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take one  
& pass it  
around!

Where there are rivers,  
There are valleys,  
There are horses,  
And...

All Breeds,  
All Disciplines,  
All the Time!

May 2012

# The Valley Equestrian Newspaper

Your resource for equestrian news, events and information

## FROM ND TO CARNEGIE HALL:

A CA Woman's Passion for  
Horses, Music and Art!

### Inside This Issue:

- Horse in a Box by Faye Rudsenske
- Expo Photo Redo
- Wild Country Review by Ronda Anderson



# Northern Minnesota Celebrates Spring Northland Horse Fair



An impressive crowd turned out for the 7th Annual Northland Horse Fair on March 31 at the Mariner Mall in Superior, WI. Diamond Royal Tack again hosted this popular event.

Clinicians presenting included Peter Sylvester from the MN Farriers Association. Sylvester demonstrated how to care for and trim hooves for balance, how to get a nice clean sole making sure the frog is in good shape and filing the outside edge to safeguard against chipping.

Dale Myler of Myler Bits provided an indepth seminar on bits. There was a 4H used tack sale, and hat shaping by Jim Shaykett of Stetson Hats.

Tom Tweeten of EquiScentials Horse Care Products spoke about using the grooming process to bond and communicate with your horse.

The mini pictured is a trained therapy horse and makes visits to nursing homes; the tennis shoes she wears are mandatory; the mini is also potty trained.



## Cowboy/Cowgirl Gathering, Expo, Hay, Tack and Equipment Auction

The Hinckley area turned out in droves for the Cowboy/Cowgirl Gathering Expo and Hay, Tack and Equipment Auction March 31 at the Hinckley, MN Community Center. Outside the center the hay and equipment auction was held. Inside, vendors booths included JSI Industries, Western Wishes, Dirt

Floor Arena, 1st Class Work Embroidery and more.

Attendees could visit vendors while watching and participating or bidding on items that come to the auction block.

Organizer Randy Isham said, "The event went well; we've seen nice activity at our

event and at other horse events and I've seen a lot of activity online whether it's buying, selling or just a lot 'horse talk'. I think the warm winter has helped plus some improve-

ment in the economy has helped. "Next year's date is going to be back to the second Saturday in March." Steve Sikkink and Isham organize this annual event.



## COWBOY POETRY WITH ORV

### LITTLE JEAN'S ICE CREAM DREAM

#### ECONOMIC THEORY LICKED

A family bought a small village store. They had to learn what 'supply' laws were for. Young Jean thought she's loose in a candy store. She'd fill an ice cream cone & pile on more. She was in her glory. She'd make them smile. A man said, "Haven't bought a cone in a while." It seems that her plan at that village store Was to get patrons to come back for more.

#### SUNDAYS, SUNDAES & PROFITS FROZEN

Fun trips on frozen lakes with clamp-on skates Gave winter pleasure in the northern states. Christmas brought frozen lutefisk barrels And sleigh bells, bob-sleds and Christmas carols. Guessing the impersonator's, "Ho, Ho, Ho" And peeking under gift-wrap was a no-no. Horses were tethered there in days of yore. Snowplows cleared country roads to the Home Store.

#### SWEET REWARDS

Many hours of looking out the windows As snowflakes swirled and the icy wind blows. The family awaited bells on the doors As young Jean willingly did minor chores. Jean thoroughly enjoyed the 'ice cream perks' Despite truck delays and delivery quirks. The 'star' of the show at the small town store Enticed dessert shoppers to come back for more.

#### LACKING A LICK OF SENSE?

While her mother patiently watched in shock; She planned to have a parent-daughter talk! Jean bubbled and giggled and tossed her curls, Here was the ICE-CREAM-DREAM of little girls. Another customer bought a 'tall' cone And she would thank them with a sugary tone. A wonderful day at that village store; She wanted patrons to come back for more.

#### PROFITS & PROPHETS & YOUTH

Mom discussed "costing more" with little Jean Than payments received, if you know what I mean. The economic theory was confusing Conflicting with the theory Jean was using. "Mom, your theory could be right, as long As it doesn't make my theory wrong. I'm having so much fun in the home store I'm wanting them all to come back for more!"

Orv Alvshere © Copyright & published 1996 in "QUOTE THIS" Editors Choice Award (1 of 33) recorded on CD, "Sound of Poetry"



## The Oldest Horse

**The Valley Equestrian Newspaper loves older horses! Tell us about yours!**

**Send a photo and description (short or long) of your old horse (age 25 or 30+) for publication in an upcoming issue of the Valley Equestrian Newspaper.**

**Email: thevenews@gmail.com or mail a photo (with stamped returned envelope) to: The VEN, PO Box 64, Sabin, MN 56580**

# Charles Wilhelm: Ultimate Foundation Training from Start to Finish

## The Best Exercise to Do When You Don't Have Much Time

In the training program at the ranch, we never, ever ride a horse without first starting with a bit of ground work. Even the most well trained horse can have an off day and my staff and I always take the time to check what the horse's physical, mental and emotional states are prior to riding. This also helps us see what the horse's level of resistance may be. These exercises are great for this evaluation, along with really focusing on the fundamentals for

Once the forward movement is solid in both directions, you can begin to work on getting the horse to move his hips over. This requires that the horse have a nice bend to his body. Imagine a ten-foot circle with the horse's nose, shoulder and hind legs aligned on the arc of the circle with yourself in the center. If you do not have the bend and the shoulder is stepping inside the circle, you will not be able to get the hips to move over. When you the horse has a nice bend, you are

are moving freely, continue backing him until he softens at the pole (between the first vertebrae and the axis) with his chin down towards his chest. Again, another great gymnastic exercise that builds the hindquarters and topline.

What this set of exercises gives us is suppleness, an obedient horse and the tools to start solid ground manners, along with help to instill a good work ethic in the horse. These lessons also establish you as the leader because you are controlling your horse's

As I said earlier, this is the one set of exercises we do on every horse every time we ride. We may need only to spend a couple of minutes on it, or maybe up to a half hour, but no matter what - we will go through this routine to ensure we have an attentive, responsive, supple and respectful horse.

*Charles Wilhelm is internationally known as America's most respected horse trainer. His unique approach to horse training enables horse owners to train their own horses.*



your horse. Whether you do this before a ride or as the only thing you do with your horse, it's a great way to spend training time.

Begin with concentrated circles. To do this correctly, you will stand in the same spot and pivot as the horse moves around you. We need to teach the horse to go forward consistently and to keep our body position such that the horse is nicely bending around us. If you want to start with a left circle, your left hand should be on the lead line, three to six inches from the snap of the halter. Unless your horse is already very soft, I recommend a cowboy or string halter and a twelve foot lead. Begin with a pre-cue. Cluck or kiss, whatever you want your "go forward" sound to be, every time. Then, if there is no movement, your cue to move forward is the left hip bone. I use a dressage whip with the popper removed. I tap the point of the hip until the horse moves forward. Stop tapping the moment the horse moves forward to release the pressure. I also bring my hand with the whip down to fully release the pressure, since even holding a whip up in the air represents pressure to some horses. You may need to do this several times until the horse walks forward consistently. You will get better results from tapping firmly once or twice rather repeatedly tapping lightly. Use as much pressure as you need to get the desired reaction but nothing more. You can use less and less as the horse understands the lesson and becomes lighter and more responsive. Over time, your horse will respond to your pre-cue and you will not need to tap at all. Make sure the horse is moving to the left with nice energy, a "go some-place" kind of walk. The horse should start to bend around you as it learns to give to the pressure of the halter. This is also a good beginning lesson to teach a horse to go over obstacles and to trailer load. This exercise encourages the horse bend and is supple throughout the body in addition to going forward whenever you ask. What is also good about this exercise is that it is also gymnastic work as well.

teaching the horse to engage his hindquarters. Here again, we have a gymnastic exercise which physically develops the hindquarters and topline, which also enhances suppleness and is teaching the horse to stop his feet.

Once the horse is moving in the left circle with the bend in his body and without showing any resistance, move the hips over by bringing your left hand toward the horse's left hip, looking for the hip to move away. Maintain the contact until you get at least one step. Even if the horse takes only one step, release the pressure. Get the horse moving again in the same direction and continue the exercise until the horse immediately swings his hip once you move the line toward his hip. The eventual goal is that the horse will turn on the forehand on the ground, which has a great carry over into the saddle.

The final part of the lesson is backing. To do this, get the horse moving forward with nice energy, again he should be consistently soft with a nice bend. Pickup the line to move his hips over and once he does, release the pressure, pause and then ask him to back up by making contact with the lead rope toward the horse's nose. Once you get at least one step backwards, release. Then begin again, repeating the circle, moving the hips over and asking for the backup. As the horse responds better, you can begin to ask for two steps backward and then three and more. Your goal is twenty to thirty steps backward, with your horse so smooth that he looks like he is moving on roller blades. Once his feet



space. The number one principle with horses is that space equals leadership.

Some horses can learn this in a very short time, two to three hours. Others may take weeks depending on how much baggage they may have, how naturally willing they are and of course, how consistent you are with your timing and feel on the release when you see the horse is giving.

In any case, when you only have ten, twenty or thirty minutes to spend with your horse, this is a great way to use the time. Even if your horse is completely finished and knows the lesson, this is wonderful maintenance work - it really cements the basics well for the physical, mental and emotional aspects of every horse.

*Charles is the creator of Ultimate Foundation Training; equine training techniques that combine the best of traditional, classical and natural horsemanship into a methodology that is applicable to every riding discipline. His extensive background of over thirty-five-years of training includes Dressage, Working Cow Horse, Reining, Western Pleasure and Trail class. He is one of the few clinicians of our time who is known for his superb skills in communicating and motivating people as well as his astounding natural abilities with the horse. He believes that "It's Never, Ever the Horse's Fault" and his training methods reflect that belief. Charles is one of the few trainers specializing in re-schooling horses with often-severe issues*

IT'S NEVER, EVER THE HORSE'S FAULT

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## About the Cover

*Doreen Irwin is an incredibly talented woman. I met her and became fascinated with her story at last year's "Art in the Barn," an annual exhibit of her work in one of her barns at her ranch in Elverta, CA. I learned how her love for horses inspired a life of hard work, starting at a very young age, to earn the money to keep her horses. Along the way, Irwin journaled her experiences; some of her entries are a part of this month's feature story, on page 10.*

*Irwin's strong work ethic served her well, as you will learn in the article. Not only did she paint Rodrigo Pessoa, meet him and present the painting to him, but she also directs a choir which will perform at Carnegie Hall over Memorial Weekend. She is indeed a multi-faceted woman!*

*Pictured left is Rodrigo Pessoa, Gold Medal Olympic winner and three-time World Cup Champion, Doreen Irwin and her oil painting commissioned by Pessoa by Irwin.*

Ley Bouchard, Editor



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### Editorial Information

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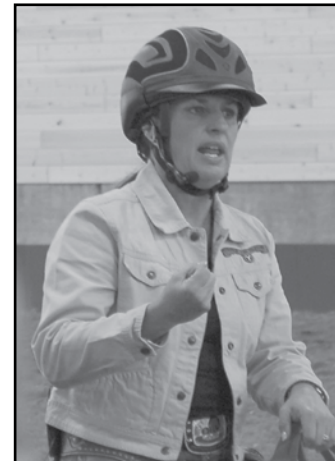
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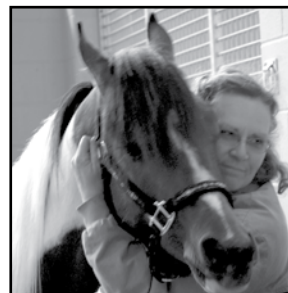
Errors: The Valley Equestrian Newspaper shall be responsible for errors or omissions in connection with an advertisement to the extent of the space covered by the error.



13 Cavallo Equestrian Arts impressed the audience with vaulting and acrobatics off the back of their Norwegian/Percheron, Rocko.



Left: Julie Goodnight keeps the crowd laughing during her clinic in St. Paul, Minn. Friday, April 27. Below: Jennifer Hicks hugs True Impression-more on page 13.



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## Horse-racing Entertainment Comes Through Local Kiosks

Horse racing in North Dakota has taken on a new entertainment level, introduced and managed for the first time through Internet-linked kiosks.

Approved by the North Dakota Racing Commission, MTPBets USA, Inc., recently installed self-betting kiosks for horse-racing telecasts in 10 business establishments throughout south-western North Dakota. The goal is to set up additional venues as businesses with technology capabilities are identified.

"This is a brand new self-service betting system being set up in the U.S.," said Garry Saundh, president and CEO of CSC Global Technologies, parent company of MTPBets.

"On January 6th, North Dakota made history when the very first e-kiosk in the U.S. went live in Mandan," he said.

Safe and secure wagering is done through self-serve kiosks using the ProPlay system for experts and QuickPlay system for novices on world-wide horse-racing events. The races are

channeled live on television screens through satellite dishes at each North Dakota business. Bets can be made by cash and credit cards, and accounts are established by the customer with a valid North Dakota driver's license. Winnings are paid by cash or as credits to the customer's account.

Gaming revenue is shared with the North Dakota businesses using the system. A small percentage is also contributed to two non-profit charitable organizations--the Fort Abraham Lincoln Foundation and the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame.

Self-service kiosks are now available at The Depot, Steele; Captain Freddy's and Lonesome Dove, Mandan; Best Western Doublewood, Bismarck; Paragon Bowl & Grill, Dickinson; Lone Wolf, Center; No Name Bar, South Heart; Boots Bar & Grill, Medora; and City Bar, Watford City.

Contact: Garry Saundh, gsaundh@mtpbets.com

*Good Luck to Everyone  
 Showing This Season!*



*The Oldest Horse: Miss Bar Renown*

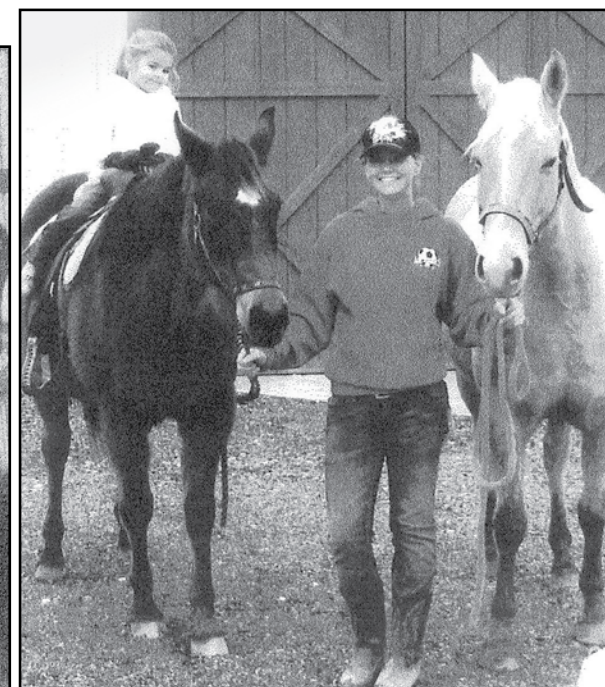
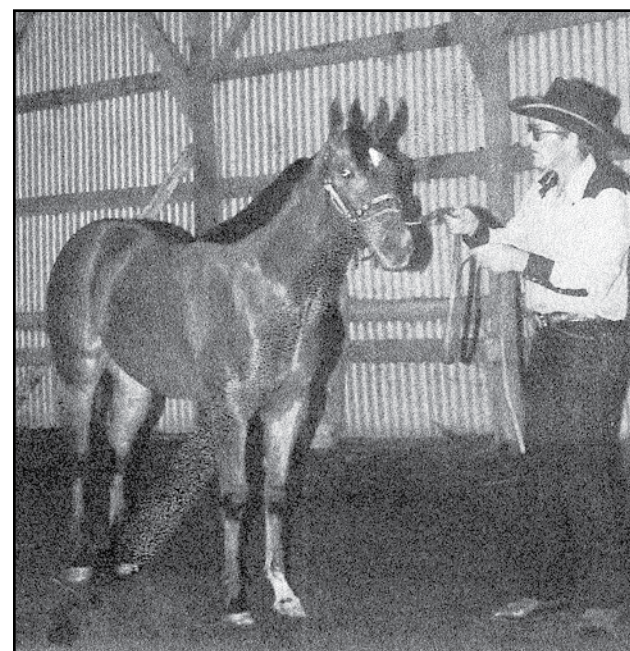
Missy, a bay filly, was purchased at two months old in July 1980. In November, when she was weaned, we picked her up at the Ortman Ranch in Canistota, S.D. Her registered name is Miss Bar Renown.

Mayock, N.C., where the horses are enjoyed by our daughter and our granddaughter. At 32 years old, she is in good condition.

George and Marge Speer  
 Leyroy, Minn.

Our son, Corey, showed her in 4-H, open shows and trail rides during his teen years. Upon graduation, he joined the Navy in July 1987. For the next years the mare was used as an extra horse; every other year she raised a foal. Corey continues in the Navy. In 2005 he took Missy and her last colt, Goldie, to

Below left: 1981 yearling Miss Bar Renown: Sire: Redemption by the Redeemer; Dam: granddaughter of 3 Bars (Bar Nun)  
 Bottom right: Photo 2011 at 31 years-old, the Missy and her last colt with our daughter and granddaughter.



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# AHC Issues Forum to Focus on Reinvigorating the Horse Industry

The American Horse Council has announced that the theme for this year's National Issues Forum is "Reinvigorating the Horse Industry."

This year's National Issues Forum will be held on Tuesday, June 26, in Washington, DC during the AHC's annual meeting. The annual meeting will run from June 24 to 27 at the Washington Court Hotel and will include the AHC's Congressional Reception, the annual Congressional Ride-In, and sessions on federal advocacy. This year's meeting will also include the AHC's Breed Roundtable, a popular event that brings together leaders of horse associations to discuss common issues of importance to the industry.

The AHC's various committees and the Unwanted Horse Coalition will also meet to discuss issues affecting the equine community.

Over the last few years the number of horses bred and overall participation in equine activities has declined. Clearly, a major factor is the downturn in the economy; but there is a growing concern in the industry that the long-standing connection between horses and people is at risk for additional reasons. Many organizations are looking at how they can get more people active with horses, attract more participants and spectators to their events, and restore the demand for horse ownership by growing the horse community.

"Several national organizations have undertaken marketing initiatives to reinvigorate the industry. They are addressing what can be done to bring back those who may have left and attract new people. The Forum is an opportunity to hear from those organizations attacking this problem and to hear what they are doing," said AHC president Jay Hickey.



The Forum will also include presentations on the evolving changes in federal advocacy. "Advances in technology and social media and how constituents can contact their federal officials have affected grassroots activities. What other groups are doing and what kind of success they have had in mobilizing their members with new technologies will be addressed," said AHC Director of Legislation Ben Pendergrass. Regardless of the method, grassroots activities are important to success in Washington and at the state and local level. Speakers will address these advocacy issues at the Forum.

The AHC will be hosting its Breed Roundtable. This event was brought back last year and proved so popular that it will be done again. It allows leaders of horse organizations involved in various disciplines to visit with each other and discuss issues of common concern.

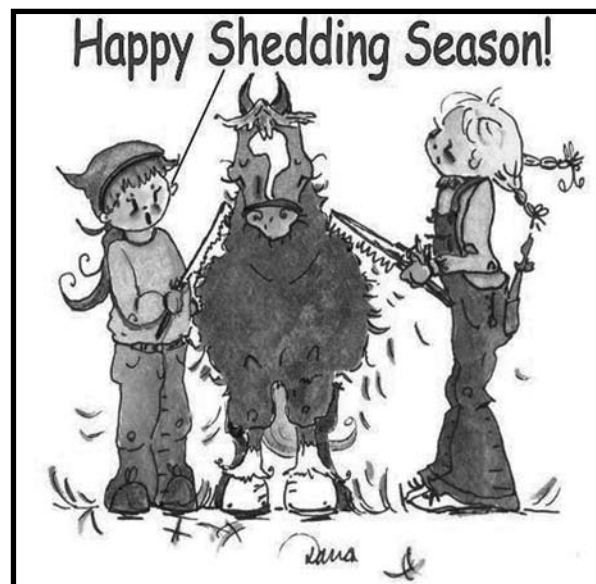
The annual Congressional Ride-In will take place on Wednesday, June 27. The Ride-In allows members of the horse community to meet with their elected representatives and their federal officials to discuss important issues affecting them. All members of the horse community are encouraged to participate, even if you don't attend the AHC convention. Congress deals with many issues that impact the horse industry, including taxes, gaming, immigration, access to trails and public lands, diseases, and interstate and international movement of horses. This is an opportunity for the horse community to come to Washington in force and meet with their Senators, Representatives, and staffs.

"The Ride-In puts an individual face on the \$102 billion horse industry and the millions of Americans who are part of it," said Hickey. "The most effective way to affect Congress is through voters, the horse people from back home who can tell Congress first-hand about the horse industry in their states and districts and the issues that impact them."

The AHC will conduct a free briefing for Ride-In participants. Anyone wishing to participate in

the Ride-In should contact AHC Legislative Director Ben Pendergrass at bpendergrass@horsecouncil.org or 202-296-4031.

More information on these Forums and the entire AHC annual meeting, including registration and hotel information can be found on the AHC's website, <http://horsecouncil.org/events.php> or by contacting the AHC.



# Horse in a Box

by Faye Rudsenske

Having owned horses for more than 40 years, one pretty much encounters a vast repertoire of experiences. None quite blew my mind like the one below.

In a previous article, I wrote about the one-eyed Mini mare that had been purchased as a companion for our Mini stud since she was unable to have any more foals. Not only did the "barren mare" companionship thing not work out, but it thrust us headlong into the Mini business. In an attempt to "retire" (or maybe we were just tired), we decided the logical thing was to sell the mares thereby removing the temptation of one more sweet little bundle of fluff that worked its way into your heart.



The brief advertisement described the mare, her qualities and her "handicap" of course. She was also listed as a companion only. The phone rang off the hook. Since all of our horse buyers are screened and chosen for their aptitude, horse-keeping knowledge and ability to care for these animals, we chose a potential buyer based on her phone interview. She answered all my questions correctly and assured me that they had the perfect home for her. Relieved that we had found the "perfect" person, we scheduled a day for her to pick up the mare.

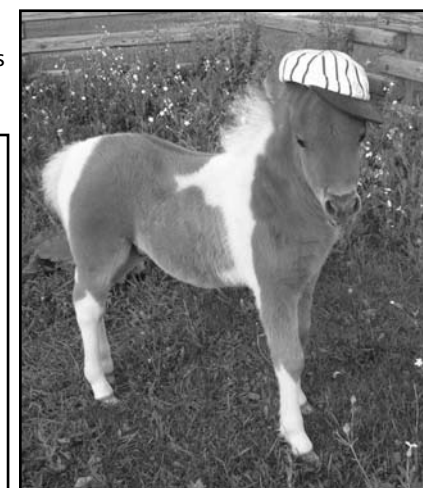
It was a dreary, cloudy, fall Saturday when she arrived with a new, shiny black truck, but no trailer. In the truck box was a big cardboard box strapped down with a couple of bungee cords. At first I really didn't give it a thought. Apparently she wanted to see the mare first and if they hit it off she would re-

turn with a horse trailer. Oh, no, that was not the case. She wanted the mare, but informed me that we could load her in the back of the truck and put her in the cardboard box.

I am sure my eyes were bugging out of my head by this time and for a person not long on patience, I asked her how she thought we could load this Mini into the high pickup bed. Quick on the uptake, she pointed to a pile of pea rock in our yard. She could back the truck up to the pile, and she would walk right in.

I'm sure my face was hot and flushed by now although I rightly don't remember exactly. Again in a patient (and internal teeth gnashing) diplomatic voice, I calmly told her the box wasn't big enough. She was a B size 38-inch Mini and maybe weighed 350-400 lbs. The woman was certainly the Comeback Kid. She triumphantly informed me that we could just put her in the box diagonally! To this day, I really don't know what kept me in check. I am proud to say, I went to get a tape measure and showed her the mare could not physically fit into that space even diagonally. I also explained that horses move around; they do not stand in one position for a 90-mile ride on the interstate. If the mare got scared (the box was totally enclosed and dark) and panicked, chaos would ensue. At one point she expressed that perhaps a hole could be cut so she could stick her head out! The expression on my face must have warned her as she hurriedly backed on that idea.

Regardless of whether



the mare would have fit in that box or not, no horse of mine would have stepped foot in it. Nope, it just wasn't going to happen on my watch.

The woman then frostily informed me that she had hauled two other Minis this same way just a couple of weeks earlier. I could feel a heart attack coming on so I informed her nicely and logically (patiently again) that she was NOT going to haul any Mini of mine in the back of her truck in a cardboard box 90 miles down the interstate. Against my better judgment, as I was now beginning to doubt if I had made a vast misjudgment of character, I took pity on her and told her if she would pay for the gas I would haul the mare in my horse trailer. This was the year of \$4/gallon prices in 2007, and I was practically giving the Mini away in exchange for the "perfect" home.

The woman's face was ashen (I thought she was going to pass out), and she was practically whimpering as she told me her husband wouldn't allow her to rent a trailer and drive back or pay any more money. Sadly, I have seen similar reactions from women who are physically abused. I kindly told her that I simply could not allow her to haul the horse in that manner and that it was dangerous not only to the horse, but to her and other motorists. What if it started to rain? It was overcast and cool, and I could easily have seen a wet box evaporate around a one eyed Mini mare that wouldn't take too kindly to the whole situation. I apologized that she had driven that distance and shuddered to think how fooled I had been by our interview. If

her husband had any questions, he could call me, I told her, and oh, how I hoped he would! She left and I often wondered about her and hoped that she fared better at home.

A couple of weeks later, I found the "perfect" home for the Mini mare with a young couple from eastern Wisconsin that drove 250 miles one way to visit the mare FIRST and returned the following weekend to pick her up WITH a horse trailer in tow. The "type of transportation" question is now on my interview list. "Oh, by the way, you don't plan on picking this horse up in a cardboard box, do you?"

I also informed the new owners that while I didn't think she was in foal, as I had never put her together with the stud, I had noticed one morning that the pair seemed awfully cozy through the pipe fencing. If it's possible, the



stud had a particular gleam in his eye that I didn't quite trust. Guess I was just a bit suspicious based on previous experience. Well, you guessed right. I guess where there is a will, there is a way. Next spring, the

one-eyed Mini mare delivered a healthy, red and white, bouncing baby boy that her new owner named Shazam. I received dozens and dozens of photographs of the two on a weekly basis for a couple of years and still get occasional updates. That's what I call a "perfect" home.

*Ride upon the Black Horse  
as power courses through her veins  
For the Black Horse  
shares a wisdom that only those  
whose intentions are pure  
may be able to gain*

*Anon*

*Friesian  
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**OUR THANKS TO THE BALD EAGLE FAMILY FOR THEIR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WEEKEND.**

## Windcross Conservancy Hosts 2nd Annual Lakota Village Experience Near Buffalo Gap, SD

By Jane Greenwood

**I**n the Black Hills of South Dakota a hundred years ago, it was common place to see a Lakota village. Much of the Lakota culture, dress, customs and especially their horses have been lost to the giant melting pot known as America. The early days of those Native Americans have caught the imagination of countless numbers of people ever since, not the least of which are those talented men and women who recreate history through their paintings and works of art. In May, a gathering will take place here in the Black Hills at Windcross Spanish Mustang Conservan-

cy located in Buffalo Gap, South Dakota. From the 18th through the 20th artists from across the country will be able to see an actual Lakota Village reconstructed on the hills of the Windcross Preserve. Over 20 members of a Lakota family, men, women and children, are participating in this event wearing traditional dress, carrying out activities once practiced regularly in their villages. The event is closed to the public, with only the artists and Lakota models participating.

Windcross President and Preserve Manager, Lucia Roda, expressed her gratitude to the

Lakota families participating in the event, saying that it honors not only their history and culture but also the horses that were so much a part of their lives. The fact that many of the horses involved will be horses from the Preserve makes it that much more authentic for the artists and the Native Americans alike. Windcross Conservancy maintains a ranch for the foundation Spanish Mustang, the horse that settled America. Often confused with the horses managed by the BLM, or those feral horses managed by "mustang" organizations, the horses of Windcross Conservancy are horses with a known history from breeders across the country, horses that are from the foundations of the Spanish Horse

found here in America. The Spanish Horse first came to this country with the Conquistadors, but soon they were the mounts of not only the Indians but also many Pony Express riders. Texas cow-ponies carried the blood of these first horses.

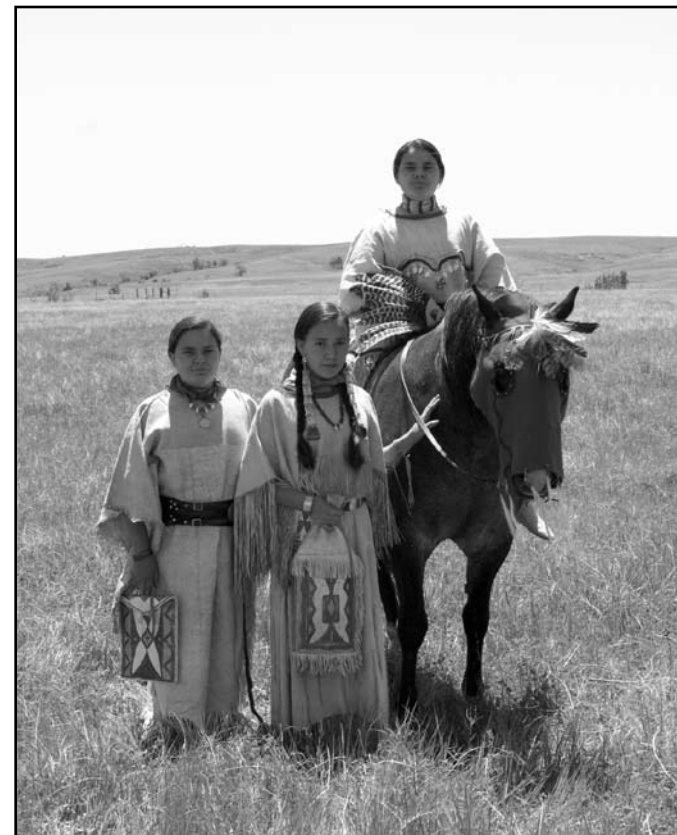
Spring will be a busy time for the Windcross Conservancy. Not only will it be hosting the Artists' Event but it will be home for several interns who are traveling from Europe to learn about the rare breed, the Spanish Mustang, from the ground up. The interns will work on the Preserve doing many of the daily jobs: cleaning pens, checking fencing, the herds and working with the horses themselves, from the yearlings to the more mature animals. Also, though still in the planning stages, are group sessions working with the horses with veterans, all of whom suffer some sort of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Equine

Therapy has proven to be very effective for many of those who struggle with PTSD. The U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs estimates that Post Traumatic Stress Disorder may affect as many as one-quarter of the men and women returning from recent wars in the Middle East.

The Windcross Conservancy Preserve is a 501C-3 non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of this rare breed of horse that has contributed so much to this country. For more information or to make a donation please go to [www.windcrossconservancy.org](http://www.windcrossconservancy.org).

*Photos of Native Americans by Lucia Roda*

*Dog Soldier photo by Shelby Roda*





# From North Dakota to Carnegie Hall: A CA Woman's Passion for Horses, Art and Music

By Ley Bouchard, Editor

Many little girls wish they had a horse. I know I did. As a child I would have done nearly anything for a horse, though it did not occur to me to go to the lengths Doreen Irwin did to get herself a horse. That spirit of determination led Irwin to her passionate pursuit of horses, art and music.

As a young girl, Irwin kept a detailed journal that included scrapbook items. She looks back fondly on it after more than 60 years. "I did keep two scrapbooks from the olden days, one about my Jersey calf, Butternut, and one about my first horse, Red. I have to say that it was interesting for me to read my 10-year-old thoughts and concerns from a long time ago. I gathered parts of tails and mane, hair from a dirty white leg, blood samples on an old piece of cloth, a torn number from a first horse show, drawings and old photos. All of these items are still in the scrapbooks ... from 1950."



Above: An oil painting by Doreen Irwin of Rodrigo Pessoa, a Gold Medal Olympic winner and three-time World Cup Champion riding HH Let's Fly. Right: Doreen Irwin, 12, with her growing bull calf, Butternut. Below: A page from 11-year-old Irwin's journal about her calf, Butternut, the expenses and profits from his sale.

Irwin remembers: "Life was so different when I grew up. If I wanted anything, I would not have thought of asking my parents for it. They struggled to make a living. I had to be a very young entrepreneur to make anything happen. I don't think my parents noticed what I was doing as long as I did well in school, did my work at home and didn't cause any problems. Saying that, I have to say that I

by entries in her journal – simply because he was her horse.

Next, Irwin wanted a saddle to ride Red. She found a way to buy it. "I bought my first calf as a ranching project so I could afford to buy a saddle for my precious horse," Irwin recounts. She bought Butternut for \$10 at a local livestock auction, and her father's friend drove to the auction to pick up the calf and bring him home in his pickup truck. "I kept careful records of what I fed him, the exact costs and all of the details about his progress. We lived along a freeway which had a truck weigh station nearby. Once a month I led the calf over to the weigh station and asked the workers to weigh him for me. The gentlemen were very nice to me and accommodated my requests in a very serious manner. I laugh now when I think about it. I don't think this would be a possibility today. I cried when I sold the calf to a meat-packing company, but also commented [in my journal] that he was getting mean. He was an 11-month-old Jersey Bull. I noted all the costs and what he sold for. I did buy a saddle."

One successful venture led to another and gave the young girl confidence to keep pursuing her dream. "I eventually

made small payments on other horses. My mom helped me on the side, knowing how horse-crazy I was. I believe she thought it was a good investment to keep me busy during my early teen years.

"I ended up with a registered mare that I wanted to breed. At that time, I decided to ask the stallion owner if I could do a painting of her stallion in exchange for the breeding. I ended up doing this several times ... bartering artwork for whatever I might need.

"Growing up, I lived in the state of Washington where the grass is plentiful. In order to feed my horses – I had collected a few! – I had to have hay. I would go to the rural neighbors and ask if I could cut and bale [hay from] their fields. They would say yes or no. In the end, I had several acres of hay baled. None of the landowners contacted my parents.

They thought nothing of dealing with me, then a very young teen. I also hired the folks who cut and baled the hay; I traded hay to the helpers who got the hay into a borrowed barn. I don't know how this all happened, but it did. I remember worrying several different summers about the hay in the fields and hoping it wouldn't rain on my hay.

"Over the years, I taught myself to ride quite well. A neighbor hauled us to horse shows. I won many ribbons barrel racing, pole bending and racing on local tracks. People would ask me to ride their horses. I raised and trained several horses and started selling them.

"I also taught myself to draw and paint. My first paints were enamel, which I got from my parents out of paint cans. I didn't know you could buy oil paints until I was able to use some at my high school.

"There was no money for riding lessons or art lessons. I just did my best because I loved horses and art. On the other hand, my parents were crazy about music and did give me piano lessons."

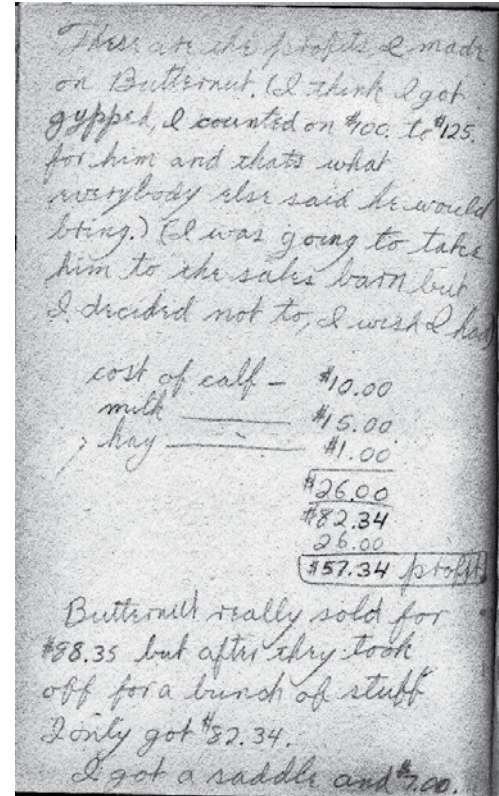
Irwin earned a bachelor's and a master's degree in music education from the University of Portland, Oregon, and has been teaching music, art, English and drama for 36 years. "I earned my way by drawing furniture for a furniture store. The ads were in weekly newspaper ads. I continued to do commercial artwork even after I became a high school music teacher. I worked very hard at that and became a professional musician as a choral director, voice and piano teacher at Sacramento City College. I have to say, it has been a wonderful profession, enhanced by my other two passions – horses and art.

"I now have my own 40-acre boarding ranch in Elverta, California. I switched from Western to English riding many years ago. We raise beautiful warm-blood babies for Hunter/Jumper, eventing or dressage. I often judge horse shows, English or Western, in northern California.

"Each year, I have a very big solo art show in our large barn. It is called 'Art in the Barn.'" In this exhibit, the barn is cleaned out, the alleyways and stalls are prepared and Irwin's original paintings and framed prints are displayed. Wine and appetizers are served; it is a social event.

"I taught myself to paint just by doing it. I have always felt confident since I can draw well. I have used watercolors, acrylics and oils. I prefer oils, especially for painting horses. I can bring out their color and shiny coats the best with oils. I have done several commissions for pet and horse owners, and have also painted several human portraits."

Continued on the next page



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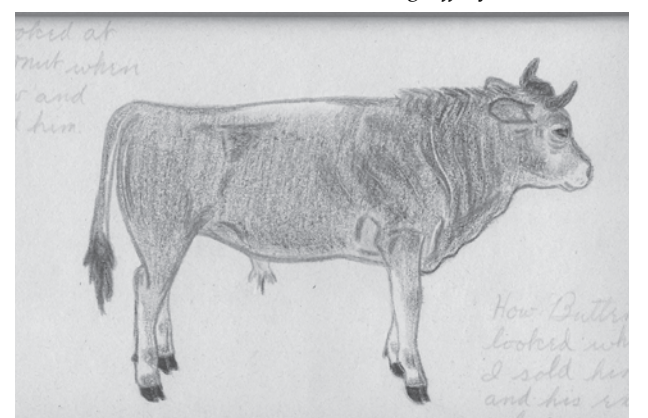
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Cooling Off by Doreen Irwin



A sketch, by 10-year-old Irwin, of "Butternut," the bull calf Irwin bought and raised to earn money for a saddle and tack.

One such project was commissioned by equestrian Rodrigo Pessoa, a Gold Medal Olympic winner and three-time World Cup Champion, whom Irwin met at his first U.S. clinic, in Sonoma, California, last summer. "I spoke to him after the clinic," she recalls, "and showed him some of my artwork, which I had on a postcard. He contacted me the following week and sent me a picture of his great show jumper, HH Let's Fly. I painted him and the horse as they are 'flying' beautifully over a water jump. "I delivered the painting to him in Florida. He loved it ... said it was 'magnificent' and [that he would take] it with him to Belgium to place in his own home. He travels between Belgium and Florida with his horses in order to compete in both countries, and all over the world. He is in Florida for the winter months. While there, he took my daughter and [me] on a tour of the lovely barns. His complex is called 'Double H Farms.' The facility was spectacular and right across the street from The Wellington Equestrian Center in Wellington, Florida.

"I am very pleased to have painted a picture for such an accomplished equestrian as Rodrigo Pessoa. On his website, he has our picture up and a comment about the painting."

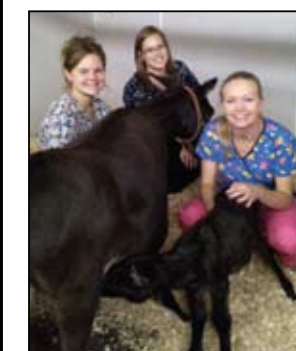
Doreen Irwin has taken her college choir to 17 different countries, including several in Europe and South America, as well as Australia. She will be directing her Sacramento City College Choir at Carnegie Hall on May 27, 2012.

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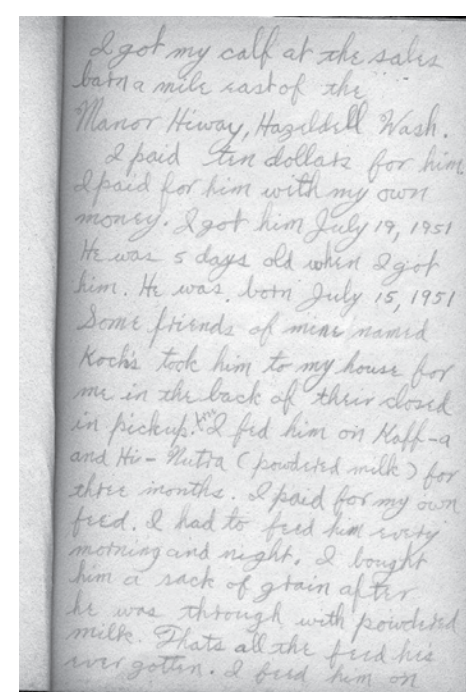
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Above: Ron Alex of Mesa, AZ was reading the NFR coverage in the Valley Equestrian Newspaper in the Las Vegas Airport in February while inroute home. His grandson, Derick Begay, is a team roping header and also participated in the NFR in December in Vegas.



## New Report on Human Health Risks From Consumption of American Horse Meat: Horses Not Raised for Food Receive Medications Banned by FDA and the European Union

The Humane Society of the United States issued a report detailing the food safety risks associated with consuming meat that originates in American horses. Horses in the U.S. are primarily used for companionship or competition, therefore they are not treated in the same way as animals raised for human consumption. Horses are commonly given pharmaceuticals that have been banned for use in food-producing animals by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office.

"The slaughter of American horses poses a potentially serious health risk to human consumers, yet tens of thousands are still slaughtered for their meat," said Dr. Michael Greger, director of public health and animal agriculture at the HSUS. "New measures put in place in the European Union to address this risk are vital steps to ensure horses who are regularly given phenylbutazone and other EU-banned substances are kept out of the slaughter pipeline."

Americans don't eat horses, but each year more than 100,000 U.S. horses are transported over the border to be slaughtered in Canada and Mexico, and the meat is exported for consumption in the European Union and Japan. Indeed, research shows that horses originating in the U.S. comprise a large percentage of the total slaughter-

house output of Canada and Mexico. The EU has found horsemeat from Mexican slaughterhouses contains harmful residues of several EU prohibited substances. A study of the medical records of race horses sent to slaughter shows that horses with a history of phenylbutazone use are making their way to slaughter plants despite the United States' and other countries' ban of the use of the drug in food producing animals. Phenylbutazone, commonly called "bute," is an anti-inflammatory regularly given to horses, and it is known to be hazardous to humans, even in trace amounts.

In 2010, the European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office evaluated food safety standards for imported horsemeat and found that many countries do not keep adequate veterinary pharmaceutical records nor are there systems in place to differentiate those equines raised for human consumption from those that are not. Therefore, effective July 2013, the EU will require that all horses presented for slaughter at EU-certified plants in countries which export horsemeat to the EU have a veterinary record listing all medications they have been given over their lifetime. This new regulation would render nearly all American horses ineligible for foreign slaughter.

The Humane Society of the United States and Front Range Equine Rescue have filed

legal petitions with both the FDA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to block companion, working and show horses from being slaughtered for human consumption, due to the associated health risks. The petition documents more than 110 examples of drugs and other substances which are, or potentially should be, prohibited in food-producing horses, describes the horrible way in which horses die at slaughterhouses, and outlines the environmental devastation that has been associated with slaughter plants. View the full white paper: [http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/farm/report\\_food\\_safety\\_horse\\_slaughter.pdf](http://www.humanesociety.org/assets/pdfs/farm/report_food_safety_horse_slaughter.pdf).

Horse Slaughter Facts

- Even though horses are not currently slaughtered for human consumption in the U.S., our horses are still being subjected to intense suffering and abuse through transport and slaughter over the border. Undercover footage shows live horses being dragged, whipped, and crammed into trucks in with interior temperatures reaching 110 degrees. Horses are often shipped for more than 24 hours at a time without food, water, or rest. Pregnant mares, foals, injured horses, and even blind horses must endure the journey.
- In November 2011, Congress chose not to renew a prohibition on spending tax dollars to facilitate horse slaughter, which had been in place for five years, potentially opening the

door for a return of horse slaughter plants on American soil, despite broad opposition in this country to the practice. USDA documented a history of abuse and cruelty at the U.S. plants, including employees whipping horses in the face, horses giving birth on the killing floors, and horses arriving with gruesome injuries.

- It is not only horses who are old, sick and infirm which fall victim to horse slaughter. USDA statistics show that 92 percent of all horses sent to slaughter arrive in "good" condition—meaning they are sound, in good health and could go on to lead productive lives.
- Horse slaughter actually prevents horse rescue; rescue operators are routinely outbid by killer buyers at auctions.
- The operation of horse slaughterhouses has a negative environmental impact. All three of the last domestic plants to close were in violation of local environmental laws related to the disposal of blood and other waste materials.
- Congress is considering the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, S. 1176 introduced by Sens. Mary Landrieu, D-La., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and H.R. 2966 introduced by Reps. Dan Burton, R-Ind., and Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., to prevent horse slaughter plants from opening in the U.S. and stop the export of American horses for the purpose of slaughter in Canada and Mexico.

## MN Horse Expo Highlights

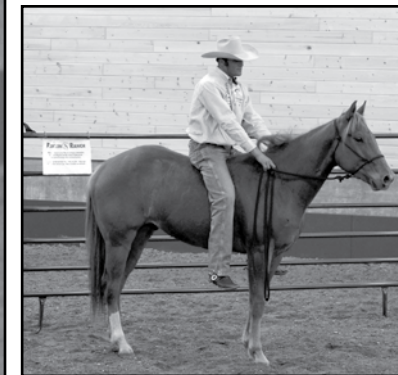
One can predict the weather by the MN Horse Expo on the State Fairgrounds in St. Paul this year held April 27-29. Even with the unseasonably warm weather this spring, Expo brought the cold and rain. It did not daunt expo-goers who donned layers as they traversed the buildings heated and unheated to see the array of vendors, exhibitors, clinicians, presenters and, of course, horses.

The days brought the teachings of Julie

Goodnight, June Savoie, Bob Janssen, Colleen Kelly, Larry Whitesell, Jennifer Bauer, Tammy Whyte, and many more, along with a discussion and book signing by Kate Chenery Tweedy, daughter of Secretariat owner, Penny Chenery.

The 2012 Expo was highlighted by the official dedication of a new building, the AgStar Arena, located where the Judging Arena previously stood. The new building is a 27,000 square-foot with a 15,000 square-foot arena; multiple entrances for animals, equipment and people, wood paneled interior, bleachers along one long side overlooking the arena, wash racks, portable stalls, and enhanced lighting. A noticeable improvement was a sound system that was clearly understandable. The MN Horse Council donated \$100,000 toward the construction of this new facility.

Article and Photos by Ley Bouchard



Top to bottom: Julie Goodnight speaks about "The Natural Ride"; Trey Young sits atop Cowboy, a colt he started 30 minutes before; Kettle Moraine Rough Rider Drill Team performs a drill; the Cavallo Equestrian Arts demonstrate acrobatic acts. In this photo, Ermes is runner and Gino does an aerial somersault all in the new AgStar Arena at the St. Paul, MN, Fairgrounds Friday, April 27, for the MN Horse Expo.



## Golden Eagle Hunt Seat Team Closes Out Season at Zone Finals

(Crookston, Minn.)- The University of Minnesota, Crookston Hunt Seat Equestrian team took part in the Intercollegiate Horse Show (IHSA) Zone Finals in Marion, Ind. on Sunday, May 1. The Golden Eagles put forth a stellar effort but saw their season come to an end.

With the ten best riders in each individual class, Angela Peterson (Jr, Detroit Lakes, Minn.), Annalee Sundin (So, Deer River, Minn.) and Samantha Kramer (Fr, Corcoran, Minn.) battled to place in the top two. Zone 7 encompasses all of the colleges in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Angela Peterson, competing in Novice Equitation Over Fences, had a good draw and a strong ride placing third and just missing a

spot at nationals. She came in behind Purdue and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Both teams moved forward on to the National Championships. Annalee Sundin had a stellar Walk Trot round but disappointingly came in fourth. Samantha Kramer, taking part in her first-ever Zone Finals, came in eighth overall.

"All three athletes put in 100% out there," says Golden Eagle Head Coach Brooke Leininger. "I'm very pleased with how they rode and how they represented UMC against the top teams in Zone 7."

For more information, visit the Golden Eagle Athletics Web site at [www.goldeneaglesports.com](http://www.goldeneaglesports.com).

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UM-C Athletics.

The University of Minnesota, Crookston is an NCAA Division II Institution and a member of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC). The Golden Eagle Equestrian team is a member of the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA).

(Left to Right) - Samantha Kramer, Coach Brooke Leininger, Angela Peterson, Annalee Sundin



## Graburn Produces Wire-to-Wire Victory to Claim Second USEF National Single Horse Championship

Raeford, NC -The USEF National Single Horse Championship concluded Sunday afternoon at the Carolina Horse Park, with the cones phase shaking up the final standings. Time faults and balls down proved extremely costly for competitors all day at the Southern Pines CDE, which hosted the USEF National Championship. Sterling Graburn seized the lead in the Single Horse during Friday's dressage and refused to relent over Richard Nicoll's challenging marathon and cones courses to produce a wire-



Sterling Graburn claims his second USEF National Championship (Picsofyou.com) to-wire victory.

Graburn (Georgetown, KY) held his nerve and drove a determined, confident cones phase on the Twin Gates Farm Derby Field to claim his second USEF National Champion title. Driving Larry Denny's Ulano, Graburn added three faults for a knock down and just .43 time penalties over Sunday's course to complete on a score of 119.76.

"It's always better to be double clear. I had one mistake that cost me the time fault and one ball down but he drove really well. I felt really good coming into today's cones." Graburn reflected on today's performance.

His focus, like many other National Championship competitors, now is on the 2012 Singles World Driving Championships to be held in Lezirias, Portugal September 12-16. The Southern Pines CDE also served as a Selection Trial for these World Championships.

"He (Ulano) has been steadily progressing. I thought we would peak at this show and we did. We will keep on practicing and hopefully will end up on the top of the World game in Portugal."

Donna Crookston collected second place honors with her own RG Cowboys Black Cadillac on the strength of a magnificent fault-free cones round for an overall score of 129.82. Sara Schmitt and her own Kaboom finished in third place with a score of 130.30.

For competitor information, times and results visit: <http://drivingnewsusa.com/results/results2012/SouthernPines/>

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**May 5th - Cowboy Up Kick-off at the Dilworth, MN VFW**  
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# Events for May and Beyond

Call before you haul -- contact information is included in each event listed.

May 4-6: CDE (Combined Driving Event) Camp, Three G Farms, Ames, IA; jada@midwest-driving.com

Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

www.aeefargo.org

May 4-6: Race for the Roses at Red Horse Ranch in Fergus Falls, MN; http://redhorserancharena.com/events

June 2: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

June 24: FM Mounted Posse show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, N.D., http://www.fmmountedposse.com

May 5: Cowboy Up Kickoff Pulled Pork Feed, Silent Auction, Dance at the Dilworth, MN VFW; http://www.gventertainment.org/cowboyup/

June 2: Draft Horse Hitch Show (Noon), New Virginia, IA and Harness, Hitching, and Driving Clinics (9AM-11:30AM), www.iowadrafthorse.com

June 24: MayPort Arena Family Fun Play-day at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

May 6: St. Croix Riders Fuzzy Wuzzy Fun Show at 8 a.m. at the St. Croix Riders Arena in Baldwin, WI with a non-WSCA judge; call 715-781-1110 for more information.

June 2 & 3 - Wild Rice River Shootout, Twin Valley Rides Club Arena, Twin Valley, MN; more info at www.wildricepeacemakers.com.

June 29: Barrel Racing Series, Single-Run Campout at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

May 10-13: Wadena Area Spring Quarter Horse Show at Red Horse Ranch Arena in Fergus Falls, MN; http://redhorserancharena.com/events

June 3: Sheyenne Valley Team Penning at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

June 29: Cowboy Up Ride Against Cancer Golf Tournament at the Leonard Country Club; http://www.gventertainment.org/cowboyup/

May 11-13: Northwoods Harness Club Driving Clinic with Suzy Stafford in Hertel hosted by the Northwoods Harness Club contact: Contact Candy Hankins kess@cheqnet.net

June 6: Opening night of racing at the Running Aces Harness Park in Columbus, MN. Racing continues

June 30: Barrel Racing Series, Double Run at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn at 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

May 7- 8: Whips & Wheels Prairie Home Carriage Festival, Farmington MN Dakota Co. Fairgrounds. Steve Crownover 612-759-4111.

four nights a week (Tues., Wed., Sat., and Sun) through Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 3

June 30: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

May 15: NWECA Driving show at Hayward Arena Contact Julie Dahlberg 715-378-2383

June 9: FM Mounted Posse show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, N.D., www.fmmountedposse.com  
June 10: Barrel Racing Series, Double Run at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

July 4-5: Montana State Fair Appaloosa Show in Great Falls, MT

May 20: Triple "C" Open Horse Show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo; www.triplec4h.com

June 16: Jackpot Roping Series at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

July 7: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

May 25-27: ND Quarter Horse Association show at Red Horse Ranch Arena in Fergus Falls, MN; http://redhorserancharena.com/events

June 16: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

July 9-21: National Appaloosa Show in Tulsa, OK www.appaloosa.com

May 26: FM Mounted Posse show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, N.D., http://www.fmmountedposse.com

June 16: Cowboy Up Ride Against Cancer 3rd Annual Cruising for the Cure Motorcycle Run; http://www.gventertainment.org/cowboyup/

July 15: FM Mounted Posse show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, N.D., http://www.fmmountedposse.com

May 27: AEER Hunter/Jumper show at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds, West Fargo, ND. www.aeefargo.org

June 17: Sheyenne Valley Team Penning at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact Janet Meyer 701-430-0969 or Alan Eichhorn 701-430-6860 or visit the Facebook page. "MayPort Arena Association GROUP"

July 28 & 29 - Lynn Hanson Memorial Day Shoot, Marshall County Fairgrounds Arena, Warren, MN; more information at www.

May 28: English & Western Dressage show at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds, West Fargo, ND. www.aeefargo.org

June 18: Cowboy Up Ride Against Cancer Burger Night at 5:30 p.m. at the Moorhead American Legion; http://www.gventertainment.org/cowboyup/


Memorial Day Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Medora, N.D.

June 23-24: Tenth Annual Skunk River Driving Trial, Three G Farms, IA; jada@midwest-driving.com

May 31-June 3: North Central Reining Horse Association at Red Horse Ranch Arena in Fergus Falls, MN; http://redhorserancharena.com/events

June 23:24 AEER Hunter/Jumper and English/Western Dressage show at the Red Horse Ranch outdoor arena in Fergus Falls, Minn..

June 2: Barrel Racing Series, Double Run at the MayPort Arena in Portland, ND; contact



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July 31-Aug. 4: Canadian National Appaloosa Show in Brandon MB www.appaloosa.ca

Aug. 2: Equine Heritage Fun Show; www.wrightcountyfair.com

Aug. 4-5: Montana State Fair Appaloosa Show in Great Falls, MT

Aug. 4&5: FM Mounted Posse show at 9 a.m. at the Red River Valley Fairgrounds in West Fargo, N.D., www.fmmountedposse.com

Aug. 4: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

Aug. 18: Cowboy Way Church Horse Haven Arena Barrels and Poles Finals at Hartford, SD; www.sdhorsefair.com

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# Review: Wide Country on DVD

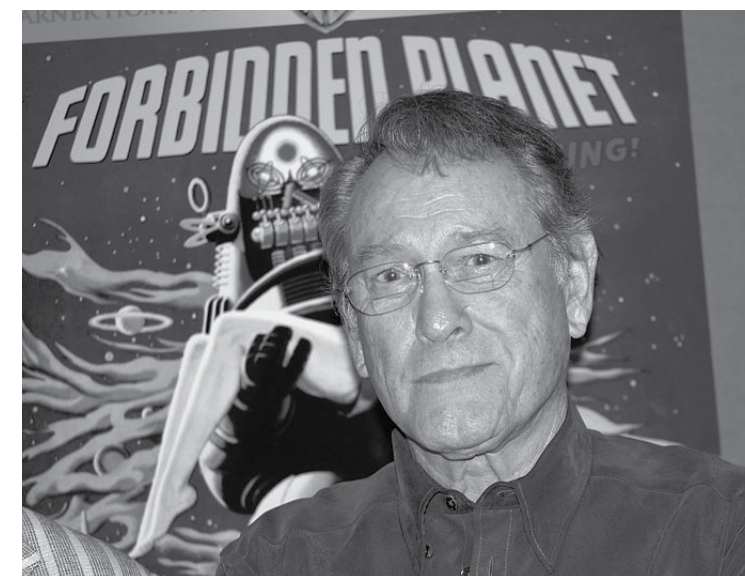
By Ronda Anderson

A great surprise last fall was the release to DVD of the 1962-1963 rodeo series "Wide Country" starring the nicely conformed Earl Holliman at just the right age to play the veteran - but still competitive - rough-stock rider and three-time World Champion All-Around Cowboy Mitch Guthrie.

Although angular co-star Andrew Prine may not be totally believable as a sibling to Holliman-as-Mitch, the two actors became friends and shared some chemistry, working well together in cute scenes or contentious ones.

A couple of the slower episodes involve brothers Mitch and Andy Guthrie mired down in small-town politics, but there's generally enough action at the rodeo grounds, or enough side trips, to keep it entertaining.

crossbred, and many do have some degree of Brahma blood, but they're probably never purebred, or referred to by the pros as Brahmas - just plain ol' bulls. The writers redeemed themselves by throwing in many colorful lines like "It's obvious to anybody if I ever stepped into the ring with this guy, he'd stomp a mud-hole in me," about Bruce Yarnell's heavyweight-boxer character in "The Lucky Punch." Another cute line to a bragging Texan character in "The Quest of Jacob Blaufus": "My daddy used to tell me there wasn't nothing sadder than a deflated Texan." Then there's Kathryn Hays' character, Lila Nevers, in "The Girl from Nob Hill," asking Mitch Guthrie while dancing in his arms, "Do you think I'm nice?" Mitch: "Well, I wouldn't throw rocks at you." Although Holliman's Mitch Guthrie is mostly played as an unsophisticated, ranch-raised, simple cowboy, a bit of Earl's natural sensuality sneaks through in this episode. Watch for a scene at the piano bench, with Lila asking Mitch, "I saw you talking to my father; was he warning you about me?" Mitch replies, "He wasn't too clear; something about you being a big-city girl, and me being an innocent cowboy," with a smirk that suggests a distinct lack of innocence!



There's even some dancing and romancing on occasional for us female fans.

The writers were obviously tenderfoot types, constantly referring to the bovine bucking stock as "Brahmas." It's probably safe to say that most, or all, rodeo bulls are

the shiny black is, he gallops over a lot of rough ground as Santanis, a wild thing pursued by broken-down bronc-buster Johnny Prewitt (Victor Jory), with some help from the stars, of course.

One of my favorite screenplays was based on a story by actual rodeo competitor and semi-regular character Slim Pickens; an installment called "Speckle Bird," co-starring Slim's talented Appaloosa gelding, Dear John. John could jump like a deer; he and Slim were sidekicks and comic relief in 11 '50s-era Rex Allen westerns such as Down Laredo Way and Colorado Sundown. Besides snatching saddle blankets off his own back as green easterner Gregory Peck tried to saddle him in The Big Country, or sitting on his haunches like a dog, Dear John's most in-demand talent was the ability to buck on cue - though he was sensible and kind enough to walk around the corral and give bareback rides to little girls, without being led. In addition to the necessary bucking scenes, he could serve as a normal saddle horse, "as long as you don't scratch him," to quote Mitch Guthrie.

Earl was no stranger to horseback, having paid his dues in the saddle like most other actors of the '50s and '60s. He looks very much at home, confident, and balanced on Dear John.

The extras on this set are hidden on the last disc and include the inspiration for the series, an episode of Alcoa Premiere titled "Second Chance," introduced on camera by host Fred Astaire. "Second Chance" starred Holliman and Prine also, along with Cliff Robertson and Jacquie Scott, Earl's most frequent on-screen wife (in Gunsmoke, Disney's Smoke and others). Roger Mobley, already a veteran of the Fury series, played their son, and appeared again in a Wide Country episode. Along with "Second Chance," July 2011 interviews feature both

Andrew Prine and Earl Holliman talking about the show, as well as their lives and careers in general.

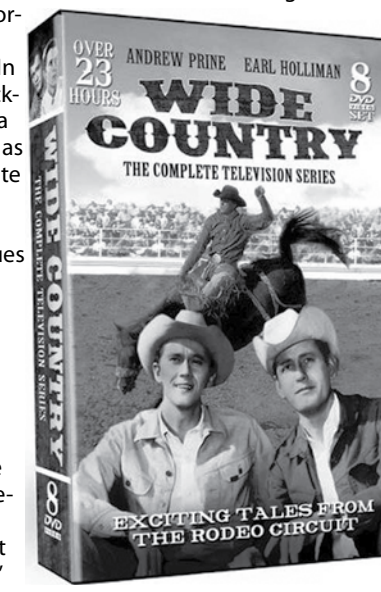
"It was a good show," says Holliman from a seat next to the piano in his living room. "I'm proud of it; it should have gone longer." I agree - it's a fun show; it's just too bad the strange hit-and-miss Nielsen ratings measurement of the day didn't give it more seasons.

The well-traveled Guthrie brothers were joined on the rodeo circuit by recognizable guest-stars in virtually every episode, with backgrounds in vaudeville, Broadway and opera stages, as well as many notable appearances on screens big and small. Most went on to much continued success in their various pursuits, and of course, both Andy and Earl had long careers and built such a lengthy list of stage film, and TV appearances that it makes me tired just to look at all that work!

Wide Country can be found on amazon.com and other DVD outlets. Now I've got to find some of those Rex Allen movies co-starring "miracle horse of the movies," Koko, with Slim and Dear John.

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Ronda Anderson is a country/farm girl who's been attracted to animals in general, and horses in particular, since she was old enough to remember. She retired in Aug 2011 with almost 21 years total military service including Navy, Army Nat. Guard, and Air Nat. Guard, and is back in the Mora, MN area since 2008 where much of her family has lived off and on for 3 generations. Writing, photography, and model-horse/animal collecting have been some of her main hobbies for many years.

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# From the Horse's Mouth: Industry News

## (MIS)USE OF THE BODY CONDITION SCORING SYSTEM FOR HORSES

Over the past year, cases of alleged horse neglect have skyrocketed across the United States. I have been contacted by people from California to Maryland, from Minnesota to Texas, and from New York to Arizona. This phenomenon has reached epidemic proportions. Minnesota alone reportedly investigated almost 400 cases in 2011. Most of these can be attributed to the down economy and the drought making it difficult for horse owners to feed their horses like they would like to feed them. Therefore, we are seeing a lot more horses in below average body condition. That does not make every thin horse a neglected or abused horse.

Over the past decade, the Body Condition Scoring System for Horses (BCS) has become, in many if not most cases, the sole reason for seizure for neglect or abuse. The problem with this is that the BCS was not designed to reflect the health or well-being of the horse. The BCS provides an estimate of stored body fat, period. From a physiological standpoint, as long as a horse has any fat reserves and is receiving a diet that meets its daily maintenance requirements, that horse can be healthy.

For example, The Minimum Standards of Horse Care in the State of California (2011) arbitrarily indicates that any horse with a BCS of less than 3 does not meet the minimum standard. By definition, a BCS 3 horse still has reserves of body fat. Once a horse gets below a BCS 3, then reserves are low. However, the health of the horse is only in jeopardy if it is breaking down non-fat tissue to provide for its basic energy needs. The BCS cannot measure this function.

Breakdown of non-adipose tissue for energy can be evaluated through blood analysis focusing on liver and kidney function, and the breakdown of structural tissue for energy. Blood urea nitrogen, creatinine, and the ratio of blood urea nitrogen level to creatinine level are indicators of tissue breakdown. Analysis for hematocrit, serum concentrations of total protein solids, sodium, calcium, potassium, triglycerides, bilirubin, and albumin will also provide information concerning malnutrition and starvation. None of these tests are accurate on their own. However, evaluation of matching trends from the analysis can help confirm or disprove that the horse is nutritionally deprived.

In addition, the presence, or absence, of other physical indicators of inadequate energy intake should be used to evaluate alleged neglect. Energy deprived horses will be lethargic. Their reaction to stimuli will be depressed. They will usually show signs of dehydration: tacky gums, "tenting" of skin on the neck, concentrated urine with a very strong odor, and decreased fecal output. Coprophagy, the consumption of feces, is usually very pronounced in energy deprived horses, especially those kept in groups. Since energy deprivation is usually accompanied by protein deficits, the hair coat will dull and shaggy. It is imperative that a low BCS score be supported by other clinical signs of starvation to indicate nutritional neglect.

The presence, or absence, of feed and hay on the premises is an excellent indicator of the ability of the owner to meet the nutritional needs of their horses. If adequate feed and hay is present to meet the needs of the animals, then seizure is not warranted. Few, if any, horse owners will refuse to feed their horses if feed is available.

Adding to the problem is that many "evaluators" have not received any formal training in the application of the BCS. They do not understand the physiology of fat deposition and utilization, they are not knowledgeable in conformation and breed characteristics that will influence the BCS, and most often they have personal biases that lower their estimate. The BCS is designed as a ranking system. It was never designed to be exact and it cannot be exact because of differences in breeds, size, age, and conformation between

horses. It is a guideline. If the average lay horse owner gets within 1 body condition score, plus or minus, of the horses actual condition, they are doing a good job. Seizing a horse based solely on an untrained person's estimated BCS is a very questionable practice.

I find it very disturbing that humane societies and local authorities have utilized the BCS in such a manner. There are definitely cases of neglect and abuse that need to be dealt with in a quick and decisive manner. However, care must be taken to be sure that the animals are truly being starved and that requires supporting evidence from their other physical parameters and blood analysis. My recommendation to all parties is that if neglect or abuse due to nutrition deprivation is suspected,

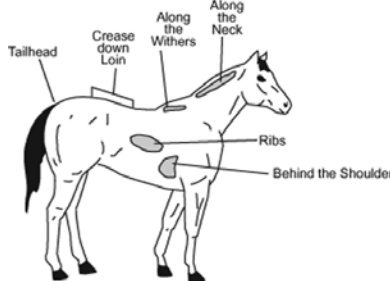
The evaluator must exhibit the ability to offer a trained, unbiased opinion based solely on the stored body fat of the animal. If seizure is to be considered, the evaluation of the animals by a qualified, impartial third person should be required.

A BCS of less than 3 is not cause for automatic seizure. The animals in question must exhibit altered metabolism confirmed by blood analysis or other physical signs consistent with malnutrition before they can be seized for inadequate body condition. If it is determined that the horse needs immediate attention, a veterinarian of the owner's choosing should provide those supporting procedures. These procedures may be done with supervision by the legal authorities.

Only horses exhibiting altered metabolism and having inadequate feed stores on the premises should be seized. Removing healthy horses from their home is not necessary and may often result in adverse consequences due to stress created by a new environment and untrained handlers.

If at all possible, the alleged neglected horses should remain at the owner's farm. Removing any horse from its familiar environment, drastically changing its diet, and exposing it to a new set of handlers will usually result in stress and a further loss of body condition. In the vast majority of cases, if the intent is truly the best care of the horse, that care can best be administered in familiar surroundings. If the legal authorities require, care can be conducted under their official guidance.

Continued on page 18



## Department of Labor Finalizes Changes to H-2B Visa Program

On February 21, 2012 the Department of Labor (DOL) issued a final rule concerning the H-2B temporary guest worker program. This new rule, which will go into effect on April 23, 2012, will make significant changes to the way the H-2B program operates for all employers including those in the horse industry.

"Anyone in the horse industry who uses the H-2B program needs to be aware of this new rule. It makes major changes to the responsibilities of employers using the program and if the new guidelines aren't followed employers could be fined and barred from using the program," said AHC President Jay Hickey. The H-2B program is used by members of the horse industry, principally horse trainers and owners who cannot find American workers to fill semi-skilled jobs at racetracks, horse shows, fairs and in similar non-agricultural activities.

The AHC believes the new rule will make the H-2B program more costly and burdensome for employers who are forced to use the program and has opposed the new rule. "It is unfortunate the DOL decided to finalize this rule," said AHC Legislative Director Ben Pendergrass. "This rule will make it difficult for trainers and others in the horse industry to use the program and could impact American jobs. The current rule was working well for the industry and included many protections for foreign and American workers."

The final rule, among other things, will: Require an employer to pay most inbound and outbound travel expenses for H-2B workers.

Extend H-2B program benefits, such as reimbursement of transportation cost, to American "corresponding workers" that work alongside H-2B workers and perform substantially the same work.

Require employers to provide documentation that they have taken appropriate steps to recruit U.S. workers, rather than permitting employers to attest to such compliance. Increase the amount of time employers must try to recruit U.S. workers.

Prohibit job contractors from using the program. Define temporary need as 9 months, previously it was 10 months.

Define full time employment as 35 hours a week, previously it was 30 hours.

"This final rule is complex and has many new provisions and changes. If you are an employer who uses the program you should review the new guidelines and contact the lawyer or agent you use to process H-2B applications to ensure you are in compliance with the new rule when it goes into effect on April 23," said Pendergrass.

DOL guidance and the complete rule can be found on the Department of Labor's website at <http://www.dol.gov/whd/immigration/H2BFinalRule/index.htm>.

"Many Members of Congress are also displeased with this new rule and believe it could hurt industries in their states. The AHC is going to continue to work with those Members to try and roll back this new rule. Unfortunately, gridlock in Washington will prevent any quick action by Congress and the horse industry will have to comply with the new rule for the foreseeable future," said Hickey.

The AHC encourages members of the equestrian community to visit its website [www.horsecouncil.org](http://www.horsecouncil.org) to learn how federal legislation and regulations impact them and how they can get involved.

## MIDWEST HORSE FAIR® AWARDED \$20,000 TOURISM GRANT

MADISON, Wis. (April 20, 2012) – A new equine event will have additional marketing power thanks to a \$20,000 Joint Effort Marketing grant from the Department of Tourism, presented by Regional Tourism Specialist David Spiegelberg. Taking the Reins, hosted by the Midwest Horse Fair®, is expected to generate an economic impact of over \$800,000 from traveler spending at area hotels, restaurants and stores.

"This brand new event will work to showcase Wisconsin on a national level as a fantastic destination for equestrian and outdoor enthusiasts," said Secretary Klett. "JEM grant funding assists organizers market the event and boost attendance, which in turn creates a positive economic impact in the community."

The two-day event, August 17-18, 2012, encompasses a wide range of activities, including the taping of Project Cowboy, a reality show searching for "The Next Great American Horseman." Taking the Reins will feature a competition for the show, which will garner national attention and provide the audience the opportunity to cheer for their favorite competitor. The winner receives \$10,000 in prize money and a chance to become "The Next Great American Horseman." Other activities include interactive classes and events, from test riding a horse to bit-making demonstrations, and a variety of exhibitors.

In fiscal 2011, the Department funded 53 Joint Effort Marketing projects, awarding a total of nearly \$1.2 million dollars. Visitor expenditures driven by the marketing from these projects will exceed \$20 million.

Grant dollars will be used to promote the festival utilizing a variety of media outlets. Traditional and online advertising will be implemented, as well as targeted public relations and social media efforts. An assortment of print media will be used, as well as radio spots and email campaigns. The event hopes to draw attendees from the state of Wisconsin as well as Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota.

"Wisconsin has such a powerful equine legacy, and this event strengthens that tradition," says Rhonda Reese, general manager of the Midwest Horse Fair®. "The help we receive from this grant will not only generate more exposure for Taking the Reins, but will also benefit people and businesses throughout the area that contribute to its success."

JEM grant funds are available to non-profit organizations for the promotion of Wisconsin tourism events and destinations. The state can fund up to 75 percent of a project's first year advertising and marketing costs and provides support for second and third year projects, but with decreasing amounts for funding each year until projects become self-sustaining. For information on the JEM Program and application materials, visit <http://industry.travelwisconsin.com>.

# From the Horse's Mouth: Industry News

## State Officials, Humane Groups Oppose Proposed Horse Slaughter Plant in New Mexico

(April 13, 2012)—The Humane Society of the United States, the ASPCA (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), Front Range Equine Rescue and Animal Protection of New Mexico condemn plans to open a horse slaughter plant in Roswell, N.M.

The plans for the slaughterhouse were uncovered in an investigation by Front Range Equine Rescue, a Colorado-based equine rescue organization. The proposed facility would be operated by Valley Meat Co., LLC, a company in Roswell that has already applied with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service for inspection of the slaughter of equines for human consumption. According to Front Range's investigators, FSIS officials were scheduled to conduct a preliminary walk-through inspection of Valley Meat's facility last month. USDA temporarily suspended inspections of cattle slaughter at Valley Meat Co. in February 2012 [PDF] and November 2011 due to failure to comply with humane slaughter regulations.

"A horse slaughtering plant in Roswell is a terrible idea," said New Mexico Attorney General Gary King. "Such a practice, while not illegal, is certainly abhorrent to public sentiment, and I strongly suggest it be abandoned. I come from a ranching family but processing horses for food was never part of the plan for raising livestock. Horses are different and should be treated differently."

"As a veterinarian and someone who has had the great good fortune to grow up with and around horses, I am very saddened and angry about the recent revelations of mistreatment of horses in New Mexico," said New Mexico State Land Commissioner Ray Powell. "If a horse is hurt, terminally ill, or has no chance to find a loving home, then humane euthanasia is a realistic alternative. I am told New Mexico is entertaining the idea of a horse slaughtering facility in our state. Since we do not have the horses in New Mexico to make this economically viable, it means horses would be trucked in from surrounding states. This is a bad idea on every level, and I strongly oppose it. New Mexico can do much better by these intelligent and gentle creatures."

"Horse slaughter means tremendous suffering of horses, a proven history of environmental and waste violations, and allowing a toxic meat product to enter the human food chain," said Hilary Wood, president and founder of Front Range Equine Rescue. "Solutions to horse slaughter include stopping irresponsible breeding practices, more gelding and euthanasia assistance programs, re-homing and re-training options, and short-term owner assistance programs. Horse slaughter has no place in the U.S. or across our borders."

"American horses are our partners in sport, work and recreation—not dinner," said Keith Dane, director of equine protection for The HSUS. "The entire process of horse slaughter is filled with nonstop terror, pain and misery for horses, and it is proven to have a severe negative impact on surrounding communities. It would be irresponsible for the federal government to sign off on

a predatory industry that has no regard for animal or human welfare."

"New Mexicans have a deep and enduring appreciation for horses, especially given their important role in our state's rural way of life. It's an affront to our citizens to suggest bringing the cruel, dangerous and polluting enterprise of horse slaughter to New Mexico as we celebrate our state's centennial," said Elisabeth Jennings, executive director of Animal Protection of New Mexico.

"The overwhelming majority of Americans are intensely opposed to this cruel practice, and as more people learn that we are allowing our horses to be shuttled off to gruesome deaths all for the sake of foreign gourmands, they are outraged, and opposition to this grisly practice is growing," said Nancy Perry, senior vice president of ASPCA Government Relations. "Horse slaughter plants abuse more than just horses as they have proved economically and environmentally disastrous to communities in other states."

In November 2011, Congress chose not to renew a ban on funding federal inspectors at horse slaughter plants in the United States, even though a similar provision has been part of the agriculture department's spending bill for the past five years. That action opened the door for a return of horse slaughter to American soil, including taxpayer funded inspections of horse meat destined to be sent abroad, despite broad opposition in this country to the practice. A January 2012 poll commissioned by the ASPCA confirms that 80 percent of American voters oppose the slaughter of horses for human consumption.

When the last three horse slaughter plants in the U.S. closed, the surrounding communities cheered. These communities had endured water pollution, an unending stench of rotting blood and offal, and a negative stigma that caused other businesses to leave the community. The slaughter plants employed no more than a few dozen employees in low-paying, dangerous, high-stress jobs. In their quest for higher profits, the foreign-owned companies did their best to avoid paying property taxes and the fines levied against them for environmental violations.

Additionally, it is unclear how Valley Meat Co. or the USDA would address the medications, vaccines and other substances that are routinely given to American horses and are known to be poisonous if consumed by humans. Earlier this year, The HSUS announced its intention to pursue legal action if the federal government failed to follow required protocols to ensure that food safety and environmental review requirements were observed.

Last month, The HSUS joined Front Range Equine Rescue in filing a petition with the Food and Drug Administration to declare the meat of former companion, show, and working animals to be unfit for human consumption due to the risk of the meat containing toxic residues. Last week, the two groups filed a separate petition with the USDA to ban the slaughter for human consumption of such animals for the same reasons.

## Florida and Wimps Chocolate Chip Run to Victory in CRI3\* at the Ariat Kentucky Reining Cup

By Helen Murray

Lexington, KY- Eighteen of the top reiners from the U.S. and Canada vied for team and individual honors in the CRI3\* division of the Ariat Kentucky Reining Cup Friday evening. Riding Reining Pattern Number 10, the best in the game went head-to-head in the Alltech Arena. An appreciative audience needed to wait until the final rider of the third and final rotation entered the ring. It was well worth the wait as Shawn Florida and Wimps Chocolate Chip slid to a decisive four point victory.



Shawn Florida & Wimps Chocolate Chip (Photo by Shannon Brinkman)

Florida (Springfield, OH), who won the inaugural CRI at the 2011 Ariat Kentucky Reining Cup, and Rick Clark's seven-year-old Quarter Horse gelding ran to a score of 228 on the strength of great acceleration and phenomenal slides and spins. From his bold entrance all the way to the final slide, Florida rode like a man on a mission.

Shawn Florida & Wimps Chocolate Chip (Photo by Shannon Brinkman)

"I just had a lot of fun in this ride. You can run him and he comes right back. You can run him down there and the just say 'whoa' and he comes right back. I have a lot of enjoyment playing with this horse," said Florida of the horse he has been riding since his three-year-old year. "This horse here, his longevity is unbelievable. He's really fun to ride."

Following directly behind Florida in the



The Cavallo Equestrian Arts perform vaulting feats off the back of their Norwegian Fjord/Percheron cross, Rocko, April 27 in St. Paul, Minn. L-R: Ermes, Gino and Olission Zamperia Zoppe are 8th & 9th generation acrobats based in Florida.

Photo by Ley Bouchard



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## BODY CONDITION SCORING SYSTEM FOR HORSES

Continued from page 16

"Innocent until proven guilty" is the most abused legal standard in America today. Due to biased press coverage, most "trials" are conducted before the accused ever has a chance to answer the charges. Once a horse owner has been accused of neglect, they are stained for life. If they are later proven to be innocent, the public has already painted them with a negative picture. This should not happen. It is imperative that the state authorities demonstrate adequate cause for seizure. Unsupported claims of neglect against a horse owner should be followed by a vigorous public campaign by the state authorities criticizing the parties who have filed a frivolous claim and, if possible, such parties should be prosecuted by the state.

Don Henneke, Ph.D., is currently the Director of Equine Science at Tarleton State University, Stephenville, TX. Dr. Henneke was the principal investigator in developing the Body Condition Scoring System for Horses at Texas A&M University in 1979.

Image courtesy University of Minnesota Extension at <http://www.extension.org/pages/11488/horsequest-learning-lesson-how-to-body-condition-score-horses>

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## Dr. Getty's Tip: Use Your Stethoscope Before You Need It

Your emergency kit likely includes a stethoscope – a highly valuable piece of equipment during any urgent health situation. Knowing your horse's normal heart rate and gut sounds beforehand will allow you to better assess the seriousness of the situation -- so use your stethoscope now.

A resting pulse is typically between 32 and 40 beats per minute (ponies' are slightly higher). Place the stethoscope in front of the girth area, just behind the elbow. Using the sweep second hand on your watch or a stop watch (usually a feature on your cell phone), count the number of beats for 30 seconds and double it to get beats per minute. Measure at various times of day, before and after eating, and at any change in circumstances or activity level; this will give you a clear idea of how your horse generally responds to his environment. Marked deviation from normal (without obvious explanation such as exercise) can indicate the presence of infection, pain, or illness.

Your stethoscope is especially useful for listening to gut sounds. It is normal and healthy for sounds to come from the digestive tract due to the movement of feed, gas, and fluid. Intestines are made of muscles; processing forage continuously provides the necessary exercise to keep these muscles in good condition. Normally, the sounds will be low in pitch with some growling. Colic occurs when there is a change within the intestines, ordinarily due to obstruction, gas, or torsion, and sounds change or stop altogether. If you don't hear any noise, or if the sounds have become higher pitched, significantly slowed, or sound hollow, it likely indicates colic and you should contact your vet immediately.

Practice listening to four areas of the gut: along the upper barrel and the lower flank area on both sides. Generally speaking, sounds from the upper left come from the small colon and tend to be high pitched and of short duration. The lower left has sounds from the large colon. On the upper right, the sounds come from the large colon and cecum whereas the lower right has the large colon. However, the point of origin for gut sounds is not completely predictable; the important thing is to identify a variation from your horse's normal sounds.

Deviations from normal in pulse or gut sounds may have many possible explanations, so unless you have extensive experience, you should never put yourself in the position of diagnosing colic or other disorders. But you can be a valuable resource to your veterinarian if you know what is normal for your horse and can identify a change, before illness happens.

Dr. Juliet Getty has taught and consulted on equine nutrition for more than 20 years. The Getty Equine Nutrition website ([www.GettyEquineNutrition.com](http://www.GettyEquineNutrition.com)) offers helpful articles, a library of previous teleseminars and articles, and a nutrition forum. Subscribe on the website to her free and informative monthly e-newsletter, "Forage for Thought." Dr. Getty serves as a distinguished advisor to the Equine Sciences Academy and her articles on equine nutrition are internationally published. She is available for individual consultations. For permission to reprint this article whole or in part, contact Dr. Getty directly at [gettyequinenutrition@gmail.com](mailto:gettyequinenutrition@gmail.com) or (740) 663-2333.

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Ermes and Gino Zamperla Zoppe of Cavallo Equestrian Arts  
-- Photo by Ley Bouchard

## The NRCS and Conservation Professional Training Program Present: The CRP Readiness Initiative

National conservation training set for May 1-2 in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Sioux Falls, S.D. – On May 1-2, conservation professionals have the opportunity to join nearly 300 colleagues across the country who have already signed up to help farmers and landowners preserve soil, improve water quality, and increase wildlife habitat through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Readiness Initiative. A free two-day CRP training workshop will be held at the Holiday Inn City Centre, 100 W. 8th Street, Sioux Falls. The registration deadline is April 23. The workshop is presented by the Conservation Professional Training Program and sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). It is part of a national initiative to train a group of conservation professionals and independent consultants to provide the planning, implementation, and management services associated with the Conservation Reserve Program.

"We are thrilled to have so much interest in our national training program so far. These conservation professionals emerging from our trainings now have detailed knowledge of national and state CRP conservation practices. They are ready to create, implement and maintain CRP conservation plans and ultimately help preserve our most fragile rural lands," said Kevin Erb, Project Co-Director.

A team led by the University of Wisconsin-Extension and comprised of University of Minnesota Extension and other national university extension staff, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff, and representatives from NRCS partner agencies and organizations has collaborated to streamline the trainings and make them accessible, convenient, and consistent across all states.

"With more people trained to help landowners, we expect more landowners to take advantage of the Conservation Reserve Program to protect our natural resources," said Erb. The Conservation Reserve Program gives farmers and landowners technical assistance and a financial incentive to reduce soil erosion and runoff, leading to improved water quality and wildlife habitat. Upon acceptance under a general or continuous program sign-up, a conservation professional trained in CRP planning helps a landowner assess his or her unique parcel of land, covering topics like land slope, cropping history, soil type, cultivation methods, and water quality. Upon completion of an assessment, the landowner and the conservation professional work together to create a CRP-conservation plan.

Natural Resources Conservation Service employees and conservation partners usually provide the technical services associated with CRP planning, but a wave of expiring contracts has prompted a new effort to recruit and train a broader range of professionals to help meet planning demands for expected re-enrollments. Independent conservation professionals, registered technical service providers, members of conservation associations, and employees of organizations with formal connections to NRCS are encouraged to participate.

"Assisting landowners in getting conservation on the ground is the end goal of the CRPRI. By training and mentoring technical service providers and current partners for CRP conservation planning, we increase the capacity and availability of conservation professionals qualified and ready to prepare high-quality conservation plans that protect soil, water quality and wildlife habitats," said Tony Kramer, NRCS Deputy Chief of Programs.

Following the initial two-day training, participants in the CRP Readiness Initiative will have the opportunity to work directly with a project mentor, participate in online forums and webinars, and sign up for supplemental training courses as needed. During the summer of 2012, the training curriculum will be transitioned to an online format, which will be available for a course fee. Some of the topics to be covered during the free core workshops include: understanding the landowner's objectives, developing a CRP plan according to national and state guidelines, and CRP best practices for conservation. Continuing education units are available for agriculture and forestry advisors.

For more information, contact Tim Gieseke, CRP Readiness Initiative Midwest Media Contact, at (507) 359-1889 or [tgieseke@agresourcestrategies.com](mailto:tgieseke@agresourcestrategies.com). To register for the South Dakota workshop, visit <http://conservation-training.uwex.edu/crpworkshops>.

Visit <http://conservation-training.uwex.edu/media> for full media kit.

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