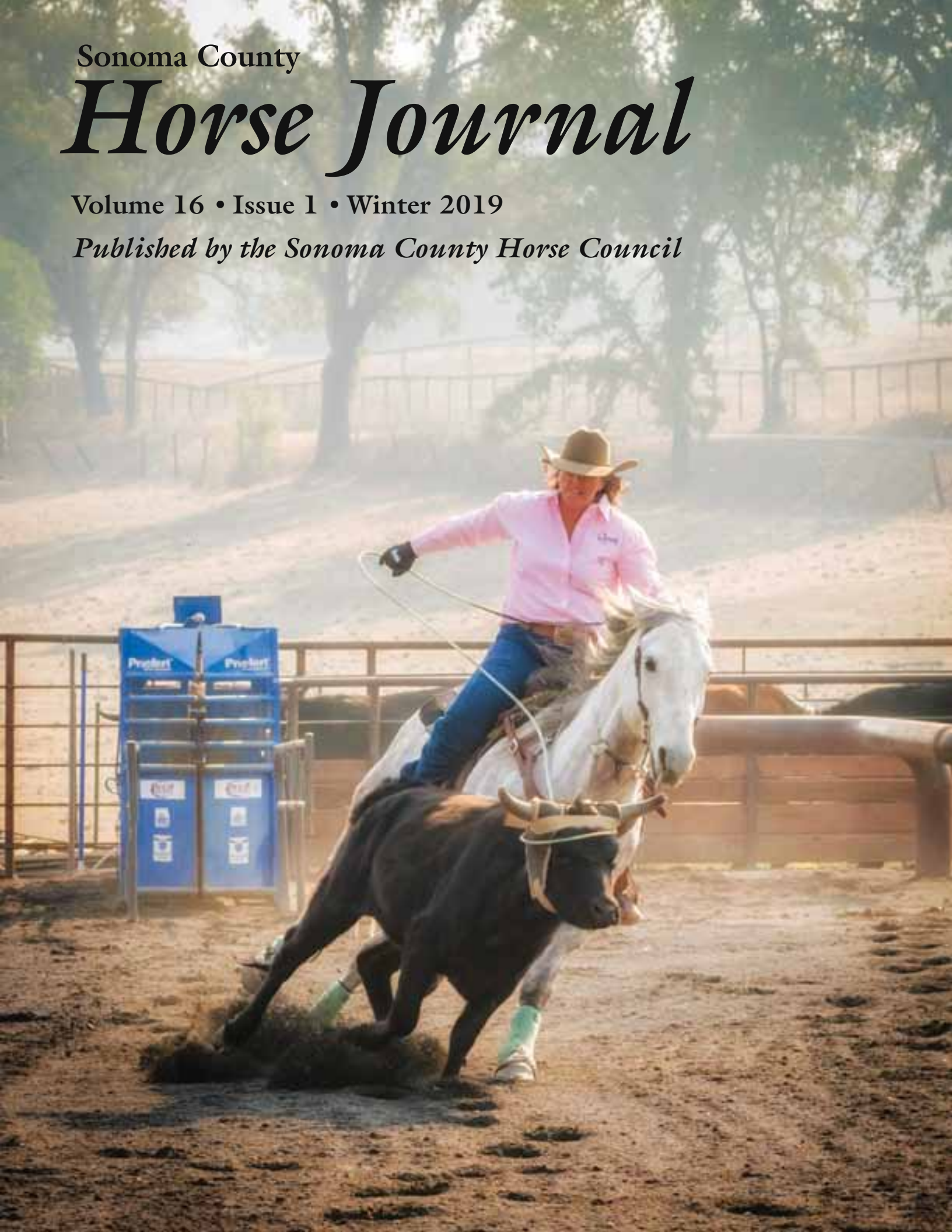


Sonoma County

Horse Journal

Volume 16 • Issue 1 • Winter 2019

Published by the Sonoma County Horse Council



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Cover Photo: Marcie Lewis

Becky McCully Moore getting in some practice time aboard her own 8yr. old horse, SHS Jag Blanton.

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President's Message



Elizabeth and Greycie

As I write this message, the Camp Fire is roughly 70% contained and the air quality throughout the North Bay is still at hazardous levels. Watching our Butte County neighbors and the Southern California communities besieged by the Camp and Woolsey Fires caused many of us to relive our 2017 trauma, even as we rallied to help. These catastrophic events seem to underscore that firestorms may be our new abnormal.

Groups and individuals from Sonoma County are already working with locals in the Paradise area, and the Sonoma County Horse Council (SCHC) is developing partnerships with local organizations to provide financial assistance for equine-related losses. We are also excited to be part of the upcoming Sonoma Community Animal Response Team (CART) (see News & Newsworthy on page 24 of this issue). As part of the CART, we will continue to support Sonoma County Animal Services and our community through large animal evacuation and sheltering services, as well as disaster service worker training.

In addition to the informative articles on horse health and well-being you have come to expect from the Horse Journal, this issue includes helpful guidance for managing the geriatric equine. It also includes an update on the \$146,000 in grants the SCHC disbursed to local equestrians in the wake of the 2017 wildfires. Perhaps, like me, you will be inspired by (or at least will live vicariously through) the once-in-a-lifetime riding experiences recounted by two local equestrians. This holiday season as you shop, please support our advertisers, who make it possible for the Horse Journal to bring you this relevant and educational content.

On a final note, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Horse Journal's own Editor-in-Chief, Patrice Doyle, and her equine partner The Black Tornado (aka "Blackie") on their success at the United States Dressage Federation/Great American Insurance Group Region 7 Championship and California Dressage Society Championship shows last September. Showing Prix St. Georges, Adult Amateur, the pair placed third in the USDF/GAIG championship and ninth in the CDS championship. Nationally, they are ranked 39th out of 147 horse/rider combinations at this level. We are very proud of both of them and wish them continued success.

Best,
Elizabeth Palmer
President, Sonoma County Horse Council

We're Expanding Our Horse Journal Editorial Team!

Desire to be a part of a premier equine publication in the North Bay? Thrive on collaborating with talented contributors? Seek to deliver relevant and important equine information to our community? Then this opportunity is for you! Join the Horse Journal Editorial Team! Contact Patrice Doyle at schc.pdoyle@gmail.com or Elizabeth Palmer at schc.epalmer@gmail.com.

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The Equine Esquire

By Column Editor Patrice A. Doyle, Attorney at Law, Board of Directors

Problems With A Handshake: Enforcing The Oral Contract

Many deals have been made simply on a smile and a handshake, especially in the farming, ranching, and horse communities. A person's word had integrity and was equally as good as a signature on paper. This method of transacting can work fine, but unfortunately when a deal goes south it can be extremely difficult to prove the existence and terms of the oral contract.

Proving the Existence and Terms of the Oral Contract

To be legally enforceable, a contract must have the following elements: 1) an offer, 2) an acceptance, 3) mutual assent to be bound, and 4) consideration supporting the contract. The one that often hammers the death blow to an oral contract is the "mutual assent to be bound" element. Before the contract will be considered enforceable, the party seeking enforcement must prove not only that the other person agreed to be bound, but that the parties agreed on the essential terms related to that contract. Such terms might include price, interest rate, the payment amount, the item to be built, or numerous other terms dictated by the agreement in dispute.

Courts typically will require you to present "clear and convincing evidence" of the contract's terms, meaning that you must present dependable, concrete evidence from credible sources to prove that the truth of your claim is highly probable. It might include:

- Proof that the parties have acted in a certain way that supports the assertion of a contract (for example, services were provided by one party to the other in exchange for payment).
- Parties' statements made and actions taken during and following the formation of the oral contract, as well as prior dealings of the parties.
- Documentation—Even if there is no signed contract between the parties, there is very often other documentation to support the existence of the contract, such as correspondence (letters, emails), notes, or even draft contracts which were never signed.
- Testimony from witnesses—If there were any other persons who were present at the time the contract was struck (such as employees or family members), those persons can act as witnesses to verify the existence of the relationship. The evidence might be conflicting, so it is important to have disinterested, credible witnesses who were present during negotiations or who saw, heard, or otherwise know the terms of the agreement.

The central issue of an oral contract will almost always be whether the parties actually agreed on the material points of the contract. If they did, they can begin to battle over what it all means. If they did not, then no contract was ever formed and there is nothing to enforce.

Contracts That Must Be In Writing to Be Enforceable

Even if you can prove the existence and terms of your oral contract, there are some contracts that must be in writing in order to be legally enforceable. California Civil Code § 1624, the

Statute of Frauds, specifically describes these transactions. Generally, they are:

- Contracts that necessarily take longer than one year to complete
- Agreements to pay another's debt
- A lease lasting longer than one year, or a contract for the sale of real property
- An agreement authorizing an agent to purchase or sell real estate, or to lease real estate for a longer period than one year
- Contracts that last longer than a party's life
- An agreement by a purchaser of real property to pay an indebtedness secured by a mortgage
- Contracts for over a certain amount of money

As with many legal rules, there are exceptions to the requirements of a written contract under the Statute of Frauds. If you do not have a written agreement for one of the transactions described above, there may be an exception that applies to your particular facts.

Statute of Limitations—The Timeline for Filing a Lawsuit

If you are satisfied that you have valid oral contract and one which will survive a Statute of Frauds defense, you may need to file a lawsuit to enforce your agreement. California law provides specific time limits for filing lawsuits, called statutes of limitations. The statute of limitations for breach of an oral contract is two (2) years (CCP § 339), and four (4) years for breach of a written contract (CCP § 337). Determining when the statute of limitations runs out is based on the date the contract was breached, which can be difficult to ascertain. Additionally, there can be minor breaches (not legally fatal) and material breaches. If you have any doubts about how to calculate the time you have to file, it's important to seek legal advice, rather than risk forfeiting your right to bring legal action.

Summary

People enter into handshake contracts, or oral contracts, instead of getting it in writing for all sorts of reasons, none of which is usually good enough to forego a written agreement. Time and expense can often be saved by putting your agreements in writing, specifying the parties' respective obligations, and detailing the remedies for breach. If you need legal assistance enforcing an oral contract, or drafting an agreement, Patrice Doyle can offer the necessary legal guidance.



Patrice Doyle is an attorney in Santa Rosa and has been an avid horse-woman since childhood. She can be of assistance in guiding you through equine-related legal issues and reached at (707) 695-9295.

The above article is not intended to be legal advice. Readers should seek legal counsel to determine how the law applies to their particular circumstances.



Keeping It in the Loop

By Erin Gabriel

Becky McCully Moore, a Sonoma County native, first rode a horse when she was two at her aunt's ranch in Washington. The joy and delight on her face foretold that her lifetime would be consumed by horses. As a young girl, Becky was an active 4-H and Redwoods Pony Club member. She started learning 3-day eventing (dressage, cross country jumping, stadium jumping), growing from there to achieve the Prix St. Georges level in dressage competitions.

Becky credits the Cresta family for getting her interested in team roping. After watching her first roping competition at the Cresta's, she was amazed at the camaraderie between competitors, each helping the other. One day, Trissha Cresta asked Becky, known as the "English girl", to try her hand at team roping. She first practiced on the dummy (fake life-size steer) and then on cattle. From there she was hooked!

Team roping originally stems from working cattle ranches. Steers needed to be caught for medical treatment, branding, or tagging in such a way that it would be done quickly and safely for all concerned. One person would rope the head and another person would rope the feet to catch the steer. Ranchers could the quickly and safely approach the steer to give a shot, tag an ear, or treat a wound. Fast is always better with a scared steer, thus the basis of the speed element in competitions. The sport has grown over the years. From junior rodeos to jackpot team ropings, there are tens of thousands of amateur ropers across the country who compete for millions of dollars in prize money.



Competing in Las Vegas, the all girl team of Becky Moore heading for Judy Parker aboard Smurf owned by Les Oswald.

Professional level teams take between four and seconds to rope, dally (wrap the rope around the saddle horn), and stretch the steer. The fastest team roping record in the U.S. is 3.5 seconds. Three different teams hold this title. It's incredible when it all comes together. It's also the only rodeo sport in which men and women compete together as equal partners.

The 'team' in team roping consists of a header who ropes the steer's head, and a heeler who ropes the back feet. The steer to be roped is moved into a chute which has a door in the front and a solid gate behind. The header is in a box to the steer's left and the heeler in a box to the steer's right. When the header is ready, he or she nods and the chute is opened. The steer must be the first to cross the barrier, which is a laser beam that starts the clock. There is a time penalty of ten seconds if the horse and rider cross the barrier ahead of the steer. The steer then races towards the catch pen at the far end of the arena. The ropers pursue at a gallop. The header ropes the steer in one of three legal catches (around the



Photo: Marcie Lewis

horns, neck, or a combination). Once the steer is caught, the header must dally the rope around the saddle horn and turn the steer to the left, exposing its heels as cleanly as possible for the heeler to rope.

The heeler cannot throw the rope until the steer's head has been turned by the header. If the heeler only gets one foot roped, a five-second penalty is added to the time. When the heeler ropes the heels and dallies, the header must 'face' or flip around to face the steer and stop. Both horses back up slightly so as to stretch out the steer's hind legs, thereby immobilizing the steer. Both ropes must be taut before the official will

drop the flag to signal stopping the clock.

Roping techniques are different for header and heeler. Headers swing the loop flat and smooth overhead, aiming for the back of the steer's head when releasing the loop. Once the loop is released, the header's hand stops open, flat, and facing down.

Heelers will swing, keeping their loop on the left side of their body. Timing is everything for a heeler. The top of the loop has to be down when the steer's legs are in the forward position. When the loop is released, it should go against the steer's legs and the loop bottom goes on the ground. The steer will then jump into the loop and the heeler will tighten the rope.

Another important aspect to the event is the type of horses used by the ropers. The American Quarter Horse is by far the most popular, but you also see Paints, Appaloosas, and a variety of breeds. Head horses generally are taller and heavier because they need the power to turn the steer after it is roped. Heel horses need to be quick and agile, enabling them to better follow the steer and react to where it moves. Both need to be calm and stand flat footed in the box to start, take off at a gallop, and be able to work collected the instant they catch up to the steer.

Today, Becky competes as a header in California, Nevada, and Arizona, with her husband, Rich Moore, a heeler. Whether Becky is team roping, riding at the beach, or working one of her horses in the basics of dressage in the arena, you can still see that little girl's delight and joy lighting up her face. Becky and Rich are owners of B & R Sales, a mobile tack supply source for ropers.



Becky and her husband, Richard Moore, competing in Quincy, CA. Becky is aboard her 8 yr. old horse, SHS Jag Blanton.

Photo: Jordan Laine Photography

On a Mission

By Tressa Boulden

I have a mission.

My intent is to create a community dedicated to classical horsemanship, devoted to the centuries old, proven principles of classical dressage. I'm taking this on in part because as a trainer and rider this is what I believe.

But I'm also taking this on to honor my mentor. Melissa Simms died this year, and it's a heavy weight to carry on for such a person. I'm not pretending to be or even aspire to be the brilliant artist she was. But her brilliance was based on principles passed on through generations, and it's these principles that I want to bring to our community.

Melissa frequently taught in Sonoma County and even lived here for a number of years. Dressage fired her soul and led her to the Von Neindorff Reinstute in Karlsruhe, Germany, where she turned a three-month working student stint into a 24-year stay. She became the mentee and inheritor of Egon Von Neindorff's legendary teachings. For 19 years, she was charged with the care and training of 40 performance horses, and the choreography, music, organization, and training of the performance riders for exhibitions of classical horsemanship, presented for the public ten times a year, and for dignitaries including Saudi Arabian sheiks, members of the French Riding Academy, and the director of the Spanish Riding School. She would later become the director of training.

Von Neindorff entrusted her with assembling his unfinished book, *The Art of Classical Horsemanship*, and translating it to English, a unique project for an American who moved to Germany not speaking a word of German, and, even as a foreigner at the world's center of dressage, became a master herself.

My mission: keep the candle lit for classical horsemanship—the training, the care, the whole practice based on principles taught by Von Neindorff, Alois Podhajsky at the Spanish Riding School of Vienna, reaching back centuries to classical masters. This traditional riding is based on preserving the horse in a way that the horse enjoys the work. This is riding that reaches back to the pure version of German classical riding.

This is training for, as Melissa said, “the horse in balance with a relaxed back, the horse that absorbs the energy he produces, rather than braces against it.” This is a horse that is ridden with a balanced seat, independent hands, no coercion, and technique that builds the horse's confidence in keeping with its biomechanics.

My mission is to bring the gifted clinicians who represent the legacy and principles of Von Neindorff, the Spanish Riding School, and Melissa to California. Elke Potucek-Puscha has come to Sonoma County for three clinics and lectures, and will return with a clinic dedicated to in-hand work. Such clinics are rare in this country, and can teach a range of skills from proper longing to airs above the ground, such as capriole and levade. This will be an amazing opportunity.

As Melissa had said about work in-hand, “The work in-hand is one of the most rewarding things to do with a horse, and you develop a different contact with the horse than what you do when you ride



Photo Courtesy of Melissa Simms Archive.

him. You are right next to him, you see his eye, you see him differently. It's more of a mental than a physical connection. The horse becomes very attuned to every movement and feeling you have. Working in hand makes you know, understand, and appreciate the horse's character.”

Starting at age 12, Elke learned to care for and ride horses at the Von Neindorff Institute, and trained there for a number of years. Later she trained horses and riders, and created the performances at the Lipica Stud Farm and Riding School in Slovenia under the direction Arthur Kottas-Heldenberg, former first chief rider of the Spanish Riding School of Vienna. Today, she travels from her home base in the German Black Forest to teach in Austria, Hungary, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Slovenia, Switzerland, and the U.S. Recently we were joined at my Sebastopol farm by Christoph Ackermann, who has trained many horses to Grand Prix and rode with Von Neindorff starting in 1973. He has earned his bronze, silver, and gold medals in Germany. His priority is to teach a rider to ride in harmony with the horse, and he proved that with the changes we saw in the clinic's horse and rider pairs.



Photo: Paloma David

With Tressa Boulden aboard and the assistance from Elke Potucek-Puscha, Johan performs a levade. The 14-year-old Friesian is owned by Beverly Chambers of Sebastopol.

My mission, ultimately, is to give us all an opportunity to learn from a source of the original teaching and riding exercises that have made horses the best they can be.

Tressa Boulden of Traditions Farm in Sebastopol has made horses an integral part of her life since the age of five, exposing herself to many disciplines, philosophies, and approaches to training the horse. As a professional trainer and student of riding, she studied with prominent instructors in the U.S. and Europe, exploring the subtle differences in breeds, dressage philosophy, and training techniques. As a student she has wanted to know not only “what to do” but the, “why's and how's” of communication to the horse to truly understand what technique is correct and most compatible with the horse's nature. www.tressabouldendressage.com.



From the Judge's Booth

By Column Editor Melissa Kalember

Why?

Ask any of my students and they will tell you I ask them this question *all the time*. Why do I ask them this question *all the time*? I consider myself a student of life, I study everything I can. I want to understand, grow and evolve, and I am smart enough to have surrounded myself with some of the best teachers—horses.

I ask myself why all the time. Why does this horse stop all the time? Why is this horse always tight in this muscle? Why does that rider have heavy hands? Why does this horse or rider get this ribbon?

I seek to understand so I am in comfort. If I understand the core reason why that horse is stopping then I can help it. If I understand why that horse's muscle is always tight then I can help the owner fix it and the horse can have a longer, happier career. If I understand why I am placing a horse or rider in that placing, then I know I did the best judging I could.

Not only does asking why bring comfort, it tells us where to go and what to do next. This is why I constantly ask my students *why*.



Photo: Sarah Mullins

During a Bodywork & Therapeutic Riding Clinic Melissa explains what happens to the hind end muscles when horses are not traveling at correct pace.

I encourage them to think, wonder, and feel. I want them to be good horsepersons, not just good riders. For example, a student came for her lesson, got on the horse, and started her walking warm-up routine. I could tell the student felt something was different, but I waited for her to bring it up. She proceeded with her walking. When she tried to pick up a trot the horse was reluctant. Once she trotted, the horse was stiff in the hind end. I still waited for my student to bring it up, knowing she was wondering what was occurring. My student tried again and got the same result. Then she giggled and finally asked what was happening. I started by asking what she felt, and she explained the same thing I had observed.

Then the fun work happened! I asked *why* do you think she is being reluctant? I love this because it asks the student to go in and try and feel. I want them to practice looking at all the layers of their horse and keep following the bouncing ball until they think they understand. After a few answers, and me asking more *whys* and what do you know about the horse's life, my student got the core reason! The horse had just finished a bad heat cycle and she was really tight in some of her hind end muscles from it.

This inquiry gave us the real reason of what was happening for the horse so we could have compassion rather than frustration. We were then able to address the core reason by treating her muscles to get her in comfort again.

So why ask *why*? Seek to understand, keep inquiring until you have discovered the core reason, and you will be happy you did so!



Photo: Mary Burton

Melissa explains to a client where her horse is tight and how to rub on muscle liniment.


Melissa Kalember is a USEF R Judge, SAHJA Judge, equine masseuse, and intuitive trainer. Please contact her if you have a specific topic you'd like addressed: 707-363-1258 or melissa@kalemberequine.com.




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Golden Oldies

By Patti Schofler

It had been a great run for Wendy Luscombe and Aastrakhan.

Luscombe, a longtime adult-amateur dressage rider and Arabian-horse enthusiast, had bred the 1991 Arabian mare (Multir Ibn Al Malik—Courtney) and later competed as a rider or owner through Fourth Level. But eventually the physical demands began to be a bit much for the then 16-year-old mare. Aastrakhan was ready to step her workload down a notch, but she was in good health and still had valuable years left to play the role of schoolmistress for other riders.

Having for years owned horses for and trained with Bedford, New York-based Olympian Lendon Gray, Luscombe, of Craryville, NY, was well acquainted with Gray's Dressage4Kids organization. She donated Aastrakahn to Gray as a Dressage4Kids mount.

First paired with 13-year-old Rachel Chowanec in 2007, Aastrakhan showed her young pupil the ropes, competing at Second and Third Levels and winning the FEI Pony title at Lendon's Youth Dressage Festival that year. When Chowanec was ready to move on, Aastrakahn took another step down, teaching First and Second Levels to her next young partners. It was aboard Aastrakahn that junior rider Victoria Grace Jennings placed sixth in the 13-and-under division at the 2010 USEF Dressage Seat Medal Finals.

"She went through five riders, is now 27, and doing very basic work," Gray says of her mare.

Thanks to good care and advances in veterinary medicine, our equine partners are living longer and more productive lives than ever before. Dressage horses regularly win international titles in their teens, and it's not unusual for our senior friends to enjoy active careers well into their twenties.

But just like ourselves, horses as they age may develop health concerns and require some extra TLC to keep them feeling and performing their age-appropriate best. In this article, dressage trainers, veterinary specialists, and an equine nutritionist share advice on keeping our precious senior horses active and happy in their golden years.

Keep Him Moving

An important part of being a sympathetic dressage rider and trainer, experts say, is learning how far a horse can go—comfortably and confidently—in his training. "Some horses get stuck at Second [Level]; some, at Prix St. Georges," says Gray. "We need to recognize their limits but allow them to continue to be athletes."

"Athlete" is the key word when it comes to managing an older horse.

"I felt strongly about keeping my Olympic horses going when they were no longer competitive for me," Gray says. "They last longer if they are doing something. To take a horse that has been pampered



The Black Tornado (aka "Blackie"), a 1999 Hanoverian gelding, competes at the Prix St. Georges level of dressage at age 19. Blackie is owned and ridden by Patrice Doyle.

Photo: Melissa Rogers

the way our horses have been, turn him out in pasture, and suddenly ignore him is not necessarily good. The longer we put that off, the longer they keep fit and sound. I had one in my stable that had competed internationally for another country, who did lower and lower levels until he was 28. He thrived doing light work as a beginner-y horse."

That stepping-down process—guided by frequent reassessment—that Gray describes is an excellent way of keeping an older horse working happily and comfortably, says Ashlee Watts, DVM, PhD, Dipl. ACVS, assistant professor of large-animal surgery at the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, College Station.

"Everything changes throughout the horse's life, and you have to be ready to adjust his management program annually or even monthly to make it right for that horse's stage of life. There is no one right formula," Watts says.

(Watts has sport-horse cred that extends beyond the academic: A decorated adult-amateur dressage rider, she has two US Dressage Finals championship titles, one reserve title, and numerous other wins under her belt. With her Danish Warmblood gelding, Hampton, she graced the 2016 yearbook-issue cover of *USDF Connection*.)

Foremost, Watts says, horses are designed and programmed to move. "A joint in motion stays in motion. Older equine athletes do better with regular exercise, whether they are ridden, turned out, or both."

How that horse exercises—as an active competitor, a lesson horse, or a pleasure mount—depends on the individual.

We know "people in their late sixties who can't walk down the street," says FEI-level trainer and competitor Rosalind "Roz" Kinstler, Ann Arbor, MI, and Wellington, FL, and others "the same age who can run a marathon. You have to be clever and recognize that this [horse] we can push; this one we can't."

"I remind people that your ambition can't be your horse's ambition," adds Kinstler, a longtime instructor of dressage juniors and young riders, who also coached a student to a berth on the 2012 US Paralympic dressage team. "I have two students who were given eighteen- and nineteen-year-old FEI horses because the owners felt sure that they would not be taken advantage of or overfaced at that age."

Knowing it's time to turn a horse over to a different rider with more modest goals takes keen and selfless observation power. Holding on to your senior with the goal of taking him further up the levels, or even just hoping that he will maintain his current level for years to come, may be unrealistic. If your 15-year-old horse has never learned flying changes, it may be that he's not the right partner for

your Fourth Level ambitions—but that same mount might rack up the high-score awards as a Second Level schoolmaster for another grateful rider.

“You have to be happy with what your horse can do. I’ve seen older horses who still do their upper-level jobs, but the joy is gone from them,” Kinstler observes.

“Horses communicate if we will listen,” Gray says. “When the work has lost some of its joy and he starts getting heavier, taking longer to warm up, becoming more resistant, it’s time for change. My last Grand Prix horse stayed in my stable with an older woman whose attitude was, “Whatever you want to give me, I’m here to receive it.”

Keep Him Fit

Your older horse knows his job. Most don’t require (or enjoy) daily drilling. Our experts recommend a modest and varied exercise regimen to help keep their bodies and minds fresh, fit, and engaged.

Kinstler likes to work an older horse five consecutive days a week, not on an every-other-day schedule.

“The five days of work,” she explains, “vary in intensity and length. The week begins with suppling, builds to the hardest work mid-week, then tapers to avoid overdoing but still maintaining a good fitness level.” She keeps sessions short, with frequent breaks and a long walk or cool-down period at the end.

On days six and seven, Kinstler turns the horse out or hand-walks him to keep his muscles from getting stiff. “If decent turnout isn’t available, then day six can be a long tack-walk or hack. To me, for mental health, it’s also good to [give the horse] a day off, even if it means staying in a stall. If that’s the case, then the first day back to work needs a long walk before actually beginning the session.”

The other 23 hours of the day? “Turnout is a tremendous benefit for an old guy,” Kinstler says, but if your senior is unaccustomed to lengthy pasture time, “introduce it slowly. Use a smaller area or a limited time, according to what they can manage and not get carried away with their abilities.”

If you compete your senior dressage horse, hand- or tack-walking between classes helps to prevent stiffness, says Kinstler. Make warm-ups economical. At this point in horses’ careers, “they know how to do their job and should be fit enough. They don’t need to be trained at the show. They get tired.”

Older horses, like older people, may be less able to cope with heat and humidity. “For our fifteen- and sixteen-year-old horses at Prix St. Georges, we go ringside with a bucket of water and a little alcohol and rub them down a few times,” Kinstler says. In addition, “we closely monitor their drinking” to help ensure that horses stay properly hydrated. Talk to your veterinarian about proactive measures you can take to help your older horse manage the stresses of showing in the heat.

Keep Him Comfortable

Osteoarthritis, the joint inflammation that causes pain and stiffness, is inevitable if a horse lives long enough, Watts says.

“Horses are athletes, even if they live in a field all their lives, and they can still develop osteoarthritis. Take mustangs: They don’t just stand around and graze. They push the limits of their bodies, getting small injuries to their joints that can lead to arthritis. And once the horse gets arthritis, it’s here to stay. However, proper management can alleviate inflammation, pain, and stiffness.”

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), such as phenylbutazone (“Bute”), flunixin meglumine (Banamine), and firocoxib (Equioxx), may help ease older horses’ joint-related aches and pains. (If you plan to compete in US Equestrian-licensed/USDF-recognized dressage competition, review the rules regarding drugs and medications carefully to be sure your horse is in compliance with all regulations.)

In cases of prolonged or more severe discomfort, your veterinarian may recommend injecting the affected joints with a corticosteroid, which is a powerful anti-inflammatory. But joint injections are more of a last resort than a first line of defense, says Cara Wright, DVM, of Sawtooth Equine Service, Bellevue, ID, who specializes in geriatric care.

“It’s important that we’ve addressed everything before we inject,” Wright says. “Commonly, an older horse has lameness in the front, and the majority of forelimb lameness is in the foot. Be sure you’re not missing something: Maybe, instead of drugs, the horse needs a shoeing change.

“Routine joint injections are not something I do,” Wright continues. “A horse isn’t a car that needs an oil change every three thousand miles. If lameness is from the hocks and it has been localized to the hocks, then it’s the right thing to do. Oftentimes, the horse may get an injection and not need it again for years. They get stronger and use the hock better.”

Watts participated in a recent study of the antioxidant resveratrol, a molecule found in the skin of red grapes (and the key substance in articles touting the health benefits of drinking red wine and red grape juice), to assess resveratrol’s ability to reduce inflammation caused by osteoarthritis. Based on the study findings, she says, horses with lameness related to the lower hock joints might benefit from daily resveratrol to lessen lameness severity.

Keep Him Healthy

In humans, resveratrol also has been shown to help prevent insulin resistance, a condition that can lead to diabetes. It may also have other anti-aging and disease-fighting powers.

“While resveratrol has been proven to reduce hock-associated lameness,” says Watts, “it may also help horses prone to laminitis, insulin dysregulation, and obesity. When used in conjunction with medications like pergolide, resveratrol may also improve the clinical signs associated with the endocrine disorder known as Cushing’s disease [formal name: pars pituitary intermedia dysfunction, or PPID], a disease that many older horses develop.”

For now, a diet restricting overall starch and sugar can minimize risks associated with insulin dysregulation (laminitis is a classic fear), especially in horses that already demonstrate additional risk factors, such as obesity or PPID.

You don’t want your horse to be fat at any age, but it’s especially true when he’s older.

“Weight management is key to senior horse management,” says Clair Thunes, PhD, who operates the independent consulting firm Summit Equine Nutrition, Sacramento, CA. “We often think of [older horses becoming] skinny, not overweight. But overweight horses are likely to be insulin-resistant. Plus, senior horses are probably struggling with arthritis and joint pain that can be made worse by extra weight.”

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Equine “senior feeds,” which are popular low-starch, low-sugar choices, contain large amounts of easily digestible fiber, ground up into pelleted form so they dissolve in the mouth and don’t require a lot of chewing. Typical senior horse feeds are higher in calories per pound than hay and are fortified with vitamins and minerals. Most are complete feeds, meaning that they are formulated to be fed in large servings without hay—something that many horse owners don’t realize, according to Thunes.

“People feed hay and a scoop of senior feed, not realizing that in order to get the full benefit of the feed, you need to serve the fully recommended amount. At fifteen pounds per day, that is very expensive,” she says.

Instead, Thunes suggests giving the senior dressage horse a good-quality performance feed, even though it contains slightly higher levels of crude protein and trace minerals. “The little research out there about feeding seniors shows they don’t utilize dietary protein or absorb minerals quite as well.”

Even if senior feeds aren’t the right choice for you and your horse, the rationale behind their formulation is sensible: Older horses’ teeth change, and our senior equine friends may need special dental care and softer feeds if they can’t chew as well.

Equine teeth continually erupt to replenish what’s worn away by normal chewing. As a horse ages, his teeth reshape, take on wear patterns, and change angle (which is why we can approximate a horse’s age by looking at his teeth).

But new tooth growth doesn’t happen forever, and eventually the horse’s mouth runs out of replacement material and the teeth are shed, says Dr. Teresa Crocker of North Coast Equine, Santa Rosa, CA, who focuses on geriatrics and dentistry. The typical modern horse wears one inch off the surface of his teeth every 10 years. With slower wear, the teeth may wear to the root surface by age 30 and then naturally exfoliate (fall out). A horse that’s undergone considerable dental work over the years may shed his teeth after only 20 years. Removing less tooth during dental-care visits will extend the life of the tooth, she says.

Don’t skip the dental care, however. Routine checks and floating (removing hooks and sharp edges) will help your senior horse maintain his weight, absorb nutrients from his food, and perform more comfortably, says Crocker. For the senior horse, a twice-yearly inspection may lead to better feeding choices and head off disease.

“If the horse isn’t chewing properly, too-long pieces of hay can cause gastrointestinal inflammation, diarrhea, or colic,” Crocker explains. “On the other hand, when you feed a diet of soaked pellets with a soupy consistency, you lose the buffering capacity of saliva, which is released from chewing. We want them to have some forage. Chewing causes the jaw to work and keeps up the strength and health of the TMJ [the temporomandibular joint, which connects the lower jaw to the skull]. Shredded beet pulp, fresh pasture grass, and soaked hay cubes work.”

Senior horses are more prone to dental-related disease, including:

Equine odontoclastic tooth resorption and hypercementosis (EOTRH). The equine tooth is composed of dentin, enamel, and cementum to provide strength and flexibility. If a tooth cracks or the surrounding tissue around becomes inflamed, the body can’t create more

dentin to save the tooth. However, it can weep cementum into the crack and repair itself.

In the condition known as EOTRH, the roots of the teeth begin to dissolve. To protect the teeth and keep them anchored to the jawbone, the body lays down excessive amounts of cementum (hypercementosis). This production enlarges the roots, refiguring them into a bulbous shape.

“When the roots are carrot-shaped, the teeth all fit nicely. With [excess] cementum, the teeth spread apart and are going every which way. That is an incredibly painful disease,” says Crocker. “It is suspected that it can happen from not enough wear of the incisors, with the back teeth worn faster than the incisors. That places pressure on the roots, which decay. If you see receding gum lines with overly long incisors, it’s worth radiographing to see if there is reabsorption, the beginning of the disease.”

Periodontal (gum) disease. A young horse’s teeth are tightly packed together. As teeth erupt and wear, the crowns narrow, leaving gaps between the teeth that are prime spots for bits of food to accumulate. Normally, saliva, white blood cells, and beneficial bacteria clean out these gaps; but misaligned teeth, decreased saliva production, and other factors may interfere with this process. If packed food remains between the teeth, the horse’s immune system must fight the resulting “bad” bacteria—which is particularly problematic for seniors with PPID, especially when gum recession becomes severe. Unchecked gum disease results in pain and tooth loss.

To treat gum disease, a veterinarian will clean out the feed pockets, repair misalignments, consider a course of antibiotics, protect pockets from further invasion, and in advanced cases extract a tooth or teeth.

End-stage dentition. At some point in a horse’s life, the teeth may lose the grinding surfaces needed to process food.

Arthritis: We tend to think of arthritis as affecting the hocks and other such joints, but the TMJ is equally susceptible. According to Crocker, use of a dental halter to support the horse’s head from above during dental procedures may adversely affect the horse’s cervical spine, put weight on its lower jaw, and cause TMJ strain. If the horse’s head needs to be steadied for dental work, Crocker prefers to use a stand on which the horse rests its head.

TMJ arthritis makes it difficult for the horse to open its mouth, Crocker says. A speculum that is cantilevered, she says, distributes the weight across the jaw muscle so that there is less pressure on the TMJ.

Crocker is also careful not to position the horse’s head and neck at exaggerated angles when she works. “I check the range of motion in the neck, and I don’t lift the head high. I get down low to float the teeth. If you raise the head up, the horse will likely need more drugs for the procedure. Also, [if the head and neck are raised too high] you might pinch a nerve in the neck, and then the horse can’t feel his back legs, so he could fall.”

Senior horses may require special consideration when it comes to dental work, Crocker says.

“The amount and type of sedation may be different for an older horse that has circulatory or cardiac issues,” she says. In addition, “seniors may be better trained and more compliant—or they may have had bad experiences,” which may make them more or less tolerant of dental work as a result.



Use of the dental speculum, which keeps the horse's mouth open, may also have to be altered to keep the older horse comfortable, Crocker says. The senior's forward-angled incisors may not rest properly on the speculum plates, which can cause the upper plate to cut into the horse's palate. And if the teeth are worn short, the grooves in the plates can cut into the gums. Crocker uses a speculum that allows her to change the plates as needed, and one type she uses has rubberized plates for extra comfort.

Cherish Your Horse's Golden Years


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Your horse may not need glasses or a hearing aid as he ages, but he does need regular veterinary checkups to monitor his weight and to keep an eye on his insulin levels, his endocrine system, his teeth, and his overall comfort. Plan at least twice-yearly wellness exams, and ask your veterinarian to help develop a strategy to keep your golden oldie healthy and happy for many years to come.

Patti Schofler is an award-winning writer based in northern California. She is a USDF L graduate and a passionate dressage rider.

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Vet's Office

By Column Editor Michelle Beko, DVM

Choosing a Stallion

If you are planning on breeding your mare this year, winter is the time to pick the stallion you'd like to breed her to. There are several factors you should take into consideration. First, before breeding at all, you should consider your personal situation and your mare. Do you have the financial means and patience to provide for a foal for two to three years before it is rideable? Do you have fencing that is safe for a foal? Foals require fencing that is lower to the ground so they don't accidentally slip underneath it when they lie down, and are much more likely to run into a fence than an adult horse.

Considering your mare, is she truly worthy of breeding? Is she young enough that she is likely to get in foal easily? Older mares who've never had a foal before can be difficult to get pregnant. Does she have reasonably good conformation? If she has significant conformational flaws that contributed to her being chronically lame, it isn't ideal to potentially pass them along to a new generation. Does she have a good disposition and is she good at whatever discipline (jumping, trail riding, dressage, etc.) that you would like her offspring to do?

Once you do decide to breed her, choosing a stallion is the next most important decision. There are multiple ways to breed your mare which will influence your choices of stallions and the amount of money you spend. The simplest is to take your mare to the stallion and have the stallion breed her, either when they are loose in the pasture or in hand (with handlers restraining mare and stallion). The limitation of this method is that you are restricted to choosing from stallions within driving range.

Secondly, you could choose to breed to a stallion whose owners are collecting and shipping cooled, fresh semen. This gives you access to studs from all over the country and Canada. The disadvantage of this method is that you need your veterinarian to palpate and ultrasound your mare one to three times per cycle so he or she can predict when your mare will ovulate and order semen for artificial insemination (AI) at the correct time. This, of course, results in more expense. If the stallion is competing during the breeding season, his intermittent lack of availability can be frustrating. Although the conception rates are similar to live cover, you can't count on your mare getting pregnant on the first attempt.

Last, you can opt to breed your mare with frozen semen. This gives you access to stallions from all over the world and some that are now deceased or gelded. The down side is that conception rates are somewhat lower and that more intensive veterinary intervention is necessary. We strive to inseminate mares with cooled fresh semen roughly 24 hours before to 12 hours after ovulation; however frozen semen requires insemination within a few hours of



Photo: Marcie Lewis

Verso, a local stallion owned by Tracy Underwood is available for breeding with fresh or cooled shipped semen.

ovulation. Mares usually need to board at a veterinarian's facility and may get ultrasound exams multiple times in a day as they approach ovulation. They often need to be inseminated late at night. Breeding with frozen semen tends to be the most expensive way to get your mare in foal.

Stallion characteristics that can be considered include breed, genetic diseases he may carry, conformation, disposition, stud fee, performance record of stallion and his progeny and color. None of these characteristics should be considered alone. For example, just because a stallion might give your foal the color genes you'd like doesn't mean that you should disregard his conformation. You should attempt to make up for any

shortcomings you feel that your mare has by choosing a stallion with opposite qualities. If, for example, your mare has a hotter disposition than you'd like, you could find a stallion known to throw quiet offspring. In addition to the stud fee, there can be additional costs such as a collection and/or shipping fees for cooled semen and storage fees for frozen semen. Some breeders have a live foal guarantee which means you aren't required to pay the stud fee unless your mare actually foals. Find out the details of the breeding contract so there are no surprises.

When breeding and foaling goes well, it can be a very rewarding process!

Michelle Beko, DVM, has been an equine veterinarian since 1991. When not working, she enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter, eventing her horse Zeke, hiking, and travelling. You can reach her at Empire Equine at 707-545-3909, check her website: www.empire-equine.com, or on Facebook.



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Best Ride of My Life

By Genevieve de Fontaine

Hello, my name is Genevieve de Fontaine, and I am 15 years old, live in Sebastopol, and attend Credo High School in Cotati, CA. I recently had the great honor of participating in the Rocky Mountain Horse Association International Grand Championship in Lexington, Kentucky, at the beginning of September. I would like to share in my experience with you.

We took a hard landing into the Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, Kentucky, on Tuesday at midnight. We finally made it after several delays and seven hours of flying. I was exhausted, so my mom and I drove straight to the hotel. All I wanted to do was climb into my bed and fall asleep, but as soon as I got into my bed, I couldn't fall asleep. All I could think about was that I was going to show my new horse in the RMHA International Grand Championship, the top level show for the Rocky Mountain horse. It took a long time, but at some point I finally closed my eyes and fell asleep.

I woke up the next morning with a sudden burst of excitement. The room was filled with the morning sunlight. I quickly jumped out of bed and got ready while my mom was still getting up. We grabbed some breakfast on our way to the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, where the championship was being held, and where my new horse was being stalled. My new horse is a Rocky Mountain mare and her registered name is "Having a Big Time"; we call her Big Time.

The moment I saw her I could see that she was tall, with a beautiful chocolate-colored dapple coat and a long white mane and tail. She is beautiful! Truly a fairy tale horse. She turned her head and sniffed me. She had the most elegant face I have ever seen on a horse. We spent some time grooming her and giving her treats, and then I was ready to try her out, to ride and get a feel for her. We tacked her up with saddle and bridle, and led her to the arena. I got on and took her a few times around the ring, the ring that would be the show arena for the championships. I don't think I have ever ridden a horse that had so much power but was still easy to control. I had fallen in love. After the ride, I took her back, untacked her, and put her into her stall.

I rode her like this a few more times in the next two days leading up to the championships. Each day the show goes from nine in the morning to ten at night, sometimes later. I rode her after show hours, sometimes at one in the morning, to build our relationship so we would be ready for the big day. The grand championship would be held on Saturday. I wanted Big Time to get to know me well before our big ride.

On Saturday, I woke up ready. Today was the day that I would have the best ride of my life. We grabbed some breakfast; something small, of course, since I was still very nervous. We drove to the horse park once more, got out of the car, and went to see Big Time.



Genevieve and Having a Big Time win Reserve Grand Champion at the Rocky Mountain International Horse Show in Lexington, Kentucky.

She had already eaten her breakfast. I had the entire day to watch the show since my class, Youth 12-17 Show Pleasure Grand Championship, wasn't until night, the second-to-last class of the day.

The whole day, I watched some of the new friends I had made show their horses. My class got closer and closer. When it was finally time to get ready, I walked to the barn and changed into my show clothes: dark purple suit and vest, with bow tie, and my black top hat—a requirement for the grand championship class. I was really, really nervous. Big Time was all tacked up and I was ready. We walked down to the warm up ring. As I walked, I visualized my ride. Visualizing my ride always seems to help calm me down when I am preparing to compete.

When I got to the ring I looked into Big Time's eyes. She knew what was coming next. I got on her and started walking her around and around the warm up ring.

There were so many riders in the ring, it was hard not to bump into anyone. Everyone was warming up for my class, each rider with a championship on their minds. Some competitors wished me good luck as they passed by. Was I ready? I had been training for this moment at home for many years, but now but I questioned myself. I had only ridden Big Time a handful of hours; three, to be exact. But, I had to trust Big Time and believe in myself. I came all this way for the biggest Rocky Mountain Horse show in the United States. I'm here to have the best ride of my life.

The announcer called the class. One after the other, the riders took to the show ring. I followed the horse in front of me. I could feel Big Time's excitement coursing through her body. My heart was pumping so fast I thought it could explode. They called for the show gait, which is the slower of the two gaits. Big Time was moving out and lifting up her legs so high, it felt like we were floating. Then they asked for the pleasure gait, the faster gait. Big Time knew this was her cue.

She continued her high step and went even faster, faster than I had gone with her before. She passed everyone that got in our way. She knew exactly what I wanted, what I needed her to do. We were connected now, I could just feel it. The crowd roared as we passed. I could hear my name being yelled. At that very moment I felt free. I was a part of something bigger than me, something that I will never forget.

The announcer called for the trail walk and I slowed Big Time all the way down to the flat walk. We were then all asked to walk to the middle of the ring and line up for the judges. We sat on our horses and waited for what felt like an eternity for the judges to announce their results. I was exhausted. I looked over at the other competitors and they seemed exhausted as well. Their horses

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Genevieve and her chocolate Rocky Mountain mare, "Having a Big Time".

were breathing hard, nostrils flaring, sides moving in and out rapidly. I could hear Big Time breathing hard too.

It felt like thirty minutes until they were ready to call the results. With ten of the best Rocky Mountain horses and youth riders, this was a hard class to judge! I wanted to know the placings, but also didn't want to know.

They called the number for grand champion.

It wasn't me.

But then I heard "236," my number, for reserve grand champion. Then I heard the crowd screaming, yelling, and applauding. What had just happened? Did I really hear my number? I couldn't believe it, I had just gotten called for reserve grand champion! I came out of the show ring with a huge smile on my face. I can't even put into words how I felt at that exact moment, I was so overwhelmed with joy. My mom came running, congratulating me and taking thousands of pictures. I got off and gave Big Time a huge hug and, of course, lots of treats.

I am so lucky to have this incredible horse who made my dreams come true. I'm so grateful to my mom who made this possible. I can't thank her enough.

This is why I love to ride horses, because there is never a dull moment.

Best ride of my life.

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The Importance of Consistency and Follow Through

By Lisa Lombardi

Imagine you are driving a car. Imagine your passenger is giving you directions. You are trusting her navigation. As you are driving, your passenger navigator says, "Turn left here." But what she really meant was to turn right. You assume she made an honest mistake and you keep driving. A few minutes later she blurts out, "Turn left here." It turns out she really meant for you to hurry up. Several blocks down the road your passenger frantically shouts, "Turn left here!" Yet she really meant for you to park the car. At this point, how are you feeling about your passenger and your relationship with her? Confused? Angry? Wanting to quit?



Natasha Mallan riding Lisa Lombardi's mare, Oohla.



Becky Shapley in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Photos: Lisa Lombardi

In both cases, riders and horses are content and safe because of consistency, and knowing what to expect.

How many of our horses feel like this when being handled and ridden? How many of our horses are expected to respond as we wish when given mixed, confusing, or inconsistent messages?

One example (also one of my pet peeves) is the use of the cluck. Sometimes a cluck means pick up the front left hoof. Sometimes a cluck is simply a greeting. Cluck is sometimes used to ask a horse to back up. Sometimes the intention of the rider's cluck is to speed up a spin. The cluck could mean anything. After a while, the cluck means nothing.

Another example is the word "whoa." How can we get angry when

a horse does not come to a complete stop at the sound of "whoa" if sometimes "whoa" means slow from a gallop to a canter and other times means transition from jog to walk?

To improve our relationship with our horses, to help eliminate misunderstandings, and improve safety, we need to be consistent in our communication. We first must decide what we want each cue to mean. Then, equally important, is that we must be willing and able to follow through with our request. If we would like a cluck to reliably equal jog, then we must use cluck to jog and only jog. If the horse does not instantly jog at the sound of a cluck, then a stronger aid such as a leg or crop must immediately be used to reinforce the cluck. Without reinforcement, the cluck becomes meaningless. Cluck only means jog, and cluck always means jog. Using the above example of "whoa," if a horse is running loose in a pasture it might not be wise to call out "whoa," because it may be impossible for the handler to reinforce this voice cue in this situation. "Whoa" only means halt, and "whoa" always means immediate halt.

To improve your horse's dependable responses, safety, and relationship, how can you use consistency and follow through with your own horse?

Lisa Lombardi is a SRJC equine science instructor, CHA Clinic Instructor, CHA Master Instructor, PATH, Ceip-ed certified, and has taught professionally since 1987. Lisa's 24-year-old lesson horse, Ten-Thirty, was Sonoma County's 2013 Equus Award winner, 2011 and 2012 CHA international school horse of the year runner-up. She currently owns 9 horses. www.clovertenthirty.com.



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Listen!

By Deb Jackson



Listening Lesson on the trail with a master: Morgan mare, April Alert.

In the field of human-animal communication there are innumerable facets and qualities. Respect, honesty, playfulness, and so much more. We are only scratching the surface, but, we are scratching! New programs are being instituted in colleges and universities, and therapeutic relationships are being widely explored in the sciences such as psychology, and medicine. Legendary leaders have come forward, including Temple Grandin. Carol Rathmann, founder and director of Forget Me Not Farm in Santa Rosa, is one of these pioneers and a local expert I admire greatly. And these are only a few components of the *human* side of the equation!

Consider that all animals on land, in the seas and skies, continually communicate with us every minute, in every way they can, in every wild and tame corner of the world.

We have only to listen.

What does that even mean? Sounds simple enough. Our brains have developed over the eons, but in a way that seems to have moved us away from the natural ability to tune in to the life around us. Consider the exquisite sensitivity of horses, their powerful telepathy and silent language.

When I go every night to the barn after work I arrive in a cloud of distraction. My body has become an extension of my car, stiff and cramped from a day in a desk chair, eyes clouded from computer gaze, and ear glued to the incessant demands of a phone. I'm awakened from this fog by April's welcoming neigh—timed perfectly and directed right at me. How is it she knows when I have arrived? Heart melts. I take it in. Here. Now.

Finally, I take a breath. (Did you just take a deep breath? Hope so.)

Listening isn't passive. Listening is dynamic, receptive, somatic. Hearing is only one aspect of listening. Although I hear April's neigh with my ears, it's an integrative experience. One that connects me with her, but also with myself... if I let it.

I love the barn at night. It's a place to practice opening to all the senses, to become one of the herd there, to be guided by invisible energies. Tonight I had two sugar cubes pilfered from my favorite coffee shop, one for April, but the other would have to be called for somehow.

It was such a soft night, we went out to graze a bit on the new green growth. Grazing is such a grounding activity and, if I'm listening, often reveals an intuitive message. Tonight, the message was to walk out to the back pasture to visit an older mare, a beautiful being who I identified with as a fellow grandmother. She had recently lost a daughter and I could feel her tenderness, her subtle solitude even though surrounded by her herd. She is a powerful being, a strong leader. But tonight there was a sense of vulnerability and I followed it. She called me out to her, rather than coming in to me. She waited. She received my gift, had me walk with her a ways, which is when I noticed her gait. Something had shifted; she was dragging her

hind hooves a bit. Clearly she wanted me to know and to see. To listen to and be with her.

Walking back to the barn, I marveled at the power of a lead mare to call me to her, and grateful for her message about communicating with stronger intention and less noise. They have so much to teach us. We have only to listen.

Deb Jackson is the Founder of Windhorse Full Circle Coaching, offering private sessions coaching in partnership with horses. All our work is done unmounted, and is safe for those with no experience with horses. Deb is a certified in the Equine Gestalt Coaching Method, and a lifelong equestrian. Please contact us for more information at: Deb@WindhorseFullCircle.com, 808 561-1932.

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Horse Council Completes Fire Disaster Grant Program

By Mark Krug, Treasurer, Sonoma County Horse Council

Round #1		Round #2		Round #3		Round #4		Total	
15	13	12	12	11	10	5	5	43	40
Apps	Awards	Apps	Awards	Apps	Awards	Apps	Awards	Apps	Awards
\$51,463	\$42,213	\$54,485	\$49,985	\$49,400	\$39,500	\$21,280	\$15,158	\$176,628	\$146,856

When the October 2017 fires hit, the Sonoma County Horse Council (SCHC) provided leadership in mobilizing the Sonoma County Fairgrounds for use as a sanctuary for fire-displaced large animals.

SCHC Board members Ted Stashak, DVM and Denise Gilseth, in particular, played instrumental leadership roles in the fairgrounds operation in those early days of the fire. Before that operation fully wound down, the SCHC board decided to take another step by establishing a fire relief fund for the local equine community. Because we had some infrastructure already in place due to the lessons learned from the Valley Fire in Lake County two years prior, we were able to move quickly in raising funds and establishing a grant program for equine community individuals, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

Not surprisingly, Sonoma County residents stepped up and were very generous—we received donations large and small right away. The Sonoma County Trailblazers were especially generous as they contributed \$50,000 to the cause. SCHC applied to the North Bay Fire Relief Fund, established by Redwood Credit Union Community Fund in partnership with state Senator Mike McGuire, and we were awarded \$50,000 from that source as well. Longtime community philanthropists and Horse Council supporters, Karen and Vic Trione, wrote us a check for \$25,000. Through his business Burgess Lumber, Orin Burgess donated \$5,000, as did Jackson Family Wines. In addition, we received 44 other gifts ranging from \$50 to \$3,000. Most of the donors were local, but we received gifts from as far away as North Carolina. In total, we received about \$147,000, all of which was used for direct assistance.

The SCHC Board decided to do multiple rounds of grant funding for a few different reasons. First, we knew that some people's

financial status with insurance companies and FEMA was uncertain early on, so we wanted to make sure those people had an opportunity to seek grant funds many months after the fires ended. Second, we knew that having multiple rounds would help us reach out to a broader community of potential grantees. In the end, we did four rounds of funding starting in November 2017 and ending in October 2018. The first three rounds were for individuals, businesses, and nonprofit agencies, the fourth and final round limited to just nonprofit agencies.

Reading the grant applications as they came in was heart wrenching. Applicants detailed their losses including homes, outbuildings, fencing, business income, tack, and equipment, and most painfully, several applicants lost horses in the fires. We wished, of course, that we had unlimited funds as all applicants were worthy of assistance. In advance of receiving the applications, we established grant parameters which gave us an objective structure in which to review the applications and make funding decisions. The results of the four rounds of grant funding are summarized in the table above.

Individual grants ranged from \$500 to \$5,000 and were used for a wide variety of purposes, most commonly to help finance rebuilding fences and other destroyed equine facilities.

SCHC is greatly appreciative of the generosity of the many donors that allowed us to establish and implement a fire relief grant program. To those donors, please accept our heartfelt thanks.

Correction to Fall 2018 Horse Journal

Monitoring Your Horse's Health

by Ted Stashak, DVM, page 14

- Column 1 should have read - "Signs of EHS include: a rectal temperature (104° – 106°)"
- Column 2 should have read - "Range of Normal Values: Rectal temperature (RT): - 99.5° to 100.5°"

Our sincere apologies to Dr. Stashak and our readers!



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Riding the Pyrenees—Travel on Horseback

By an adventurous and enthusiastic Sonoma County horsewoman!



Très amigas heading into the high country with perfect weather.

Since we were getting a bit long in the tooth, it was an item on our bucket list that needed to be checked off sooner as opposed to later. A challenging ride in a foreign land might just be the thing to satisfy that nagging call for adventure. "Let's ride from the sea to the top of the Pyrenees!" Three enthusiastic Sonomans heartily agreed that this was a fantastic idea. Exotic horses, epic scenery, and the physicality of a progressive ride covering 350 kilometers that was billed as "probably the most challenging horse riding adventure in Europe" per Panorama Trails (www.panorama-trails.com), checked all the boxes on our wish list.

We met the five other equine enthusiasts at the Barcelona airport and were driven north a few hours to the point of debarkation, a quaint coastal village a short distance south of the French border. After a lovely meal and copious amounts of wine, the liability releases were presented, all signed optimistically.

The next morning we were introduced to our mounts that had been slyly hidden in a grove of small pines behind the hotel. Our guide had deduced the night before which horse/rider combinations would succeed. We were introduced to our mounts, informed of their unique quirks, and taught how to saddle. And then we were off on the beach-to-beach Andorra Trail!

Beginning at sea level in 104 degree heat and ending with hail and lightning at 8,000 feet, this 11-day ride covered a broad range of atmospheric elements. The terrain changed daily from chaparral, olive groves and vineyards, broad leaf and conifer forests, the tundra-like high plateaus with thousands of cows and horses, to the barren rock hillsides above tree line of the Alt Pirineu. You may ride all day but see no signs of civilization, or ride through

towns, tunnels, and bridges with an onslaught of cars.

The pace was aggressive, the riding style endurance. Trot and gallop whenever possible at post or 2-point, covering up to 40 kilometers a day. To save your horse's feet and back, you led it down steep hills. One such descent was 2,500 feet in an hour, so one needed to be fit. The cumulative climb is 34,000 feet (Everest!) as you cross multiple mountain ranges, up and down.

While we stayed in tents most nights, we also had hotel accommodations where we could get a much needed shower. Much thought went into the route and where we stayed. Most memorable was swimming in the lovely Muga River, dinner in an abandoned 9th century chapel with hundreds of candles, and hunkering down in a rather eerie hunters' hut during a downpour.

The horses were quite amazing. We may have been hoping to have elegant Spanish Andalusians under us; that was not the case. Two of us had off-the-track French trotters, the other a gypsy horse. These were not the warm and fuzzy critters that meet you at the



Setting the packs with all our gear and food for the next few days. Wishing for a shorter horse!



Heading back into Catalonia from the craggy peaks of Andorra.

gate for an apple. Some were quite grumpy on the ground, but once we were in the saddle they were all business. They never showed any sign of fatigue even after the longest day and were as fresh on the last day as the first. These super athletes, well-conditioned and very well cared for, with special rations three meals a day, still exhibited normal horse behaviors—they shied, bolted, bit, and kicked.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the adventure was the camaraderie that developed among the eight equestriennes: we three, two Germans, one Swiss, one Brit, and a Dutch gal, spanning the age range from 26-60. Our guide was not the hand holding type—you were shown once how it is done, then you were on your own, so we grew to depend on each other for assistance and moral support. There was not a complainer in the group. We shared much laughter and good cheer making for lifelong friends.

The end was bittersweet, with tears shed as our faithful mounts entered the box trailer, but we also felt pride that we had accomplished an arduous task. On the final night our guide revealed that we were the first group that summer to all finish the ride, and our American group was only the second in seven years to complete the journey. News that was, fortunately, saved for the end! We are all looking forward to the next ride on the bucket list.

A Brief History of BLM and the Wild Horse and Burro Program

By Leslie Wolcott

In 1950, Velma Johnston followed a truck dripping blood to a slaughterhouse. The truck's cargo was wild horses. Velma, later known as Wild Horse Annie, started a letter writing campaign resulting in the passage of the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971.

The Wild Horse and Burro Management Program is assigned to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The wild horses and burros live on 11% of all BLM lands. According to a BLM map dated 2007 there are 21 herds in California on 2.5 million acres with an estimated appropriate management level of 2,200 horses.

To date, the BLM's management strategy is to round up the wild horses and burros, and place them in long term holding. According to BLM, there are currently more than 45,000 horses and burros in long-term holding. The annual cost per horse for long-term holding, not including the annual multi-million dollar helicopter contracts, is \$1,100, according to a Government Accountability Office report dated June 19, 2017.

In 2013, the National Academy of Sciences completed a report evaluating the "science, methodology, and technical decision making approaches of the Wild Horse and Burro Management Program." The report found that population size estimates provided by BLM "cannot be considered scientifically rigorous nor is the management based on population-monitoring procedures." Assuming population management may be needed, the report recommends "fertility control methods" such as porcine zona pellicida (PZP). Further findings include, "The Management practices are facilitating high horse population growth rates."

The report concludes, "Tools already exist for BLM to use addressing the challenges faced by its Wild Horse and Burro Program. The continuation of 'business-as-usual' practices will be expensive and unproductive for BLM."

BLM contends that PZP is not financially feasible. The roundups continue. This approach actually results in an increase in population. Last year, BLM administered PZP to 777 horses (in 2012 prior



Tango moving out on the trail.

to the NAS report 1,045 mares were treated.) The American Wild Horse Campaign (AWHC) and volunteers have administered PZP to more horses this year than BLM has in its entire existence.

There are collaborations between BLM and non-profit organizations working together using PZP. The Pryor Mountain mustangs, managed by the Cloud Foundation, have a stable population thanks largely to founder Ginger Kathrens, who relies on PZP with an efficacy rate of 95%.

Most recently, BLM has been promoting spaying the wild mares with a surgical procedure known as ovariectomy. The NAS

report found this method to be inhumane, resulting in high rates of infection, bleeding, and death. To date, lawsuits have prohibited this barbaric procedure.

The NAS report concluded that BLM has the resources and tools to manage the horses and burros. Why don't they? How about using those helicopters to apply PZP, eliminating long term holding? BLM could say, "Yes," to non-profit organizations offering to apply PZP.

What can you do? First, stay informed. Wild Horse Education, the American Wild Horse Campaign, and the Cloud Foundation are great resources. Second, contact your congressional representatives to protect our public lands. Educate them on the Wild Horse and Burro Management program or simply voice your opinion. Our voice is really all we have to make a difference.

And if you don't think one voice can make a difference, just ask Wild Horse Annie Velma Johnston.



Tango, my inspiration.

Leslie Wolcott was adopted by her mustang Tango in 2012 leading to a curiosity about the history of wild horses. Her educational pursuit continues to this day resulting in an advocacy for the humane and effective management of the Wild Horse and Burros. She can be reached at LAW1918@icloud.com.

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News & Newsworthy



Large animal veterinary triage station and volunteers including the CA Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (blue vests) at the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds large animal evacuation center.

Animal Services during a disaster by organizing sheltering, supplies, and care for animals;

- Providing a community resource for how to prepare for disaster, and how you can help during, and after, the next disaster.

We need your support!

Please send in questions or comments to Marjorie or Dr. Bowen at info@sonomacart.org or to Sonoma County Animal Services at SonomaCounty-info@gmail.com. **Website coming soon at www.sonomaCART.org.

Photo: Amber Bowen, DVM

Up-and-Coming: SONOMA CART

We are pleased to announce the roll-out of the Sonoma Community Animal Response Team (Sonoma CART) expected in January 2019. In concert with Sonoma County Animal Services and with the community, we are taking an all-hazards and all-species approach, and invite all interested partnerships, community members, and animal-loving entities. We are currently gathering information on interested supporters and volunteers for the next disaster. Learning from the huge volunteer outreach during the Sonoma County fires, we are moving forward to organize the over-arching umbrella of a large animal disaster response, including your horse or livestock (not just cats and dogs). Dr. Amber Bowen, a Sonoma County equine veterinarian who was instrumental during the 2017 fire evacuation and large animal sheltering at the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds, and Marjorie McCoy, President of the SERRA Horse Rescue, have taken early measures to start the daunting task of organizing these amazing volunteers into specific teams with specific training.

Our Mission: To advocate for the animal component of disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

So far, we have the support of several individuals and entities, and are working on:

- Compiling a list of trained and approved animal disaster service workers (A-DSWs) who can be organized into specific disaster response teams;
- Supporting Sonoma County



Shorty, a local paint pony, was evacuated to the Santa Rosa Fairgrounds where care was given for severe burns to his face, eyes, and feet sustained during the Tubbs fire.

Photo: Amber Bowen, DVM



Wine Country Arabian Horse Association

Wine Country Arabian Horse Association held its 4th annual Halloween All Breed Open Schooling Show on October 28th at Santa Rosa Horse Company. It was a great success. We had 28 Halloween costume horses and 19 horses in the English Pleasure Class. We had so many different breeds, including Arabians, Morgans, Saddlebreds, Quarter Horses, Appaloosa, Thoroughbreds, and many more. This show gets bigger and better every year. This year we were very lucky to have professional course designer Ann Dennis set our trail classes. Our judge was Melissa Zanetti. We're already looking forward to next year's show! Our next event will be the Cinco de Mayo Show in May 2019. More information is available at www.winecountryarabians.com.

Local Equestrian Events—Winter 2019

Monthly Clinics with Erika Jansson (email or call for dates) SR Equestrian Center ejdressage@me.com, 707-326-7612

Please submit events for the next issue to Horse Journal Editor, Patrice Doyle - schc.pdoyle@gmail.com

Sonoma County—Places to Ride

Annadel State Park	6201 Channel Drive	Santa Rosa CA 95409	707-539-3911
Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve	17000 Armstrong Wds Rd	Guerneville CA 95446	707-869-2015
Bodega Bay Equestrian Trailhead	Westshore Dr at Bayflat Rd	Bodega Bay CA 94923	707-843-1716
Cloverdale River Park	31820 McCray Rd	Cloverdale CA 95425	707-433-1625
Crane Creek Regional Park	5000 Pressley Rd	Rohnert Park CA 94928	707-565-2041
Doran Beach Regional Park	201 Doran Beach Rd	Bodega Bay CA 94923	707-875-3540
Foothill Regional Park	1351 Arata Lane	Windsor CA 95492	707-433-1625
Helen Putnam Regional Park	411 Chileno Valley Rd	Petaluma CA 94952	707-433-1625
Hood Mountain Regional Park	3000 Los Alamos Rd	Santa Rosa CA 95409	707-565-2041
Laguna de Santa Rosa Trail	6303 Highway 12	Santa Rosa CA 95401	707-433-1625
Lake Sonoma	3333 Skaggs Springs Rd	Geyserville (west of Hburg)	707-431-4590
Ragle Ranch Regional Park	500 Ragle Rd	Sebastopol CA 95472	707-565-2041
Riverfront Regional Park	7821 Eastside Rd	Healdsburg CA 95448	707-433-1625
Salt Point State Park	25050 Highway 1	Jenner CA 95450	707-847-3221
Spring Lake Regional Park	391 Violetti Drive	Santa Rosa CA 95409	707-539-8092
Stewart's Horse Camp	Pt. Reyes Nat'l Seashore	Bolinas CA 94924	415-663-1362
Sugarloaf Ridge State Park	2605 Adobe Canyon Rd	Kenwood CA 95452	707-833-5712
Taylor Mt. Regional Park & Open Space Preserve	3820 Petaluma Hill Rd	Santa Rosa CA 95404	707-539-8092

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The Sonoma County Horse Journal is a quarterly publication designed to reach Sonoma County’s estimated 30,000 equestrians through direct mail to SCHC Members, individuals, organizations, 35 local horse clubs, and distribution at local feed stores and equestrian businesses. A very affordable way to spotlight your business to the Northern California horse community!

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Specification Questions or Design: Contact Lynn Newton – newton5@sonic.net

Sonoma County Horse Journal Submission Guidelines

Article submissions must have content that is educational, substantive, and of interest to a broad range of equine enthusiasts. Examples would be horse handling techniques, veterinary topics, rider fitness, riding disciplines, farriers/hoof care, etc. Authors should include short (40 words or less) biographical and background information, qualifications, etc. Articles may be rejected if a submission is overtly promotional of a product, service, business, and/or organization.

All articles are edited before appearing in print.

Submissions should be no longer than 600 words and may be accompanied by no more than two pictures, unless arranged for in advance and approved by the editor. ALL PHOTOGRAPHS must be the property of the submission’s author or be accompanied by verifiable usage permissions from the photographs’ owner of rights. Please submit photos in jpg, tiff, psd or pdf format and at least 300dpi (about 1 megabyte).

Please format your submissions as a Word document, one-inch margins, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Include the author’s name, phone number/email, and word count. Spell check your content, please.

News & Newsworthy submissions must be news items and/or announcements of interest to readership. Examples are show results, opening of a facility, and updates from rescue organizations/non-profits. Content must be 150-words or less and one photo.

Authors retain copyright for their work and grant the Sonoma County Horse Council and The Sonoma County Horse Council’s Horse Journal permission to print submissions without remuneration.

Submission Deadlines

Spring Issue - Submission Deadline February 1 - Publication March 15

Summer Issue - Submission Deadline May 1 - Publication June 15

Fall Issue - Submission Deadline August 1 - Publication September 15

Winter Issue - Submission Deadline November 1 - Publication December 15

HALTER Project LEADING RESIDENTS TO SAFETY & PREPAREDNESS

As we write, we are in between shifts assisting animal welfare resources in Butte County, and serving as a point of contact to coordinate resources for horse owners in Ventura and LA Counties. The number of injured and displaced animals is staggering, and the long-term effects of these current disasters, added to the ongoing impacts of the North Bay fires, will have serious impacts beyond feed, shelter and care.

The magnitude of these events underscores three facts:

1. Owner and facility preparedness make a huge difference in the survival and resilience of communities rich in equines and livestock
2. Animals housed on properties in forested areas accessible only by narrow roads with trees on both sides are highly vulnerable to a variety of natural disasters.
3. Local government relies on community resources to aid in response. The communities with robust, engaged, trained resources WORKING TOGETHER have the best outcomes.

This is not new information. But seeing the consequences of these conditions is a very harsh wake-up call. A sad fact is that the “backyard” equines and livestock suffer the most. Their owners often lack transportation or a network of contacts. These are often the animals abandoned or surrendered, as owners have no other options. In a region where pasture and stabling are dwindling at a fast rate, there are humane issues that must be considered and dealt with in the next decade as our landscape and demographic evolve. We encourage members to get more involved with the American Horse Council. This is the lobby representing equine welfare in the U.S.. Be as educated as you can about all aspects of major equine welfare issues and decide what you, personally, can do to improve the outlook for unwanted equines and disaster preparedness.

More immediately, here is a quick summary of current positive action in Sonoma County, and how you can support efforts to improve our readiness and resiliency:

- Sonoma County Office of Recovery and Resiliency, (ORR), enlisted HALTER Project participation in the development of the document shaping the future of disaster planning for SoCo. The emphasis, consistent with directives for human welfare, is on collaborative community engagement.
- County leaders and emergency managers are more informed and aware of the need to expedite approval of protocols for permitting property owners with equines and livestock to provide care during an incident. HALTER Project is actively engaged in this process.
- Disaster Service Worker programs: A growing number of SoCo residents are training to become registered volunteers. Several community groups and many individuals are acquiring CERT, (Community Emergency Response Team), certification – a requirement for animal disaster workers in many locations.
- Large Animal Emergency Response (ATR): The interest in the fire service and Search & Rescue is growing, and with the addition of 2 local ATR instructors, there will be a very active training calendar this winter and spring.
- Community Education: A very successful HALTER Project / Marin Horse Council / Marin Humane collaboration is resulting in numerous workshops, outreach events, and engagement with emergency services.
- COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS: We are encouraged that, after many years, a solid effort to establish a sustainable Sonoma Community Animal Response Team, (CART), is underway. You can take steps to prepare!
- CERT training and FEMA on-line training in the Incident Command (ICS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS) are requirements for most CARTs. You can complete these on your own to be ready when a CART is established and receives an MOU with Sonoma County DHS/AS.

Relief for Fire Communities: Check NapaCART.org, Butte County Farm Bureau, NVADG.org, Camp Fire Pet Rescue & Reunification, and Southern California Equine Emergency Evacuation to find best local relief info.

Wishing you and your loved ones a safe holiday and winter season.
The HALTER Team



Sonoma County Horse Council

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Lisa Thomas & Aliisa Mazariegos

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COMPASS

All acreage is estimated, not based on survey.

Brokers do not guarantee development potential, business income or return on real estate investments. Buyers to assure themselves fully of their ability to use property for their intended purpose.