



Celebrating Our 8th Year!

August 2014

The Valley Equestrian Newspaper



**Celestial Horses ♦ Deadly Nightshade ♦ American Horsewoman's Challenge
A Fence for Vision ♦ BLM Grants Access to Broken Arrow Mustangs**



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BLM NV Creates Access to Wild Horses, Advocate Drops Litigation

(RENO,NV) On Friday July 25th Amy Lueders, Nevada State Lead for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), issued a directive on access to wild horse and burro helicopter roundups. Simultaneously the National BLM office has agreed to open up the "Broken Arrow" facility on Indian Lakes Road to public tours.

As a condition of this directive Laura Leigh, President and founder of Wild Horse Education, agreed to voluntarily drop an ongoing federal court action to obtain meaningful access to wild horses and burros during capture and in holding.

"BLM Nevada's objective is to provide an opportunity for the observation of individual animals when they are gathered, sorted, and/or placed into temporary holding on the date of the gather," states the letter sent out from the Directors office.

"This year we have increased tensions on the range," stated Laura Leigh, "Access to view captured wild horses and burros will be more important than ever. Wild horses and burros have been hidden from public view for almost two years now at Broken Arrow. After months of conversations we have come up with a starting point to begin to work on access issues outside of the courtroom. In addition I believe we have begun to create a conversation that can address a multitude of issues that begin on the range long before a wild horse or burro is ever removed or family bands shattered. Many of those conversations have already begun within districts in this state. It is insane that issues of public access ever had to be taken into a courtroom.

It is my sincere hope that we can begin sanity into ways in which issues are addressed before the need for litigation becomes necessary."

BLM is expected to announce public tours of Broken Arrow shortly. The capacity of the facility is nearly 3000 wild horses and burros.

"There are things you never forget," said Leigh, "I remember that colt whose feet I literally watched begin to fall off at Broken Arrow after being run in the dead of winter. I remember every injured horse that I could



not follow into that facility and then reading the facility death reports and wondering which horse died. I think of all the foals there that are born and grow and are never seen. The closed gates of Broken Arrow are a personal constant ache for me. That facility should never have been closed off. It is literally contrary to the BLM stated mission to do everything possible to adopt out animals. How can you adopt out a horse or burro the public never gets to see?"

This case has gone on for 4 years. Leigh has traveled in excess of 250,000 miles in her quest to observe, report and advocate for wild horses and burros during capture and in holding. Her documentation has gained an International audience and brought needed attention not only to the ways wild horses are handled dur-

ing capture and in holding, but to range management and an adoption program that need serious reform.

"Wild horses and burros in our country are in serious trouble," Leigh continued, "we have a range over populated with special interest groups like livestock and mining that have serious backing and are very organized. If we hope to have wild horses on a range that even resembles a 'wild place' we need to move fast toward gaining protections for them as was the true intention of the Wild Free Roaming Horses and Burros Act."

Roundups of wild horses and burros by the BLM will begin again in the state of Nevada in September. There is nothing in the agreement that precludes Leigh from addressing this issue in court once again should the directive fail to provide access to document individual animals and to assess BLM handling methods.

Leigh carries other current active litigation that addresses inhumane conduct and unjustified removals and is an Intervenor against the Nevada Association of Counties legal effort to remove and destroy wild horses.

Wild Horse Education is devoted to gaining protections for America's wild horses and burros from abuse, slaughter and extinction. Main website: http://WildHorseEducation.org

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American Horsewoman's Challenge Competition to be Held in Oklahoma

Jim Hutchins, producer of the American Horsewoman's Challenge (AHC) says he was inspired at 3 a.m. to do the American Horsewoman's Challenge. He started thinking about a 12-month challenge of young horses and his customer bank, younger girls and 45+ year-old women. He knew there were many very talented horsewomen who have a good regional following and decided to start the AHC Competition.

The competition was opened to women who will be asked to perform three different disciplines and submit a video of their work in cowboy dressage, liberty and ranch and trail versatility. The finals will be held October 3-5, 2014 in Guthrie, Oklahoma where the Top 10 will be critiqued in front of an audience of 4000 people.

When asked "Why is a man producing this all-female competition?" Jim Hutchins explains: "I grew up with four sisters, a very strong mother, and in my day-to-day business worked with 95 percent, or more, women. I felt like in the Western competitive world, we don't really honor women. There is a lot of testos-

terone out there. It made sense that it should be a competition for women because they are really not recognized." Any woman who is in the United States and Canada is eligible to compete.

See the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j13-6yENdKE> to see a video of Hutchins telling more about the AHC.

We asked each contestant to answer the following questions: 1) In one concise sentence describe your history with horses. 2) How is it that you are: "strong enough to stand alone, be yourself enough to stand apart, and be wise enough to stand together when the time comes." 3) What is your favorite training technique or what bit of wisdom is going to put you in the best position to win this competition? 4) Why do you think you should be the first AHC winner, and why do you want to be, the perks of winning, aside? The responses follow:

Pamela Asheton, Alberta, Canada

"Best-selling American author Marguerite Henry nailed me way back in my early teens with her 'WHITE STALLION OF LIPPIZA' - the closing page still gets me, every time, and amazingly, it's been my lodestar riding professionally,

teaching right up to international levels and writing, writing - detailed on that page it's the rider's obligation, duty, contract really to honour the horse, find each one's talent and work, learn, adapt, think that every minute of the ride.

"These days I just listen to the horses; when the 'Challenge' came up on the horizon the synchronicity was incredible, it's still happening, all the right people and helpers and contacts needed. "You need to be at least 30 percent better at home than when competing; Olympian Jennie Loriston-Clarke remarked that once when I was standing alongside watching her students - she was absolutely right. "Should, by the way, in sports psychology talk, is a majorly dreadful guilt word - ugh! I'm riding a wildie (American word

"Training the horse and myself with positive reinforcement is our secret weapon. I have a 'clicker' (used in clicker training) in the arena, in the barn and in my pocket at all times.

"I think every competitor is the winner. What I want to achieve is my BEST and my horse's BEST. Winning will bring clicker training to everyone's attention and thousands of horses will benefit from this.

PHOTO BY Shannon Daly

translates to 'mustang') youngster, the learning curve has taken me to way different thinking, networking - taught me just how much 'domestic' horses put up with...if we can pass-that-forward, that knowledge, like his competition name, 'It's-all-Good'..and we'll perhaps get a few people thinking."

Winnie Stott of Winsong Farms, Ontario, Canada

"My history is with dressage, eventing and nowadays liberty and teaching games and tricks. I always LOVE what I'm doing. Two phrases summarize my approach to life: "If you can dream it, you can do it." And, "Find the Magic within you."

"Training the horse and myself with positive reinforcement is our secret weapon. I have a 'clicker' (used in clicker training) in the arena, in the barn and in my pocket at all times.

"I think every competitor is the winner. What I want to achieve is my BEST and my horse's BEST. Winning will bring clicker training to everyone's attention and thousands of horses will benefit from this.

Jerusha Steinert,

St. Paul, Minnesota

"I am a city girl with horses in my blood who keeps pursuing all things equine through riding, training, gentling, teaching and drawing.

"It's important to be self confident enough to put in the time, dedication and discipline into something on your own. You cannot be a leader for horse or anyone else without stepping up, and you need that self confidence to share what you know with others.

"Trusting your own strengths and creativity while working towards a goal gives you the ability to look to other people for inspiration and camaraderie when you need to refill. There is also a beauty in sharing that passion with others, it's contagious! Instead of competing with each other we can reenergize what training horses should be all about. The beauty of this competition is the versatility required to do all of the events. If you are always focusing on the whole foundation of your horse and taking care of the relationship you can be ready for anything. I have a deep love of liberty

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HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, VEN! ABOUT THE COVER:

Our cover this month features the artistry of Michelle Rudland of About You Photography, www.auphoto.net. Her sumptuous images of the equine and ranching community capture the needs and desires of her clients. As she

days, "I might be risking my neck, but the best place to capture the action is right in the ring, and getting those great shots is what I love to do! [The cover image] is just a shot of some beautiful horses in a lovely setting."

In this issue, you can find out about the lovely mustangs that are finally getting public access in the Broken Arrow holding facility, and how Laura Leigh of Wild Horse Education is making legal headway with the BLM (page 2).

Other horses that were once disputed, but in a different way, were the celestial horses of Fergana (page 8). America's female trainers are celebrated in the first-ever American Horsewoman's Challenge (page 3). And

ways to protect your horses, livestock, pets and children from deadly nightshade poisoning are discussed (page 12). All in this 8th Anniversary issue of the Valley Equestrian News!

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Editorial Information

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An Anniversary Letter from the Editors

It is hard to believe we are beginning our 8th year in publishing the Valley Equestrian News! As a journalist, I was always surprised by the lack of reporting of equestrian news by the mass media. Many of the freely distributed horsey magazines eight years ago were only advertising with little or no content. We wanted the VEN to fill that gap and make that change to give people stories of horses and people and how they make a difference in our world.

It has been a difficult seven years for the U.S. economy and more specifically the

equestrian and rural community. It has been a struggle to start and keep this fledgling newspaper going. We have eeked by because we are trying to share with people far and wide the importance of horses and what they represent.

The horse is a national icon, a symbol of strength and perseverance. We honor the horse for what it has brought to America: it helped settle our lands, it served as an important partner in breaking the soil, plowing, seeding, harvesting our crops which helped feed the people

and cattle. We know this, especially those of us that have lived a few decades or have parents and grandparents that remember the depression, home-steading, and the days of labor under the sun next to our horses.

Going forward, we intend to continue to honor the horse, and those who work with and support the horse. We will continue to bring interesting stories, ideas and discussions to the table, to promote growth in the equine industry, as well as the individual. A plow doesn't do much going backwards, but it

sure can turn up some interesting things going forward.

We are thankful for this journey and for your ongoing support. We expect the next leg of the journey to be even more exciting, thought-provoking, and meaningful. We hope you'll join us!

Ley Bouchard, Editor and Publisher and Kari Hagstrom, Managing Editor and Sales Manager

American Horsewoman's Challenge Competition to be Held October in Oklahoma

Continued from page 3

and enjoy playing with my horses. I can wait to do liberty in a competition!

"My AHC horse is a Nokota horse. I want to share the beauty and talent of the Nokota horse with the world so that the breed can step forward to be recognized and used as they were meant to be. As for me I want to demonstrate that you can use all of your talents in horsemanship. Horses are an extension of you. For me this is about artistry, expression and intimacy with my horse. There is no one approach with horses but channeling the strongest parts of yourself to communicate with them is very powerful. I want to empower others to do the same."

Courtney Clarke, Fowlerville, Michigan, developed a love of horses as a child in 4-H, which grew into a passion leading



her to a professional career as a certified Parelli instructor. Clarke describes herself: "I'm a resourceful and strong individual with a unique style of training and supporting horsemanship students. However, I also believe that working as group for a common goal can lead to having a greater impact on the horse industry. In this competition, I'm excited to be standing with my female peers to highlight women's contributions to horsemanship! "I put the re-

lationship first with my colt ensuring that he is a happy and willing partner for me in this competition.

"Not only am I dedicated to my personal horsemanship journey, I'm also passionate about helping others enjoy successful partnerships with their

horses. Winning this competition would enable me to reach more students and positively influence the horse training industry."

Continue to learn more about all the competitors in the September and October issue of the VEN.

COWBOY POETRY WITH ORV

PANNING FOR GOLD IN CALIFORNIA

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED GOLD NUGGET
I gazed at the size of the tall mountain and its steep incline. The thought of climbing it brought 'exertion and effort' to mind. The excitement of finding gold was uppermost in my mind; As there was an outside prospect of a precious nugget find. There would be no need to climb that huge mountain standing there. As the cold water stream would be washing down my gold dust share. My thoughts strayed to the grain fields back home, under sunbeams so warm; Of planting gold wheat kernels, hoping for more gold on the farm.

EITHER-ORE/EYE SPY/ODE TO LODGE
I would be panning for gold below in the cold water creek. Where gold dust washed down to be 'inherited by the meek'. The musing that this method of panning, as history has told. Was practiced here in California, and one hundred years old. I had a 'gold rush'. Notice the excitement with which I'd say That I would find gold dust or nuggets, on that, my lucky day! My thoughts strayed to North Dakota grain fields, with sunbeams so warm. Where we planted gold durum, hoping for more gold on the farm.

CHANCE TO FIND NUGGETS OR HARVEST GRAINS OF GOLD
Like prospectors from before my time, had I made a tragic choice? Would I go bankrupt? Or would I find a nugget and rejoice? Would I face sunburn, frostbite, fool's gold, claim jumpers or thieves? Would I find iron pyrite, that is, the 'fools gold' that deceives? We're told that miners met loneliness, deserts and dashed hopes; To include impatient, hungry burros who chewed through their ropes. Luckily claim jumpers and ruthless thieves of old were long gone. There would be no failure or fool's gold, so I could dream on.

MINING AND SLUICING AND DREAMING
Dreams of how to spend it, there'd be no 'California or bust'. I was panning for gold and finding some shiny gold dust. My thoughts raced as I panned in that California sun so warm. Did I fail to mention, I was panning...at Knott's Berry Farm?

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Racing Resumes at North Dakota Horse Park



Adopt-A-Horse & Find a Partner for Life ...



Marin

For more info please contact the
Minnesota Hooved Animal Rescue

PO Box 47, Zimmerman, MN 55398
(763) 856-3119 or info@mnhoovedanimalrescue.org

Marin is a beautiful bay hackney pony mare who came to MHARF from the 2012 "Fillmore 55" humane case. She was foaled in approximately 2001. Marin is

broke to drive and has that great snappy hackney pony trot and a lot of go". Marin would not be suitable for children at this point as she can be a little shy because

she was not handled as much or as kindly as she should have been in the past. The American Hackney Horse Society was not able to match Marin's DNA so she is not registered.

For more information on MHARF's adoption policies please see www.mnhooved-animalrescue.org or email info@mnhooved-animalrescue.org. Marin's adoption fee is \$550.00.

Bobbi Sox from Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary

Bobbi Sox is a beautiful, 11 year old, red roan quarter horse, rescued from a feedlot in Canada. She has been ridden under saddle, leads, loads and picks up her feet. Bobbi Sox tends to be dominant with other horses, but is great with people. She is a very sensitive horse and needs an experienced, compassionate person that understands her.

Adoption Fee: \$750

Contact: Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary, 520-398-2814 or info@equinevoices.org
Meet: By Appointment



Bobbi Sox

A Fence for Vision

A blind pony named Vision is in need of some new fencing at her new home at White Horse Ranch, in Herman, Minn., which serves kids and families at no cost, as well as provides a safe home for horses in need. A seven-year-old paint/quarter horse pony mare, Vision was previously referred to as Blind Mare. She left a hazardous and potentially life-threatening situation, then ran through a fence and some woods. She bears the scars on her legs. She had also managed to scratch one of her eyes shortly before joining White Horse Ranch. Due to Vision's lack

of sight, she requires special fencing to create a safe environment in which she can move about and graze.

Owner and founder of White Horse Ranch, Gina Dahlen says that, "Vision may not see clearly, but I believe she sees through her heart. She is an amazing horse with such a story to tell. She has not allowed her lack of sight to stop her from loving and trusting the people she interacts with. What is amazing about her is that she loves to be ridden and totally trusts her rider to steer and direct her safely. She is very willing and eager to be a friend to

almost everyone she meets. She has become very popular in the short time she has been here, as the kids tend to gravitate to her. The love that is shared between them is incredibly special."

White Horse Ranch is a 501(c)(3) organization, and your donation is tax-exempt. The goal is to raise \$2,500.00 for Vision's fence with your help. Donations may be made through the White Horse Ranch website: www.whitehorseranchmn.org .



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Vision enjoys her new life helping kids.

Photos by White Horse Ranch



Charles Wilhelm: Ultimate Foundation Training

Western Pleasure - Part 3

Welcome back to Western Pleasure 101. This is the final article in the Western Pleasure series. These articles are for individuals who are not able to put their horses in full training but who want to get into Western pleasure and who want to try it on their own. At any time throughout the training process when you are having problems, you may want to have a trainer come to you or you may be able to trailer in once a week to get help. There is nothing wrong with getting help and that way you can stay within a your budget.

Equipment: If you are going to buy equipment, buy good quality equipment. Today, you can purchase a good quality saddle for around \$2000 or \$3000. If you buy a saddle for \$500 or \$600 or \$300, there is a reason the price is so low. If you buy a

be that light oil was the big deal and now it is medium oil. That is acceptable in the show ring and is beginning to be very popular.

The quality of your reins is also important. A good quality, supple leather rein, like a Herman Oak leather rein, will cost anywhere from \$50 to \$89. Reins come in different widths, depending on the level of sophistication. For example, with a snaffle bit, the reins are wider. Reins used with a bridle (leverage bit) are usually narrow (1/2 inch). The use of romel reins - braided rawhide - is also acceptable in the show ring.

Fit of the saddle for you and your horse is most important. Probably 90 percent of the people I see, are not using a saddle of the correct size. If you are buying a saddle, always have the option of returning it because it has to fit your horse and most likely your horse is not with you when you are shopping. The top picture [upper right] shows a saddle fitting a horse that is the norm and what people are using but it is too small for the rider and puts her in a poor position with poor balance. It is the lack of understanding how a saddle should fit. We don't have space here to



discuss the proper fit of a saddle but a proper fit is a must. Proper fit of all your equipment is a must. The equipment has to fit your horse and make your horse comfortable. You don't have to have a show saddle but you want a saddle that is clean, oiled and looks nice on the horse.

Blankets: You want a good quality blanket. You may use a pad with a Navajo blanket on top of it for showing. A nice quality Navajo will cost anywhere from \$95

to \$175. You can spend up to \$400 but it is not necessary. The blanket is just to showcase your horse and bring the best out in the horse's presentation. Good quality equipment is always going to look good on your horse and a judge is going to see how the blanket sets off your horse and makes your horse look good.

Dress: You also want to coordinate what you wear. If you are in junior classes, you can wear brighter colors, lime or pink or something similar. In the adult classes you want enough bling or brightness of color to showcase you and your horse to get the attention of the judge. Something that is too loud will be offensive to the judge and will detract from the horse and the judge will not be able to see you as all he or she will focus on is the bright color. You want to be somewhat conservative but at the same time you need a little bit of zing to catch the judge's eye. Image is not everything, it is everything. It shouldn't be that way but when you enter an arena with 25 or 35 other riders and your saddle and pad are not fitting properly, your pad is not attractive, even though they are both clean, they are not going to make a good impression on the judge. By the way, a saddle and pad that don't fit well can negatively influence how your horse travels. Proper fit is very important.

It is important how you look as well. You can be the best equitation rider in the arena but if you are not presenting yourself well in colors that compliment your horse or yourself, you will not present well. You want to dress appropriately, with colors coordinating with your pad and complimenting your horse.

Preparation: Preparing your horse is important. The horse should be bathed and brushed thoroughly, including the tail. It is not so much the style or length

of the mane that is important but that the mane is nicely groomed and part of it is not rubbed out. If part of the mane is rubbed out you should shorten it to be less noticeable and more tasteful. You want to sit your horse in the proper position for Western Pleasure. You want the horse to look like it is a pleasure to ride and you want to have a presence so the audience and the judge will know you are enjoying your ride.

Any time you show it can and should be fun. One of the things I tell my clients here at the ranch is have fun, have fun, have fun. I encourage my clients to show because when you are at home at the ranch and you are schooling your horse, the horse always seems to do well. But when you are in a show ring for eight or ten minutes, and you are being asked to perform in a specific way, on cue and on time, and with other horses, which can be distracting, it really lets you know where you are with the training of your horse. It doesn't mean that you get upset when you don't do well, it just means that you go home and work on the things that gave you trouble. As you progress your horse will get better and better. Also, any time you have an excuse, take your horse out and around to different horse shows, and let him be exposed to different situations. The more you do that, the better trained horse you will have and it will be more fun and a real pleasure to ride.

When you finish up a horse show, don't be afraid to go up to the judge and introduce yourself in a polite way and ask if he has any tips for you. Most judges are more than willing to give you suggestions. There is a time and place to do this. You don't want to interrupt the judge in the middle of doing something but find a time in between classes when there is a lull. I have had clients of mine show and some judges

just don't like them. I have a client who received high point palomino for the year and who was invited to the world show but there are some judges who were not placing her. Just because you don't place, you should not get discouraged. Some judges have their own ideas on what a horse should look like. I have one client who showed and the judge said the horse was homely. Two weeks later she went to another show and the judge loved the horse. She not only won Reserve Champion but she got blue ribbons in almost every class she entered. What you are looking for is long term improvement in your horsemanship skills and being a better teammate with your horse.

As you get better in the local shows and you are doing well, then you need to set your standards a little higher and compete in regional shows. In the two lower pictures, one client of mine has been doing quite well in the local shows and is ready to go on to regional competition. The second picture shows a client of mine who is more on the regional and national level. Everyone starts at the local shows. They are often called schooling shows because they are where you can learn to work with your horse in competition. They are more casual and not quite as intense. As



you progress, it is good for you and your horse to raise the standard and go for the bigger shows. Remember, Consistency, Patience, Persistence, and Follow through. Never give up.

Good luck to you and God Bless.

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.

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. Charles Wilhelm is internationally known as America's most respected horse trainer.

ROOTS OF THE LIGHT HORSE BREEDS:

THE HEAVENLY HORSES OF FERGANA

By Janice M. Ladendorf

The people of Fergana believed their breed had been founded by the foals of supernatural or celestial horses. They thought only such descent could explain their exceptional speed, endurance, and beauty. Like the Turkmenian horses, the heavenly horses came from Central Asia. In the days when the fabulous Silk Road existed, travelers could go from China to the Middle East or from the Middle East to China, as did Marco Polo. Travelers going west on the Silk Road had to go through Fergana, then Samarkand before they could pass through Turkmenistan. Both Fergana and Samarkand are now part of southeastern Uzbekistan.

He devoted himself to military conquests and territorial expansion. At the beginning of his reign, the Chinese knew little about what lay beyond their northwestern borders. Hostile nomadic tribes, known as the Xiongnu, roamed there and regarded the Chinese as their enemies.

“The Fergana horse is gamest among nomad breeds. Lean in build, like the point of a lance. Four hoofs light as though born of the wind. Heading away across the endless spaces. Truly, you may entrust him with your life.”

By the Chinese poet, TuFu, 9th Century A.D.

to obtain heavenly horses for the imperial stables.

The story of the war over the heavenly horses begins in 128 B.C. when Emperor Wuti sent Chang Ch’ien out to search for allies against the hostile Xiongnu tribes. They captured him and held him prisoner for ten long years. He married one of them and escaped with his wife and son. They found their way around deserts and through mountain passes until they reached Dayuan (Fergana). After leaving Fergana, they traveled on to Bactria, but found no allies there. On their way back to China, they were captured again by the Xiongnu tribes, but escaped after one year. Chang Ch’ien started with one hundred men, but only one survived to return with him and his family. The great explorer gave Emperor Wuti extensive information on many of the lands that lay to the west of China.

His report said, “Dayuan [Fergana] lies southwest of the territory of the Xiongnu some 10,000 li [4,158 km] directly west of China. The people are settled on the land, plowing the fields and

dered and stripped the Han envoy bare.

When Emperor Wuti heard what had happened to his envoy, he flew into a rage. In 104 B.C., he sent an army commanded by General Li Kuang-li (Li Guangli), the brother of his favorite concubine. The General had six thousand horsemen with him, as well as thousands of foot soldiers, but about half died on the long and perilous journey. His army was defeated and forced to retreat.

When this news reached Emperor Wuti, he sent sixty thousand men, thirty thousand horses, one hundred head of cattle, and thousands of draft animals marching towards Fergana. Despite losses on the way, they successfully besieged the capital. When General Li Kuang-li blocked the river that delivered water to the city, the King of Fergana had to surrender.

The army returned with some of the best celestial horses, three thousand ordinary stallions and mares, and a special agreement with Dayuan (Fergana). Their King promised to send two of the celestial horses to China every year. The war over the heavenly horses was over, but Emperor Wuti had paid an incredibly high price in blood and gold for these special horses.

Wars have results. When General Li Kuang-li fell from favor, Emperor Wuti had him executed. After the

celestial and ordinary horses from Fergana had been used to upgrade the Chinese cavalry mounts, Emperor Wuti’s armies defeated the Xiongnu.

Owning a heavenly horse soon became status symbols for rich men and officials. Traces of these horses still exist in the art of the Han Dynasty. In 1969, bronze statuettes of these horses were discovered in Gansu Province, one of which is the famous flying horse.



“THE FLYING HORSE”



“DRAWING OF TURKMENE, 1848”

The heavenly horses are one of the earliest example of the Turkmenian horse. The modern Akhal-Tekes are thought to be descended from them. Like the flying horse, Chinese breeds tend to be stocky. A draw-

Continued on next page

Equine non-profits granted nearly \$300,000 by USA Equestrian Trust

Next grant application period opens early 2015

Lexington, KY — USA Equestrian Trust has awarded nearly \$300,000 in grants to help fund more than a dozen projects by equine non-profits. Since the inception of the Trust’s grants program, the organization has awarded more than \$1.8 million in grants.

The projects funded as part of the grant application period ending in May were:

AMERICAN MORGAN HORSE EDUCATIONAL CHARITABLE TRUST (\$44,500) to develop an online home school module that teaches courses through horsemanship and

to purchase online testing software, which can also be used in other programs. Additional funded projects include researching new programs to engage youth and launching a series of educational videos and podcasts.

CALIFORNIA DRESSAGE SOCIETY — SACRAMENTO VALLEY CHAPTER (\$5,000) to support PSS University, a two-day equine educational event in Northern California.

EQUUS FOUNDATION (\$5,050) to expand its Equine Welfare Network online database that allows

website visitors to search for equine organizations near their homes. With the expansion, the database will include information on equestrian sport and recreational horseback riding facilities, as well as colleges and universities offering equine studies programs.

HARNESS HORSE YOUTH FOUNDATION, INC. (\$500) to offer field trips during a summer camp held at the Harness Racing Museum and Hall of Fame.

HEALING HORSES & ARMED FORCES (\$15,600) to assist its equine therapy program

for veterans.

MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS (\$37,164) to help its safety and ambulance program purchase a new truck and replace a mannequin horse used for training.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP INTERNATIONAL (\$17,700) to web-cast educational sessions from its annual conference so they can be viewed by members unable to attend.

SACRAMENTO AREA HUNTER JUMPER ASSOCIATION (\$5,000) to offer a free training clinic to its members, who are entry-level exhibitors and low-budget owners. The money for this grant was allocated from funding reserved for

Hunter/Jumper activities in California and Nevada. USEF EQUINE HEALTH RESEARCH FUND (\$74,706) to support research projects at Auburn University, University of California and The Ohio State University. The projects examine the effect of arena surfaces on the fore and hind limbs of jumping horses, the impact of mare behavioral drugs on foal performance and fertility, and the use of intravenous magnesium sulfate in horses.

USEF U.S. SADDLE SEAT EQUITATION WORLD CUP AND YOUNG RIDERS TEAMS (\$90,000) to assist the teams in attending events from 2015 to 2017. The Trust previously provided funding to support the U.S. Saddle Seat Equitation World Cup team’s 2012

victory in South Africa, as well as the upcoming 2014 World Cup hosted in the United States. This funding will support the team at the 2016 Saddle Seat Equitation World Cup that’s expected to be held in South Africa. The grant will also support the 2015 and 2017 Saddle Seat Young Riders Teams, which develop riders for future World Cup competitions.

The Trust’s next application period will begin early in 2015. Equine non-profits wishing to make a request for funding during that application period will be required to fill out the online application form at <http://trusthorses.org>. To be notified once the application period has opened, please email grants@trusthorses.org.



ing done of the Turkmen horse in 1848 shows a more refined horse, but he is still not as lanky as the modern Akhal-Tekes. Some believe the flying horse and the Akhal-Teke represent two different strains of the same breed, one of which could be the heavenly horses and the other the ordinary horses from Fergana. Many centuries of breeding for speed and endurance could well have created the unusual conformation of the modern Akhal-Tekes.

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Information Resources:

“Han Emperor Wu-Ti’s Interest in Central Asia and Chang Chien’s Expeditions”, www.silk-road.com/art/wuti.shtml.

Hyland, Ann. *The Endurance Horse*. J.A. Allen, 1988, pp. 22-23.



The Silk Route

studies, she has focused on inter and intra species communication. She has been a librarian, an inventory analyst, and an accountant. She is currently retired and lives in St. Paul, MN.

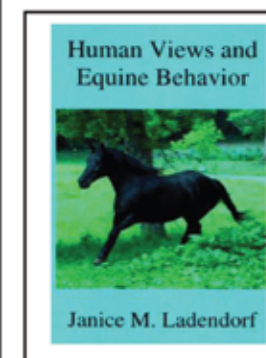
The photo left is of a statue of Zhang Qian (Chang Ch’ien) in the Shaanxi History Museum in Xian. It was taken by John Hill in 6-29-11.



For over fifty years, Janice Ladendorf has been studying horsemanship and training her own horses. She is the author of four books: Human Views and Equine Behavior, A Marvelous Mustang, Heart of a Falcon, and Practical Dressage for Amateur Trainers, as well as many articles. She has a B.A. in history and a M.A. in library science. In her advanced

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Before the founding of Rome or the birth of Christ, a Chinese explorer discovered these unusual horses in the fertile valley of Fergana (Dayuan). The people of Fergana loved their horses and refused to let them go. To obtain some for the imperial stables, China had to go to war. Every culture with horses used them in war, but this is the only time horses have been known to cause a war.

There were three key players in this remarkable event.

1) The first one is Chinese Emperor Wuti. He belonged to the Han Dynasty and lived in the 2nd century B.C.

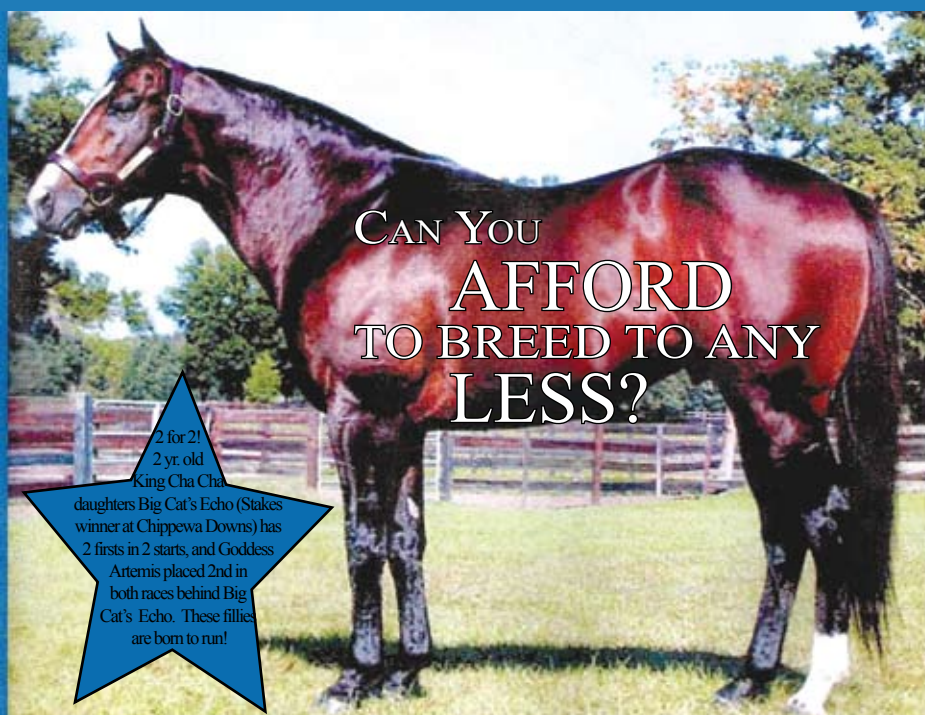
2) The second key player is the great explorer, Chang Ch’ien (Zhang Qian). This intrepid man is thought to be the founder of the Silk Road. He was the one who discovered the heavenly horses and reported their existence to Emperor Wuti.

3) The third key player is the General Li Kuang-li (Li Gaungli). He was the brother of Emperor Wuti’s favorite concubine, and commanded the armies sent



Emperor Wuti

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CLYDES VISIT FARGO

An eight-up hitch of Budweiser Clydesdales parade the track at the North Dakota Horse Park Saturday, June 26, 2014 in Fargo, N.D. The team was part of the Budweiser Brewmeister Tour that spent the weekend at the NDHP. The team travels with a crew of 5-6 people and the symbolic Dalmation dog who rides atop with the drivers.



Photo by Ley Bouchard

Girls and Their Horses

One can see the delight in the face of this gal as she rides through the barrels at the UBRA World Tour event July 13, 2014, at the Scholander Pavilion on the Red River Valley Fairgrounds. Five year-old Sophie Jesz Alder sat right at home on her 11-year-old mare, Twister.



Photos by Ley Bouchard

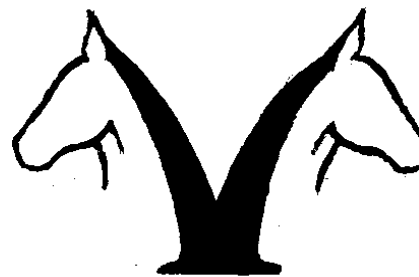


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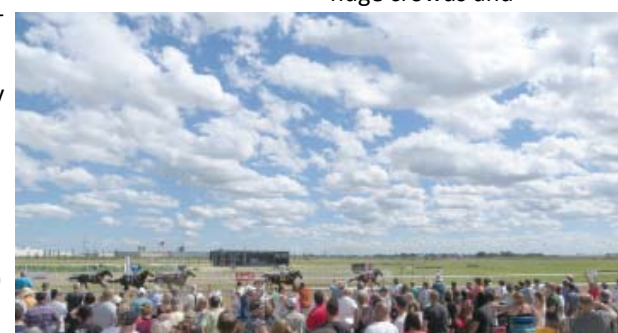
RACING FREE CELEBRATES WEEKEND AT NORTH DAKOTA HORSE PARK

Guthrie, OK-- The Racing Free team spent an extremely positive weekend at North Dakota Horse Park promoting the first member-restricted allowance races for the organization. The energy was high and the horse park was jam-packed with Fargo residents taking advantage of the beautiful 80 degree weather and family-friendly activities. A record 3,300 people attended the races Saturday, the highest number recorded since the track reopened in 2012. Wagering and merchandise sales were also at a record high, and the NDHP staff has

much to celebrate after such a successful weekend. Both the Racing Free QH & TB member-restricted allowance races

sponsored by Andreini & Company was won by the impressive 4-year-old gelding, JA Gols Fancy Man. Both days drew huge crowds and

Horse Park for taking such a huge step. This is a great start. We would love to see other tracks join the movement and implement



programs that encourage horsemen to be proactive," exclaimed Racing Free Co-Founder, Leslie McKinney. Racing Free promotes drug-free racing and a level playing field for all involved.

went off without a hitch. The 6-furlong thoroughbred allowance sponsored by Maberry Equine Insurance was won by Doug, the 8-year-old crowd favorite. The 400-yard quarter horse allowance spon-

big smiles from the folks in attendance. Tracks like North Dakota Horse Park are doing positive things for this sport and should be congratulated on their efforts.

For more information on how you can join the movement "For the Future of Racing," visit www.racing-free.com.

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Deadly Nightshade: Protect Your Horses and Animals

By Kari Hagstrom

Imagine this: It's a beautiful summer morning, and you're walking down the driveway to get the mail. You look over the horses to see how they're doing, especially the young mare that was recently put in to pasture breed with the black bay stallion. This young mare has been long-awaited: a lovely black bay Arabian with desirable bloodlines and looks, to cross with the above-mentioned black bay Arabian stallion, named Jamie. High hopes are riding on this breeding. The mare's name is Mirage, in honor of her desert ancestors, and unfortunately, she lived up to that name.

As you glance over at Jamie and Mirage, you stop in your tracks. Mirage is standing in the corner by the gate with her head down and long, thick streams of saliva streaming from her mouth. She's dull and listless, obviously uncomfortable; she is the picture of dejection. You think, maybe something is stuck in her mouth, or she has an injury. You stick your hand in her mouth to gently feel around for objects or injuries. Nothing, just viscous saliva. [Yes, the vet later chews you out for not

worrying about rabies—but she had no external wounds, so you weren't very worried, besides, you'd had rabies shots a few years earlier from a cat bite.] When you go to stroke her shoulder to comfort her, her skin and hide feel like bubble-wrap: kind of mildly lumpy, like there are air pockets under the skin, and it sounds/feels hollow. Definitely not right.

The vet suggests getting her into the barn—no easy feat, as she doesn't want to move. She seems light-sensitive, so the darker barn helps her a little. After the vet examines Mirage, he states that he doesn't know precisely what is wrong with her, but is concerned about rabies, as some of her symptoms point in that direction. We all realize that Mirage not going to make it, that she is dying as we speak. The owner gives consent to put her down, and the vet takes her beautiful head for rabies testing.

You and the owner are shocked at this progression of events. Mirage was fine yesterday. But like a mirage in the desert, she vanished quickly, like she had never been there. The grisly task of burying her beautiful



Note the small, white, star-shaped flowers and moth-eaten appearance of some of the leaves on this nightshade plant.

headless body is done. And it turns out later, when the test results come back from the University of Minnesota, that Mirage did not have rabies.

A few years later, you read an article in "Equus Magazine" about nightshade poisoning in horses. The memory of Mirage flickers back into your memory.

factor in Mirage's demise, the loss of a beautiful young horse and potentially valuable brood mare. One hears about nightshade, farmers spray for it out in the fields, but one doesn't think of it growing in the back yard or the back paddock. But it does, and prolifically.

Atropa belladonna, otherwise known as deadly nightshade or belladonna, is a member of the *Solanum* species, of which there are approximately 1,500 varieties worldwide. It is toxic to horses and other livestock, dogs, cats and humans. All parts of the plant are toxic. For the purpose of this article, I'll focus on the variety of deadly nightshade that grows most commonly in the central United States, found here in Minnesota, the Dakotas and surrounding areas. For general purposes, the plant grows similarly to a tomato, with smooth dark green branching leaves, small white star-shaped flowers which appear to "turn themselves inside out," the golden center protruding as the white petals rear back during the maturation process. The smooth, round berries grow in clusters and develop from green to black, and have a "green elfish hat" on its fruits, as do all plants in the nightshade (*Solanaceae*) family—other members of the nightshade family include tomatoes, eggplant, potatoes, goji berries, tobacco, and apparently all peppers (bell, chili, etc.) [Georgia Ede, MD—see her excellent discussion of nightshades in the human diet listed in sources below]. The nightshade plants which I notice often have a moth-eaten or ragged appearance to the leaves. Other varieties of nightshade are cited to have purple bell-shaped flowers. I urge you to become familiar with the varieties that are common in your area.

Deadly nightshade, I've learned, is a very clever plant, often hiding alongside nettles, burdock and thistles; natural protectors and concealers—who wants to casually reach into a stand of nettles or thistles to pull up a nightshade? It enjoys the shade and hiding space that large burdock leaves provide. It also hides among similar-looking plants, which also have smooth dark green leaves and small white flowers, but these are flat and round flowers—the star shape and protruding stamen are distinctive to nightshade. It likes part-shade, but does well in direct sunlight. I often check the north side of a building in particular, but include searching all around any given building, along fence lines, particularly the hard to mow areas—I once found several plants concealed in burdock growing in the fence line next to my horses' water tank!

Nightshade likes to grow in weedy areas, alongside the edges between a field and a wood, and in the partly shaded areas of a grove, in waste areas—pretty much anywhere. I've found nightshade growing alongside grain bins, along driveways that are wooded and partly shaded, in the weedy areas near a brush pile. It can be found in grain and hay fields, and get baled-up in hay, harvested with grain. It doesn't mind dry, loose soil, either. I've found bitter-sweet nightshade, also toxic, with purple star-shaped flowers and green-ripening-to-red berries growing prolifically along the wooded, partly-shaded, rocky shoreline at a friend's lake home property. Interestingly, the leaves of the bitter-sweet variety turn lavender-purple when

The story above is true. Every unpleasant detail. It could happen to anyone, to any horse, anywhere. Deadly nightshade is a very common plant, with many varieties. It is part of the tomato family, and looks rather like a tomato plant, with a strong stalk, branching leaves, and small flowers. And ignorance was the key

Photo by K. Blocksdorf



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Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) - Positive Diagnosis in Horses in Weld County, Colo. Guidelines for Livestock Shows, Fairs, Exhibitions, and Events

BROOMFIELD, Colo. — The Colorado Department of Agriculture's State Veterinarian's Office has placed seven locations under quarantine after horses tested positive for Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). The quarantines are located in Weld and Boulder counties; results on additional tests in other counties are pending.

Colorado is the second state in the country to have confirmed cases of VS. Previous positive cases of vesicular stomatitis in 2014 have been diagnosed in the southern area of Texas near the Mexico border and more recently in Bastrop and Travis Counties just south of Austin, Texas.

"Vesicular stomatitis can be painful for animals and costly to their owners," said state veterinarian, Dr. Keith Roehr. "The virus typically causes oral blisters and sores that can be painful causing difficulty in eating and drinking."

Veterinarians and livestock owners who suspect an animal may have VS or any other vesicular disease should immediately contact state or federal animal health authorities. Livestock with clinical signs of VS are isolated until they are healed and determined to be of no further threat for disease spread. There are no USDA-approved vaccines for VS.

While rare, human cases of VS can occur, usually among those who handle infected animals. VS in humans can cause flu-like symptoms and only rarely includes lesions or blisters.

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Signs and Transmission: VS susceptible species include horses, mules, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, pigs, and camelids. The clinical signs of the disease include vesicles, erosions and sloughing of the skin

on the muzzle, tongue, teats and above the hooves of susceptible livestock. Vesicles are usually only seen early in the course of the disease. The transmission of vesicular stomatitis is not completely understood but components include insect vectors, mechanical transmission, and livestock movement.

Tips for Livestock Owners:


- Strict fly control is an important factor to inhibit the transmission of the disease.
- Avoid transferring feeding equipment, cleaning tools or health care equipment from other herds.
- Colorado veterinarians and livestock owners should contact the state of destination when moving livestock interstate to ensure that all import requirements are met. A list of contact information for all state veterinarians' offices is available at www.colorado.gov/ag/ animals and click on "Import Requirements."
- Colorado fairs, livestock exhibitions, and rodeos may institute new entry requirements based on the extent and severity of the current VS outbreak. Certificates of Veterinary Inspection issued within 2-5 days prior to an event can be beneficial to reduce risks. Be sure to stay informed of any new livestock event requirements.
- During an event, important VS disease prevention procedures include minimizing the sharing of water and feed/equipment, applying insect repellent daily (especially to the animals ears), and closely observing animals for signs of VS.
- If moving livestock internationally please contact the USDA APHIS VS Colorado office at 303-231-5385 to determine if there are any movement restrictions or testing requirements for VS.

State Veterinarian's Office in Colorado — to report call 303-869-9130. If after-hours, call the same number to obtain the phone number of the staff veterinarian on call.

For additional information, contact the Colorado State Veterinarian's Office at 303-869-9130 or to view the current location of cases and other important updates and information you can visit: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth?1dmy&urle=wcm%3apath%3a%2Faphis_content_library%2Fsa_our_focus%2Fsa_animal_health%2Fsa_animal_disease_information%2Fsa_equine_health%2Fsa_vesicular_stomatitis%2Fct_vesicular_stomatitis.

bio-security and movement restrictions

Washington, DC—July 2, 2014. The Unwanted Horse Coalition (UHC) held its annual meeting on Monday, June 23, during the American Horse Council's National Convention and Issues Forum. At the meeting, attendees heard presentations by member organizations including The Jockey Club, The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, The Equine Network, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the United States Trotting Association, and the Master of Foxhounds Association. In addition, Janine Jacques, founder of the Equine Rescue Network, explained how her program uses a combination of microchips and social media to track down and locate abandoned, neglected, lost, stolen, or otherwise "unwanted" horses.




Heat Alert!

The Valley Equestrian Newspaper reminds you to protect your horse, dog, cat and small children who travel with you this summer.

- Park in the shade.
- Be sure to keep trailers, trucks and cars well ventilated—open those windows. The best option: Leave them at home. Don't let sentiment override safety. Vehicle interiors can become dangerously hot in minutes, resulting in the death of your pet.
- Take pets along only when going to the vet, or a known destination where they can exit the vehicle. They don't need to go shopping with you!
- Err on the side of caution. Live to enjoy another day!

The Valley Equestrian News wishes you a safe and fun summer with your animals!



UHC Meets During AHC's Annual Meeting

Washington, DC—July 2, 2014. The Unwanted Horse Coalition (UHC) held its annual meeting on Monday, June 23, during the American Horse Council's National Convention and Issues Forum. At the meeting, attendees heard presentations by member organizations including The Jockey Club, The Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance, The Equine Network, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the United States Trotting Association, and the Master of Foxhounds Association. In addition, Janine Jacques, founder of the Equine Rescue Network, explained how her program uses a combination of microchips and social media to track down and locate abandoned, neglected, lost, stolen, or otherwise "unwanted" horses.

Following the presentations, the group discussed ideas for new UHC initiatives, including continuing its Operation Gelding program with the funds available; creating an educational campaign and providing materials promoting the benefits of castration/spaying non-breeding quality horses, similar to the programs dealing with dogs and cats; updating and reprinting UHC educational materials; and creating a webinars subcommittee. The UHC also decided to sell Ellen Harvey's new book, Standardbred Old Friends, through the UHC website. For every book sold through the UHC, it will keep \$10 of the \$30

sales price, plus shipping and handling. Funds shall be used for Operation Gelding.

Overall, the meeting was a great success and the UHC looks forward to both enhancing its current programs and taking on new ones.

Operation Gelding Update
The UHC's Operation Gelding program continues to help castrate stallions across the country. Now in its fourth year, the program has assisted in castrating 939 stallions at 79 clinics in 32 states. In the past year, Operation Gelding has been responsible for castrating 181 horses in 16 clinics across the country. These included clinics at veterinary schools and clinics such as, the Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia; the Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine in College Station, Texas; and the Springhill Equine Veterinary Clinic in Newberry, Florida. Multiple clinics were also held at equine rescues around the country, including Hope in the Valley Equine Rescue in Wichita, Kansas and Dreamchaser PMU Rescue and Rehabilitation Inc. in Waddell, Arizona.

Operation Gelding is able to continue thanks to the support and seed money provided by the American Association of Equine Practitioners Foundation, Zoetis, and the UHC. Proceeds from the sale of Dr. Jennifer Williams' book, How to Start and Run a Rescue, also help fund the Operation Gelding program. Sales from Ellen Harvey's book, Standardbred Old Friends, will now also benefit Operation Gelding. Books can be purchased on the UHC website: www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org

Continued on page 14

Deadly Nightshade: Protect Your Horses and Animals

Continued from page 12

exposed to frost in late autumn, and the berries remain on the plant through most of the winter; the birds, squirrels and other wildlife don't eat them.

Since deadly nightshade is toxic, and can be absorbed through the skin, it is a good idea to wear gloves when uprooting it. As the berries can fall off during this process, it is also a good idea to be sure to get them all picked up, so no other animal or child tries to eat them [one source said that three to four berries could be fatal to a small child], and so that no other plants sprout. For that reason, I suggest collecting the uprooted plants in a garbage bag or old feed bag and burning it or putting it in the garbage—though if your garbage goes to a landfill, you're just transplanting the seeds to another location.

Here's what I remember from reading that article in "Equus": Nightshade can be sweet, and addictive for that reason, to horses; especially horses with a sweet-tooth, or that are unused to having abundant greenery available to them (check yes for Mirage: she went from a bare-ground paddock and grass pasture to a shady-wooded paddock with lots of undergrowth—shade to keep a black bay stallion's coat from fading too much in the summer sun. Mirage evidently found a stand of nightshade, liked it,

and gorged on it.) [It is estimated that one-to-ten pounds of nightshade can be fatal for horses--Univ. of Illinois] The article also stated that nightshade shuts down the kidneys, and flushing the horse's system can help to flush out the toxin. That's what I remember reading.

In current reports researched for this article, however, most state that nightshades are unpalatable to horses, unless they are hungry, a pasture is over-grazed, or nightshade leaves or seeds contaminate hay or grain sources, such as if it were to be baled in some hay or harvested with the grain. [Indeed, this does happen. A farmer I know had a combine accident while harvesting, in which he lost his big toe; and as he had hit a patch of nightshade right then, the hospital treated him for nightshade poisoning—his foot was purple from the juice of the ripe black berries.] The leaves, stems and berries remain toxic after drying. Nightshade may and often does grow just outside a fenced area, as many weeds do, and horses can often reach over to it.

Some reports state that the leaves are more toxic, some that the berries are more toxic, or that the green berries are more toxic. Some state that the black berries are more toxic. Some varieties have green berries that

ripen to red, others the go from green to black (the deadly nightshade variety in particular). Either way, the whole plant is toxic, so remove it from your environment—it's no time to take chances. However, according to the Rutgers University article, "Poisonous Weeds in Horse Pasture," in descending order of toxicity, the green berries are most toxic, followed by the red or black berries, then the leaves, stems and roots.

Current sources state that deadly nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) causes gastrointestinal irritation and central nervous system problems, due to the compounds glycoalkaloid solanine and atropine (an anticholinergic alkaloid), respectively. But all members of the *Solanum* species (Nightshades, Jerusalem Cherry, Potato, Horse Nettle, Buffalo Bur) can cause solanine poisoning. Symptoms of deadly nightshade poisoning include: hypersalivation, loss of appetite, severe gastrointestinal upset, diarrhea, drowsiness, sudden states of depression, confusion, behavioral change, weakness, loss of muscular coordination, dilated pupils, slow heart rate (brachycardia), dyspnea (shortness of breath or labored breathing), apparent hallucinations, convulsions. Some sources suggest the drug neostigmine to counteract the effects of atropine (which

affects the central nervous system), as well as supportive care, orally administered activated charcoal to help clear the toxin, and veterinarian-administered IV fluids [PetMd]. Other sources suggest treatment with GI protectants, and the drugs pilocarpine and phystostigmine for solanine poisoning [Merk Manuals]. Plant poisoning can be hard to diagnose, as so many symptoms can look like other problems or diseases. One site encouragingly stated that often plant poisoning can only be determined by examination of the gastrointestinal contents for plant fragments--postmortem.

Some sources recommend a blood profile including a chemistry analysis, a complete blood count, and a urinalysis, though no specific test is available for nightshade poisoning [PetMd]. As the nightshades can kill quickly, depending on the amount ingested, a milder case will usually afford the time to get some of these tests done, bearing in mind that the samples may have to be sent away to a testing lab.

Your best protection? Be knowledgeable, be aware, be proactive. Prevention is the best way to go. Know your plants, at least what grows in your area. Know what your horse and other animals are eating. Know what's available to them. Plant poisoning can be hard

to diagnose, as so many symptoms can look like other problems or diseases. Yes, vets do go through poisonous plant courses in their training, but poisoning cases are not very common, at least not the severe ones, so lack of familiarity can be a problem. It should be noted, that nightshades do serve medicinal purposes, as well, but are carefully handled in that respect.

Here's what to look for on deadly nightshade patrol:

- Broadleaf, smooth, dark green leaves on a plant that grows and branches similarly to a tomato plant, about three-foot tall.
- Small, star-shaped white (or purple—bittersweet variety) flowers with a golden center (stamen), that appear to be "turned inside out," with the stamen protruding. Other varieties have a purple, bell-shaped flower.
- A ragged or moth-eaten appearance to the leaves.
- Small clusters of smooth, round green berries that turn deep purple/black (or red in other varieties, as with the bittersweet).
- Look for it in fence rows, along buildings, shaded areas, among other weeds (thistle, burdock, nettle, etc.), and between fields and woods.
- When clearing nightshade, wear gloves, as the toxins can be absorbed through your skin, and perhaps a long-sleeved shirt to

avoid nettle stings.

- Collect the whole plant for disposal, don't just toss it aside, as the dried plant remains toxic. Use a bag. Collect all the berries, to avoid later ingestion by horses, other animals or children, and to avoid reseeding. Burn the collected plants, or if placing in the garbage, be sure it goes to an incinerator, not a landfill, to avoid spreading the seeds.
- The whole plant is poisonous. All parts are toxic: the leaves, stems, roots, berries. It is toxic to horses and other livestock, dogs, cats, humans.

Other plants poisonous to horses include: Buttercup, Milkweed, Jimsonweed, Poke-weed, Japanese Yew, Wild Cherry, Black Walnut, Maple trees, Poison Hemlock, Water Hemlock, Alsike Clover, Rhododendron/Azalea/Mountain Laurel, Bracken Fern, Horsetails, Lamb's Quarter, Lily of the Valley, Pigweed, Red Oak, St. John's Wort. There are many, many plants with varying degrees of toxicity. Some sources with lists and descriptions are listed below.

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deadly-nightshade

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"Poisonous Weeds in Horse Pasture," Rutgers University. <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/pubs/fs938/>

Road to the Ultimate X Showdown Trainer's 100-Day Challenge/Barrel Race: August Update

[Editor's Note: "The Valley Equestrian Newspaper" is following the progress of professional barrel racer and trainer Lindsay Jensen, 23, who owns and operates Rush Meadow Farm Performance Horses in Detroit Lakes, Minn., and her off-the-track thoroughbred, Miley, in their progress toward the Ultimate X Showdown. Jensen is one of 15 trainers from across the country accepted by application into the 100-day Ultimate X Showdown Trainer's Challenge/Barrel Race (UXS), produced by Dreaming of Three. The UXS is for off-the-track thoroughbreds, with a total purse of over \$10,000, with \$5,000 paid out to the winner. All proceeds go to support off-the-track thoroughbred rescues. The UXS Trainer's Challenge/Barrel Race will be held Sept. 5, 2014, at 7 p.m. at Simmons Equestrian Center, Negley, Ohio.

Dreaming of Three is a non-profit organization that does charitable fund raising through rodeo and a passion for horses. Based on the founder, Jackie Harris' experience of losing her step-father to cancer, and her father to heart disease, plus a love of barrel racing, Dreaming of Three was born of a desire to support three charities (American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, and St. Jude's Children's Hospital) by donating Harris' barrel racing winnings, and incorporating the symbolic three barrels of barrel racing. Over time, Dreaming of Three has grown to include a Rodeo Kids Program, where kids with cancer or heart disease and their families are taken to rodeos. It also includes disaster relief fund raising, with Team DQ3. For more information, go to www.dreamingofthree.org.]

Valley Equestrian: How are

things going with Miley's training? Any challenges?

Jensen: Things are going very well. The only challenge I've had is that another horse flipped-over on me and broke my nose and some bones in my cheek a couple of weeks ago. But it really hasn't bothered me, and is healing well. Miley has been great, no challenges. I've taken her to four or five barrel races, and she keeps getting faster. She was close to winning some money—not any big races, just some smaller races.

She runs barrels like she was born to do it. She's not a speed-demon; she actually likes going slow, and I've had to teach her to go



faster. But now she likes it, likes going fast. She's learning where to put her hind-end around the barrels. Thoroughbreds are not used to using their hind quarters that way; they're used to running, and using their forelegs more. Before, Miley was turning on her front legs, and it was kind of messy. But now she's figured it out and she likes it. She's not struggling anymore.



Now, I just have to get her going quicker and get ready for the free-style [part of the challenge]. [Competitors] have to demonstrate how "broke" their horse is by stopping and backing, side-passing over a pole, turning on the forehand and haunches in both directions, plus create a five-minute free-style pattern. At first, Miley was afraid to go over the pole, but she's getting used to it, and we're working on her turning on her forehand. She's one of those horses where you can get after her, and she'll get it; she won't get real frustrated and blow up. She just listens.

VEN: Who are you're sponsors for the Ultimate X Showdown?

Jensen: Cindy Besser of Roasted to Perfection donated feed for all 100 days of the competition. Miley has responded really well to it. She has this kind of calm energy; it's hard to get a rise out of her. A lot of thoroughbreds will usually eventually show some of that "hotness" that they have, but she is just really calm and mellow. Nothing bothers her, not even fireworks, and I took her to some events with fireworks—nothing. She's kind of a "go-to-gal," a real steady-eddy; I was even able to ride her bareback out of the pasture ponying along four other training horses—

and I'd never tried to ride her bareback before. I can do anything on her. She's totally different from last year's horse: That one was more challenging, more of a hot-head. She was a money-winner, but harder, more excitable and liked to go fast. But on the Roasted to Perfection feed, Miley has remained calm, and gained some weight—she's still in racing-shape, but she's muscled-up more using different muscles. She's shiny and healthy-looking. She's a finicky eater, and she eats this right up.

My other sponsors are Silver Lining Herbs from Detroit Lakes, owned by Anna Tietz. Tietz and her husband, Guy, who also own a hay company, donated beautiful bales of hay for Miley, as well. Miley has been more tolerable when in season, when she's been on the herbs. Bill Kroska, Miley's former owner, was really excited to hear about Miley being in the competition, and donated some money. And Tammy Cummings of TroubleMaker Custom Leather donated a headstall and breast collar.

Watch for more updates as the UXS Challenge approaches. We will continue to follow Lindsay and Miley in upcoming issues. And follow them on our Face Book page: www.facebook.com/VE-News.

31st Annual Sheriff's Mounted Posse Wagon Train

The 31st annual Wagon Train for Youth sponsored by the Minnesota Sheriffs' Posse Association will be held September 12 through September 14, 2014 at the Waseca County Fairgrounds. The Train will be raising funds for Children's Hospital and Clinics of Minnesota. The Wagon Train will leave daily from the fairgrounds and return each evening.

The fairgrounds will be open for participants Thursday Sept. 11 at 4 p.m and close Sunday, Sept. 14 at noon. The ride will cover 15 to 20 miles on Friday and Saturday. It is recommended that horses be shod all the way around.

Breakfast will be served Friday, Saturday, and Sunday as well as an evening meal on Friday and Saturday. Snacks will be available at each rest stop on the ride. Participants will need to pack a lunch for Friday. On Saturday the wagon train will be at the Farmamerica Fall Festival - food vendors will be happy to serve you!

You do not need a wagon to participate. Riders with saddled horses will follow the wagons - all horses (and mules!) are welcome. You should ensure that your horse is up to date on all vaccinations. Any unruly horses posing a significant safety threat will be asked to leave. Please ensure that all riders are appropriately matched to their horse. We strongly recommend safety helmets for all riders under the age of 18.

According to Jolene Gundermann, the proceeds of the wagon ride are donated to the Children's Hospital of Minneapolis.

Winona County hosted the last two years and Waseca County is hosting the Sheriff's Posse Wagon Train for the next two years.

"We will have a different route each day traveling about 16-20 miles each day. This year we plan to travel to Farmamerica, west of Waseca, for their Fall Festival, on Saturday. We may delay the start time if there is thunder and lightning, but if we are out on the road, we ride rain or shine. So, don't forget your rain gear!



Photo by Ley Bouchard

"We could have anywhere from four to 25 wagons. We just never know. We try to encourage pre-registration for meal-planning, etc., but most people watch the weather and just show up, if it's going to be nice. I'm hoping for 50-80 people but we could have 100 or more. One advantage Waseca has is that it is located in the center of Southern Minnesota so everyone has about the same distance to travel to get here. We already have one wagon coming from Iowa, so that is a good sign. I also hope to have 15-20 riding horses with us too.

For more information, please contact either Ken Borgmann at: ken.borgmann@gmail.com or Jolene Gundermann at: jgunderm2@gmail.com or the Waseca County Sheriff's Mounted Posse at 507- 838-8318.

See more coverage on the Valley Equestrian Newspaper web site and Facebook page: www.theveonline.com or www.facebook.com/VENews

Dr. Getty Nutrition Information

Adopting a Wild Horse or Feral Mustang?

Guidelines from Dr. Getty on feeding the horse in transition to domesticated

If there's one thing we can say about the benefit of being wild (or feral, in healthful surroundings) is that in most circumstances horses which have been free to roam open lands are often healthier than domesticated horses. Think about their diet for starters—they have so much variety—grasses, flowers, berries, leaves, seeds, fruits—providing all the nutrients their bodies need. Once they leave this natural setting, however, they typically eat only hay and it's the same hay every day. Hay is dead grass and no longer contains the vitamins found in their previous, varied diet. The horse's nutrition gaps will need to be filled in order to match the rich nutrition of the wild environment. Therefore, to fill in the nutritional gaps:

- Provide a comprehensive vitamin/mineral supplement along with chia seeds and ground flaxseeds for omega 3s

Horses in the wild rarely experience colic. One of the main reasons for colic in the domesticated situation is the rapid change from one feed to another, leaving the bacterial hindgut population little time to adjust. These microbes are responsible for digesting the fiber found in

forage (hay and/or pasture) and need to be protected. To help your new horse's digestive system adjust:

- Feed a potent probiotic that contains billions of colony forming units (CFUs)

Ulcers are common in domesticated horses, especially when transitioning to a new environment. Horses are trickle feeders – they need to graze continuously to keep the digestive system functioning normally. That means they should have quality hay 24/7. Horses are awake and moving most of the time and will take 15 to 20 minute naps intermittently throughout the day and night. The best way to protect your new horse against an ulcer is to:

- Feed him in sync with his natural instinct to continuously graze by giving him hay, free-choice

Many wild horses get adopted when they are young. They require the variety of feed sources that they had in the wild that offered quality protein, fat, vitamins, and minerals to support new growth. To accomplish this, add some alfalfa to your

horse's diet (about 30% of the total hay ration), along with either a supplement or a commercially fortified feed. Avoid cereal grains (oats, corn, etc.) and molasses – they can interfere with normal bone and joint development. In general:

- Feed growing horses extra protein, vitamins and minerals, chia seeds and ground flaxseeds to provide omega 3s, while avoiding high amounts of starch

Respect your horse's need to roam, along with other horses. Naturally curious,

they enjoy seeking out feed in various locations, feeding their bodies, but also providing movement to keep the digestive tract muscles in good tone. And being prey animals, they depend on the companionship of other horses to protect them against threats, real and imagined. This transition phase can be stressful – new sights, smells, people, and other animals can create a hormonal response that can lead to a variety of health problems, including ulcers, colic, and laminitis.

All of these can be avoided by making slow adjustments, filling in nutritional gaps, and doing as much as possible to simulate a natural setting. In other words...

- Feed him like he was meant to be fed – like a horse.

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Juliet M. Getty, Ph.D. is an internationally respected, independent equine nutritionist who believes that optimizing horse health comes from understanding how the horse's physiology and instincts determine the correct feeding and nutrition practices. She is available for private consultations and speaking engagements.

Dr. Getty's comprehensive resource book, Feed Your Horse Like

a Horse, is available at Dr. Getty's website, www.gettyequinenutrition.com, as well as from Amazon (www.amazon.com) and other online book retailers. The seven separate volumes in Dr. Getty's topic-centered "Spotlight on Equine Nutrition" series are also available at her website, where Dr. Getty offers special package pricing, and from Amazon (in print and Kindle versions) and from other online retailers.

Dr. Getty's website, www.gettyequinenutrition.com, offers a generous stock of free, useful information for the horseperson. Sign up for her free monthly newsletter, Forage for Thought; browse her library of reference articles; search her nutrition forum; and purchase recordings of her educational teleseminars. Plus, for the growing community of horse owners and managers who allow their horses free choice forage feeding, Dr. Getty has set up a special forum as a place for support, celebrations, congratulations, and idea sharing. Share your experiences at jmgetty.blogspot.com. Reach Dr. Getty directly at gettyequinenutrition@gmail.com.



EquiLottery Revenue Studies Show Big Upside for Ontario Horse Racing

Toronto, ON – In year one of operation, initial revenue studies provided to Canadian company EquiLottery Corp. estimate its lottery and horse racing game EquiLottery to generate \$100 million in ticket sales. Factor in the effect the game will have on increasing horseplayer interest and EquiLottery is projected to generate \$101.5 million in handle to the racing industry.

The recent mandate by the Premier for integration between the lottery and the provincial horse racing industries makes Ontario an ideal location for the implementation of EquiLottery: The Greatest Two Dollars in Sports. A large population base including Toronto, North America's third largest city, the distribution and exposure provided by over 8,000 lottery terminals will bring this sport to many

who have yet to be exposed to its brilliance and excitement.

"Discovering the horse racing industry as a 30-something adult, I can relate to the steep learning curve it takes to understand this beautiful sport," said Brad Cummings, who invented and patented the game and serves as President and CEO of EquiLottery LLC, parent company of EquiLottery

Corp. "My initial goal was to increase the exposure of horse racing and develop new fans within a structure that makes lotteries profitable. EquiLottery certainly satisfies these criteria."

Based on the game design, \$50 million will transfer to the racetrack pools and influence payouts on exotic wagers at the track. This initial report, performed

by world leading lottery auditing firm Gaming Laboratories International, also estimates \$51.5 million in additional racetrack handle from horseplayers who are drawn to EquiLottery infused pools.

"As we've learned more about the Ontario market, it is clear there has yet to be an answer to the question 'what does integration

mean?" said Cummings. "With estimated revenues of over \$100 million annually in additional Ontario handle, our game looks to add over \$25 million to the racing industry in takeout revenue and add an attractive new \$100 million gaming option to the lottery. These numbers suggest EquiLottery can at least be part of that answer."

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New Tax Court Case Issues Split Decision

By John Alan Cohan, Attorney at Law

A new Tax Court decision involved very substantial deficiencies and penalties against the taxpayer, Merrill C. Roberts, of Indianapolis, Indiana, over a four-year period for horse-related activities [Roberts v. Commissioner, T.C. Memo 2014-74]. In an unusual decision, the court held that the taxpayer had a profit objective in two of the four years; the remaining two years were ruled to lack the requisite profit objective, and hence deductions for those years was disallowed.

In years prior to starting the horse activity, Mr. Roberts owned and operated several successful nightclubs in the region. He sold his interests in the 1990s. Mr. Roberts had also acquired some real estate, including a parcel with an operational horse boarding stable. He got interested in the financial prospect of horse racing and, after conferring with a trainer, got an owner's license, purchased two young horses for \$1,000 each and put them into training for the racetrack. He studied racing videos, and built a training track on his property. In the first year, 1999, Mr. Roberts' net income was \$18,000 from the two horses. He bought more horses, including a breeding stallion, and hired several trainers. He worked on developing skills as a trainer, and he passed the trainer's license test.

In 2005, the taxpayer decided to build his own

training facility, but during the course of development he ran into hurdles with the city's strict building codes. He sold the property for \$2.2 million, and bought a parcel in an area that had less restrictive building codes. Following the advice of a bloodstock agent, he developed the new property into a training facility, and it was completed in 2007. He produced his own hay and rented some of the land out for \$20,000 a year.

The taxpayer engaged in boarding, breeding, training and racing of horses. He hired an assistant trainer and spent considerable time matching horses with specific races.

There were several setbacks, including loss of some stallions due to injuries, and quarantine of some horses that prevented them from being raced in 2008.

The taxpayer served on the boards of two horse racing associations, and successfully lobbied the legislature to permit slot machines at racetracks, in turn increasing purses for horse racing in Indiana.

Mr. Roberts used a "rudimentary accounting system" for all of his businesses, including his horse-related finances. He relied on canceled checks and bank statements to track expenses. For gross receipts, he partly relied on an Internet database devoted to horse racing records.

The taxpayer demonstrated significant changes in operation, adoption of new techniques, and abandonment of unprofitable methods when he moved his horse racing activity from the original property to the new property. The court said this enabled him to mitigate expenses in his old facility and move to a property that would not be cost prohibitive because of building codes. This also allowed him to reduce feeding costs by growing his own hay and renting out some of the property.

The court found that the taxpayer's accounting method, "while rudimentary," provided him with enough information to make informed business decisions. The court noted that the Internet provides a database that conveniently tracks earnings and other information on each of the horses raced by the taxpayer.

The court noted that when the taxpayer made significant changes in 2007 and 2008, his manner of carrying on the activity became more businesslike.

The court also found that the taxpayer had become an expert in his own right in the financial aspects of horse racing, and that he consulted with industry experts, whose advice he adopted.

The court said that his purchase of property to breed and train horses on and the improvements thereon might be expected to appre-

ciate in value, and that this was relevant as to whether his horse activities were carried on with the intent to profit.

The court held that the taxpayer did not engage in his horse-related activities for profit during 2005 and 2006, but he demonstrated a profit objective in 2007 and thereafter. One of the significant points of this case is that a taxpayer's business records can in effect be supplemented by database records available on the Internet. The court also seemed impressed with the taxpayer's involvement on the boards of horse racing associations and in lobbying the legislature.

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"The horse shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the sense we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear."

– Henry Beston

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Industry Leaders Meet at AHC Conference in Washington AHC's 45th Annual Meeting a Success

(Washington, D.C.)- The 45th annual meeting of the American Horse Council was held in Washington, DC in late June. It drew nearly 200 attendees, including industry leaders from 50 organizations, members of Congress and staff, and federal regulatory agency staff. Photos from the meeting are posted on the AHC's website.

"We had our best attendance in quite a few years," said AHC president Jay Hickey. "We think that is because of the importance of the issues facing all segments of the horse industry before Congress and the federal agencies. We also think the topic of this year's National Issues Forum, 'Where Have All the Horses Gone,' attracted great interest."

The first day of the AHC's annual meeting is an opportunity for all of the AHC's advisory committees to meet face-to-face and discuss federal issues affecting all segments of the horse industry. Those committees include the Animal Welfare Committee, Health and Regulatory Committee, Horse Show Committee, Racing Committee, and Recreation Committee. The AHC's Coalition of State Horse Councils also meets, as does the Unwanted Horse Coalition.

Probably the most-discussed legislation was the Prevent All Soring Tactics Act (PAST Act), which was before the AHC's Animal Welfare Committee and Horse Show Committee, but brought up at several others too. "The AHC, along with all major breed registries and horse show organizations, supports the bill, which now has 296 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and 57 cosponsors in the Senate. That position of support was reaffirmed at the meetings," noted Hickey, "So we will redouble our

efforts to get it passed. But even with that number of Congressional cosponsors, we still need more help from the horse community at large to get it over the finish line."

"Taxes are always an important topic," Hickey noted, "and were again at this annual meeting." Several favorable tax provisions applicable to horses and assets used in the horse business expired or dropped in value at the end of 2013. This includes the Section 179 expense deduction, which went from \$500,000 to \$25,000; bonus depreciation, which went from 50% to zero; the ability to depreciate all race horses over three years, rather than over seven; and the higher limits for contributions of real property for conservation purposes by farmers and ranchers. "Legislation to extend all these provisions is being considered by Congress and the AHC supports such extensions. We are hopeful any extensions will be retroactive to January 1, 2014," said Hickey.

In addition to the reinstatement of three-year-depreciation for all race horses, the AHC Racing Committee also discussed efforts to have the Department of Treasury re-characterize the definition of a wager so that fewer wagers are subject to withholding. Current federal bills to legalize and regulate, or simply prohibit, Internet wagering were reviewed. The AHC was directed to ensure that if any legislation is considered in Congress it protects what the racing industry is now offering under the Interstate Horseracing Act.

In the equine health area, attendees received reports on the Equine Veterinary Mobility Act, which would

allow veterinarians to transport medications deemed "controlled substances" to farms, tracks, shows, and events without fear of violating the Controlled Substances Act. "This critical legislation has passed the Senate and should get to the House floor for a vote," said Hickey. "If we can get it to the floor, it should pass and eliminate veterinarians' concerns about the Drug Enforcement Agency finding a violation should vets take medications out of their offices to administer to horses."



In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has proposed several changes to the import-export regulations. The Health and Regulatory Committee was updated by USDA staff on the latest rule change proposal that would eliminate Saudi Arabia from the list of countries with African Horse Sickness and make it easier for horses to be imported from that country. As with any changes to the import rules, the industry wants to facilitate the international movement of horses, "but not at the expense of protecting the U.S. horse population," said Hickey. "This meeting allowed the AHC Health and Regulatory Committee to discuss this proposal and prepare to submit comments to USDA by mid-August on the proposed rule change."

Finally, the AHC's Recreation Committee discussed the recent introduction of the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (H.R. 4886), which would direct the Forest Service to address the current trail maintenance backlog that is adversely affecting trail users, including equestrians. "The AHC, along with the Back Country Horsemen of America and the Wilderness Society, was significantly involved in the drafting and introduction of

this bill. We are all for it," said Hickey.

The AHC annual meeting also was an opportunity for the AHC's Coalition of State Horse Councils to meet and discuss state issues and activities thoroughly. The AHC's Van Ness Award, presented to an outstanding person associated with state councils, was presented to Paul Briney of Illinois at the luncheon on Tuesday.

The AHC's National Issues Forum was held on the second day of the convention and heard three panels discuss "Where Have All the Horses Gone." Tim Capps, Director, Equine Industry Program, University of Louisville, was the keynote speaker. Attendees heard representatives of racing, showing and other stakeholders explain in detail how the dramatic fall-off in registered horses affected them and what they were doing about it. "Clearly, this is a critical issue for the future of the horse industry," said Hickey. "But just as clearly the leaders of the industry are acutely aware of it and taking steps to reverse it."

One effort is the AHC's "Time To Ride" program and convention attendees heard an update on the "100 Day Horse Challenge" intended to attract 100,000 new people to an equine experience this summer. Various stables, events, and facilities will be compet-

ing for \$100,000 in cash and other prizes. Patti Colbert of PCE Enterprises gave an update on the Challenge.

Dr. Nat White updated all on the current status of the National Equine Health Plan and the formation of the Equine Disease Communication Center, which will be operational later this year and provide accurate and up-to-date information on disease outbreaks.

The AHC annual meeting was also an opportunity for the Unwanted Horse Coalition, which operates under the AHC, to meet. Members present reaffirmed their commitment to the UHC and its various ongoing educational programs.

The AHC's convention also included the AHC's Congressional Reception, which allowed industry people to visit informally with Members of Congress to renew old friendships, make new ones, and discuss industry concerns.

The annual Congressional Ride-In took place all day Wednesday, June 25. The Ride-In brought horse people to Capitol Hill to meet with their elected representatives to discuss important issues affecting them.

"As always, the AHC's annual meeting brings together the horse industry's leaders, stakeholders, service providers and rank-and-file to discuss common federal issues of importance," said Hickey.

About the American Horse Council

As the national association representing all segments of the horse industry in Washington, D.C., the American Horse Council works daily to represent equine interests and opportunities. The AHC promotes and protects the industry by communicating with Congress, federal agencies, the media and the industry on behalf of all horse related interests each and every day.

The AHC is member supported by individuals and organizations representing virtually every facet of the horse world from owners, breeders, veterinarians, farriers, breed registries and horsemen's associations to horse shows, race tracks, rodeos, commercial suppliers and state horse councils.

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The Valley Equestrian Newspaper loves older horses!

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

Haverstick Films and Horse Lifestyle Media Team to Produce Full Length Film

New York, NY – July 22, 2014 – Haverstick Films and Horse Lifestyle Media have teamed up to co-produce a film based on the short form documentary "SAVE NYC HORSE CARRIAGES" narrated by Liam Neeson. The longer format will allow the independent filmmakers to track the issue over time, as the struggle plays out in New York City and across the country. The film will utilize the story arc of the issue as it continues to develop within both the political sphere and the national psyche.

"The Last Horsemen of New York" will take the audience directly inside the battle of the carriage industry and attempt to show the dynamic forces at play as the drivers seek to hold on to their way of life. The filmmakers will profile magnetic characters from both sides of this controversial debate. The long form documentary will invest the audience in the struggle of the drivers and their supporting unions, while also studying the conflict inherent from the opposing activists and the well-heeled interests of campaign politics.

"We'll be actively seeking comments from both sides of this debate to best frame the story," stated Mary Haverstick, who is directing the project. "Who knows when we're rolling the camera what stories will erupt. We will explore each story as they unfold, the more current this is – the better."

The film project will further involve and enrich a well-rounded philosophical debate concerning the overarching humane care of the NYC carriage horses. Scholars and industry professionals are being sought out to contribute their thoughts concerning the ethical treatment of animals. The producers will further juxtapose the viewpoints from several

communities, such as the Amish, that still rely on the working animal relationship.

"This documentary is a point of view and not everyone is going to agree with it, but it's necessary to put this story on film to best illustrate the impact over time. The news sound-bites are inadequate to the full narrative at play," added Haverstick. "We are going to throw into stark relief this fight in New York and follow the issue from its historical base to its national outcome. We will broaden this story out to show the entire perspective and raise the questions that force us to evaluate ourselves and our relationship with animals in the world. This will be the documentary of record on this subject. We don't know how this is going to end."

"Horse Lifestyle Media is confident that Haverstick Films will take great care to bring the viewer beyond the hyped sensationalism and delve into the issues that are proving to be so politically and philosophically divisive," said Sarah A. Chase, Chief Business Officer for Horse Lifestyle Media. "We're reminded of the saying that 'Wherever man has left his footprint in the long ascent from barbarism to civilization we will find the hoofprint of the horse beside it,' and Horse Lifestyle Media is pleased to support this project because it further illustrates the pivotal role horses continue to play in shaping our modern perspectives."

For complete details surrounding "The Last Horsemen of New York" film project, including the press kit and the best way to make either a professional or public contribution, please visit the film's official site at: www.horselifestylefoundation.org and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Last-HorsemenNYC

About Haverstick Films: Haverstick Films, an award winning production company, was founded by writer/director Mary Haverstick and producer/composer Michele Mercure to pursue true independent filmmaking. The company, which thrives as a truly independent voice, is the premiere production company in Pennsylvania. Topics that require a longer investigative arc or in depth commitment to the pursuit of a truthful story are hallmarks of the company. In a world where fast moving media demands the quickest fix, independent feature length cinema now plays the role of exhaustive journalism. With its proven ability to attract A-list talent, Haverstick Films remains committed to quality and truth in storytelling. For more details: www.haverstickfilms.com New York Daily News: http://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/liam-neson-narrates-short-film-city-horse-history-article-1.1788380.

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MDA warns residents of toxic weed found in eastern Minnesota

Residents should look for Grecian foxglove and report it to the MDA

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) is asking for the public's help to find and eliminate Grecian foxglove (*Digitalis lanata*), a highly toxic plant that is known to be growing in parts of Washington, Dakota, and Wabasha counties.

Grecian foxglove is not native to North America, having come from central and southern Europe. The weed is poisonous, and both fresh and dried plant parts are toxic. The greatest concern is the potentially lethal threat of human and livestock poisoning. The leafy portions of Grecian foxglove could be mistaken for lettuce or other leafy greens, and the plant has even been found growing in a homeowner's vegetable garden.

The weed is a perennial plant and will come back year after year if it isn't treated. It's known to be growing in roadsides, residential yards, grasslands, and forest margins along the St. Croix and Mississippi Rivers. Residents in those areas are encouraged to look for the weed and report any sighting to the MDA. What does Grecian foxglove look like?

(For photos, go to <http://www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/badplants/foxglove.aspx>)

photos of the whole plant, rosettes, flowers and seed stalks that can be emailed for identification.

- In its first year, the weed seedling looks like a green rosette with no flowers.
- Mature plants are two to five feet tall with creamy white, tubular flowers with purplish lines.
- Leaves are simple, alternate, oblong-shaped, and about six inches long with a pointed tip. What sets Grecian foxglove apart from common or garden foxglove is both the flowering stems and undersides of the Grecian foxglove leaves have woolly hairs.
- Note the exact location.
- If possible, take digital

photos of the whole plant, rosettes, flowers and seed stalks that can be emailed for identification.

The MDA has teamed up with local and state partners to rid Minnesota of this toxic weed. Currently known infestations, and those reported to the MDA throughout the summer, will be treated by Conservation Corps Minnesota in the fall. This work is funded by the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizens Commission on Minnesota Resources.

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Contact: James Island, owner, 612-801-4563 or email Kari at kari.venews@hotmail.com

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