trails.



Michelle Beko, DVM has been an equine veterinarian since 1991. She enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter as well as doing dressage and jumping with her horse Ranger. You can reach her at Empire Equine at 707 545-3909. www.empire-equine.com



Tara Good-Young is a 30-year Sonoma County resident, healthcare operations specialist, and passionate returning equestrian. Introduced in the last three years to riding and showing American Saddlebreds in saddle seat English pleasure classes, she advocates for the breed as vice president of the Northern California American Saddlebred Association, as well as an owner and future breeder of these magnificent animals. Her love of caring for and riding horses began at an early age, raised on western trail and employing gentling techniques with Mustangs in rural northern Nevada where she grew up.



Sam Durham of Petaluma has been shoeing horses for more than 31 years. He became a self-sufficient farrier after living and working on ranches in remote areas. Eventually going back to school, he started his own farrier business. He traveled around the U.S. and British Columbia to receive his CJF certification in 1998, and in 2009 he received his DIPWCF certification specializing in hunters, jumpers, and dressage horses. Sam has been happily married for 26 years and is a proud dad of three children. He enjoys studying anatomy, racing cars, and creating welding and fabrication work.

Do you want to write for the *Horse Journal* or see your photos in print?

Please contact Patti Schofler at schc.pschofler@gmail.com



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HORSE ART

marlenebauerholder@gmail.com



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Rain, rain go away, come again some other day.

It's hard to quantify just how much rain and snow the State of California has been blessed with this past winter. For those of us who grew up around here, it is reminiscent of the winters that we used to have in these parts. And for anyone who oversees pasture land or hay fields, the water has been an unbelievably welcome aspect to the winter and will spur the growth of some lush cover and valuable feed. With all of the rainfall that we have had, I have not heard any frustrations from anyone about the amount or inconvenience that it might have caused. And, maybe—just maybe, the best part might be not having to listen to newscasters talk about “the drought” anymore for a while. All in all, it is a welcome change that lets the earth recharge itself and a relief for us from thinking that we are living right on the edge.

And on to Horse Council business: On April 20 our annual meeting will be held via Zoom. We will review the past year and take care of some housekeeping requirements for the good of the order.

The Board of Directors has been on a mission to expand its ranks to a total of nine members, which will be organized into groups of three-year terms, with one group needing to be voted on each year. This method will help bring new people and fresh ideas to the leadership on a regular basis and make sure that we always have a quorum for meetings. Two new people will be on the slate for voting this year. Active members have been sent an email with the online meeting login information.

The board has decided to refresh the Economic Outlook report that it commissioned in 2013. We have engaged the services of Dr. Rob Eyler, professor of economics at Sonoma State University. Besides being the author of the original report, he is incredibly well suited to the task given his longtime residency in Sonoma County and deep familiarity with the local economy. And, he lives with horses on his property. Members of our equine community may be contacted by Dr. Eyler to assist with the development of the database of animals. If you are asked for help, the board asks that you please assist him with gathering quality information upon which he can base his calculations. Everyone knows the old axiom “garbage in—garbage out” so let's not let that happen with our research and report. It is to everyone's benefit to have a good measurement of the size and economic impact of our community. And, for anyone looking to contribute some time and energy to the process, please contact the Council through info@sonomacountyhorsecouncil.org, and we will connect you with Dr. Eyler to see what kind of help he may need.

John O'Hara Photography



Here's to blue sky and lush pastures!
Happy Trails,
Henry Beaumont
President

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Sonoma County Horse Council

Elizabeth R. Palmer
Attorney
Business & Taxation

ElizabethPalmerLaw.com

707-849-6444
epalmer@elizabethpalmerlaw.com
Santa Rosa, CA



Keep Northern California in the loop about your organization, nonprofit, or business large or small. Send your news to: schc.pschofler@gmail.com. We'll get the word out.



Photo courtesy of Sofia Platzman

Sofia and Leo in competition.

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL WINNERS

Congratulations to **Sofia Platzman** who, with her partner Georgian Grande Lion Heart ("Leo") from Nicasio Riding Club in Nicasio, California, is the U.S. Dressage Federation's Junior/Young Rider of the Year—Fourth Level.

Two riders and their horses from Full Circle Farm at Sonoma Horse Park in Petaluma won reserve championships for the NorCal Hunter Jumper Association. They are **Amber Czajkowski** on *Silva Forever*, amateur-owner jumpers, and **May Seto** on *Vigo R*, modified amateur jumpers.

OPEN ARENA NIGHT AT FAIRGROUNDS

April 26 is one more chance to enjoy open arena and barrel racing at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds until its reopening in October. Open arena time from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. is followed by barrel race practice runs from 6:00 to 6:45 p.m. with the barrel racing starting at 7 p.m. Classes offered include leadline, young guns, open, youth, "fix it" class, and pole bending. Details on Facebook page Wednesday Night Open Arena and Barrel Races.

NEW FACILITY AT OLD LOCATION

North Bay Equestrian Center has taken over the site of former Sonoma Valley Stables, 1075 Jacobsen Lane, Petaluma, where BW Equestrian and trainer Brittany Watkins focus on hunters, jumpers, and equitation with a strong dressage foundation. The 15-acre facility includes a 59' x 60' outdoor arena with a grass jumping bank, updated footing, and a professional jump course. The 80'

x 200' covered arena is fully enclosed. The five-horse EuroXciser sports rubber footing and sprinklers. The horses also have access to two covered Horse Gym Treadmills. The 36-stall barn was built by SC Barns. The four-stall barn has oversized stalls with attached paddocks. North Bay also has added 59'x60' turnouts with shelters. They soon will build retirement paddocks for the older horses to live out their golden years in full care.

britt.bwequestrian@gmail.com

RODEOS RETURN

The Russian River Rodeo returns to the rodeo grounds, 23450 Moscow Road, Duncans Mills, on June 24 and 25. Tickets go on sale after May 1 through the website: www.russianriverrodeo.com

The Bay Area Chapter of the Golden State Gay Rodeo Association brings back the Best Buck in the Bay rodeo September 9-10 to the rodeo ground in Duncans Mills. Visit www.gsgra.org.



Photo: Leslie Carr

Ranch bronc riding is a carryover from the traditional ranch rodeo. Typically, they dress more like a buckaroo with a suit jacket and flat hat with a wild rag around the neck.

LOVE FOR ALL THINGS EQUESTRIAN

In 2021 Sonoma County native **Julie Young** of Cotati founded The Modern Horse, an equestrian lifestyle subscription service that is known for its flagship product, The Bit Box. Subscribers can





Photo courtesy of Julie Young

Julie Young prepares a box of equestrian products.

receive in the mail quarterly a box filled with products that speak to fashion, beauty, wellness, horse, home, and tech.

“My equestrian lifestyle comes from generations of horse-women supporting and guiding me along pathways that have given me invaluable equestrian experiences. I created the Modern Horse and The Bit Box to share with those who share the same love of all things equestrian,” says Julie. www.themodernhorse.com.

VETERANS FOR MUSTANGS ACT INTRODUCED TO CONGRESS

Washington, D.C.–Veterans for Mustangs Act (VMA) H.R. 726 has been introduced to Congress to amend the 1971 Wild-Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act and to help better protect American wild horses and burros on federal lands. The measure would reduce or eliminate the need for inhumane roundups, provide jobs for our military heroes utilizing existing funds appropriated, and offer avenues for healing American veterans with Post Traumatic Stress and other disorders resulting from combat.

“The Veterans for Mustangs Act would create jobs for veterans, help curb the Bureau of Land Management’s round-up of wild equines on federal lands, and save the taxpayers billions of dollars by administering common-sense immunocontraceptive birth control instead of rounding up and warehousing masses of horses and burros,” says Marty Irby, executive director at Animal Wellness Action and eight-time world champion equestrian.

The VMA is endorsed by Veterans for Mustangs, Animal Wellness Action, the Animal Wellness Foundation, the Center for a Humane Economy, the American Horse Protection Society, numerous American Legion Posts across the U.S., Monty Roberts and Flag Is Up Farm, Horse Sense and Healing, War Horse Creek, Devil Dog Depot Equine Sanctuary and Rescue, Wish for Our Heroes, and more than 70 groups and organizations across America.

COLLEGE EQUESTRIAN SCHOLARSHIPS FROM U.S. EQUESTRIAN

Lexington, Kentucky–US Equestrian is now accepting applications for the 2023 Higher Education Equestrian Scholarships. This program provides five \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors who are committed to furthering their equestrian skills and knowledge while in college.

Applicants must have a current competing or subscriber membership with US Equestrian and be a graduating high school senior preparing to enter their freshman year of college in fall of 2023.

Applicants must provide proof of continuing involvement in equestrian sports through college.

Applications are due on or before July 31, 2023, and must be emailed to Emily McSweeney, National Breeds & Disciplines Special Projects Manager, at emcsweeney@usef.org. Scholarship recipients will be announced on September 15, 2023. Find more information at www.usef.org



PONY CLUB LIVES ON

Three generations of Pony Club members are represented in this photo taken at the Halloween Dressage Show at Hoofbeat Park, Healdsburg.

Sally Peacock (second from right) and Judy McHerron (far right) were both B-level Pony Clubbers in eventing during the 1970s. They went on to participate in the National Examiner Program, and they continue teaching at the Marin County and Santa Rosa Pony Clubs.

The moms in the photo are all graduate Pony Club members that rode with Sally and Judy back in the day. They are with their daughters, who are now Pony Club members and ride with Sally and Judy.

Starting from the far left are Maria Tiscornia, 9, Jeniffer Tiscornia, district commissioner (DC) of Marin County Pony Club, Nicole Rapicavoli and Julia Rapicavoli, 6, Nicci Bacigalupi Dericco, secretary at Santa Rosa Pony Club and Stella Bacigalupi, 10, and Melissa Pitkin and Rose Pitkin, 7. Missing from the photo is Pam Bacigalupi, past DC of Hoofbeats Pony Club, Nicci’s mom and Stella’s grandmother, along with Nicci’s twin sister Katie, graduate B, Hoofbeats Pony Club. 🐾



Rumors, allegation, and tall tales blame hair color for bad tempers and the boldness of mammals. Tortoiseshells are the divas of the cat world because they have a big dose of attitude. Red-headed humans are more hot-headed than those with any other hair color. And chestnut mares are said to be feisty, quick to act, bold and brash, even bad-tempered. Yet generally speaking, chestnut mares have a very devoted public in the North Bay.



FATIMA AND JENNIFER JAW

Meet Fatima, a chestnut mare and a truly special redhead. She had a rough start in life, and at the age of 12, found herself at a low-end auction. She was rescued by Love This Horse Equine Rescue in 2018 and found her forever home in 2020. She is a wonder horse. She has taken her adopted human horse camping, competing in ride-and-tie events, cantering on the beach, participating in working equitation clinics, competing

in schooling shows, and galloping into the sunset, all while maintaining her reputation as a chestnut mare, never failing to pin her ears at all things that bother her and bring her sassiness to all her adventures. Fatima is special because, in spite of the abuse she suffered, she loves her humans and carrots and welcomes each day with a warmth that you can see through her shiny coat.



MARVI AND THERESA SIMMONS

I had just finished a lesson with dressage judge Jane Weatherwax. We were on a loose rein as Jane was signing off on our progress when liver chestnut Marvi, from a standstill, bucked me off. She then stretched low and sauntered out of the arena at A with about a 12" overstep. She waited for me at the trailer.

Chestnut Mare

GENETIC PROGRAMMING

My first horse, a chestnut mare, was everything that a first horse should be. She taught my then twelve-year-old self all about horses and riding, along with some important lessons about life. To this day, chestnut horses catch my eye—and tug at my heart.

Chestnut mares are often labeled as “difficult” or “crazy.” Are they biologically programmed this way, or is this a red herring?

Genes that control coat color sometimes influence other biological processes, which can in turn, affect behavior. Studies in mice, foxes, and dogs have shown biological effects on stress responses and aggression associated with certain coat colors, including red, in specific species or breeds. Therefore, on the surface, it is reasonable to suggest that chestnut coat color is linked to behavior. But what does the science actually say?

The *melanocortin-1 receptor (MC1R)* gene is responsible for “red” hair/coat color in many species, including red hair in people. It takes two copies of the red allele (also known as “extension”), one from mom and one from dad, to result in offspring with red hair/coats.

To date, only two scientific studies have investigated a link between chestnut coat color and behavior.

One study evaluated 215 North American Tennessee Walking Horses (Jacobs et al. 2016). The results showed no significant relationship between the chestnut allele and temperament.

Another study analyzed 477 horses representing different breeds (Finn et al. 2016). There was no evidence to support the idea that chestnut horses are more likely than non-chestnut horses to display behaviors associated with training difficulties. However, chestnut horses were more likely to approach unfamiliar objects. Prior to domestication, most horses were bay, and increased coat color variation is considered a consequence of domestication. Based on the findings of this study, selection for chestnut coat color may have inadvertently been selected for boldness. If true, chestnut horses may be perceived as more confident or assertive, which could earn negative labels in comparison to other horses, especially if this boldness makes them more likely to engage in frightening or dangerous situations.

Recently, a group of researchers, including experts from the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, reviewed the role of *MC1R* variants in pain modulation and opioid metabolism (Bacon et al. 2022). In humans and other species, *MC1R* variants



Beware!

OR A RED HERRING?

By Amy Young

alter pain and sensitivity to analgesics (pain-relieving medications, including opioids). One study reported that red-haired women are significantly more sensitive to pain than dark-haired women. Another showed that individuals with certain *MC1R* variants had stronger responses to analgesics than others. These connections have yet to be explored in horses but could have important implications for understanding pain perception in horses with different coat colors (i.e., do chestnut horses behave differently because they perceive pain differently?). This could also provide valuable insights into the appropriate pain medications for horses with different coat colors.

Future research may provide more answers, but it is important to note that behavior is influenced by many factors, including breed, age, training, and health status, meaning that the root of behavior is more than skin deep. 🐾



TEDDIE AND YOU

A year ago Sonoma County Animal Services and Sonoma CHANGE rescued a senior chestnut mare named Teddie who had an eye injury, a body condition score of 2 (very thin), and several dental issues that made it nearly impossible for her to eat normally. Extensive dental work helped her greatly. Her eye injury was treated and is completely healed. During her first month in foster care, she gained about 100 pounds.

ALI AND VICKI MARTINEZ

Me, own a chestnut mare? No way, I thought. I was still mourning the loss of my beloved event horse when the call came from my trainer that a five-year-old chestnut Trakehner/Oldenburg mare had come available, and I must fly at once to Idaho to see her. Over the years, I had heard all the rumors and snide comments about chestnut mares. Nonetheless, in the dead of winter, I traveled to look into the eye of any horse that might become my future long-term partner.

This sweet mare looked back into my eyes and said yes. On a wonderful dressage and eventing journey with me, my Ali, aka "Miss Congeniality," could not be farther from the stereotypical chestnut mare. She has impeccable manners and looks to be friends with all creatures, human and otherwise. On the ground, Ali is the safest and most easy-going horse I have known. Feisty and energetic under saddle, she channels her exuberance into becoming my wonderful dance partner. I LOVE my chestnut mare.



LITTLE MAY AND AUDREY RYAN

I am the proud owner of a wonderful liver chestnut Morgan mare, the nine-year-old, 14.3 hand Little May. We are currently doing beginner novice in eventing, but we love to dabble in other disciplines as well, like endurance, pure dressage, and on occasion, pony games. She is a very talented and well-mannered horse despite her chestnut mare moments. She is very fond of food and will do almost anything for a treat, but she does not appreciate water or small spaces. I have owned her for 3 1/2 years, and they have definitely been the best out of my eight years with horses. I am so lucky to own my incredible horse, and I definitely recommend chestnut mares.



Chestnut Mare

By The Byrds, 1970

The lyrics are haunting. The performance is chilling. Have a listen. [youtube.com/watch?v=_SdISjpOdyU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SdISjpOdyU)



Photo: Marcie Lewis

Always alone
Never with a herd
Prettiest mare I've ever seen
You'll have to take my word

I'm going to catch that horse if I can
And when I do I'll give her my brand

Well I was up on Stony Ridge
After this chestnut mare, been chasing her for weeks
Oh I'd catch a glimpse of her every once in a while
Taking her meal, bathing, fine lady
This one day I happen to be real close to her
And I saw her standing over there
So I snuck up on her nice and easy
Got my rope out
And I flung it in the air!

I'm going to catch that horse if I can
And when I do I'll give her my brand
And we'll be friends for life
She'll be just like a wife
I'm going to catch that horse if I can

And I got her and I'm pulling on her
And she's pulling back like this mule going up a ladder
And I take a choice and I jump right up on her
Damned if I don't land right on top of her



And she takes off, running up onto the ridge
Higher than I've ever been before
She's running along just fine
'Til she stops and something spooked her
It's a sidewinder, all coiled and ready to strike
She doesn't know what to do for a second
But then, she jumps off the edge, me holding on

Above the hills, higher than eagles were gliding
Suspended in the sky
Over the hill


Straight for the sun we were riding
My eyes were filled with light
Behind those black walls
Below was a bottomless canyon
Floating with no sound
Ghosts far below
Seemed to be suddenly rising
Exploding all around

I'm going to catch that horse if I can
And when I do I'll give her my brand
And we'll be friends for life
She'll be just like a wife
I'm going to catch that horse if I can


We were falling
Down this crevice
About about a mile down it seem
And I looked down
And I see this red thing below us coming up real fast
And it's our reflection that's
This little pool of water about six feet wide and one foot deep
And we're falling down right through it
We hit, we splashed it dry
That's when I lost my hold
And she got away
But I'm gonna try and get her again some day

I'm going to catch that horse if I can
And when I do I'll give her my brand
And we'll be friends for life
She'll be just like a wife
I'm going to catch that horse, I'm going to catch that horse,
I'm going to catch that horse, if I can





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Virtual Tevis

By Robin Everett

When you ride your horse, do you pretend to participate in a high-level competition? Or do you daydream about what working with horses was like for your ancestors, when horses were a necessity? Or does a repetitive task become easier to complete if you have a goal? If any of this is true for you, consider signing up for the Virtual Tevis, 100 miles in 100 days ridden anywhere you want.

The 100 days can start any time after April 19, 2023, and are to be completed by or on July 29, 2023. Not everyone starts on Day 1. You are welcome to sign up anytime, but miles must be covered during the 100 official days to count toward your completion.

The Virtual Tevis is organized by the same people who bring you the iconic and live Tevis Cup endurance ride, which is officially called the Western States Trail Ride. Organized by the Western States Trail Foundation (WSTF) annually since 1955 (with just two exceptions), this 100-mile trail ride, from Truckee to Auburn, must be completed within 24 hours. It is arguably the oldest and most challenging endurance ride in modern times. If you are curious about it, check out the website <https://teviscup.org>

The Virtual Tevis is in its fourth year. As with so many happenings this decade, the Covid-19 pandemic was the mother of this necessity. In 2020, because of the pandemic, the Ride was canceled. The Western States board of directors searched for a replacement for this important fund-raising event and, like other signature events of this time, cleverly moved to a virtual format with the birth of the Virtual Tevis.



Robin Everett (right) of Sebastopol and Maria Coyle of Penngrove show off their Virtual Tevis tee shirts awarded for completing 100 miles on the trail in 100 days.

ALL OVER THE WORLD

The idea was that anyone, anywhere, could sign up. The goal was to complete 100 miles but to do it on your own terms and your own trails or arenas. A reporting website was established for entrants to report their progress. This event proved so popular that it is now held yearly.

All over the world, people who would never be able to attend the actual Ride can dream and participate at home, even if they don't ride, thanks to the Non-Riding Division. Folks can lead or drive a horse, hike, bike, or walk – whatever they want as long as it's non-motorized. A Facebook group, Tevis Cup Virtual Ride, was established so everyone could share their adventures and progress. This public group is where you will want to go to locate the link to sign up for the event.

WHO SIGNS UP

For the 2021 Virtual Tevis, a good friend rode with me on her 17-hand Hanoverian Eddie, who was just learning how to be a trail horse. My own horse Spirit was being reconditioned after missing the 2020 Virtual Tevis due to tendon surgery. Other people use the incentive to put trail miles on a youngster. Some people ride two entries, as does Barbara White, a Marin County resident and a long-time WSTF board member. She also has completed the official live Tevis Ride 30 times.

"The Tevis Virtual Riders have 100 days to finish in time to watch the 2023 Tevis Cup one-day riders. After you finish, you can sit back and enjoy the official Tevis webcast, live cast, discussion, and GPS live trackers as the race unfolds on July 29. Or, even better, go up to the Ride venue and be inspired by the athletic horses and their determined riders as they cross the mountains.

"I've completed the Virtual Ride each year on my two retired endurance mares. It motivates me to keep them going, and it's surprising how fast the miles add up. It definitely keeps the "fun" in fundraising and is a worthy way to secure the future of the historic Western States Trail and the annual Tevis Cup Ride," says Barbara.



For more information on the 500 participants from last year's event, you can visit

<https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Auburn/TevisCup>.

I will be entering again. I really want that tee shirt. Yes, there's swag. Everyone who finishes gets their choice of a tee shirt or a medal, plus a nifty sticker modeled after the completion buckle for the actual Ride.

Perhaps the most fun is the progress reports you receive as you enter your miles. You are notified every time you "reach" a well-known landmark on the actual trail, with a link to more information about that landmark.

The non-profit WSTF has a serious goal—to maintain and preserve a historic trail. They partner with other organizations, notably the Western States Endurance Run:

(<https://www.wser.org>).

The trail has been affected by many things over the years. Especially during the last decade, fires have caused considerable damage. The Mosquito Fire just last fall has left large sections of the trail needing repair before the Ride can be held this year. Entry fees in the Virtual Tevis help repair and maintain this reminder of the challenges faced by early Americans.

With Virtual Tevis, you'll be doing good and having fun, all in just 100 days. 🐾

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WHERE GREEK MEETS EAST MEETS WEST

*"Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet"
is the first line of an 1892 poem by Rudyard Kipling.*

Usually, we substitute the word "east" with an English riding discipline and "west" with a Western riding discipline and ask ourselves if never the twain shall meet when the same question is put to both people. But this time, an ancient Greek guy is in the picture.



NANCY O'NEILL LOMBARDO



XENOPHON



JORDAN ROHANNA

Our participants are:

XENOPHON (X): Xenophon may be familiar to some because of a quote attributed to him "For what the horse does under compulsion... is done without understanding; and there is no beauty in it, any more than if one should whip and spur a dancer." Born in 430 B.C. and dying around 345 B.C., this brilliant Greek general, historian, philosopher, and student of Socrates was born into a wealthy equestrian family in Athens. He was a natural to write a treatise entitled "The Art of Horsemanship," the oldest existing work on the subject. Today it reads like it could have been written by any one of several modern-day trainers. His contribution was taken from the translation by Morris H. Morgan in 1893*.

NANCY O'NEILL LOMBARDO (NL): Nancy is the director of training at the Montgomery Creek Ranch, a 2000-acre private wild horse sanctuary outside of Elk Creek, California, with an adjunct facility in Sonoma. She also facilitates medical care and Mustang adoptions. Her experience has included ranch-type competitions and pleasure classes with her first pony. She went on to work in a veterinary office and later at a Santa Barbara guest ranch with 90 horses in her care. For another seven years, Nancy worked for a performance horse trainer and trained reining, cutting, and reined cow horses.

JORDAN ROHANNA (JR): Jordan is an FEI dressage trainer and competitor, young horse developer, biomechanics coach, and clinician. She is based at a private facility in Sebastopol, California, and has operated her business in Sonoma County since 2000.

Our questions for this issue address test-riding sale horses.

Do you have a system for test riding sale horses?

X: I shall describe how a man, in buying a horse, would be least likely to be cheated. First, the question of age should not pass unnoticed. His youth once made sure of, the way in which he lets you put the bit into his mouth, and the headpiece about his ears, should not escape you. This would be least likely to pass unnoticed if the bridle were put on and taken off in the sight of the purchaser. Next, we ought to observe how the horse received the rider upon his back—whether when mounted he is willing to leave other horses or whether, when ridden near horses that are standing still, he runs away towards them... A disobedient horse is not only useless, but he often plays the part of a... traitor.

NL: It's important to our adopters that the horses be personable and approachable. Because they like to make a connection.

I leave the horses out in the 15-acre pasture, so it's clear that you can catch them when they're with the other horses. For a recent potential adopter, I wanted her to know everything. So, she saw what the horse was like after two days off and what he was like in his routine. This is good information. If you see it all, you can sift out everything that doesn't matter to you. Some sellers want the people in and out. We want to be sure that the horses are in the right situation. So, people come out and spend hours. We want them to see everything and ask all the questions.

JR: Trying sale horses is like speed dating. The last thing you want is a four-hour date with someone when after 10 minutes, you realize you aren't a match. Make the first date brief. Don't waste the seller's time or yours by having them wait until after you arrive to groom, tack, lunge, and so on. Until I see the horse



go, and I feel him under saddle, I'm not interested in spending time getting to know him deeply or getting attached to his personality. If my client and I are interested in the horse after the first date, we can come back for a second date.

If the horse is local, try returning within a day or two. If you have to travel a ways away, book a hotel so you can have that second date the following morning. That's when my client and I will bring the horse out ourselves, groom him, check how he stands in the crossties, touch everything, brush everywhere.

Does he seem to genuinely enjoy interacting with you? Do you enjoy interacting with him? Can he let you touch the ears, nose, and poll? I've met so many mishandled and abused horses that show immediate fear when you place your hand near the head or the poll. Pull back accidents and rough handling can cause a lifetime of trauma, pain, and restrictions throughout the entire body.

Who rides first? What do you look for in the ride?

X: As I assume that the horse to be bought is meant for war, the trial should be made of all the qualities that war itself puts to the test. These are jumping ditches, going over walls, breasting banks, and leaping down from them; you must try him riding uphill and down dale and along the slope. All these tests prove whether his spirit is strong and his body sound.

NL: We always ride the horse first in the arena. Most of our adopters are trail riders and often ask to ride the horse on the trail. We will ride out with them. Then they can evaluate the comfort of the gaits. It's important to them that the horse likes to walk out and not be overly reactive.

JR: Always the seller or the seller's trainer should ride first, even if just for 15 minutes. Then I can see if the horse is sound, is trained to the capacity as advertised, or has any questionable behaviors. If all those check out ok, then I'll get on and see if the horse is appropriate for my client. If so, I'll then coach my client on the horse. If we are still interested and feeling positive after our rides, we'll plan for our second date.

What else do you want to see or hear?

X: You must learn, too, whether the horse has any particular vice shown towards other horses or towards men and whether he is very skittish. These are all troublesome matters for his owner. You could much better discover objections to being bridled and mounted and other vices by trying to do over again, after the horse has finished his work, just what you did before, beginning your ride. Horses that are ready to submit to a task the second time, after having done it once, give proof enough of high spirit.

NL: Adopters want to know if the horse is the same on and off the property. So we'll make sure we take him off property as part of his training and provide the adopter with a video of that training. It's also a good idea to see a horse loaded into a trailer. If that's not possible that day, ask to be sent a video. Since we have a trailer here as part of our obstacle course, adopters can see for themselves how the horse loads.

JR: Does the horse stand still at the mounting block? When the seller or trainer gets on, does the horse show fear, anger, or agitation? Is there a reaction from a cold back?

Tell us some red flags to look out for.

X: He should not be rejected, however, if he does not perform them (the tests described above) all very finely; as many animals fail, not from inability but from want of practice in these feats. With instruction, habit, and practice they may do all finely, provided they are sound and not vicious. But you must beware of horses that are naturally shy. The over-timid let no harm come to the enemy from off their backs, and they often throw the rider and bring him into the greatest danger.

The horse should be taught to stand still when the rider is taking his seat, and until he has drawn his skirts from under him, if necessary, made the reins even, and taken the most convenient grasp of his spear.

NL: Check out the demeanor of the seller. Are they wringing their hands and clutching a rabbit's foot? Are they rushing you or do they look relaxed?

JR: Listen to what people say because people will tell you the truth in an interesting way. "Oh, yeah, he's usually ok in the outdoor arena, but he can be a little funny at times." That may very well mean that the horse cannot go in the outdoor arena without bolting in every corner.

People use cute words when they're trying to mask issues.

Also, if there is any resistance to me on day two wanting to bring the horse out myself, groom, and tack him up, something isn't adding up. If the horse is supposedly so super chill, then why can't my client or I handle him without the assistance of the seller or trainer?

Any final advice?

X: To sum it all up, the least troublesome and most serviceable to his rider in the wars would naturally be the horse that is sound-footed, gentle, sufficiently fleet, ready and able to undergo fatigue, and first and foremost, obedient. On the other hand, horses that need much urging from laziness or much coaxing and attention from being too mettlesome keep the rider's hands always engaged, and take away his courage in moments of danger.

NL: My goal is that the horse is adopted to the correct home. I've turned down buyers that weren't a good match. We had a young and very active mare who was to be kept in a stall without other horses around. We saw that the mare would not become the horse the adopter wanted.

JR: If your intuition is to skip the test ride and run in the opposite direction—do so. Your goal is to leave in the same physical condition you arrived in. Don't feel obligated to get on just because they braided the horse and put white polo wraps on him.

*The Art of Horsemanship by Xenophon, Dover Publications, first published in 2006, is an unabridged republication of the work originally published by Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1893.



HALTER Project

ANIMAL DISASTER
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By Julie Atwood



SPRING SAFETY FOR EQUINES

Equines are experts at getting themselves into sticky situations, and sometimes a simple roll in the stall or pasture, or a leisurely trail ride, can quickly turn into a frightening predicament. Knowing what to do can be lifesaving.

The “after” of extended and heavy rainy weather can be dramatic, and many dangers are obvious. Leaning trees, falling branches, weakened structures and damaged roofs are visible and keep coming down long after the rain has stopped.

Some hazards that aren’t so immediately obvious and can quickly turn a day outdoors into a major animal emergency. Knowing what to look out for, what to do if an animal is in distress, and how to get the right help can be life-saving knowledge to have.

MY HORSE IS STUCK!

A 10-minute “Hazard Hunt” to scout for anyplace your animals might walk, roll, lay down,

swim, roll or play can prevent trauma. But elderly, lame, or spooked equines can find ways to get trapped in even the safest stall, pen and pasture.

Fortunately, the North Bay now has trained first responders who are ready and willing to use their Large Animal Rescue skills and specialized equipment. Knowing how to request them, and what you can do to help, is critical to achieve the best outcomes. Many large animals suffer not only from entrapment, but often, improper “rescue” techniques.

Our Animal Technical Rescue (ATR) teams are experts at managing these terrifying and dangerous incidents, coordinating resources that can include veterinarians, EMTs/paramedics, traffic control, heavy equipment operators, transport, and animal owners or handlers. Understanding how they respond and work together, and the vital role that calm and informed animal owners play, are essential.

Common rescue situations include extrication from mud, old wells and septic tanks, gates and cattle guards, trailer accidents, falls “over the edge” of steep hills or ravines, and trail riding mishaps.

WHO ARE THE TEAMS?

Sonoma and Marin counties have outstanding ATR responders, and supportive veterinarians and Animal Services agencies, who can respond to complex incidents and know how to humanely extricate the animal(s), rescue any humans involved, and keep everyone safe. ATR responders are trained in equine anatomy and behavior, and the use of standard, readily available rescue equipment.

Our local ATR teams in Sonoma and Marin all have specialized backboards, straps, lifts, and animal protective gear that’s made specifically for use with large animals. They train and refresh periodically to maintain their skills and are qualified to command these types of complex incidents if needed.

LEARN THE SKILLS

There are other, less complicated types of animal situations that most equine owners can learn to handle on their own, with a bit of help from neighbors or barn-mates.

Learning how to safely handle common mishaps such as cast or down horses, can be stress-reducing and lifesaving. For these situations, it can really pay off to invest in some basic training and simple equipment that works for most situations.



HALTER Project can help you choose equipment and learn how to perform many basic maneuvers to help animals in common predicaments.

KEY POINTS TO KNOW

- Learn how to request technical rescue help.
- Understand the difference between an individual emergency and a disaster.
- Get to know your responder resources, and how to request their services.
- Disasters are handled differently from “everyday”, individual emergencies.
- In a disaster, all companion animal assistance is handled by County Animal Services, by calling the appropriate hotline. (see code)
- For individual emergencies, 911 dispatchers route the request to the nearest specialist team resource. Do NOT call a local fire station—it will only slow down the process.



QUICK TIPS

DO:

- Calm yourself and everyone involved and keep the area quiet. Minimize the number of people.
- Keep an animal buddy nearby if safely possible.
- **Call 911, request LARGE ANIMAL RESCUE**
- Be ready to state the situation clearly, calmly, and accurately.
- Call your vet. If no vet is available, the response resources will contact a qualified vet.
- Keep animal and human victims quiet, warm, or cool, as needed.
- Offer food and water to animal victims if you’re able to do it safely.

DO NOT:

- Attempt rescue yourself.
- Attempt to pull an animal out of mud or sand.

SONOMA-MARIN ATR TEAMS

Sonoma Valley Fire District, Rancho Adobe Fire District, Graton Volunteer FD with Sebastopol Fire District, Marin County Sheriff Search & Rescue Golden Gate National Recreation Area Park Patrol, Sonoma County Animal Services, Marin Humane

Several Community Animal Response Teams (CARTs) have ATR volunteers who can assist during disasters, when agency responders must give priority to human life safety.

In the North Bay, all these resources have been developed, trained, and equipped through programs and funding provided by THE HALTER Project.

To learn more, scan these QR codes to download resources for preparedness, training, and owner-friendly rescue equipment.

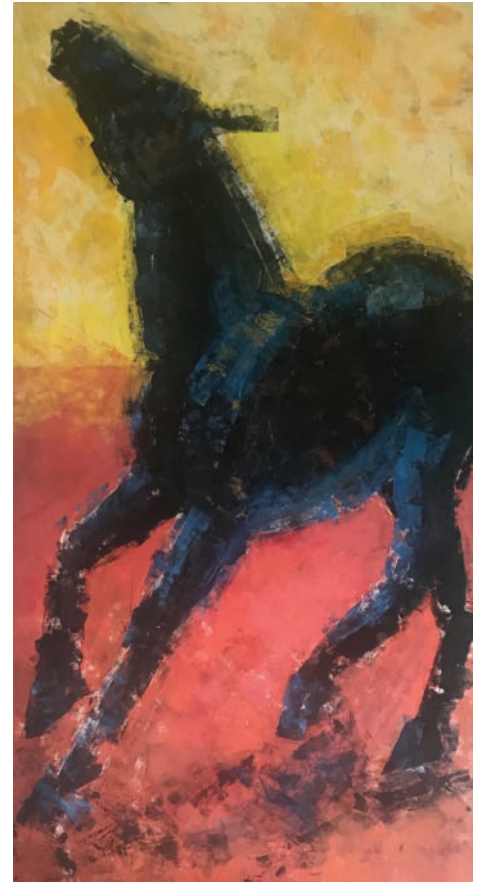


ARTISTS DRAW

When I decided to get back into horses, I met trainer Taylor Merrill, who introduced me to Cruz, a Thoroughbred at Silver Buckle Ranch in Santa Rosa. The horse wasn't being handled. When I decided to work with him, his resistance was to rear, jump through the air and gallop off. This painting represents the emotion and action he demonstrated. We spent a lot of time in the round pen. Eventually, with quiet handling and riding, he calmed down.

The grey mare is an Arabian Quarter Horse cross named Balsam whom I leased for 11 years. marlenebauerholder@gmail.com

— *Marlene Bauer-Holder*



When I met my friend Patti's horse Dano for the first time, I had to paint their portrait. Horses were a big part of my early career. I started riding in my early teens and stayed with teaching and training until my 50s. Now I admire horses with paint.

I am an artist and co-owner of a vegetable farm in Sonoma, California. I can't help noticing the beautiful compositional balance and color in the world. Whether seeing an arresting landscape, a combination of color and shapes in a small personal vignette, or the powerful form of an animal, everything is worthy of portrayal. I went to art school, had a career in design for publications, and began to paint more seriously in 2000. Candied@vom.com

— *Candi Edmondson*



OWN TO HORSES



The creator of this work is Johnnie, a beautiful nine-year-old Gypsy Vanner who took the road less traveled and became a painter.

The Gypsy Vanner breed is originally from Ireland and was bred by the nomadic Romany people. The horses with more than ample manes, tails, and lower leg feathers got their name as a reflection of their traditional employment,—pulling the family’s wheeled caravans across the British Isles.

All fine and fitting with his owner’s “great plans for Johnnie to be a riding horse and pull my own carriages,” says Camilla Gray-Nelson. “But it turned out he’d buck everybody off and was terrified of the carriages. So, I had to find his lane, something that Johnnie actually wanted to do.”

Camilla hired Kathleen Sidjakov, an animal trainer and the owner of Animal Stars Training, to teach Johnnie some tricks. Accidentally, they discovered the horse’s alacrity for painting. Now Johnnie has a website, and his art is available several times a year at shows on Dairy Dell Ranch and Art.com. www.paintinghorsej.com

— *Camilla on behalf of Johnnie*



CHURCHILL DOWNS CARRIES SPECIAL MEANING

By Tara Good-Young



Entrance to Churchill Downs, home of the Kentucky Derby

Spring is here, and my heart warms, reminiscing over Triple Crown race memories. When I was a kid, the only time on a Saturday that my dad took a break from ranch chores was for those glorious races. I would idle on up beside him, and we would admire horses and assess the jockeys as they paraded and prepared for the announcer to call “riders-up” and proclaim “the most exciting two minutes in sports.” While he’s been gone twenty years, I keep the tradition and joy very much alive.

A trip to meet American Saddlebred champion stallions and breeders in Kentucky afforded me the opportunity

I had been waiting on for over 47 years, to step foot onto Churchill Downs in Louisville. My visit in early December was just after racing had ended for the season, so no horses were to be seen breezing the track. However, it presented a different, very personal experience. Because I was the only scheduled guest that early Monday morning, a Spires and Super Stars Tour evolved into a private one.

I was treated to views of the track and winner’s circles, including the one for all races and the coveted other beneath the bugler’s post reserved exclusively for the Kentucky Derby winner. When we focused our attention on the infield, I imagined the derby with 80,000 people in that field. From the various levels and areas of the grandstands, I marveled at the sea of horse barns. I walked away, knowing what sections held the best view for prices this gal could reasonably afford.

While visiting the Turf Club, Millionaires Row, Skye Terrace, and the Stakes Room, I enjoyed stories about interesting and infamous visitors past, including Queen Elizabeth and historic jockeys. I also learned that Kentucky Derby festival week could set you back a king’s ransom to dine in these fabled spaces. Think five to eight figures. On most standard



Photo: Tara Good-Young

Handcrafted glass reproduction of Churchill Downs



racing days, you can enjoy buffet lunches for around \$42 to \$50.

Our walk-about upstairs concluded with viewing beautiful photographs and artwork featuring prominent chairmen, jockeys, owners, trainers, and horses. Ending the gracious visual tour of history and tradition spanning over a century, we stepped outside to take in an exhilarating, close-up view of the famous twin spires. I felt as if I could reach out and touch the one nearest. To finish the tour, we headed downstairs to the Club House Level to take in the spectacular 30-foot-wide work of art by Craig Colquhoun. The 4,000-piece colored handblown glass replica of the grandstands, spires, and final stretch, with horses, riders, media, and spectators, is a sight not to be missed.

Even if you're not a passionate horseracing fan, visiting the Kentucky Derby Museum should not be missed for such a rich history of Thoroughbreds, black trainers, grooms, and jockeys. A section is dedicated to the International Horseshoeing Hall of Fame with a fascinating display of horseshoes by style and purpose. Avid race fans will enjoy historical Kentucky.

Derby race clips dating back to 1918 and including the greats such as Sir Barton, Gallant Fox, Omaha, Citation, and Secretariat. My heart sang, and a tear came to my eye.



A large exhibit area was dedicated to jockey Bill Shoemaker who was my idol in the 1970s and well after he retired in 1990. Viewing the sizeable collection of photos and stories that spanned his life in and outside of racing felt like the next best thing to meeting the man himself.

For bourbon and whisky drinkers in the crowd, the little café next to the museum, while not auspicious, offers selections of three different bourbon/whisky tasting flights levels, which is a nice experience, particularly if you can't hit the Bourbon Trail. I'd also have to say the soup and salad combo I selected surprisingly exceeded expectations.

Whether you view the 149th running of the Kentucky Derby in person or on television, you'll notice a couple of pertinent items will have changed. A new set of grandstands at the center of the first bend is complete with dining areas of its own. The usual paddock where "riders up" was demolished and by the 150th running, May 2024, will sport a newly constructed circular layout with dining and viewing venues surrounding it. To fellow horse lovers, I say, make the trip, take the tour, and taste the bourbon. It'll be memorable.

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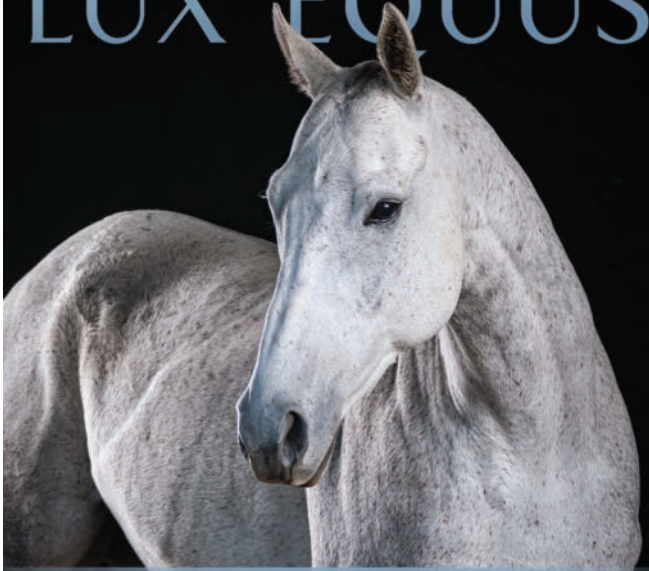
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This has become our signature event, an intimate, luxurious gathering, featuring a curated four-course dinner menu showcasing the best of the season, carefully paired with lovely wines.

The cocktail reception will provide ample time to sip and nibble Derby Day treats and enjoy the gardens. We will also have a fun live auction to experience.

Help us launch our next 25 years of enhancing lives through the healing power of horses, team, and community.

Tickets and tables are limited, so get yours today!



EXCERPT FROM:

The Water Calls: **One Woman's Journey to Reclaim Her Dignity and Freedom**

By Ariana Strozzi Mazzucchi

Sonoma County's Ariana Strozzi Mazzucchi is a master somatic coach, entrepreneur, author, rancher, professional equestrian, artist, and international spokeswoman. A pioneer in equine-assisted therapy, in 1989 she founded Leadership & Horses™, an equine-guided education and coaching program.

In this her latest book, *The Water Calls*, what began as Ariana's desire to understand her traumatic divorce became the revelation of a heroine's journey. Written through the eyes and voice of horse trainer Emma, Ariana unravels a lifetime of conditioning to fit in, to be "the good girl," and to be convinced to hide her intuitive powers and deep connection to the natural world.

Through significant life moments, Ariana shares how her sacred relationship with horses, and the healing lessons gleaned from nature helped her heal old wounds and betrayals and reclaim her dignity and freedom.

TAKING A STAND

Emma was ready to be misunderstood. She knew it was up to her to save herself. She knew she needed to stop protecting other people's identities at the expense of her own well-being. It was time to stop pretending that her life was not in crisis.

In the morning, Emma took the kids to school and tidied the kitchen, like she always did. She went down to the barn to work with the nameless horse who reminded her of Golda, the majestic palomino of her childhood.

She groomed her in the usual routine, saddled her, and took her into the arena to lunge her. She couldn't feel this horse's heart. It was as if she had no will, no life; she was an empty shell of a horse. Every time Emma tried to make a move to ride her, she got fidgety and anxious, more than a normal unbroken horse would do.

Emma stopped the horse from going around in circles. "What is it, girl?" she whispered. "You seem so far away. I can't feel you. Talk to me."

Emma rested her head on the lonely horse's neck, closed her eyes, and breathed quietly. She had a vision. She saw this chestnut mare when she was a little filly. She was a happy girl. But one day, people came and took her away from her mother. They pushed her into a big white box and closed all the doors so she couldn't see anything. She was screaming wildly for her mother. Her eyes were white with terror, and she broke into a terrible sweat.

The mare's mother and all the horses were screaming and running frantically back and forth in the paddock, trying to jump over the fence to find her. They could hear her, but they couldn't see her. Their hooves on the dry dirt scratched the earth, and the dust rose so they could no longer even see the big white box.

The lady who had been her human was nowhere to be found. She loved that lady named Sarah. Where was she? All of a sudden, the big box started moving, bumping, and throwing her around in the black wilderness of nowhere. She tossed and turned, whinnied, and cried for hours and hours. By the time it stopped, she was exhausted. She was dripping with sweat; her whole body was shaking uncontrollably. The whites of her eyes were stretched with terror.

Emma was crying, wet, lumpy tears running down her cheeks. She lifted her head to look into the mare's deep brown eye, a world full of silent stories. The mare lowered her head. Emma could see a few tears in her eyes. Emma and the mare wept together.



Drawing by Ariana Strozzi Mazzucchi



"I miss my mother," said the mare. "I miss Sarah, too. I don't know where they are. And this new lady, Mindy, wants you to train me to ride. But my body is broken. It hurts to canter. I don't want anyone to ride me; it hurts too much."

"Now I get it," Emma said, relieved to finally understand what she had been feeling in the blank void between what Mindy wanted and what this mare could do. "Thank you for telling me."

Emma had felt deep down in her intuitive gut that this horse didn't want to be ridden, but she'd doubted herself. Horse trainers were not supposed to think or feel this way. Instead, she had held onto the old horse training rule she'd been taught: make the horse do what you want, when you want. If she'd gone to this horse's owner and simply said, "Your horse doesn't want to be ridden," she'd look incompetent. She'd be the laughing stock. She might as well hang up her horse trainer hat.

Instead, she whispered to the mare, "I knew something was wrong. It didn't feel right pressuring you the way I have been—the way I'm paid to do. Let's stop this right now. Let's start from the beginning. Tell me your name."

The mare lifted her head with a new light in her eye. "Emma, my name is Rose."

"That is one of my favorite names! It's perfect. I shall call you Rose. And I am going to tell your owner that I am concerned about riding you because I think something is wrong with your body. I can see you are in pain, you are afraid something bad is going to happen. Is this why you are being resistant?"

"Yes, Emma, thank you for seeing me." And the mare sighed in deep relief.

"I'm also going to tell her that you are lonely because you were taken from your family and that she needs to bond with you and become your friend. How's that?"

"I like it." Rose licked her lips in agreement.

Later that day, Emma spoke to Mindy and shared her concerns. She recommended a vet visit to examine Rose's physical body. Mindy agreed.

Emma felt relieved inside. She had been scared to take a stand with the owner, but she knew she had to. She felt out of integrity with Rose to keep pushing her rather than being curious about why the horse was resistant.

It was a big moment for Emma as a horse trainer. This was another reason why Golda had come to her. Emma knew she needed to listen now.

EMMA EXPLAINS HER OWN STORY

By taking a stand for Rose, I broke one of the old rules passed down for many generations, one of the fundamental rules of domination—to make another do as you wish, when you ask and in a hurry, too. An unspoken rule in horsemanship states that once you ask the horse to do something, it must be done. You have to make the horse do it no matter what. I didn't have the heart to make Rose do something that was clearly painful for her just because I had been hired to do so.

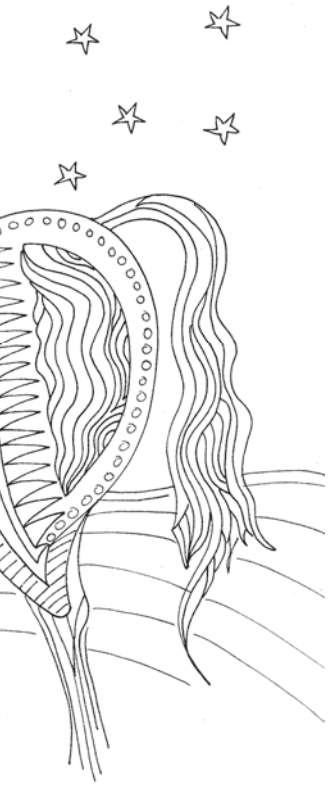
I talked to Mindy and told her I would not make Rose be ridden, that something was wrong within her body. I had the vet come out, and sure enough, she had suffered an injury before the age of two, where most likely she had been tied up at too young of an age when her body was still growing.

Rose had struggled fiercely to get free. In doing so, she had pulled a system of muscles and tendons, damaging an area around the neck vertebrae that caused chronic pain down the spine through her croup. No wonder she didn't want to be ridden.

Since then, I have seen this condition a number of times when people come to me because they don't understand why their horse is being so resistant and won't allow them to be ridden. Some old horsemanship models advise to tie young horses up and sack them out (meaning, scare them on purpose) so they pull back and learn they cannot get away. I've never done such horrid things to horses, nor have I ever seen it done. But I know that method has a long history in some antiquated horsemanship models. And I have assisted a lot of horses who had such tragic experiences to recover from their trauma.

So, whether Rose was sacked out or injured in the trailer (the big white box) is unknown. But the vet confirmed she should not be ridden. I suggested to Mindy that she send her back to the previous owner, Sarah, who was Mindy's sister. Sarah could give her a home and companionship. Mindy had been the one who thought her sister shouldn't have the horse because she didn't want to ride her. And so, Rose returned to her family.

If I hadn't set myself free from worrying about what the owner would think of me by telling her I wouldn't train her horse to ride, Rose might have had a terrible life. Unbeknownst to me at the time, I was already breaking the rules, cutting the invisible ropes of domestication that I shared with horses. 🐾





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Foals and the First Few Weeks

By Michelle Beko, D.V.M.

In spring, we are party to wonderful arrivals such as daffodils and tulips, longer days, greener grass, and, best of all, baby horses. Usually born between March and July, we delight in seeing foals nursing, playing in their pastures, and exploring their new world.

Actually, the first few weeks are somewhat precarious for newborn (neonatal) foals, and a few common problems can have serious consequences. One is meconium impactions. They are a common cause of colic in neonates. Meconium is the first feces they pass. It is waste products and hormones from their time in utero and should be passed within their first 12 hours. It tends to be firm and dark brown to almost black pellets, unlike the soft pasty manure that they will pass later. They often strain to pass it. Fortunately, we can significantly decrease babies' risk of meconium impaction by administering an enema soon after birth. An over-the-counter enema for humans works well. You might divide it into two or three doses.

Note: it's best not to stand behind them for a while after giving them an enema.

Failure of Passive Transfer (FPT) is another problem. Although foals are born with a fully functional immune system, they don't have any antibodies or infection-fighting proteins made by the immune system to help them fight specific pathogens. Humans get some antibodies in utero from the mother, but foals are reliant on getting maternal antibodies through colostrum, the first milk the mare produces, which is rich in antibodies.

In the first 12 to 36 hours of a foal's life, its small intestine can absorb these large proteins intact. FPT happens if the foal doesn't nurse or if the mare leaks colostrum before foaling. We can help prevent this by watching the mare for dripping milk as parturition approaches and watching the newborn to make sure you can hear swallowing when it's nursing.

If a foal has trouble nursing, a veterinarian can administer the mare's colostrum to the foal via a stomach tube. Many breeding farms collect and save colostrum from mares that have stillborn foals in case they need it for foals of mares leaking colostrum or dying. A post-foaling examination by your vet usually entails taking a blood sample and checking the baby's antibody level. If it is too low, your vet can potentially administer commercially available plasma if the foal is too old to absorb colostrum.

One of the most life-threatening problems babies face is septicemia, a bacterial infection in the bloodstream that can lead to severe inflammation called Systemic Inflammatory Response Syndrome. If the mare has placentitis (infection of the placenta), the foal can become infected in utero through the umbilical stump, by ingesting or inhaling bacteria, or through a wound. FPT puts them at an increased risk of septicemia.

The symptoms are vague and non-specific and may include lethargy, diarrhea, infected joint(s), and elevated heart and respiratory rates. They rarely have a fever. Treatment requires antibiotics and intensive supportive care, and usually, a referral to someplace that can watch them around the clock, especially if they aren't nursing.

Research has greatly improved survival rates in septic foals from what they were a couple of decades ago. Having a clean area for



TO-DO LIST WHEN NEWBORN FOAL ARRIVES

- Wash mare's udder and surrounding area
- Dip navel
- Confirm nursing within the first two hours
- Get well baby vet check with IgG (antibody) test





the mare to foal, washing the mare's udder and surrounding area before the foal nurses, making sure the foal nurses, and dipping the umbilicus in antiseptic such as diluted chlorhexidine or iodine will minimize the risk of this serious disease. Since it can occur within the first three weeks of life, foals should be watched closely. Neonatal foals sleep a lot and should nurse frequently. If they don't nurse right after getting up or seem lethargic when they are standing, you should call your veterinarian right away.

As an aside, although calling foals "babies" is widespread in the horse world, it does occasionally lead to some confusion. After I had my daughter, a client called and wanted me to come to see her horse. When my office manager told her I was not working for the next few weeks because I'd had a baby, she wondered why and said she was working even though her mare had foaled recently. 🐾



Michelle Beko, D.V.M.

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Tips to Beat the Heat



Extrême heat now occurs more often, earlier in the season, and when the weather should normally be cool. Such climatic events can be life-threatening and advanced preparation can mean the difference between saving or losing your animal.

As a native of Sonoma County and a former California State Horsemen's Association riding instructor with over 30 years of horse ownership, I share my discoveries from the 2021 extreme heat event I experienced.

ADVANCED PREPARATION

- Consider two thermometers as a critical tool in the first aid kit. Get to know your own horse's vital signs in advance. A horse cools the body by sweating, but when this stops, a horse's temperature can rise within minutes. Normal temperature ranges from about 98 to 101 degrees Fahrenheit, with 100 being average.
- Buy items you will need during a heat event well in advance while the products are fully in stock: horse and human first aid kit items, horse pain medications, calming powders, electrolytes, extra-large buckets, hoses, towels, mats, misters, sprinklers, tarp, fly traps, extension cords, fans, body clippers, gloves, ice trays, shade cloth.
- Keep all tack in the shade. Metal on halters, as example, can become hot enough to cause pain.

CREATE A COOLER ENVIRONMENT

- Mount a fan by the stall or shed. It can be suspended inside a mesh hay net out of the horse's reach. Consider installing a permanent sprinkler or misting system.
- Attach shade cloth to the sides of barns or sheds to further cool the building. Shade cloth can be suspended between poles or trees to create or enlarge shade areas. Ensure all shade clothes, fans, and cords are safely secured, and out of the animals' reach.
- Consider insulating your barn or building out a safe stall. For example, rigid 1" or 2" insulation covered with plywood, even if used only on the south side, can make a difference in cooling the walls.
- Hay should be stored outside the barn. This is important because it will absorb heat and then radiate it in the afternoon. Remove piles of shavings and wet sawdust for the same reason.

TRAIN BEFORE AND DURING THE EVENT

- Introduce your horses beforehand to accessories used in heat events, like sprinklers on the barn roof.
- Horses are much more sensitive to heat than humans are. As the heat climbs, horses may suddenly exhibit dangerous fight or flight



Preparing Horses for Excessive Heat Events

By Diane Engdahl

behavior as they feel signals that their lives are in danger. Never assume at a glance that horses are doing well. Their heart rate and respiration may be going up. Horses can suddenly be overwhelmed by the heat and collapse.

- Reduce your horses' stress by feeding them calming powder or paste and lowering the barn radio volume. Remember that how you breathe matters to your horse. Keep yourself calm and be a good leader.

CARE


- **WATER:** Keep animals cool and well-hydrated. Make sure their water source remains cool. Test the water coming from the hose or mister before filling buckets or washing the horse. Never use small automatic water devices as they deliver warm or hot water during hot weather. Extra large tubs of cool water ensure that your horse will have plenty of water even in the event of a power blackout. Keep a salt block nearby. Offer electrolytes in a separate bucket of water before the hottest day arrives. Check that no horses are being pushed out into the sun or away from the water by a more aggressive herd member.
- **FEEDING:** Try not to introduce any feed changes. Do not increase feed during this time because extra calories serve to warm the horse, not cool him. To help horses stay hydrated, spray hay or feed with cool water. Feed immediately and remove if not eaten, before bacteria can multiply. Feeding moldy or mildewed feed can make a horse extremely ill.
- **BEDDING:** Do not introduce a new type of bedding during this time. Horses may ingest bedding when hungry or nervous, which can affect the PH of their gut and cause colic.
- **FLIES:** Spray only with a non-oil-based fly spray. Remove fly sheets. Use masks with forelock holes, and without material covering the horse's jaws.
- **GELDINGS:** Water consumption will be much higher, and the horse will need to urinate more. Clean your gelding's sheath and check for beans that restrict normal urination. Talk to your vet.

DURING THE EVENT

- **BRAIDING:** Braiding the mane can expose more neck area and help the body to cool. You can braid the tail, placing the band well below the tail tip, to allow airflow over the large veins of the inner leg.
- **CLIPPING:** Ask your vet if clipping might be recommended for your horse's breed to reduce heat distress. If the temperatures become life-threatening, clipping may help save your horse.
- **WORMING AND VET VISITS:** Avoid using wormers 48 hours before or during excessive heat. Reschedule vet visits that might require sedation. Side effects of sedation include decreased GI motility, slowed heartbeat, elevated blood glucose, and a drop in blood pressure. Sedation can affect and decrease the horses' thermoregulation.
- **TRANSPORTING:** Heat, combined with the stress of travel, is very dangerous, especially in trailers with aluminum roofs. The poll is the nerve center for thermoregulation, and the aluminum roof can heat the horse's head. If you must transport, wait until night.
- **RIDING:** Do not risk going for a morning trail ride. Temperatures can climb sooner than expected, putting your horse at risk on the ride home.

HORSES ESPECIALLY AT RISK

- Young animals, senior animals, obese animals, animals with health problems, and animals on medication or recovering from injury are much more at risk.
- Breeds with extra leg feathering, bushy manes, and thick forelocks are more heat sensitive or may have problems sweating. Because horses cool themselves by evaporation, this is a huge problem during extreme heat. Draft breeds can be stoic and hard to assess during heat stress. Your vet will have ideas to help.
- Eye issues like uveitis can be extremely painful on hot days. Ask your vet how to care for uveitis in extreme heat.
- Dark-colored horses heat up more easily. To reduce their risk, bring them in very early and keep them inside. This will keep their core temperature cool from the start.
- For overweight horses: Begin exercising and dieting horses in the months ahead of the summer heat.

Until we get control of climate change, extreme heat is likely in our future. Planning and advanced preparation will give us a leg up on helping, maybe even saving, our horses. 



Farrier Views

Equine Foot Balance

By Sam Durham, CJF CI DiPWC

Farriers are on a specific quest when they look this way and that at a horse's leg and hoof. The alignment of the limb, foot, and horseshoe or balance is the chief guidepost for preparing the foot and fitting the shoe to the foot. Matching the proportions of the limb with the foot and shoe to enhance limb alignment is the ultimate balance.

The farrier's job is to alter the balance by trimming the hoof and selecting, modifying, and placing the shoe in accordance with the golden rules of the blacksmithing trade. That process begins with an assessment of each limb from the side and the front, observing standing balance, and assessing any imbalance when the limb is in motion.

Standing balance is best evaluated with the horse situated on a level, well-lit, clean area, square on all four feet with an equal load on each limb. The farrier picks up each leg to assess foot shape and health conditions. Is the hoof overgrown? Is there too little hoof? Is thrush present? Are there abnormal growth rings or any other damage? Are the frog, sole, wall, and bars healthy?

Evaluating at the Standstill

The farrier looks for equal proportions in the standing limb and foot. When assessing the balance from in front of the leg, the farrier focuses on the center axis of the bones of the leg. The cannon bone should bisect the hoof into equal halves. The hoof wall should be at similar angles on both sides.

From a front-standing view, the farrier best sees conformational issues such as base wide, base narrow, bowlegged, knock-kneed, toe in or out, or rotational deviations. By lifting the leg and holding the cannon bone, the farrier views down the long axis of the limb, determines the extent of conformational deviations, and best decides how to trim the foot into the most congruent joint limb balance for the given limb conformation.

Because of the fixed pelvic limb anatomy, the hind limbs need to be viewed from several positions. Lifting the hind leg forward and viewing over and down the center axis of the cannon bone, the farrier looks for equal proportions on each side of the hoof. Setting the foot down, the farrier then stands in front of



An example of a broken back or upright foot

the horse to eyeball the central axis of the hind leg cannon bone. The foot should be equal on each side of the center axis.

The farrier moves for a side view of the front limb to evaluate the angle of the pastern and hoof capsule axis (HPA). The same will be done for the back limb.

In a back view of the hind limb, the farrier eyes the center back part of the fetlock, looking down to the heels of the hoof, and checking to see if they are equal on each side. The farrier then lifts the leg so that it hangs from the hock region directly behind the pelvis. The farrier sees over the hock, cannon bone, and pastern to the bottom portion of the hoof capsule. In looking for equal proportions on the bearing border of the hoof capsule, the farrier questions if it is equal on both medial (inside) and lateral (outside) sides. Is it overgrown and how much needs to be removed to achieve equality?

The bottom of the hoof including the frog, sole, bars, heels, and wall can be great guides if they are in healthy condition. The frog is normally centrally located in the hoof capsule and pro-

duces a dermal layer that is directly adjacent to the bottom of the coffin bone. It is in the direct angle and alignment with the coffin bone. Therefore, the farrier relies on its constant position as a guide to the proportions of the sole, wall depth, and alignment.

Viewing the hoof from the lateral side, the farrier assesses the length of the hoof and the angle in relation to the HPA. The goal is to have the hoof wall as close to equal as possible to the HPA. A veterinarian can take lateral view x-rays to help with this assessment. If HPA is out of balance, it may be broken back or broken forward from the ideal HPA.

Broken back HPA is a long toe and low heel condition. This puts excess load onto other parts of the foot and can lead to lamenesses like corns, navicular syndrome, caudal heel pain, degenerative joint disease at the coffin joint, or strained suspensory ligament.

Broken forward HPA is best described as a club or upright foot. This condition has fewer foot lameness issues but is implicated in a majority of upper limb lameness. Stumbling, excessive heel first landing, coffin bone tip pathology, impact-related navicular pain, and a distorted or peeled hoof wall at the toe are related to broken forward HPA. As close a balance as possible at each shoeing or trimming interval is the goal.

Evaluating the Horse in Motion

Hoof balance can affect the horse's performance. Almost all hoof balance-related injuries occur during landing or loading portions of the stride. These are both affected by trimming and shoeing applications. Farriers cannot influence a limb in the flight phase of the stride, only in the foot's landing, loading, and lift-off phases.

By standing in front of the horse moving at the walk or trot, the farrier ideally sees the foot land flat or slightly heel first, a true congruent limb load, and a true congruent lift-off without rotational or inside/outside movements.

Conformational issues like a toe-in or toe-out can create abnormal landing, loading, and lift-off. The farrier uses trimming to improve this dynamic balance or implements shoeing strategies to help mitigate conformational imbalances.

Time, poor fitness, environment, and pathology are all things we must manage to ensure the horse has a healthy life. Balancing the horse's foot is a top priority for the optimum health of our equine partners. 🐾

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