

Sonoma County

Horse Journal

Volume 13 • Issue 2 • Spring 2016



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



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Cover Photo: Kim Hawkins

Mike Loades of the California Centaurs at SCEC. He is riding Valkyrie and demonstrating the 'Parthian shot'—turning in the saddle to shoot behind.

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President's Message

Member Planet—The Sonoma County Horse Council continues to evolve.



Elizabeth and Greycie

As an all volunteer organization, keeping track of membership information has always presented a challenge for the SCHC. Now, as our numbers are growing and we introduce new programs, such as the Large Animal Disaster Preparedness Plan, we have an increasing need to manage membership status, registration for training courses and the credentials of volunteer disaster service workers. We are excited to introduce Member Planet, a new communication platform that enables us to

more efficiently and economically manage our member data and our programs.

Member Planet is a flexible tool that will automatically remind you when it is time to pay your dues and will process the payment when you renew (taking a huge load off of a volunteer membership chairperson). It will enable us to register and track participants in the Disaster Preparedness Plan training and send

all email blasts and reminders from a single source.

If you are a current or past SCHC member, your name and email are probably already in the Member Planet database and you do not have to do anything until it is time to renew your membership. However, if you want to know when your renewal is due or want to create a more detailed member profile, you can go to the "Join Now" button on the SCHC website, create a login and password and access or add to your profile.

New members will use the "Join Now" button, along with their name and email to set up a new profile and pay their first year's dues. Going forward, all members will be reminded to pay dues and will receive the option of automatic renewal. If your most recent payment was made by check, the automatic renewal feature will not work until you have paid once through Member Planet, with a credit card or PayPal. Yes, this means we are doing away with the paper membership forms. If you want to renew your membership without using the internet, please contact Jan Loewen at 707-528-8483 or jan@janloeweninsurance.com.

Future communications from the SCHC will come from Member Planet. Be assured it's still us, we're just using a powerful new tool!

Elizabeth Palmer

President, Sonoma County Horse Council

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Bella Silveira with her horse Celeste



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Readers Write

Overview: Sonoma County Horse Council's Large Animal Disaster Preparedness Plan

For years, horse owners in Sonoma County (SC) have been concerned about the inherent challenges in evacuating and sheltering large numbers of horses during a disaster (e.g., floods and fires). Although the Sonoma County Horse Council (SCHC) was aware of these concerns, and the issue was brought up annually at our Board meetings for the past 5 years, it was not acted on until a report from Sonoma State University, sponsored by the SCHC, on the "Economic Impact of Equine Activities in Sonoma County" was published in 2014. This report found that SC is home to approximately 26,000 horses, which generates about \$613 million annually for local business, provides nearly 7,700 jobs, and produces, greater than \$11 million in tax revenues for SC annually.

Following this report, and after a period of due diligence, the SCHC found that there was not a well-organized large animal disaster preparedness plan (LA DP) for SC. With these findings, the HC formed a Disaster Preparedness Committee whose task is to develop a template for a county-wide LA DP.

The newly formed committee invited presentations from Dr. Claudia Sonder, Director Center of Equine Health (CEH), University California Davis (UCD) and Tracey Stevens, Acting Deputy Director Program Development & Training-Animals in Disasters, Western Institute for Food Safety & Security (WIFSS), to assist the SCHC in developing a template for the LA DP. From this, a mission statement was articulated: **Develop, support, and steward a county-wide large animal disaster preparedness plan.**

To accomplish this mission, the following **objectives** were formulated:

- 1) Work with SC Animal Services (AS) and CEH - UCD to develop a Large Animal (LA) training curriculum that:
 - a. Is approved by SC Office of Emergency Services (SC-OES).
 - b. Will certify volunteers and first responders to participate in a large animal disaster/and an emergency response. From this, a list of trained/certified volunteers LA disaster service workers (LA-DSW) will be established.
- 2) Generate LA demographics for SC (e.g., Map out farm locations contact information, numbers and type of LAs).
- 3) Develop a list of acceptable sheltering sites. An acceptable sheltering site is one in which biosecurity measure can be readily employed.
- 4) Identify LA veterinarians, willing to be trained in National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command (IC).
- 5) Make available a central source IC information data base.
- 6) Work with SC-OES and AS to formulate a LA-DP.

To accomplish these objectives the SCHC has been fortunate to develop **relationships/partnerships** with following:

- 1) Brian Whipple, Operations Manager SC Animal Services (AS), and Kevin Davis, Supervising Animal Control Officer. They are presently updating the SC LA disaster response plan and will be assisting with the development of a training curriculum that

Ted S. Stashak, DVM, MS, DACVS, Board of Directors, SCHC

is acceptable to SC-OES. They also will be identifying sheltering options for evacuated LAs.

- 2) Dr. Sonder will be assisting in defining curricula to achieve different levels of DSW training/certification.
- 3) Drs. John Madigan (Director), Eric Davis, and Patricia Andrade of the International Animal Welfare Training Institute (IAWTI)-UCD will be responsible for program development and training.
- 4) Pete Albers, Sonoma County Ag Commissioner Office, will be assisting with SC LA demographics.
- 5) Mike Furlong (President) and Fred Radelfinger (Vice President) of the Sonoma - Marin Cattlemen's Association, will assist the SCHC with demographics and supply volunteers for training.
- 6) John Kaufman, DVM (large animal) and Eric Williams, DVM (small animal), are representatives from the Redwood Empire Veterinary Medical Association for animals in disaster response.

Where we are to date:

- 1) SCHC Meetings & Training
 - a. Stake holder meeting – SRJC's Warren G. Dutton Pavilion, October 26th, 2015
 - b. Large animal rescue training for first responders and volunteers at Circle Oak Equine – November 14th, 2015
- 2) SCHC – DP participation in Lake County fire
 - a. Response from SC was well beyond expectations
 - b. SCHC - IC response organized:
 - i. Transportation for evacuated horses
 - ii. Delivery of supplies and feed
 - c. Generated biosecurity measures for horse facilities receiving evacuated horses. See SCHC website: www.sonomacounty-horsecouncil.org/
- 3) Large animal demographics – preliminary findings in Sonoma County:
 - a. Horses: approximately 26,000
 - b. Beef Cattle: approximately 30,000 (Dr. Stephanie Larsen)
 - c. Sheep: approximately 15,000 – 20,000 (Joe Pozzi, President of North Bay Wool Growers)
 - d. Dairy cows: approximately 29,000 (CDFA Dairy Statistics)

In summary, the SCHC is committed to developing a county-wide LA DP, in harmony with AS and UCD, which includes training and certification of volunteers and first responders, accepted and recognized by OES. We are fortunate to have developed strong partnerships which will allow us accomplish our mission.



Ted Stashak DVM, MS, DACVS, graduated from UCD 1971 and retired in 2005 from Colorado State University as an Emeritus Professor. He has authored six text books on lameness and wound management in horses. He enjoys family events, traveling, horse-back riding and cycling. Dr. Stashak can be reached through the SCHC web site.

The Equine Esquire

Column editor Patrice Doyle, Attorney at Law, Board of Directors

Evaluating Your Liability Waiver

Think about this typical scenario...parents bring their young daughter to a riding stable for lessons. The facility owner gives the parents a lesson contract to review and sign. The contract identifies the facility, participant, dates of lessons, and skill level of the child. Additionally, the contract language states, "I agree to accept full responsibility for myself and my minor child during the lessons. I will hold the facility harmless for any accident, injury, or loss that may occur due to participation in riding lessons." The parents sign the contract. The daughter later falls off her horse during a lesson and breaks her arm. The parents sue the facility on behalf of their minor daughter. The attorney for the facility files a motion to dismiss the lawsuit based on the existence of a signed liability waiver. What happens? For the reasons that follow, there is a strong likelihood that the particular waiver the parents signed will be deemed unenforceable in a court of law, and the facility will not escape liability for the daughter's injuries.

A waiver, often termed a release, is a contract between the facility (trainer, horse owner, etc.) and the participant (or participant's parent(s) if a minor). The agreement is reviewed and signed prior to commencing the activity in which the facility seeks to be absolved of any fault or liability for injuries resulting from its ordinary negligence or mistakes.

Waivers fail for many reasons, but one of the most frequent causes is that they are poorly written. When evaluating your liability waiver, consider the following:

- Title and form – Clearly title the document in large type so the participant knows what they are signing. Use terminology such as LIABILITY WAIVER & RELEASE or specific to the activity such as BOARDING & TRAINING AGREEMENT AND LIABILITY RELEASE.
- Clarity and readability – Is the exculpatory language conspicuous (underline, bold, upper case, etc.)? Is the font size large enough to be easily read? Is it written in language that can be understood by the intended reader? Do not use legalese.
- Naming parties released from liability – Name all parties being released from liability, otherwise they will likely not gain any protection in court. It's fine to use individual names as well as groups such as "employees, agents, officers, directors, volunteers, sponsors", etc.
- List the inherent risks of the activity – Hazards and risks must be spelled out in the release and clearly separated from other sections. Include a list of potential equine risks, including minor, serious, and catastrophic events that could occur. Also include the consequences of these risks (eg. minor: scrapes, bruises; serious: broken bones, concussion; catastrophic: death, paralysis.) If the possible risks are not made clear, then the injured party can claim they did not "knowingly waive" the liability where they were uninformed.
- Identify signers & releasees – Does the agreement clearly identify who is to sign the release and who the release affects? In the case of a minor, does the person signing have the legal right to do so? Include full names, addresses, and phone numbers.
- Use the word "negligence" – There must be a distinct section

regarding waiver of liability for acts of ordinary negligence. Be sure to broadly describe all phases and aspects of participation. No court will enforce a release that attempts to waive liability for gross negligence, willful and wanton misconduct, or intentional acts.

- Include dates – Does the release indicate when it was executed, when it takes effect, and how long it remains in force? For an activity that is more than a one-time event, such as a boarding or training, consider requiring a new release to be signed annually, and especially if the activity or premises is modified.

When incorporating the use of a waiver in your business, make sure you and your staff administer the waiver properly and fairly:

- Allow the signer(s) time to read;
- Explain the agreement;
- Answer questions;
- Provide an executed copy to the signer;
- Develop a system to retain the signed documents and allow for easy retrieval (electronic storage and storing originals in a clean, safe place);
- Review the waiver language from time to time, especially if there are changes in your facility, or in services/activities offered; and
- Do not use sign-up sheets as liability waivers as courts have consistently disallowed their use as waivers.

In sum, no business should operate without a good liability waiver. If you've considered all the criteria above when drafting your waiver, it is probably well-positioned to enjoy enforcement under the law.



Patrice Doyle is a senior attorney at Kornblum, Cochran, Erickson & Harbison, L.L.P., and has been an avid horsewoman since childhood. She can be of assistance in guiding you through equine-related legal issues. Contact her at (707) 544-9006 or www.kcehlaw.com.

The above article is provided free and offers general information on the topic of waivers. Neither the author nor the publication intend this article to be viewed as rendering legal advice. If legal advice is sought, readers should seek competent legal counsel regarding their particular circumstances.

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Readers Write

New Tax Laws May Benefit Horse Industries

by Elizabeth Palmer, Esq.

In the last days of 2015, Congress passed several tax provisions that may benefit small businesses, including horse-related businesses. This eleventh hour governmental exercise is nothing new, it happens each December as Congress either extends or restores tax laws that would otherwise expire. The extensions are usually for one or two years and, although many taxpayers may benefit from them, the uncertainty surrounding whether or when Congress may allow these laws to lapse altogether, generally makes it difficult for businesses to plan.

This latest bill, called the Protect Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 ("the PATH Act"), is noteworthy because it makes certain tax laws permanent, removing them from the shifting priorities of Congress. This should allow horse businesses, breeders and farms to make long term plans that take advantage of these tax provisions. Here is a brief summary of some of the provisions in the Path Act that may benefit the horse industry.

- The PATH Act reinstates the \$500,000 deduction for "Section 179" business expenses and makes the limitation permanent; however, the deduction is reduced dollar for dollar once investment in all business activities reaches \$2-million. This means that businesses can immediately deduct up to \$500,000 for new and used business assets purchased and placed in service in a given year, rather than depreciating the assets over their useful life. Horses, machinery and equipment are examples of assets that can be deducted under section 179. Broodmares may be eligible for expensing as used property, if they have been used in the prior owner's business.
- The Path Act also restores bonus depreciation for qualifying new property purchased and placed in service between 2015 and 2019. This includes assets used in a horse business, such as horses and equipment. The bonus depreciation rate is 50% for property placed in service in 2015, 2016 and 2017. It decreases to 40% for 2018 and 30% for 2019. Importantly, unlike Section 179 which applies to new or used property, the taxpayer must be the first to place the property in service (i.e., a horse that was "in service" for a prior owner does not qualify for bonus depreciation). Also, beginning in 2016, certain trees, vines and plants qualify for bonus depreciation.
- Attractive 3-year depreciation rules for racehorses have been reinstated for horses placed in training in 2015 and 2016. Between 2009 and 2014, all racehorses could be depreciated over 3 years, rather than the cumbersome 7-year schedule that exceeds the horses' likely racing career; however, that law expired at the end of 2014. The PATH Act extends this favorable depreciation for two additional years.

Favorable tax treatment for land donated for conservation purposes, particularly by qualified farmers and ranchers, has also been restored and made permanent. A qualified farmer or rancher is a taxpayer who derives more than 50% of his or her gross income for the tax year from the trade or business of farming. The donated land must be subject to a restriction requiring it to be used for agriculture or livestock production.

- Another bill enacted in December eases the burden on

employers, such as those in certain horse industries, who rely on H-2B temporary workers. The new law makes it easier for returning H-2B workers to obtain visas and easier for employers to comply with wage reporting requirements. It also increases the period for seasonal employment from 9 months to 10 months.

If you are unsure how the new laws affect your horse-related business, consult your tax professionals.

Elizabeth Palmer is a business and taxation attorney with Dickenson, Peatman & Fogarty, P.C. She specializes in wine industry related transactions and equine matters. She can be reached at epalmer@dpf-law.com.



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Readers Write

Mounted Archery in Sonoma County

by Mike Loades

Mounted archery—shooting bows at targets from the back of a galloping horse—may be the fastest growing equestrian sport in the world. The international competition scene is expanding at a phenomenal rate and there are an increasing number of clubs in the USA.

The Sonoma Coastal Equestrian Training Center (S.C.E.C.), the inspiration of owner Nathalie Guion, is set in 260 acres of majestic Sonoma countryside near Petaluma. It encourages and caters to a wide variety of equestrian activities, and it is also home to the California Centaurs, to date the only mounted archery club in California.

Mounted archery can be practiced as a personal martial art, a focused physical and mental discipline, or enjoyed purely for fun and for building a deeper connection with your horse. People take part at many levels from international competition to informal club meets that allow beginners to start out shooting at the walk. Men and women compete together on equal terms.

There is a wide variety of course layouts but a typical one is a 90-yard track with three targets alongside. Most steady horses complete this in 9 or 10 seconds and all three targets have to be shot. Slower horses amble home over 12 seconds. Quicker horses finish in 7-8 seconds, fast but achievable for archers who can reload sufficiently speedily. Rapid reloading is the key (there are special techniques). In competition there are bonus points for every fraction of a second a rider completes the course under 12 seconds, so there is a big incentive to be fast and furious.

In some competitions there is an especially challenging target called the qabaq, a metal disc set on top of a 25-ft mast, which the archer shoots with a blunt arrow as he/she gallops below. Some tracks have angled targets that demand forward and backward over-the-shoulder shots, called Parthian shot (parting shot) made famous by the Parthians who used the tactic of feigning retreat and then shooting behind them as the enemy galloped after them (see cover photo). Horse-archers were the elite troops of many ancient armies, including Chinese, Huns, Koreans, Mongols, Persians, Samurai, Saracens, Tatars, Turks and, of course, Native Americans.

It takes two hands to load and shoot a bow, requiring that the reins be dropped for the length of the course. This requires horses that have good self-carriage, otherwise they tend towards unbalancing and stumbling. Training necessitates lots of time in the arena riding with dropped reins, often using a neck rope to cultivate a horse that is happy and responsive without rein control. The mounted archer has to place more emphasis on balance, seat, and legs. It is important that the 'Centaur' remains part of the horse from the waist down and an archer from the waist up. This is the essence of mounted archery—horse and human are a single being. It is a partnership that requires complete trust and cooperation, and a fusion of minds, between horse and rider.



Photo: Kim Hawkins

The author demonstrating the forward shot. Note that the archer rises into two-point at the moment of shooting to minimize the effects of the horse's bounce on the shot.

Before you can get to that stage, your horse has to be desensitized to the touch and sound of all the equipment and the unfamiliar actions. This, in turn, can make him/her a calmer, more confident horse. It is a journey.

When galloping flat out, shooting and re-loading three arrows, there is no time for conscious thought. You and your horse are 100% in the moment and the partnership between horse and rider is everything. It is in that moment, if all goes well, that the deepest possible connection forms between horse and rider. You become a team, performing different roles in a common task. It is both thrilling and rewarding.

The style of archery used by mounted archers is a little different from what most people are familiar. It has to be done on the move—the draw and aim have to be both instant and instinctive. On top of that there is the issue of fitting the arrow to the string (nocking) in the blink of an eye. New skills have to be learned. Mounted archers shoot with a thumb-release, the traditional method used by horse-archer warriors of the past, a method that evolved to accommodate the particular problems of shooting from a fast-moving animal.

The California Centaurs hold regular clinics, practice days for members and club competitions. Follow the California Centaurs Facebook page for news of upcoming events. Club administrator Hilary Merrill is also full-time assistant trainer at SCEC and offers private mounted archery lessons. Email her directly at californiacentaurs@gmail.com, or contact her via www.scequestertraining.com.



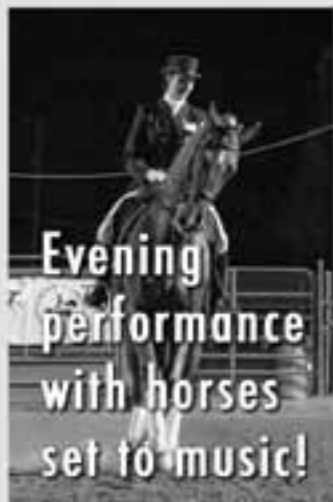
The author riding Valkyrie on the mounted archery track at SCEC, shooting at a forward angled target.

Photo: Kim Hawkins

Mike Loades is a British author, director and TV presenter, living in Sonoma County. Best known for his many TV appearances as a weapons historian, he is the founder of The California Centaurs mounted archery club. He gives presentations, demonstrations and clinics on mounted archery. Visit www.mikeloades.com.

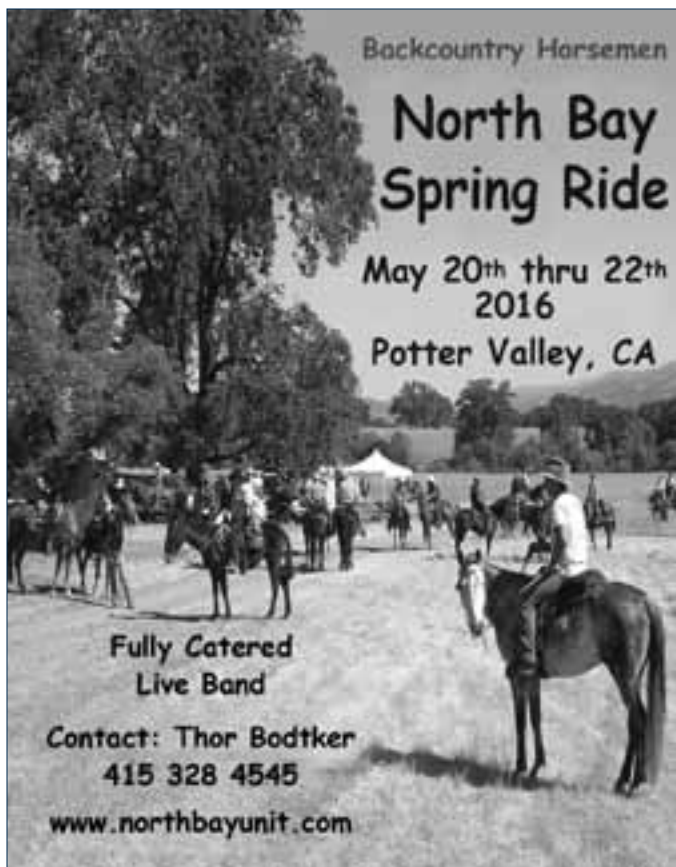



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*Readers Write***CEPEC Site Proposal in the Hands of the State**

By Wanda Smith

The California Equestrian Park and Event Center (CEPEC) is a non-profit Olympic level facility in development. It is being designed for public use for equestrian recreation, competition, education, equine medical services, historic and art exhibits. In 2015, CEPEC accomplished several milestones including:

- Publication of the Master Plan (www.cepec.us/Articles/Master%20Plan.pdf)
- Front page article in the North Bay Business Journal (www.cepec.us/NBBJarticle.htm)
- Addition of UC Davis Professor Emeritus to Board of Directors (www.cepec.us/about%20us.htm)
- Addition of Director of Development to Executive Staff (www.cepec.us/about%20us.htm)
- CEPEC Exhibition at UC Davis Horse Day
- Introductions of CEPEC to California Legislatures at the State Capital Ag Day
- Site acquisition proposal submitted to the State (<http://cepec.us/Articles/CEPEC%20SDC%20Proposal.pdf>)



West side (500 acres trails)



CEPEC proposed land (in white border)



East side (277 acres) CEPEC Complex Concept

CEPEC has considered several sites in the last few years and made offers on two of them. To qualify for consideration as a potential CEPEC site, a location must meet over thirty requirements for land, water quantity and quality, location, climate, zoning, terrain, distance from earthquake/fire/flood zones, etc. Offers for two sites in the Roblar Valley of Southwest Petaluma were withdrawn due to excessive land and species mitigation costs. Another site being considered along Highway 101 was withdrawn due to the use of part of the property for the SMART train system.

In 2015, a site that meets CEPEC's requirements became available when the California State Legislature passed a bill to close a state owned 950 acre Sonoma Developmental Center (SDC) in Sonoma Valley near Glen Ellen. A proposal from CEPEC to acquire 777 acres adjacent to the SDC campus was submitted to the State in August. This land has been used for agricultural purposes for over 120 years and CEPEC would like to continue and preserve its traditional uses for horses and equestrians. The site is composed of two areas. One is 500 acres of hills on the west side of Arnold Drive and next to Jack London Park. CEPEC plans to retain this area as open space to be used for trail riding, hiking, and wildlife preservation. The second area is 277 acres of flat land and rolling hills along Hwy 12 adjacent to the Sonoma Valley Regional Park. This site is being proposed for the CEPEC equestrian complex (e.g., riding arenas and courses, barns, vet center, museum, etc.). The north side of the properties is planned to be retained as a wildlife corridor.

CEPEC has been designed based on interviews and feedback from the local community and national equestrian organizations. The CEPEC project is projected to generate revenue of \$250 million annually for Sonoma County as well as 250 jobs. Over 400 people from around the world have signed a petition for the CEPEC project to be located in Sonoma Valley. Anyone interested in having a world class equestrian facility in Sonoma Valley can join these supporters at: www.ipetitions.com/petition/olympic-equestrian-center--sonoma-valley.

For additional information, view www.cepec.us, email director@cepec.us, or call (707) 541-6091.

Wanda Smith is the Executive Director of CEPEC. She has owned horses for over 4 decades, managed Quarter Horse ranches in the Santa Cruz and Guerneville, and showed cutting horses. Wanda is also the author of Horses of the Wine Country and The Ugly Docling, Smart Little Lena - a children's book about a horse that overcame many obstacles and became a world champion.

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Readers Write

Acupuncture: An Emerging Alternative

by Saralynn Specht, DVM



Holistic medicine has been in use for thousands of years, but its practice in veterinary medicine is limited and still seen as a modern, yet old age technique. More veterinarians are beginning to incorporate holistic medicine, such as acupuncture, into their practice due to the growing demand by our clients.

You might ask, what is this obscure modality? Acupuncture

encompasses the use of stimulating specific acupuncture points along the body's surface. Acupuncture points are located in areas rich with nerve plexuses that when activated stimulate the release of B-endorphins, serotonin, and other neurotransmitters, all of which play roles in pain relief and healing. Many conditions have been successfully treated with the addition of Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine (TCVM): colic, founder, lameness, hormonal disturbances, back pain, tension/anxiety, and neurological disease.

When I first started my journey at the Chi Institute in Florida, studying TCVM, I quickly found myself re-evaluating how I approached my cases in clinical practice. In veterinary school, we are taught to draw conclusions from our case and utilize the clinical signs and lab-work to help us achieve a definitive diagnosis. As practitioners studying TCVM, we are encouraged to approach our patients in a similar yet more intimate manner. Instead of just treating the "disease," however, we treat the patient's constitution first to recognize the disturbances arising from their body's imbalance. Although acupuncture provides an adjunctive treatment for a variety of cases, it is still viewed by some as a controversial modality in western medicine. There is limited research to support the discovery of scientific explanations for the effects of acupuncture. I run across many skeptics in practice, both clients and fellow colleagues. I was a skeptic myself until I had been treated with acupuncture for neck and back pain resulting from a car accident. The commonly prescribed NSAID's (Ibuprofen) and physical therapy were not relieving my chronic pain. Unfortunately, muscle relaxants were not an option since I had to continue to work and be capable of operating a vehicle. A close friend of mine suggested I try acupuncture therapy. I kid you not, four needles and ten minutes later my neck pain had reduced by 90% with a single treatment.

I have personally found it to be the missing piece of the puzzle needed

to help my patients achieve resolution. More commonly, I have found more horse owners inclined to use acupuncture when they have exhausted multiple other treatments without success. I believe there is a time and place for everything. I incorporate my acupuncture practice into my western medicine almost on a daily basis. I may not necessarily treat every patient utilizing acupuncture as a therapy, but I have found it just as helpful in my clinical diagnosis for the patient's condition. As with many modalities, acupuncture is not for every patient. Like humans, some horses do not enjoy the sensation of even the smallest of needles being inserted under the skin surface. But to each their own, and if you haven't tried acupuncture for your horse yet, it's worth a shot. Speak with your equine's veterinarian and find out if they practice acupuncture. Like my fellow colleagues, I want the very best for my patients. Thus, an open mind may introduce you and your horse to an alternative therapy that can help them perform better and longer.

I close with this Chinese proverb – "It is easy to get a thousand prescriptions, but hard to get one single remedy."

Dr. Specht is a native of Sonoma county where she grew up working on her family's thoroughbred broodmare farm. She graduated from UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and has recently completed the Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine Acupuncture Course at the Chi Institute in Florida. Dr. Specht is currently an associate veterinarian at Sonoma Marin Veterinary Services.

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Readers Write

Andrea Pfeiffer of Chocolate Horse Farm & Jean Stokes of Rancho Roble Lomas

Celebrate 20 Years of Producing Equestrian Champions

by Jessica Rising

Andrea's and Jean's partnership serendipitously began over 20 years ago when long time horsewoman Jean Stokes and her business partner Brigette Dulfer purchased a ranch in the bucolic hills of Petaluma. After growing up on cattle ranches in the Central Valley of California, Jean's dream was to open a casual western themed boarding facility with no trainers.

Their partnership began when James Pfeiffer, Andrea's husband and horse farrier, happened to drive up the road, saw the construction and let Jean know that his wife was looking for a new ranch for her clients. That night Andrea and Jean hammered out an agreement and within two weeks 27 horses moved onto the ranch.

It didn't take long for Jean to realize that none of the new boarders rode western, that Andrea was in fact a British Horse Society (BHS II) certified instructor who specialized in training horses and riders in the equestrian disciplines of dressage and three day eventing, and Jean was shocked to see Andrea's clients jumping their horses like "wild renegades" over her picnic tables!

Andrea and Jean set a personal goal to create a family type culture in their barn with a serious competition program available for those who wanted it. Jean expanded the ranch to accommodate 50 horses, and over the years an estimated 1,000 horses and over 3,000 riders ranging in age from 5 to 75 years old, with riding ability from beginner to competing in Grand Prix dressage and 4-star level eventing, have been a part of their program. Andrea Pfeiffer is very proud that notable three day eventing riders Kelly Prather and Matt Brown started with her as young kids and ultimately achieved international success while both were students in her training program.

Andrea is especially proud of her champion Irish Sporthorse mare Ballinakill Glory, aka "Pippa," who she purchased as a 3 year-old in Ireland and brought up through the levels of International competition via her training program. Competition highlights include the 2009 and 2011 USA Rolex Three Day competitions held in Kentucky, the FEI 2009 World Cup Eventing competition held in Poland, achieving 1st place finishes and championships



Andrea Pfeiffer, Jean Stokes, Amber Levine and her horse Otter Pop at Chocolate Horse Farm.

in both the CIC*** event held at Rebecca Farm in Montana, and the inaugural CCI** Fair Hill competition in Maryland.

It is also important for Andrea to give back to local and equestrian communities. Andrea is a board member for the COTS foundation, a nationally recognized best practice model for the prevention and elimination of homelessness. To date, Andrea, Jean and their clients have donated over \$100,000 to this organization. When the Bernard Eldredge Elementary School in Petaluma, CA needed a new playground, an event was produced that raised \$20,000 to build it. CHF also continues to rescue and retrain off-the-track thoroughbred horses so they can go on to new homes and careers.

After 20 years, Jean has decided to slow down and recently handed over the reins to Andrea for managing the ranch. Andrea is still going full steam ahead, and the tradition of producing champions continues. Current and very talented CHF Assistant Trainer Amber Levine has several young horses and in June 2015 won the Copper Meadows CIC** eventing competition. There are many promising and excellent eventing and dressage students in the program as well. Andrea's champion mare retired and in 2015 had her first foal, a filly named Ballinakill Poppy. Andrea continues to compete in dressage, and Jean, still the competitive maven, continues to cheer on the CHF team each time they leave the ranch to compete at an event or show.

To learn more about Andrea Pfeiffer and Chocolate Horse Farm, visit her website at www.chocolatehorsefarm.net.

Jessica Rising is a business consultant who specializes in improving healthcare, marketing, and public relations. Having a passion for all things equine since her teenage years, Jessica's work has been published in media sources including *Riding* and *Ride!* Magazines and even *Oprah's Magazine*. She lives with her husband and daughter in Marin County. Any questions or comments can be sent to Jessica at jrising@risinggroup.net.



Andrea Pfeiffer with her retired mare Ballinakill Glory (Pippa) and Pippa's filly Ballinakill Poppy.

Photo: Mary J. Murphy

Photo: Jessica Rising



Vet's Office

Column Editor Michelle Beko, DVM

Eye Problems—Part 2: Uveitis

As stated in the last issue, eye problems are common in horses. In this issue we will discuss Uveitis as well as the more serious Equine Recurrent Uveitis (ERU). The latter is known to be a very old disease with reports of it dating back to the 4th century. It is estimated that about 1-2% of horses in this country have ERU.

Uveitis is inflammation within the eye, particularly within the uveal tract of the eye. This portion of the eye contains all of the vascular supply (blood vessels) and includes the iris as well as other tissues. The iris is the colored part of the eye that is in front of the lens. Equine irises are usually brown but sometimes blue.

The symptoms of uveitis almost always include squinting, tearing, and a constricted pupil. They often also include puffy and red-tened conjunctiva (the tissue on the underside of the eyelids) and cloudiness. The affected eye will also usually appear smaller than the opposite eye due to a loss of internal pressure.

Many horses will have one bout of uveitis, often resulting from trauma, and never have another episode. Others unfortunately, will get recurrent episodes in the same or both eyes. These horses have ERU which is commonly known as "moon blindness". Equine recurrent uveitis is the most common cause of blindness in horses. It is characterized by intermittent bouts of inflammation separated by quiescent periods where the eye appears to be normal. A small number of horses, especially appaloosas, will have insidious uveitis where they have persistent uveitis with minimal symptoms.

There are many different things that can initiate uveitis including: trauma, Leptospirosis or other bacterial infection, some viral infections and a parasitic worm called onchocerca. Regardless of the initiating cause, ERU becomes an autoimmune disease. The equine eye is somewhat isolated from the horses' immune system by a tight blood-ocular barrier. Although the mechanisms are not completely understood, when the initiating episode of uveitis occurs the inflammation weakens this barrier allowing the horse's immune system access to its eye. The immune system then attacks some of the previously "unseen" ocular tissue as if it were foreign. The sequelae to these repeated or persistent bouts of uveitis include cataracts, glaucoma, retinal detachment and other problems which can lead to blindness.

The role of the bacteria Leptospirosis in uveitis is not fully understood and is somewhat controversial. The bacteria survive in wild and domestic animals (deer, cattle, swine and rats) and are shed in their urine. Horses are infected when they drink contaminated water. They may get a fever and pregnant mares might abort but they generally recover without treatment. Some may get mild uveitis during the acute infection but more will get it 18-24 months later. Some studies suggest that the infection can persist in the eye and others suggest it doesn't. There is a higher incidence of ERU in areas where Leptospirae are known to be common. The genetic make-up of the individual equid likely influences his/her response to leptospirosis infection. Prior use of a vaccination for cattle or pigs seemed to lessen an unexposed horse's chances of becoming infected but might cause horses that already have ERU to have a flare up. There is a newly available equine vaccine for Leptospirosis. We will see if it is useful in preventing uveitis.

Appaloosas are over 8 times more likely to get ERU than other breeds of horses are. Leopard appys or roans with dark spots are more susceptible than dark appys with a blanket on their hind-quarters. One study from New York showed that 100% of appaloosas with ERU that had a positive titer (antibodies to) Leptospirosis lost vision in one or both eyes! Appys are also more likely to have the insidious form of ERU with minimal symptoms in spite of active inflammation and therefore are more likely to go untreated. There is a study underway at U.C. Davis regarding uveitis in appaloosas that will hopefully shed more light on this disease.

Treatment includes oral or injectable anti-inflammatories such as banamine, firocoxib (previcox) or bute along with eye ointments or drops with atropine to dilate the pupil and dexamethasone or prednisolone to decrease inflammation. Treatment should continue for a minimum of 2-3 weeks and should be gradually decreased rather than stopped abruptly. Surgical implantation of a cyclosporine implant can be effective in preventing reoccurrences and can be very helpful for those horses that have frequent bouts.

Ointments with dexamethasone, prednisolone or hydrocortisone should never be put in an eye with a corneal ulcer. Horses with uveitis can also get corneal ulcers, therefore every relapse should be checked by your veterinarian before applying these medicines although it is safe to administer oral anti-inflammatories. **Remember, every squinting or newly cloudy eye should be checked by your veterinarian within 24 hours.** In the next issue, we will discuss conjunctivitis.



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.

A NOTE FROM THE SCHC

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Thank you!

From the Judge's Booth

Column Editor Melissa Kalember, Board of Directors

Selfish Riders

Why do you ride? Do you ride for the connection with your equine? Do you ride for the glory of the blue ribbon?

Why am I proposing such questions?

I want to educate riders and enlighten them, because not many riders realize judges can read the energy behind their riding.

Examples:

Rider one: a young girl enters the show arena. She is calm, but very focused. Every step of the way she is giving it her all. Her heart is in it. She is determined and wants to win, but doesn't need to win. A mistake is made. She absorbs it and proceeds. The end of her time in the show arena has just as much conviction as the start.

Rider two: another young girl enters the show arena. She is focused yet tense. Every step of the way she is giving it her all, but from a 'trying to' energy. She is determined and wants to win, but she wants to win so she can look good. Her legs tighten against her horse, with the intention of telling him to go faster, 'do better', so 'we' can win. A mistake is made and you see her face grow long. Their energy drops and then they have to regain momentum to finish in the show arena. She ends her time in the show arena with the weight of the world on her shoulders.

Obviously, these are just examples of the many different kinds of riders. My point is that most judges can read the real intention or the energy behind the action. Let me ask, how did you feel after rider one? Encouraged. Rooting for her. Waiting to see what would happen next. A sense of good horsemanship.

How did you feel after rider two? Heavy. Wanting things to be

lighter for her. Tight. Almost feeling bad for the horse that has to take her around.

Now let's say they both had the same round in the show arena. Which one would you naturally score higher?

It is not always so black and white. There are times where a rider who is not energetically in the right place wins. Let's say they feel entitled and mean, but they win. Ask why. Why did that rider or that horse win? Hopefully they were the best, with the least amount of mistakes. This is where my job can be hard. I have to pin the best horse or rider, but a part of me doesn't want to because of the selfish and entitlement energy I feel behind their riding... but it would be so obvious if I didn't award them first place.

I want exhibitors to know that *most* judges can see where a rider's energy lies, even if the rider wins. We know. So the real question is, who wins the heart of their horse at the end of the day? Rider two, or the entitled, selfish rider? Or the rider whose heart and passion are transferred in every moment? That is where the real blue ribbon is, in the connection with your partner.



Melissa Kalember is a SCHC Board Member, a USEF R Judge, SAHJA Judge, equine masseuse, and intuitive trainer. She will be writing a column "From the Judge's Booth" in every issue of the Horse Journal, so please contact her if you have a specific topic you'd like addressed: melissa@kalemberequine.com.

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Readers Write

In Pursuit of Equine Permaculture

As a consulting environmental and engineering geologist, and a horsewoman, I have this crazy idea that horse facility owners might consider for a moment the concept of "Equine Permaculture."

What is Permaculture? I'll quote Sonoma County's own Occidental Arts & Ecology Center: "*Permaculture is a design process – based in observation and systems thinking – that enables people to create ecologically and socially sustainable... settlements beneficial to the people and to the ecosystems within which they are nested.*" I'm not the first person to promote application of this concept to horse-keeping, but the incorporation of sustainable and wild horse-based management practices is still relatively novel to many, if not most, horse-and-facility-owners. With El Nino wreaking havoc locally, now is a good time to make a list of the improvements you know your site may need.

Any action plan aimed at improving the conditions of your facility must honor the core principles listed below. Beyond these, the sky is the limit to additional, creative adjustments you can implement to fundamentally improve your equine ecosystem. The key principles around which to build your equine permaculture action plan include: water quality improvement/protection, manure management, and equine health. Each of these is admittedly a broad category into which many specific actions can be grouped. But keeping the health of the water, the land, and horses as the core commitments will shape your plan toward sustainability.

Water Quality Improvement/Protection – Runoff from paddocks, dryland pastures and high-traffic areas can contain sediment, manure, nitrates, and salts that are detrimental to watershed ecosystems. Have your site topography, hydrology, soils, and ground-water conditions evaluated so that effective on-site filtration, infiltration, drainage, and erosion control can be custom-designed for your facility. Methods include infiltration trenches, planted filtration/buffer strips, rainwater harvesting, and careful grading.

Manure Management – Proper composting is a permaculture win. Composting manure produces temperatures high enough to kill parasite larvae and weed seeds, and produces a valuable product that can be used on site, given away, traded, or sold. Composting manure also cuts waste volume in half, eliminates off-hauling costs, reduces odors, and eliminates fly breeding grounds. Composting manure is kept contained or covered, with properly routed drainage, further protecting water quality.

Equine Health – This is the broadest of the core principles and also where one might see the most rewarding results. As a permaculture category it includes: grading, drainage and footing materials to eliminate horses standing in mud (also improves water quality, facility appearance, and functionality), adjustment of feeding schedule and practices to suit the trickle-feeder and reduce sand ingestion, and pasture/paddock design that incorporates lessons from the wild ones for stimulation of movement and natural



Sarah and RTF foal

By Sarah Lockwood, P.G.

behaviors. Overall, we're reaching for that definition of **permaculture** in the way we care for our horses and land. If you're repeatedly frustrated and struggling against weather-induced conditions at your site, that's not emotionally **sustainable**. If your horses stand in mud every winter, that's not a **beneficial settlement** for the horses. If you just keep taking what you have and making do with it, that's definitely not a **design process based on observations**.

A great first step is to visit the Sonoma Resource Conservation District website (<http://sonomarc.org>). Under the Publications tab, you'll find printable fact sheets covering the basics of water quality, manure management, and much

more. Next, books like Jamie Jackson's *Paddock Paradise* might get you thinking outside the 12' x 24' in terms of holistic paddock design. If you're stuck or need a kick start, seek a professional consultation to design custom solutions for your site.

Sarah Lockwood, P.G. is a Holistic Equine Training & Management Specialist based in Sonoma County. Sarah provides Holistic Horse Training and Professional Geologic Consulting for Horse Properties, including Equine Permaculture design. Visit www.EarthAndEquine.com to learn more. Email: EarthAndEquine@gmail.com. Phone: 707-239-2280.

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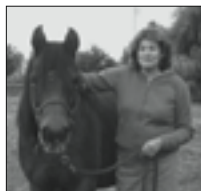
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*Spitting Sand—A Learner's Journey*

Column editor Jessica Boyd

The Herd: Observations and Musings from Inside and Out by Jessica Boyd*Who's on first? Add horses for instant lessons in herd dynamics.*

As social creatures, we humans like to think we understand a bit about herd behavior. For us—or some of us, anyway—being social provides comfort and support, a home and hearth and family bonds that nurture us. It's somewhat the same with horses, but the herd also means safety in numbers, or, at very least, someone else may be eaten before you. In the last four months we've had them shackled up together, Lena and Calabar have given me much insight into herd behavior, both with two horses who have known each other for over eight years and with all the new horses that have recently entered their herd perimeters.

As with most things, an intellectual understanding pales in comparison to actually being in it. The herd, that is. I got a hoof to the heel recently for getting in the middle of a discussion about food because I missed those subtle, intuitive cues that occur between large, physical herd animals. Cues that Lena picked up instantly—body language, ears, probably teeth—all reminded her that Calabar is in charge. He decides which food pile he's eating and chases Lena off to the other one. This is fine because they are both at or near their ideal weights again. It is also fine because it has allowed Lena to relax, to not worry about being in charge. To let someone watch over her while she naps.

Watching these two old friends find balance in a new place has been an interesting education in how horses figure it all out. It's not just each other, though, they've also created relationships with their neighbors and manage to allow random horses into the fold when the occasion arises. We recently went on a trail ride with a friend and got to see just how quickly horse herds shake things into place. Mary Sue and Clyde (aka Lucky Culprit) met through our stint with Neigh Savers, fell madly in love and have been on their own herd journey for two years or so, now. Clyde is 7, over 17 hands and sometimes a handful but Mary Sue has done a great job training him. He bunked next to Calabar for a while but I have no real way of knowing if they remember each other, let alone liked each other. That's okay. They figure that stuff out quickly, it seems.

We started out with Mary Sue walking Clyde and following along after Steve and me riding Lena and Calabar. That worked pretty well. Clyde could be sure that we weren't heading into the maw of death because the two older horses in front of him were unconcerned by dogs, strollers, small children and strange people. The challenge arose when Mary Sue mounted up and the lead position bounced back and forth between the horses. All three like to be in front at least some of the time. Calabar prefers to control the speed of the race, Lena just likes to dance up there in front of the herd and Clyde, well, Clyde thinks he wants to be in charge. Until that scary thing happens. Then no. Nope. Time for someone else to do that. That wasn't as bad, however, as being behind and separated from the other two by some known-only-to-horses measure of TOO FAR distance filled with a crowd of people. You'd think this would mean we could walk side by side and everyone would be happy, right? Wrong. The old grumpy racehorse (Calabar) does not like youngsters too close to him and there were definite instances of pinned ears and warnings.

There's a joke among horse people about how fast two horses can bond—just one short trailer ride will do it. This is how horses are wired. As long as everyone clearly understands where they fit in the herd, everything will be just fine. Just try and stay out of the middle with your puny human reflexes and you'll be fine.

Jessica Boyd lives in Sonoma County and blogs with some regularity about her herd and horse adventures at Spotty Horse News (spottyhorse.blogspot.com). You can reach Jessica (and Lena and Calabar) at spottyhorse@gmail.com.



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Readers Write

Wings

by JoDean Nicolette

I am on the gray horse. The one who is the color of the moon, whose mane flows like a waterfall between my fingers. The one who likes to fly. Today he wears his wings, reaching for the next jump as if his hooves will never hit the sandy ground. The sun shines on my cheeks and the wind sways the branches of the ancient oaks surrounding the arena. On this ride we have four legs not six, my calves fused with his sides, pulsing gently with each stride, my shoulders squared with his, relaxed and straight. My knees are steady but loose and I adapt my two-point position fluidly as he drops from the canter to the trot.

Then my trainer says, "Okay, ask for the canter again now." And the breath stops in my chest. My shoulders tense. My eyes shift downward, forcing the weight out of my heels and forward into my knees. The gray horse shifts onto the forehand, too, and the magic is gone.

The thing is, I don't *ask* for the canter.

He canters, the gray horse with wings, but only when he offers it. Like when we land and he "canters off," with my encouragement and a smile on both our faces. Or when he rocks back and I feel "the ask" in his back, and I am feeling more confident than usual so I don't squeeze a little half-halt to say no. But when we're trotting, we trot a solid trot. Steady. Forward. I never nudge with my heel, rock my hips, and kiss. It scares me; what if the gray horse leaves the ground? Or more likely, what if I end up off balance and the gray horse leaps sideways twisting in the air, as he sometimes does, in response to his pasture buddies thundering by, or the bulldozer, or a butterfly. Or his shadow. Then I am flying too, but with only my two legs, and no wings.

Ideally, a rider learns to jump when she is fifteen, not fifty, when the ground is a forgiving obstacle, a trampoline really, from which to bounce on to the next adventure. And ideally, a rider jumps with a horse she planned to jump with, not a rescue horse who was really "fos-pice." And who in fact survived, growing into an athletic beast in desperate need of regular work. A horse who views trail riding



Photo: Marcie Lewis

with the disdain and neurosis of a valley-girl. And of course the nature-hating gray horse, faced with such less-than-ideal circumstances—meaning an unfortunately mature and daft rider, unable to discern the horse's natural predilections—would be forced to declare his intentions by hurling himself over logs and ground poles while the rider stares. Her eyes wide and mouth agape.

But on this day, we are together, trotting our solid trot. The gray horse is with me. I mean really with me, responding to my thoughts, and graciously ignoring my clumsy hands and feet. Our breath flows in sync, rhythmic and relaxed. He is like this in our jump lessons, connected and calm. "Dead broke and sweet as pie," I heard an old cowboy say once, around the cigarette hanging from his lips.

So I think, *why not?* And rounding the south fence, I inhale and hitch up my big-girl pants, nudge with my heel, rock my hips, and kiss. The gray horse is surprised

by the request, running into the canter and disrupting my balance. But then we are there, moving together. And I feel like a little girl on a rocking horse, wind in my hair and dreams coming true. Tears well and I worry what people will think watching this big, little girl on her oversized pony as they lope past, a smile on both their faces.

But it's the cows watching, not people. The Holsteins in the pasture next door. And they think running looks fun, picking up their lurching and awkward lollop, which becomes a gentle stampede across the grass. The black and white is just a blur to me as the gray horse leaps sideways and twists in the air, launching me into flight with just my two legs and no wings. When I open my eyes, I see the sky and the sun and the ancient oaks swaying gently in the breeze. Sand scrapes against skin inside my breeches as I try out my legs, and slides out of my helmet. A soft muzzle brushes my face, and two brown eyes appear over me, confused about my position on the ground.

And so I climb back on the gray horse who is the color of the moon, my fingers grasping his waterfall mane. And we trot off along the fence under the sun and the ancient oaks, while I measure my breath and find the courage to ask for the canter again.

JoDean is former editor of the Horse Journal. Her nonfiction publications have appeared in The Sun, Sugared Water, and The Maine Review. "Wings" is an abbreviated piece from her collection of stories about horses and life.



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Readers Write

Creatively Preventing Undesirable Behavior in Horses

by Lisa Lombardi



All grins—Lisa's lesson horse Pat and student Becky Shapley.

Nothing is more upsetting than seeing a frustrated human arguing with, getting angry at, and yelling at a horse for being a horse and acting like a horse. This is detrimental to building a respectful, positive relationship with our equine partners. One great aspect of horsemanship is that it gives us ample opportunities to be detectives and use our creativity to solve problems. How can we get our horses to want to do what we want them to do? The following is a list of ten horse behaviors we humans may consider "bad," with possible solutions to each. How can we use our imagination to turn these situations into non issues?

1. Not picking up feet

- Run your hand from the horse's neck all the way down to the horse's hoof so the horse is not surprised and has time to adjust its weight.
- Use a lead rope to ask the horse to shift weight off the foot he is being asked to pick up.
- Clean the feet in the same order each time so the horse knows what to expect.

2. Nipping

- Create your own personal space bubble.
- Do not feed treats by hand.
- Do not play with the horse's lips.

3. Pawing while tied

- Lunge or exercise the horse before tying him up.
- Tie the horse near a buddy.
- Tie the horse where he cannot get caught on the edge of a mat or dig a hole, and ignore the pawing.

4. Pulling back while tied

- Use a tie blocker
- Have someone hold the lead rope instead of tying
- Ground tie the horse in a safe enclosed area
- Build a temporary pen if away from the barn for longer periods of time

5. Cinchy/Girthy

- Check pads and saddle for proper fit.
- Very slowly tighten the cinch/girth in small increments.
- Use a soft, fluffy cinch/girth with no metal hardware against the horse

6. Chewing on things

- Provide a toy.
- Provide a larger living space that allows the horse to run.
- Allow the horse to live with a companion horse.

7. Not liking grooming

- Try different tools to see what the horse prefers
- Be mindful of the amount of pressure used. Too soft may tickle. Too hard may hurt.
- Exercise the horse first so he can relax and be more settled.

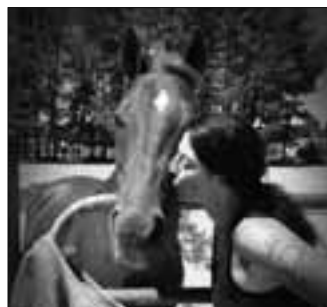
8. Resisting bridling

- Stay up to date on dental exams.
- Coat the bit with molasses.
- Make sure the bit fits properly and is comfortable.
- Use a bitless bridle.

9. Difficult to deworm

- Occasionally administer syringe filled with apple sauce.
- Mix dewormer in horse's favorite food.
- Feed pelleted dewormer.

10. Fill in the blank.



Dawn Hernandez giving Lisa's lesson horse, Rowdy, a little love.

What does your horse do that you prefer he not do? Is there a creative way to turn the undesired behavior into a non-issue? As horse owners, it is our responsibility to find ways to strengthen our bond with our horses by consciously developing an atmosphere in which the horses genuinely want to work with us.

Lisa Lombardi is an SRJC equine science 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 8 horses. www.clovertenthirty.com.

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Readers Write

Sharing a Life with Horses

By Laura Baker and Lily Baker-Lubin

Dear Lily,

Nearly 28 years ago, you and I embarked upon a shared life journey, pursuing our love of horses. You were 7 and I was 42, but we were both beginners, setting foot on a path that would deepen our relationship from being daughter and mother to true partners, as the world of horses opened before us.

We started with a year of mucking stalls and grooming the lesson horses at the barn where we rode, and on the drive home eagerly compared notes about each horse. When it was clear that we both loved the work and barn life, you got your first horse, Roxy, a sweet and seasoned Appaloosa mare who was your fulltime responsibility. A year later I bought Cat, a gentle giant who patiently packed me around. In those early years, we were learning to ride and care for the horses, but we were also searching for something more in our relationship with them.

A deeper understanding of horses unfolded gradually like a grand mystery. Whether we were riding together, working in the round pen, or just talking about them for hours, we were trying to grasp how to achieve true unity with our horses, as Tom Dorrance would call it. What began as a desire to get closer to horses became a more refined understanding of how to become partners with them.

Meanwhile, you grew up. I'll never forget the joyful astonishment I felt the day that you used your professional sports psychology insights to help me overcome my jitters in riding a particular horse, by helping me understand attentional focus.

We have journeyed to this place where a life with horses taps into our deepest desires: to be good to horses by respecting their intrinsic natures, to have fun with them, to bring out their best by being our best. These have been rich formative years that have taught me so much about myself, and about you, and also created an unbreakable bond between us. You are now a grown woman of whom I am very proud. As I look back over the years, I see so clearly how, even as I was raising you, this shared experience helped raise me, too. I am so grateful.

Love,
Mom

Laura served on the Board of the East Bay Chapter of the California Dressage Society as Education Chair. Her goal was to broaden learning opportunities for members to enrich their understanding of their horses.



Laura Baker and Lily Baker-Lubin

Dear Mom,

I feel so fortunate that when I was bitten by the horse bug you saw opportunity rather than a crisis of expenses, an opportunity for me to experience how to develop a strong work ethic by working hard for my dream. And I understand now that you shoveled manure right next to me because you were chasing your dream too. We began our horse relationship together by learning what it was like to work for horses simply for the love of horses. To this day I truly appreciate the hard work of caring for horses as necessary to provide the best life for them; riding is simply the bonus.

Sharing horses gave me the opportunity to learn about you as a woman, not just as my mother. I was privy to your discoveries, challenges, and heartaches as you pursued riding. You weren't afraid to let me see you fall — the takeaway was that riding is sometimes hard, it takes resilience and resourcefulness, and the tough times are

the best times to learn.

Our 'think tank' talks next to the round pen helped me observe horses carefully: I began to see the links between a horse's behavior, its performance, and how to study the interaction of movement with behavior. On the way home we eagerly debriefed, and I realized that even when I wasn't at the barn, I was thinking deeply about each day's experience, which I could use to inform the next day's work or simply to enlarge my understanding.

While we shared our journeys together, we respected and supported each other's individuality. I fell in love with jumping; you were smitten by dressage. During my angst-ridden teen years, horses gave us a common ground that also supported important space and individual growth. When I eventually discovered dressage for myself, you didn't say I told you so (though I know you were secretly thrilled) but instead listened to my own take on how to develop myself as an athlete in the sport.

Today as I write this, I realize how much we have built and experienced together based on our shared love of horses. Our common denominator has created an enduring forum for discussion and growth as horsewomen. It has provided life lessons and illuminated our values. Most of all it has given us time and space to express love for our horses and for each other.

Love,
Lily

Lily Baker-Lubin is an avid equestrian and competitive athlete. She holds an MS in Kinesiology among other advanced education credentials. Lily directs Top Training, a comprehensive performance enhancement program and is the Pilates Program Development Director for Body Kinetics in Novato.

Sonoma County Equestrian Events—Spring 2016

Sat, March 26	9am Gates	SW Barrel Race @ Sonoma County Fairgrounds	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sat, April 2		CGA Gymkhana (rental)	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sat, April 9	11am	Trail Ride @ TShiloh Regional Park	sebastopolwranglers.com
Tues, April 12	6:15pm	The Sport Horse Course Circle Oak Equine, Petaluma	circleoakequine.com
Sat/Sun, April 16-17		Chris Ellsworth Horsemanship Clinic NCEFT, Woodside, CA	chrisellsworthhorsemanship.com
Sun, April 17	11am - 3pm	Cloverleaf Ranch Open House Tours, swimming, horse rides, lunch & more! (rain cancels)	cloverleaf ranch.com
Sat/Sun, April 23-24		Chris Ellsworth Horsemanship Clinic Rawking Horse Ranch, Briones, CA	chrisellsworthhorsemanship.com
Sat, April 23	9am Gates	SW Barrel Race @ Sonoma County Fairgrounds	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sun, May 1	9am	Sue Curry Dressage Clinic / Wine Country Arabian Horse Assoc Fairwind Farm 707-321-7060	winecountryarabians@comcast.net
Sat, May 7	11am	Trail Ride @ Hood Mountain	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sun, May 15	11am - 3pm	Cloverleaf Ranch Open House (rain cancels) Tours, swimming, horse rides, lunch & more! (rain cancels)	cloverleaf ranch.com
Sat/Sun, May 21-22	9 - Noon	Horse Ground Handling Skills – Joyce Torrigino Lisa Lombardi Shone Farm – SSRJC	shonefarm.com/equestrian/
Sat/Sun, May 21-22		CGA Gymkhana (rental)	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sun, May 22		SW Spring Poker Ride @ TBD	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sat, June 11		SW Barrel Race @ the Arena	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sat, June 12	11am	SW Trail Ride @ Jack London Park	sebastopolwranglers.com
Sat/Sun, June 25-26	1pm	Russian River Rodeo - 50th Anniversary! Duncans Mills	russianriverrodeo.org

Please submit events for the next issue to Horse Journal Editor, Patrice Doyle - editor@sonomacountyhorsecouncil.org

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Hitting the Training Trail

Winter is the season for learning new skills and sharpening those already acquired. Groups around the state are setting goals high for enhanced emergency preparedness and education. We are always searching for ways to increase our knowledge and network of experts in the field of large animal emergency response.

Recently, HALTER attended several important educational events:

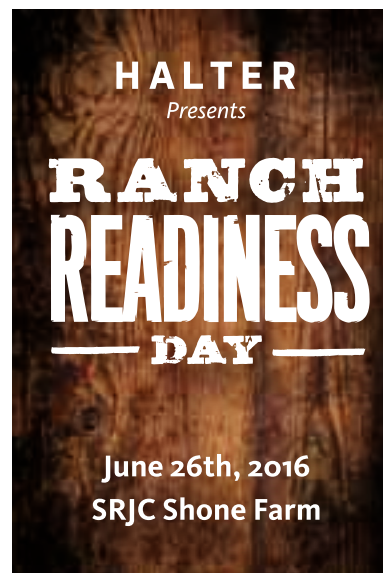
On January 7, the UCD SVM FARM Club produced their annual Beef Improvement Symposium. This year, 2 of our favorite veterinarian-educators were part of an impressive program. Dr. Mike Payne, who is both a large animal vet and firefighter, gave a highly entertaining and informative presentation. First, he walked us through trailering safety considerations from the firefighter perspective. Next, we watched a film of a fire sweeping through a foothill ranch, and saw just how a strike team defends property. Eye-opening!! Last, Dr. Payne, a dairy cattle expert, shared a video of a local cow being rescued from a well by firefighters, assisted by UCD vets. Later in the day, Dr. Eric Davis and SVM VET students demonstrated a variety of large animal rescue equipment and techniques. In between, lots of great presentations. A yummy carnitas lunch break allowed for some good networking with other ranchers and vets from around the state. A great event by the student FARM Club!

The next weekend, Jan. 16-17, was the first winter FSTEP-Operational Large Animal Rescue training. Taught by the nationally-renowned LAR Company, and hosted by the Glen Ellen Fire Department and Atwood Ranch, a capacity roster of 23 firefighters and other qualified students studied at tabletop sessions, then drilled in 6 field exercises. Heavy rains made the "rescues" highly realistic. The scenarios, which utilize life-size "Rescue Randy" mannequins, simulate a wide variety of common road, ranch, and trail emergencies. The team-building and certification skills gained at these trainings are providing the framework for large animal rescue services to be available around the North Bay.

Next stop: Oroville, for the North Valley Disaster Group (NVADG). Volunteer Training over Jan 23 & 24. This elite group deploys to local, national, and international emergencies to help animal rescue efforts. The Awareness Training covers every basic aspect of volunteer emergency and disaster response involvement, enabling members to decide which roles are the best fit for their abilities and time. This was an exhaustive and exhilarating 2 days. We met more than 100 people, from all over the state, who ranged from Animal Control and Law Enforcement officers, to firefighters, vets, trauma therapists, communications specialists and wildlife rehabbers. A truly humbling and gratifying weekend! To volunteer or donate, go to www.nvadg.org

Back in the North Bay, on Jan 30, local hero, Captain Cindy Machado of the Marin County Humane Society guided Marin and Sonoma CERT members in an Advanced Animal Disaster Training. Captain Machado is one of the most respected and experienced Animal Services officers in the state, and has deployed in management roles to many disasters, most recently, the Valley Fire. A great opportunity to connect and train with more than 70 local CERT volunteers. To get involved, go to ReadyMarin.org

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