

# Valley Equine News

Our  
80th  
Issue!

March 2015

***It's ExpoTime!***

*See who, what, where and  
when on page 2*

***See Austin  
Anderson  
at the Iowa  
Horse Fair***

***Vaquero  
Horsemanship***

***Anna  
Twinney  
on Feedlot  
Foals***

***The Six Breaths  
of Compassion***

***Whispers from  
the Wild Ones  
DVD Review***



# How to Prepare for a Horse Expo

By Ley Bouchard

That time of year is upon us once again! It is time to shake off the winter and see what is new in the equestrian world. Get ready to shine up the boots and the vests, take that cowgirl wardrobe out of hibernation and prepare for the fun season of expos in your region.

The following includes many of the regional expos taking place in the spring of 2015:

**The Rocky Mountain Horse Expo** is March 13-15 at the National Western Complex in Denver, Colo. Clinicians highlight this early expo with Mike Brashear, Richard Shrake, Mark Bolendar, Anna Twinney, Regina Wendler and many others from all disciplines. The RMHE also features an Art in the Park, Mane Event, Craft Fair, Holistic Horse Fair and more.

**Tri-State Horse Expo** takes place March 19-22 at the W. H. Lyon Fairgrounds in Sioux Falls, S.D. Organizers plan a ranch rodeo, SDRR Rodeo, 4H Events, Super Sort, barrel racing, horse soccer, drill team, cowboy church, vendors and clinicians.

**Iowa Horse Fair** (see flyer on adjoining page) April 10-12 at the Iowa State Fairgrounds in Des Moines, Iowa. The Iowa Horse Council invited top clinicians from around the country, Austin

Anderson and the Texas Trick Riders, Indalecio Macedo, Ryan Rose, Kristi Smith, Bob Smith, Wendy Murdoch along with the Wright Rodeo, Chassor El Carretero, Cowboy Mounted Shooters, the IHF Cowgirl Queen Contest, Colt Starting Challenge, free pony rides, wagon rides and drill teams.

**Midwest Horse Fair** is April 17-19 at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, Wis. Their web site promises many clinicians, horses, exhibitors, rodeo, the Epic Night of the Horse, and more.

The **MN Horse Expo** will be held April 24-26 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds in St. Paul, Minn. They expect 50 horse breeds, pony and wagon rides, tack and clothing, education presentations, clinicians like Craig Cameron, Jec Aristotle Ballou, Shawna Karrasch and more.

June 5-7 heralds the **Western States Horse Expo** at the Cal Expo in Sacramento, Calif. Live entertainment, the Magnificent 7, Ultimate Super Horse Challenge, an art show, vendors galore, young rider park, trail symposium and Horse Expo University. Horse expos, fairs and festivals are not for the novice shopper. Many of these events are several days in duration and if you



go for only a day, expect to do a lot of walking to get to everything you want to see. An average expo will cover several blocks and in each building you may walk miles of circles around exhibitor booths. Being prepared and planning the day/s are the only way to come from it with a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment.

### What to wear?

Dress in layers and of course, dress for the event. Depending upon the time of year and the location, one can and does encounter a variety of weather conditions when planning to attend horse expos. In many years, the MN Horse Expo encounters sunshine, snow, rain, cold and often plenty of wind!

The Western States Horse Expo in Sacramento usually has plenty of sunshine and rain is a rarity, but you might want to have a windbreaker, sun visor, sunglasses and layered clothing

A scarf or big hanky is a great, lightweight item to carry so you can use it as a headband, neckband, hankie or wash rag. A Ziploc bag or two will keep items separated and dry. Those moist towelettes, or pellets which when wet expand into a full size towel are also very handy, especially if you are traveling with children in tow.

This big bag you carry should have a nice wide, comfortable shoulder strap that will fit across your chest and lay on the side of your hip so you are hands free to pet that gorgeous horse walking down the avenue – oh, but be sure to ask the owner first! This bag should be large enough that you are able to fill it with brochures, business cards, literature galore, the “Valley Equestrian News” and other FREE materials you pick up BESIDES all the cool stuff you will be purchasing! Wait until the last to buy that saddle or driving cart – they are way too big to carry around all day!

### Comfort is Key

Be sure you have walking shoes or boots that are comfortable. This is not a day for glamour unless you can combine glamour with comfort. Even if you sit to watch a presentation, you are going to do a lot of walking between clinics or presentations and the vendor areas are gigantic at most of the larger expos like the WSHE or MN Horse Expo which has several buildings to go through.

### Bringing Children?

If you are bringing a child or children you have more guts than I can imagine. Depending upon their age, tenacity and patience, well, you know your kids! You want ample snacks, so you don't have to rely on the vendors or snack bar. The food prices are high at expos and there is not much variety in food

and forget about healthy options. Pizza, tacos in a bag, burgers, fries, cheese curds, and the usual fare will be found at these fairs. I have seen people bring little bags of carrots, apples, oranges, (sliced and ready to eat) along with mini-cookies, dried fruits and trail mixes, cheese and crackers, clean candies and dried beef jerky. These are all nice items to carry for when you are sitting watching a clinician. It doesn't mean you can't enjoy a snack from the local vendor, it just provides you and your family with options.

### Photography and Notes

As a photojournalist it goes without saying that I have my camera bag along with note paper and pens. I have backup batteries, extra storage media should I have trouble with my SD card or run out of room, saints preserve us! You always want plenty of storage media for your digital cameras because you never know what cute image you will encounter at a horse fair. People are dressed in costume for the breed parades, riding in their best attire with their horse decorated, too. When walking around the exhibitor booth you may come across an item you could not afford but might be very well able to create. An image would be that little reminder of what and how it was done. I'm not encouraging any copyright or trademark violations, but crafts are open game!

Have you more ideas or trusted tips you use at horse expos? Email us at the VEN: thevenews@gmail.com and we will print your ideas and suggestions on the Letters/Editorial page 5!

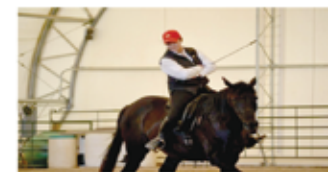
Photos by Ley Bouchard



Wendy Murdoch



Ryan Rose



Kristi Smith



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The Valley Equestrian Newspaper

Vol. 9 No. 3

PO Box 64
Sabin, MN 56580
theVENews@gmail.com

Owner/Publisher
Ley Bouchard
(701) 361-8648
leybou@gmail.com

Managing Editor/
Sales Director
Kari Hagstrom
(320) 766-2620
Kari.venews@hotmail.com

Contributing Writers
Orv Alvshere
Ley Bouchard
Dr. Juliet Getty, Ph.D.
Kari Hagstrom
Janice Ladendorf
Charles Wilhelm
Katherine Windfeather-Thompson

The Valley Equestrian News
is published monthly.

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The Valley Equestrian Newspaper

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About the Cover

Austin Anderson, a movie stuntman, entertainer and horseman entertains the masses at the Iowa Horse Fair April 10-12, 2015 in Des Moines, Iowa. Read about the Iowa Horse Fair and several other regional horse expos taking place this spring on page 2.

On the cover is Anderson roman riding his white horses, Ringo and Buck. See Austin Anderson at the Iowa Horse Fair! Photos courtesy Austin Anderson who tells us, "Ringo has been in several TV and films including Disney's Alamo, 2004, Second-hand Lions, 2003 and Fox TV's series Sleepy Hollow."



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Walking into the Unknown:
Anna Twinney on Feedlot Foals, Part 1

By Kari Hagstrom

[Editor's Note: "The Valley Equestrian News" has been doing a series on the plight of PMU (Premarin) foals, nurse mare foals, and now feedlot foals, in conversation with internationally recognized natural horsemanship clinician and equine behaviorist, Anna Twinney, founder of Reach Out to Horses® (ROTH), www.reachouttohorses.com. The previous articles on PMU foals and nurse mare foals may be found in the January and February, 2015 issues, respectively, of the VEN, or online at www.theveonline.com. Feedlot foals, as Twinney calls them, are foals which have been abandoned at the feedlots when their mothers are shipped to Canada or Mexico for slaughter. The foals are usually allowed to shift for themselves. Most to many die of neglect and starvation. The lucky ones find a mare who is willing to allow them to nurse. They don't face much of a future. However, some are bought from the feedlots by rescues and other concerned individuals.]

Valley Equestrian News: Why do we have feedlot foals? Where are they coming from and why is it a problem that people need to know about it?

Twinney: I want to tell you how it all came about for me. As part of the trainer's course, my students have to be part of foal gentling or wild horse gentling. It's not necessarily an easy task to just get your hands on foals or mustangs, or indeed untouched horses, but it's part of the curriculum to do the field study, and to ultimately learn how to gentle some of these horses. I feel like it's an important part, and has been an important part of the webinars I do, as well.

One of the statements I made the other day [on the webinar] is, "A horse, is a horse, is a horse." We all say that: "A horse, is a horse, is a horse," and yet it's not entirely like that. The horsemanship piece, yes it applies to every horse, and yes when we look at natural horsemanship we're speaking the horse's language, from the energetic connection, telepathic, body language, we're speaking their language. And of course that transfers to a horse, be it a mini, a pony, a horse, be it your foal, your yearling, your two year old, your performance horse, your geriatric: A horse, is a horse, is a horse. But it's not. And so here's the thing when you gentle a foal, or you gentle a mustang: it's quite different from doing a performance horse. Different from dealing with stallions. And so the webinars have not only been made up of what's acknowledging a try, what is a try and what does it look like, or when is something abuse. These are topics that I've just spoken about, and I put in there, what's the difference between handling a foal, versus an untouched horse, versus a stallion. And

there are differences, and if you don't have the experience, it's hard to call yourself a horse trainer in these areas. And people do; they go out there and say they've got 30 years' experience, but when you really need to look at the experience and where it is, because if you've been three-day eventing you don't have experience gentling foals, and you don't know what a foal needs. And it's not all intuitive, either; some of it is, and some of it's knowledge. And so realizing this, one of my students got her hands on a number of foals and I asked how she'd done that. And I got together with the location, and it's Friends of Horses and it's here in Colorado.

So we sat down for a coffee meeting, and I remember it to this day. I met with Bill [Stiffer of Friends of Horses Rescue and Adoption in Centennial, Colo., www.fohrescue.com], and he said, "So what is it you need, Anna?" And I said I was looking for foals. He asked me the age, and I said I wasn't too attached to the age, but anything under one, so that we could class them as foals rather than yearlings. And he said, "So when is it you're looking for?" I said September is a good time, because we would be looking at either Premarin foals at that time, or foals that had been weaned, and maybe we can find foals. Over the years that I've done these courses, it's been a big, big event to get foals. A big event: bringing them in from Canada, fundraising for them, organizing their transportation, organizing fundraising events. We've really had to come up with creative ideas as to how to get the money. There've been multiple rescues I've teamed up with; we've made a bit of a team out of it, like a little village to rescue these foals.

So I put it on the calendar, and I wanted to team with somebody, and bring it to Colorado. So here's Bill from the rescue, and he said, "It's not a problem, not a problem to bring it home." He went, "How many do you need?" And I said ten; ten's a good number. I can teach ten students and I can rescue ten foals, and support a rescue of ten, and play a big part in it. I remember it to this day when he said, "What do you need? How many foals do you need?" And I said ten, and he said, "I can get as many as you want." It was devastating, it wasn't cheerful; it wasn't that moment of "oh my goodness, this is awesome, he's got the foals, we can get as many ..." It was the sadness of "I can get as many as you want." He said, "You bring the people, I'll bring the foals." And it was that moment again, of feeling less-than, it doesn't matter what I do, that feeling of less-than, of oh my goodness, I can only get ten bums, maximum. Maximum.

Continued on page 14

Anna Twinney and Reach Out to Horses® have launched an Indiegogo campaign to help fund the donation of her "Whispers from the Wild Ones: Mustangs as Our Master Teachers™" DVD to organizations all over the United States who are involved with the fate of the wild mustang.

Help save the American mustang from extinction.

For many, the plight of the American wild horse is well known and close to their hearts. But most people, even those in the equine industry, do not know the seemingly insurmountable odds they are up against. These majestic beings face removal from their homes, round-ups into cruel and soul-crushing capture, and some say, their eventual extinction, unless we do something to stop it.

We have set aside 1,000 DVD sets to send to organizations all over the country and the world and with your support we will send this invaluable resource to as many as we can.

For as little as \$10 we can send out a copy of the DVD set to one of the thousands of organizations who truly need it!

Here is how you can help:

Go to the Reach Out to Horses homepage to connect and contribute to the Indiegogo campaign at www.reachouttohorses.com. The Indiegogo campaign runs until April 5, 2015.

Go to www.reachouttohorses.com to nominate a rescue organization to receive a copy of the "Whispers from the Wild Ones" DVD, and donate \$10 to the cause. The \$10 helps to cover shipping and handling.

Alert others to this cause, and share information about the plight of the American mustang. For more information, go to www.reachouttohorses.com.

Reader's Letters

I was kind of surprised on your article on the NFR [National Finals Rodeo] there was no mention of Brittany Diaz; or Brittany Fleck, her maiden name from Solon, North Dakota. The only lady from North Dakota to make the NFR ever, and not a mention.

My wife and I got a chance to talk to her a little when she made the NFR the first time a couple of years ago. She left her job at the bank and chased her dream. She may not be getting rich but she's "living the dream," as they say. Also this year she made the final four to run for \$100,000 at the Calgary Stampede.

Yours,
Ed Helgeson

Dear Mr. Helgeson:

We are so happy to receive letters from our readers and appreciate your comments about Brittany Diaz and her participation in the 2014 NFR. We rely on our readers to provide information and news as we are a small staff trying to reach out and provide local and national news to the people of the

region. We will try to provide the information you want in the near future.

In the meantime, photo left is Brittany Diaz Fleck at the 2014 NFR.

Keep reading! Thank you for your letter.

Editorial Staff



Photo by Tammy Scheffler for the Valley Equestrian News

# Rescued Treasures: New Life Begins When You Adopt-A-Horse

For more info please contact the  
**High Tail Horse Ranch & Rescue**  
chart@loretel.net  
Ranch: 701-526-3734  
Hawley, Minn.

This is Kate. She is a very well trained registered Arabian mare. Kate is super light to handle, and needs an experienced, light handed rider. Although she had come a long way in our rescue program, she will still get easily frustrated with a heavy handed rider, and may dump them rather than tolerate. The trainer that worked with her last year said she was her absolute favorite horse because she found her very responsive. She is 15.1 hands tall, and very sound. An endurance prospect perhaps?



Kate

For more info please contact the  
**Equine Voices Rescue & Sanctuary**  
520-398-2814 - Green Valley, AZ  
or info@equinevoices.org

## Dakotah



Dakotah is a 1 year-old, smaller-sized, honey-colored, mustang gelding. He has a sweet disposition. Dakotah has had some ground training and will need more with an experienced horse person. Dakotah's adoption fee is: \$750

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

Meet: By appointment

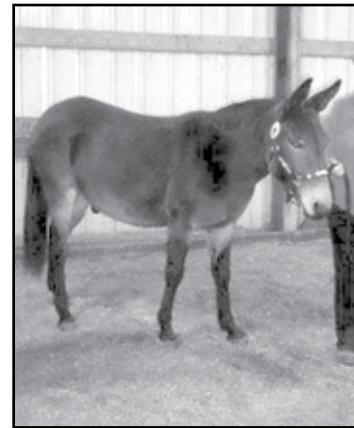
### Help Us Help Them

It is a mission of the "Valley Equestrian News" to help improve the unwanted horse situation in America, and to help increase the value of horses so horse slaughter is

not a viable option. To that end, the VEN offers free space on this page to advertise horses available for adoption from certified rescues. If you know of

a rescue or operate a rescue that wants free space on this page, please contact us: Ley Bouchard, editor, at: theVENews@gmail.com.

For more information contact:  
**Minnesota Hooved Animal Rescue**  
PO Box 47, Zimmerman, MN 55398  
(763) 856-3119  
info@mnhoovedanimalrescue.org



Lester is a 50" pony mule gelding who was foaled in 2009. Like all mules, Lester has a mind of his own, but he's also got a great temperament, has been saddled and ponied, and certainly has a bright future ahead of him!

Lester successfully competed in the 2014 Diamond in the Rough Training Competition and

has had plenty of desensitizing and obstacle work. For more info on adopting Lester please contact us at info@mnhoovedanimalrescue.org. For a complete list of our available horses and for our adoption guidelines please visit us at www.mnhoovedanimalrescue.org.

Lester

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# Charles Wilhelm: Ultimate Foundation Training

## Finding the Horse that is Right for You

By Charles Wilhelm

There are many things to consider when you decide to buy a horse. There is a lot involved in owning a horse. You need to

### What is a broke horse?

Some horses are owned, ridden, and sold without ever really being educated or, as I like to say, broke. Someone managed to get a saddle



know what you may expect from horse ownership and the many responsibilities that go along with ownership. You need to know about nutrition, medical, dental and hoof care, but the first thing to think about is that a horse will always be a horse. They do not come from the factory gentle and programmed ready to ride. Horses are born with certain natural behaviors which include striking, rearing, bucking, biting and kicking. These behaviors are part of the herd mentality. What we must do is civilize the horse and to do this we must know how to communicate, train and ride the horse properly. As owners and riders, we have the responsibility to learn as much as we can about the nature of a horse, what it takes to care for a horse, and how to ride properly.

and bridle on the horse, rode it for several years, and then finally sold it as a broke horse. Most likely that horse is not a broke horse. A broke horse will go forward, stop and back on cue. A rider can control the hind quarters by putting a leg on the horse slightly behind the cinch (the area we call the number three spot). The horse will respond to the seat and rein aids and a rider can control the shoulders by putting a leg on slightly in front of the cinch (the number one spot). For example, using these cues, a broke horse can do a turn on the haunches or on the forehead.

I have conducted many Responsive Riding and performance training clinics here at the ranch where people bring their horses. We start with a group dis-

cussion and participants are asked to rate their horse's performance in the areas discussed above. We use a scale of one to ten, one being a horse that knows very little and ten being a horse that is totally trained. Most people rate their horses from seven to nine in all areas. Once we get the horses into the arena and we ask the horses to perform these basic movements, we find that the ratings in most areas drop to two or three. The horses are not really educated because they do not know how to respond to the cues. Also, the riders often do not know how to execute the cues properly and have not established a standard of performance for their horses. A nicely trained horse, a trail or riding horse, should be rated at least eight or nine in all of these areas.

It is a matter of standards and expectations of how the horse will perform.

### What to look for in terms of training

When you are looking at a horse to buy, you need to determine how well-trained the horse really is. It is important to know if the horse has had any formal training. This doesn't mean the horse has been with a professional trainer. There are many good horse people who are very capable of

training a horse the right way. If you are a new rider it would be helpful to have a knowledgeable person ride the horse and determine how well trained it is. This doesn't mean someone who has ridden for many years, but someone who truly knows the proper way to ride.

### Work with a qualified trainer

If you are new or returning to riding you need not only a well trained and good minded horse but a qualified trainer. When foundation training is not properly maintained, even a well-trained horse will revert to natural behaviors. You will need help to maintain the integrity of the horse's training and a qualified trainer

can work with you and your horse to build your knowledge and confidence. Find an educated horse and work with a qualified trainer two or three times each week. If you do not have the budget to support this type of program, it is better to take lessons and lease a horse before buying your own.

It is not the exercise that trains the horse. The magic is your skill at working with the horse to execute the exercise. That is why it is important for you to work with a qualified trainer and that is why it is never, ever the horse's fault.

Internationally known and respected horse trainer Charles Wilhelm is the creator of Ultimate Foundation Training which combines the

best of traditional, classical and natural horsemanship. This method is applicable to every riding discipline. Charles is one of the few clinicians who is known for his superb skills in communicating with and motivating people as well as horses. His training methods reflect his motto, "It's Never, Ever the Horse's Fault".

Charles' warm and relaxed demeanor has made him a favorite at regional and national clinics and demonstrations. His training center in Castro Valley, California is among the top equine educational facilities in Northern California. Charles offers extensive hands-on learning programs for every level of horsemanship.

## Charles Wilhelm

### Ultimate Super Horse Challenge

#### Western States Horse Expo, Sacramento

June 4-7, 2015



Watch Charles every Tuesday on HRTV



Go to <http://www.hrtv.com/schedule/> for a list of showings in your area

www.CharlesWilhelm.com

# THE INVISIBLE VAQUEROS: PART 5 - VAQUERO HORSEMANSHIP

By Janice Ladendorf

How did the vaqueros produce such well-reined horses?

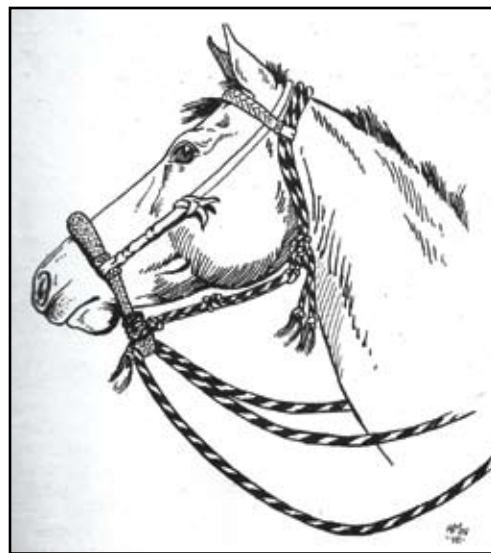
When the Spanish came to the New World, the only domestic animals they found here were dogs and llamas. They brought horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs first to the Caribbean Islands and then to Mexico. As they moved north from Mexico City, they found an ideal country for ranching and raising cattle, but had to train their best peons to be vaqueros. When their empire expanded into southern Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and California, they needed even more vaqueros to handle their expanding herds.

In the early 1800s, Americans began moving into Texas where they soon collided with Spanish ranching enterprises. A long-standing controversy exists over how much influence the Mexican vaqueros had on the emergence of the American cowboy. Some believe the Americans brought all the information, skills, and tools they needed with them. Others believe the first Texas cowboys learned everything they needed to know from the vaqueros. In my opinion, neither of these views is the correct one. Regardless of the discipline, profession, or craft, we all stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before. The vaqueros and cowboys had to have shared a common heritage that begins with the domestication of cattle in Europe.

The ranching style began in Spain, and the Conquistadors introduced it to the New World. The English colonists brought cattle with them, but these cattle were smaller and more docile than the powerful, aggressive cattle introduced by the Spanish. What carried over to open ranges in Texas from the Carolina colonies

was the use of dogs for herding cattle. These dogs drove cattle by nipping at their heels and could also hold them motionless with a bulldog grip on their noses. The Mexican vaqueros had to invent new techniques and tools to handle long-horn cattle on the open ranges. They developed lariats, Western saddles, and vaquero horsemanship.

Many fine horses came with the Spanish to the New World. For thousands of years, these horses had been bred for war, hunting, and handling cattle. During the Moorish occupation, the art of fighting bulls on horseback emerged. For all these tasks, the horses needed to be quick, agile, spirited, and responsive to their riders. By the 16th century, horsemanship had become a fine art in Iberia.



This illustration shows a handmade hackamore with a bosal and fiador.

A well-reined horse could execute all of the maneuvers we see today in reining and high school dressage. The Spanish expected such a horse to have a soft mouth and to respond to feather-light aids. In vaquero horsemanship, a real expert could link his reins together with one single horse hair. To cue his horse, he could use one

finger, but without breaking the hair.

## The Hackamore

The use of bitless bridles began with the domestication of the horse and probably preceded the use of bits. By the fifth century B.C., the Persians had begun using a "hakma," a thick plaited noseband to guide and collect their horses. In Spain, a cavesson with a stiff noseband was used with a bitted bridle in the horse's initial training. In northern Mexico, the vaqueros developed their own form of "jaqumia" or hackamore. The hackamore has four parts: the "cabezada," the "bozal," the "fiador," and the "mecate." In English, "cabezada" becomes headstall, "bozal" turns into bosal, and fiador is corrupted to Theodore and mecate to McCarty. The bosal is the noseband, the

mecate the reins [usually a 3/4-inch rope 20-25 feet long, one segment is looped to make the reins, tied to the bosal, and the excess is kept coiled on the saddle or used as a lead rope], and fiador the keeper or safety latch. [The fiador is the rope that goes around the back of the horse's head and under the jaw; it comprises the throat latch and the

piece that extends below the horse's jaw to the bosal, where it is secured with a fiador knot, so that if a horse pulls back, pressure is applied to the poll, not the noseband—see illustration above].

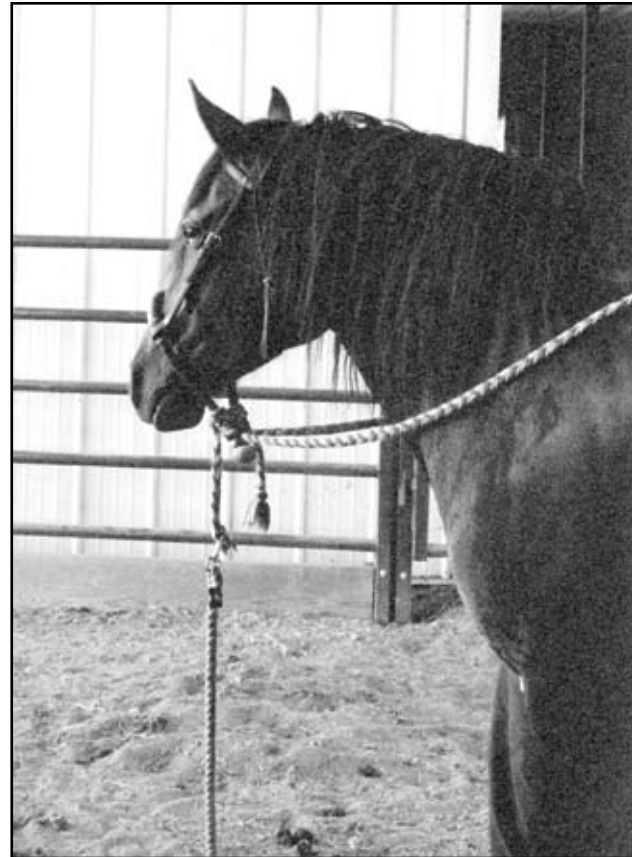
The bosal is what really makes this type of hackamore unique. In all other

forms of horsemanship, some form of contact through the reins is used to teach the horse to carry his head in the correct position. In a properly designed and fitted hackamore, the nose button and the heel knot are balanced so the horse can only make himself comfortable if his head is in the correct position. He will discover this position only if he is ridden on a loose or slack rein. A bosal must be firm, but flexible and have life or spring to it. Before he cues his horse, the rider begins by slightly lifting the bosal. This action warns the horse to expect a cue. Cues are similar to the light touches used in riding a sensitive horse with a bit. After the rider releases his touch, then the hackamore must spring back into the normal position.

To create this spring, the bosal must be made out of strands of braided rawhide wrapped around a rawhide core. The art of rawhide braiding began in Tibet, was borrowed by the Arabs, and brought to Spain by the Moors. Rawhide must be cured, but if it is also tanned, it turns into leather. To make a hackamore, only top quality hides should be used and they must be properly cured. When the bosal is made, the strands used on the outside must be tightly braided, the ends well

tied, and strands beveled so they have no rough edges. This rule applies to the heel button and the sides of the bosal. Any

edges could irritate, sore, or even cut the horse.



In the photograph of my Spanish mustang wearing his hackamore, the bosal sits correctly on his nose where the bone ends and cartilage begins. This spot is thin-skinned and extremely sensitive. This photograph was deliberately taken from an angle to show the gap between my mustang's jaws and the heel knot. Again, this is a sensitive spot because only thin skin covers

the horse's jaws. If the heel knot is too close to the jaws, the hackamore cannot work properly and creates sores underneath the horse's jaws.

In the photo showing my Spanish mustang, the bosal is used with a normal headstall and throatlatch.

The handmade hackamore shown earlier uses no metal and is adjusted with ties. The one I used has metal buckles and does not have a fiador. The fiador is used to hold the bosal in place so that it cannot slide down or off the horse's nose. If the hackamore does not have a fiador, it should never be used to lead or tie a horse. With a fiador, if the horse pulls back, the hackamore should stay on his head. The vaqueros typically lived on large ranches with

The left photo shows a smoothly braided bosal, the right photo shows a roughly braided bosal.

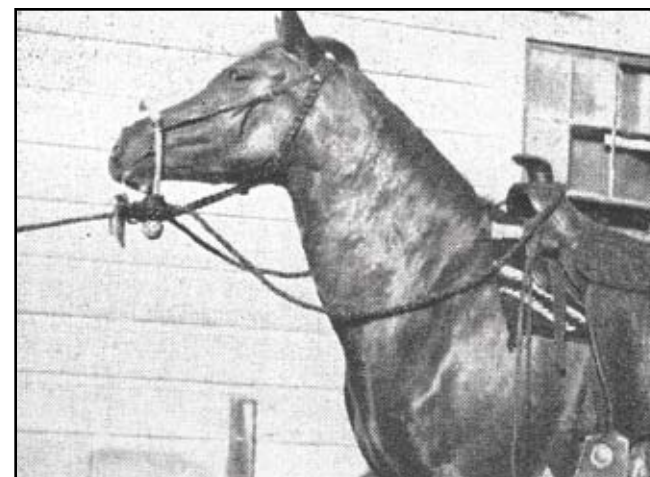
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# THE INVISIBLE VAQUEROS: PART 5 - VAQUERO HORSEMANSHIP

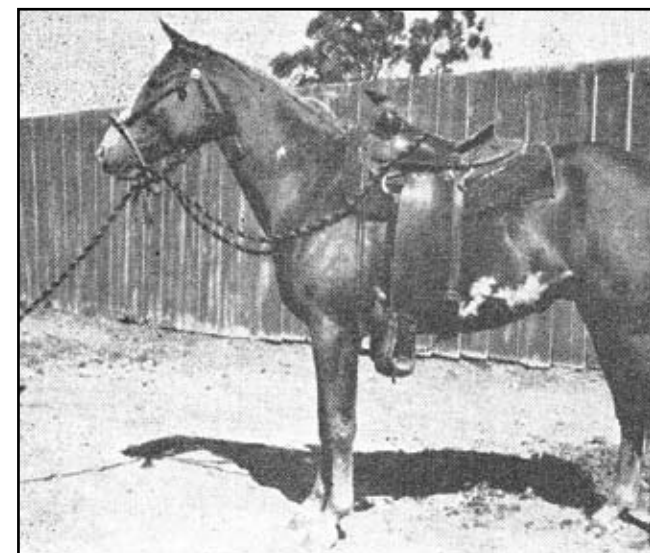
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no ready access to cities or stores. They had to learn how to make and clean their own equipment from

tioning, a vaquero had to keep it clean. Unlike leather, rawhide must never be oiled, but it can be cleaned with homemade soap. Dur-



The horse above is pulling back and putting pressure on the fiador. The horse below is ready to follow his trainer, and has put no pressure on the fiador.



the materials on hand. A mecate included reins and a lead rope. The material the vaqueros used for creating a mecate was hair taken the manes of mares or young horses. It was never taken from working horses. Tail hair from horses or steers was thought to be too stiff. The natural colors of the mane hair were often woven together to create attractive patterns. Mecates have also been made from cotton or mohair, but these materials may be too stiff for a sensitive horse. To keep his equipment func-

tioning, a vaquero had to keep it clean. Unlike leather, rawhide must never be oiled, but it can be cleaned with homemade soap. Dur-

my mustang is a heavy colt bosal.

## Training

According to Luis B. Ortega, the old vaqueros who taught him thought first of their horses. They saw them as individuals, studied their good and bad points, learned their peculiar characteristics, and never rushed their training. The old vaqueros let each horse learn at whatever speed suited him best. They might spend three to six months starting an unbroken colt and take years to turn selected individuals into well-reined horses. Every step of the way, they used cattle to train their horses.

In those days, horses were not started until they were old enough to stay sound under the heavy demands of range work. The vaqueros did not ride mares. Colts were gelded and branded and then turned back out on the range until they were five or six years old. "Domadors" specialized in breaking horses who had run free on the range for years. They started every "potro," or unbroken horse, with a hackamore.

When the colt was ready, the trainer put a bit in his mouth. When the horse had figured out how to comfortably carry the bit, they rode him with double reins. The hackamore reins were used to explain bit cues to him and, if necessary, to correct him. Finally, the hackamore could be discarded and the horse ridden in a normal bridle. Initially the "domador" was expected to turn out a horse who was easy to handle and safe to ride.

The "arrendadors" handled advanced training. Both they and the "domadors" had a wealth of knowledge about techniques they could use for dealing with specific types of horses or ones with special problems. Most of the "domadors" were young men while the "arrendadors" were older men with more years of experience. They selected the best horses for advanced training. They could take the horse away before the "domador" had introduced him to the bit or wait until he had completed his initial training. Their job was to turn the horses they selected into well-reined ones.

The progression from a bitless bridle, to double reins, to riding with a bit is not unique to vaquero horsemanship. Some classical masters also followed this procedure, but they

used cavessons instead of hackamores. In my experience, it avoids many of the problems that come from forcing a horse to accept contact with a bit. If an "arrendador" did not select the horse for advanced training, he could be put to work either in a hackamore or some type of curb bit.

Another unique feature of vaquero horsemanship is the special bit they developed for exhibiting their finished horses. Like the "jaqumia," spade bits are designed to work effectively on a loose rein and balanced so the horse has to carry his head in the correct position to make himself comfortable. Spade bits are the most misunderstood and abused bits in the world. They are signal bits and should never be used to hold any form of continu-

Below: A hackamore correctly fitted to a horse with a small muzzle.



ous contact with the horse's mouth. They are designed to be used with light pressure and can easily be abused by a rider who applies too much pressure or hangs on the horse's mouth. Since they required so much sensitivity from both horse and rider, they are not the best bits to use when the team is working with cattle.

## Change

When the Americans started moving into Texas, they had to have been impressed with vaquero horsemanship. They soon learned the tools and techniques used by the vaqueros, but did not necessarily accept the goals and attitudes behind them. One of the vaquero goals was to have a horse who never bucked from his first to his last day of training. Ground work helped them achieve this goal. The cowboys soon adapted what they had learned from the vaqueros to achieve increased efficiency.

A "domador" or "arrendador" normally had a secure job and could afford to take however much time he needed to produce a well-schooled horse. The Americans paid a "domador" a small sum, such as \$2.50, for every horse he started. This procedure meant he could only afford to take one month to finish the job and could spend little time on ground work. When American bronco busters took over this job, the time shrank even more. According to John Richard Young, cowboys preferred to ride half-broke horses who still bucked and frequently tried to bite, strike, or kick their riders.

As the years passed, vaquero horsemanship gradually faded away in the United States. In the early 20th century, only a few old vaqueros were left and they passed on their knowledge

Continued on page 12

## “Whispers from the Wild Ones, Mustangs as Our Master Teachers™: Trust Based Training for the Untouched, Rehabilitated, Spooky, Sensitive and Traumatized Horse” DVD Review

By Kari Hagstrom

“The more we understand our wild horses, the more we can capture their whisper.”  
- Anna Twinney

How do you describe magic? How do you describe the indefinable, infinitesimal moment of change and transformation? How do you describe the process of ice turning to liquid? Sure, it's a chemical process, a combination of properties and processes happening at the right time and the right place. But how do you really describe the process beyond the purely scientific? You can't. All you can say is that something becomes something else,

Ones, Mustangs as Our Master Teachers™: Trust Based Training for the Untouched, Rehabilitated, Spooky, Sensitive and Traumatized Horse,” is simply awe-inspiring, magical, and transformative. Twinney is an internationally recognized natural horsemanship clinician and equine behaviorist, and founder of Reach Out to Horses®, (ROTH) www.reachouttohorses.com. To see the alchemical moment when a wild, untouched mustang turns to the handler to acknowledge him, or to allow a touch, to connect, is beyond special, it is truly magical.

“Whispers from the Wild Ones” focuses on training and desensitizing mustangs,

And so it was great. Even subtle things, like putting out your hand, they don't know what that means. It may only take them five minutes, but they see what that is, and they learn so fast what that means.

“It was just fun, to be able to play and show them; I guess that was kind of the thing. I've got to show them that I'm actually something that they can interact with. How would [they know]? They've no idea. All they knew was 'run.' First you've got to teach them that they actually get to interact with you, and they're like, 'Oh, well that's ok. You can do that, that's kind of fun. Beats the heck out of just chewing on grass.'”



while continuing to embody the original characteristics. It transmutes into something else. How do you describe going from liquid to ice, from ice to liquid? How do you describe that alchemical, turning-point moment in a relationship, where things move from fear to trust?

How do you explain the moment when something that is wild, truly wild and untouched by human hands, turns to you and acknowledges you? Accepts you? Allows you to touch, and begins to allow for the possibility of a connection?

Watching and learning from Anna Twinney's DVD “Whispers from the Wild

helping them to make “an easier transition to our world for any wild or untouched horse,” highlighting and showing how it is possible to gently, compassionately, with kindness and understanding not only gentle, but train and connect with these wild beings. Most don't even recognize what we humans are. They don't realize that we can be interacted with, not just avoided. As ROTH graduate, Adam Edwards said: “She [the mustang filly he was assigned] was literally untouched, like, un-, un-, untouched by another human. No chutes, no nothing, no nothing. It was great to see how little of our language they see; they don't know anything of our language.

“If you want to see what a true horse and true horse behavior is, you have to go to the mustang, because only they continue to have that,” says Michael Dimock, of Dimock Ranch, Wyo., and ROTH graduate. “They live in societies, they form family units that work together to ensure their survival of their band and of their herd. And the mustangs are the top teachers, because they'll tell you if you've got it wrong, and they sure tell you if you've got it right. So if you want to be a truly successful horseperson, I think this would be exactly what you would need... It's a shame with these gathers, that a gather

Continued on next page

will break apart the [mustang] family and cause great turmoil for these animals. They are ripped from their families.”

“Awareness is a mustang's greatest survival trait,” says Twinney, and as leaders, we must earn the leadership. “Horses reflect the path to authenticity.”

The work Twinney and her graduates do with the mustangs [and the overall focus of Twinney's work], is to “capture the whisper,” which means noticing and catching the subtle and quick nuances of the horse's language: a glance, an ear flick, a shift in weight, the posture, the expression, a movement, whether the hooves are all flat on the ground, or one is cocked in a resting position or a ready-for-flight position. The horses are speaking and expressing all the time, we only have to learn to listen, to “capture the whisper,” and respond. “The look is the whisper. We capture the whisper when they look at us. When they acknowledge us, we leave the pen—we're looking purely for acknowledgement from the untouched. We build on the acknowledgement: when they see us, we will leave. We empower them by looking at us: we're a predator, [so] they're safe and well, and we will leave. The horse gets to know us; that 'I mean you no harm.' The intention is 'let's pay attention to one another when we're in this proximity.’”

The horses always have an out; they're in pens, not boxed-in or tied. They're empowered to express their discomfort with a situation and be heard. Their movements are directed with the energy of a glance or a shift in weight, a step forward or back, or to the side. Simple, subtle. What's notable about Twinney's work is that the try is always acknowledged. The pressure is taken off. Undue stress is not created. So if a handler is approaching a mustang

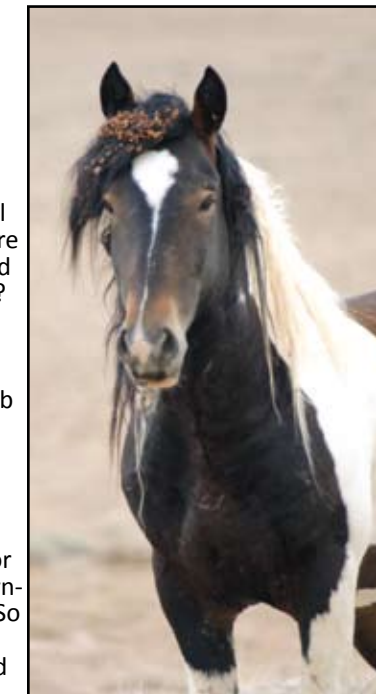
to try to get acknowledgment, and a glance is given, the try is acknowledged by removing the pressure: the person backs off, walks away for a moment, the breather is given so the horse can process and say, “Well, that wasn't so bad, maybe I can do that again a little bit more.” It's a thank you to the horse for trying, participating. The learning is relaxed, unhurried, usually without an agenda. And don't we all learn better,

more deeply, more quickly in a relaxed environment and mental/emotional state, where we are (possibly) happy, open, relaxed? Remember your most dreaded high school class where you were emotionally stressed and uncomfortable? Was it easy to learn then? It was probably hard to pay attention and absorb the subject simply from being stressed out. When we love something, or are relaxed, feel safe and unthreatened or unstressed, the learning becomes easy. So too with these wild horses, they learned quickly and well in a non-threatening, respectful and compassionate environment, with humans who were working to understand and communicate with them in their own language. It was beautiful to see, let alone what the handlers experienced.

but the language begins to offer itself up to you if you are paying attention. Paying attention, managing and grounding your own emotions around your and capturing the whisper, speaking in horse, the language of “Equus,” reaching out in an understandable gesture, transforms the whole experience for you and for your horse. True communication becomes possible, especially when it is based on mutual respect and understanding. The miracle of it is that this work is immediately

“The rest is the reward. It's the rest that will help you to shape your areas, it's your classroom. And it's the rest that gives them that moment to think. And that creates the space,” says Twinney.

Watching this DVD is a transformative experience, because not only are you watching transformations take place in the moment,



“As soon as she realized that we could have a dialogue, her attitude with me changed completely,” said Edwards. “And that was the feeling. But it was pretty nice to sit there and have her—[compared to] three days before, [when] she was putting her butt at me pretty fiercely, repeatedly, and repeatedly—to have her three days later, pretty much resting her head in my lap. That was pretty darn cool. [Smiles and laughs]”

Continued on page 15

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# THE INVISIBLE VAQUEROS: PART 5 - VAQUERO HORSEMANSHIP

Continued from page 9

to a few interested men like Luis B. Ortega. By then, skilled trainers not only had to start colts, they had to attempt to reform horses who had been ruined by the rough handling of the cowboys who had been riding them. Instead of disappearing, today vaquero horsemanship has made a comeback with horsemen who want to ride their highly schooled horses in the same style as the old time vaqueros.

### Conclusion

The Spanish brought fine horses and fine horsemanship with them to the New World. The vaqueros invented the bosal hackamore and the spade bit.

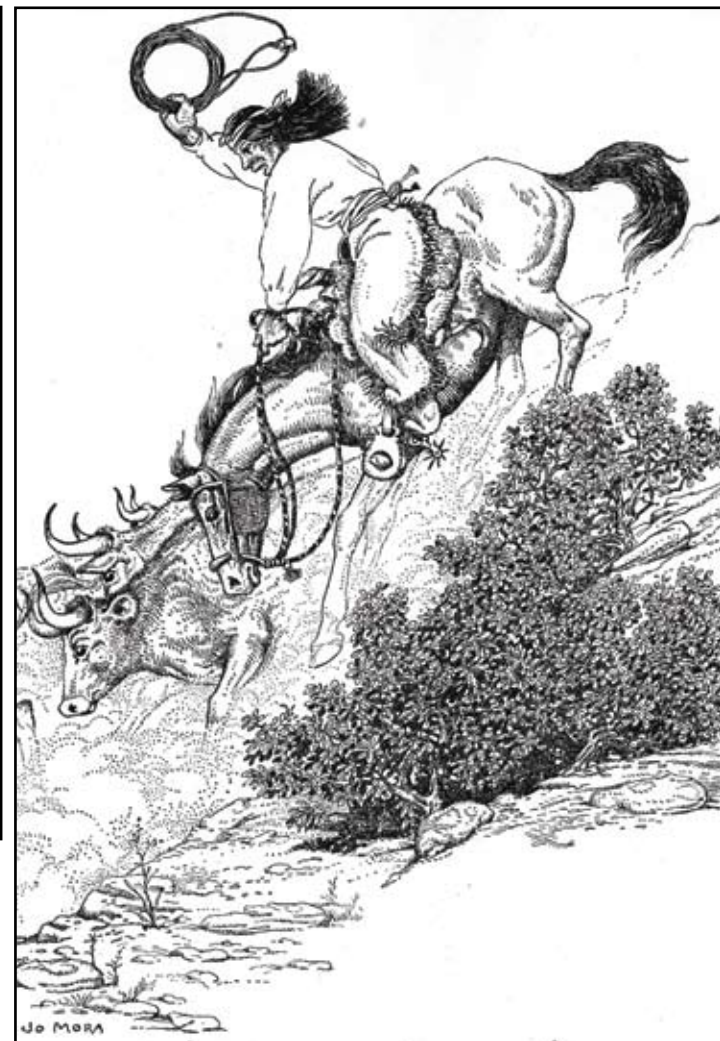
These tools are not designed to work on contact. The horse must be ridden on a loose rein and cued with feather-light touches. The cowboys borrowed these tools; but in their search for efficiency, they often used them to break and abuse horses. They did not want to take the time needed to achieve the high degree of responsiveness desired by the vaqueros.

### Information

Continued in Part 6



A colt being ridden with double reins. Illustration by Jo Mora. Left: A cow horse working in a bosal. Illustration by Jo Mora.



A colt being ridden in a bosal. The rider is holding the reins in one hand, in the correct position for vaquero horsemanship. Illustration by Jo Mora.

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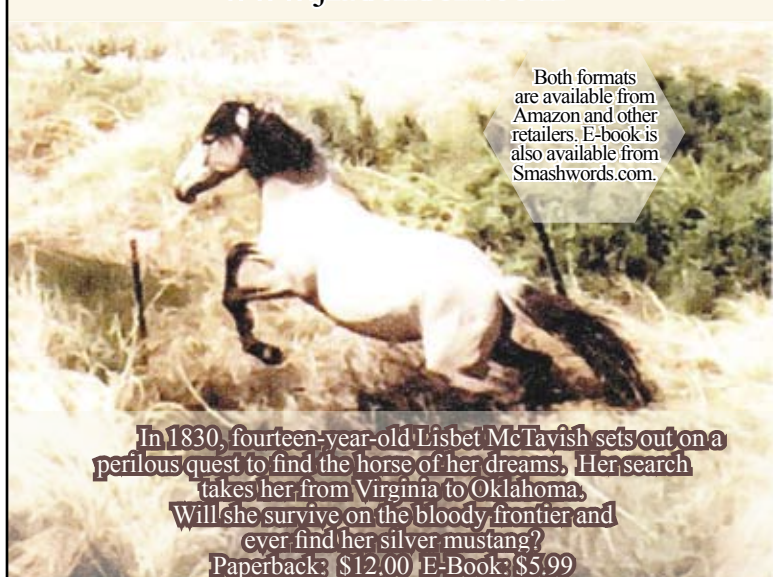
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### Acknowledgements

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## Dr. Getty urges: "Don't let your horse develop an ulcer!"

Dr. Juliet Getty never stops urging horse owners to "feed your horse like a horse," for the simple reason that a horse, fed according to his physiology and instincts, will be healthier. Dr. Getty often speaks about free choice forage feeding as the first line of defense against ulcers, but there is more an owner can do to protect his horse from the pain and stress of this condition.

"For many reasons," says the Ph.D. equine nutrition expert, "a steady, constant supply of forage keeps your horse's digestive system healthy, but it's especially important in ulcer prevention." Some basic anatomy knowledge reveals why: Unlike in the human, the horse's stomach secretes acid all the time, even when empty. Chewing creates saliva, a natural antacid. If left without food, horses will chew on whatever they can, even their own manure, to neutralize the acid that is causing them physical pain and mental discomfort. And if left with absolutely nothing to chew on, the horse will commonly develop ulcers.

Horses in the wild do not get ulcers. The diet and lifestyle we impose on our horses are to blame for this disabling condition. The good news is encouraging, according to Dr. Getty, who reminds horse owners, "We have the ability to prevent ulcers through proper feeding and stress reduction." In addition to offering forage, free-choice, Dr. Getty suggests horse owners consider these protective feeding guidelines:

- Avoid oats and other cereal grains (corn, barley, wheat, rice, etc.). Starchy feeds can lead to ulcers by stimulating stomach cells to produce more acid and encouraging acid production through bacterial fermentation. In addition, grains move through the stomach quickly, leaving an empty stomach that is vulnerable to acid.
- Feed beet pulp instead of cereal grains. It has as many calories as oats without the propensity for acid production found with starch.
- If you feed extra fat, choose the right type. Vegetable oils, such as soybean and corn oils, are the most popular fat sources but they promote inflammation due to their high omega 6 content. Instead, choose vegetable sources

that are high in omega 3s such as flax (meal or oil) or chia seeds, to actually reduce the inflammation experienced with ulcers.

- Provide high-quality protein. Legumes such as alfalfa, soybean meal, and split peas will complement the rest of the diet, offering enough amino acids (building blocks of protein) to allow for proper maintenance and healing. Plus, alfalfa hay should be offered to any horse who is prone toward developing an ulcer (such as during stall confinement) because it is an excellent buffer.
- Feed the hindgut microbial population. Fermentation products and yeast feed the microbes living in the hindgut (cecum and

give him pasture turnout – the more time the better. It not only gives him a steady supply of forage, but it lets him walk around, have a chance to run and buck, and visit with other horses. I realize that it is not always feasible to give your horse all the turnout he wants, but keeping hay in front of him at all times while confined will go a long way toward protecting his digestive system.

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. Hear Dr. Getty address issues in horse nutrition at the Kirkland House Foundation in Delta, British Columbia, sponsored by "Hay... Girl!" on May 2, 2015. For more information, contact Pam Janssen at [precioushaygirl@gmail.com](mailto:precioushaygirl@gmail.com) or call 604-961-7265.



A clinician points to the location where one may find an ulcer in their horse. Photo by Ley Bouchard

large colon). This makes digestion more efficient and promotes B vitamin synthesis to heal the digestive tract.

- Offer additional B vitamins. Stress (from pain or difficult situation) uses up B vitamins at a rapid rate. Offer a B-complex preparation that includes all 8 B-vitamins but that does not have added iron (there is plenty of iron in forage and supplementation is rarely needed).

**You know what stresses your horse** An unfamiliar environment, loss of a buddy, stalling, training, travel, and performance can result in more acid production. Did you know that a horse that is moved into a stall after being used to pasture turnout is likely to develop a gastric ulcer in less than a week? Make adjustments to your horse's lifestyle that would reduce stress. Even a horse that appears calm can have an ulcer.

**The best way to avoid an ulcer is to allow your horse to be a horse** And the best way to do that is to

## Cowboy Poetry With Orv

WATCHING SNOW BANKS GET HIGHER IN '49

DID YOU RANK THAT SNOWBANK (BY THE YARD LIGHT)? I listened to this rancher's tale of woe Regarding the '49 record snow (Because it wasn't very long ago Fargo had 100 inches of snow.) He said, "It was before the days of TV; We watched the snow blow, we watched it in 3-D. Your talk of all the tea in China, then, We had more snow and snow banks, way back when!"

SNOWBOUND IN THE BARN/WE GET THE DRIFT "With three days of blizzard and blowing snow We couldn't see but, could get vertigo. Stranded in the bar, waiting for daylight The cattle and hay warmed us all that night. But, we couldn't see to the house that day We drank warm milk and then snoozed on the hay. At 'chore' time we fed, watered, and milked cows And gave milk to the dog and cats and sows.

STANDING ON A SNOW BANK "Both day and night couldn't see the yard light; So we milked cows and spent another night. The snow banks were so high from this crowning 'blow' To climb these snow banks we'd need a ski-tow! The snow was swilling, it was so pure white We could have gotten lost and with frostbite. And later that month, the yard light burned out I climbed the snow bank with lots of self-doubt.

CHANGING A YARD LIGHT BULB "Would I fall through the snow, over my head? A suffocation was what I would dread? That's half the story I was out and about, I had to bend over and shovel it out! While on top of that huge mountain of snow I saw o'er the treetops and the view below. As far as I could see it was pure white; The year I stood there, and changed the yard light.

A SNOW JOB? NO BIZ LIKE "SNOW" BIZ "Watching them search for feed, a buck and a doe; And if Santa came with his 'Ho, Ho, Ho' He could have landed on the huge snow bank And walked to the roof, without a gangplank. The snow banks were a sight in the moonlight, Then we heard of 'more snow' on the radio. You could be questioning my hindsight Of standing here and changing the yard light.

BENDING OVER TO READ THE YARD LIGHT? "The electricity went off that night So we played cards and ate by lantern light. The Snowmaker almost ran out of designs, As it piled up to the electric lines. Barbed wire didn't stop the blowing snow We melted snow for batt'ry water, bored, you know. The rot'ry plows came to clear the road that night From the snow bank top, I bent and changed the yard light."

Orv Alveshere, © 1997

# Walking into the Unknown

Continued from page 5

This course does not overflow. There is not a waiting list for this course. It's such a specialist course, and truthfully, how many people are going to be gentling foals out there, right? How many want the knowledge, how many people do we know that are breeding in backyards and go on a course to learn how to gentle foals? You know, they just think, "I'm green, they're green. Green and green together, we can learn together. I don't think green and green makes black and blue. I think green and green, that means that this foal hasn't been abused, this foal hasn't been incorrectly trained, nothing's gone wrong with this foal, so I'll do it." And nobody realizes the importance behind the knowledge that you need when rearing and raising foals. They seem to think green and green is ok. And so it's not a hugely desirable course at this time. And anybody that's professionally in the industry that are breeding, they'll have their trainers on site, and they'll also either have the knowledge of tradition or otherwise. So the course is a challenging course for me. It's not the best course for me; there are so many foals out there, there are so many people that don't know what they're doing. And the course is amazing; I've stuck with it. So when Bill said, "How many of these foals do you need?" And I said ten, and he basically came back with, "Well, we can get 20, 30, whatever you want." It was a heartbreaking moment. I'd never met him before, but I remember the tears just streaming down my face, for the mere fact that hit me of, "How do you leave them behind?" I asked him where he was going to get them from, and he said the feedlot. "Every week we could go to the feedlot and pick up horses; we'll just pick up the foals." It was just like that, just that unique.

Once again, here I am, 30 years into horses, 20 years professionally into horses, and never heard of such a thing. Never heard of feedlot foals. We coined "feedlot foals." But honestly never heard of it. I had tons of questions in my head. How is this even possible? To my understanding, the mares might be dropped off

These feedlot foals will vary. With the foals we had, Bill got the vet in right away. It was hard to tell their ages; they were very, very different. Some tiny, tiny individuals, like a big German shepherd-sized dog, was the smallest, all the way up to what looked to me like bordering on yearlings. So they're in the feedlot. So

they're there to be fed up, are they there to be left behind? We know that multiple foals were left behind and the mares were shipped off. And it was with this clinic that I learned that it wasn't about the weight of the horses.



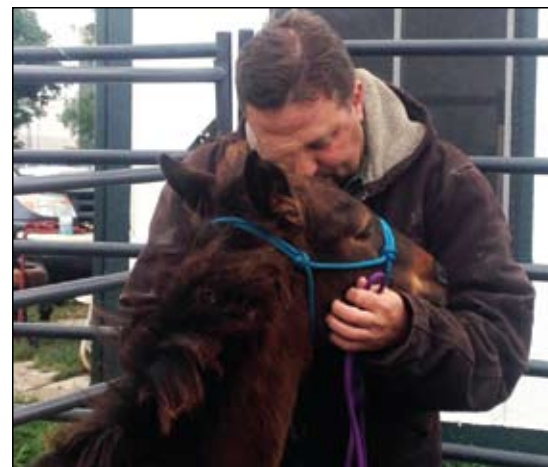
Phoenix and Dakota when they arrived at the clinic with body score two.

at the feedlot. The feedlot being somewhere where you feed the horse up so they put on weight, or somewhere where they've discarded the horses, and it doesn't matter if they're old, infirm, youngsters, mustangs, you name it. More than 80,000 horses go to slaughter each year; they start at the feedlot. So does that mean that these mares were at the feedlot pregnant and gave birth in the feedlot? Does it mean that these mares were sent to the feedlot with foals at foot? I don't have those answers.

I still do not understand, my little brain doesn't seem to put this together: what kind of human can send a pregnant mare off to the feedlot? You know, how do they end up there? Let me be kind, OK, let me be kind: somebody loses their house, they're bankrupt, somebody can't find the money, rescues can't take the horses. Those are some scenarios. The mare still found herself there. How does a foal find itself there? I have no answers.

their history. Nobody else we knew about, and there were ten of them.

So the little speckled bums, my job is to allocate them out, to get the right match with the student and the horse. A lot of it is watching the horses for ten, twenty minutes; the majority of it is intuition that I use to match them up. I match them all, and each student gets one foal to gentle, and they buddy-up so they're supporting other people, and they're also changing the buddy system so they're getting their hands on multiple foals. Some are exceedingly gentle; one was named Fawn, she was the tiny, tiny one. She was so bloody gentle. She didn't get allocated out; she didn't need to be. Everybody just loved on her, everybody did something with her, and she just couldn't get enough cuddles. It's a fine line, you know, with the cuddles, but ultimately she got tons of attention, tons of love. And her life was definitely



No words needed: Hermes and Vin.

risky, she had a huge, huge belly, and one of the days on the clinic she couldn't even get up. It was so important when she got up, because people have the mentality of when the horse can't get up, we don't want them to suffer, let them leave. To a point, my mentality is: give them a chance and let them become warriors, and fight their way through. So if she can get up, we will provide the environment for her to get healthy. And that's what we did; we helped her up a couple of times, and she made it through that week and then some.

There was one little one, an Appy, Hermes, really a delightful little speckled

butt, and they said he was really skittish, really spooky. I allocated him out to Vin [Mancarella], my husband. And within one day, he was calm as can be; he is today, calm as can be, to the point of it being a little worrying, like, "What's going on for you? Is there pain you have that we're not seeing, that you're not running around frolicking like other foals?" He just walks everywhere. So he was like that from the moment Vin had him. Vin gentled him, all the way through on his own, without anything from me. Usually I go in with students if they need support or guidance, or to keep them on track; I'll go in and show them techniques. I didn't go in once here. He did the whole thing on his own. That would be we're touching them, hand grooming them, putting the halter on, teaching them to neck yield and drop the head, come off pressure, yield to a bit of pressure on the side, pick up their feet, have some little blankets, on them. Many

coloring is Appy, you're an Appy. Who are you? I don't know." And the same for all the others. What have they been through? What shock have they been through? There are tons of them, right? So Judy Sinner helped. Judy Sinner was awesome; she's a great friend of mine, and she's a Dynamite distributor with the company Dynamite® Specialty Products, www.dynamitespecialty.com. She's a nutritional counselor, and so we had her on the call [the podcast of this call is available for free at [www.reachouttohorses.com](http://www.reachouttohorses.com), under ROTH members and podcasts—see "Supporting Weak and Compromised Foals," September 14, 2014]. The weather was so bad one day that we couldn't be outside, and I put a call into her, and she arranged her schedule, and we had a two hour piece. And she tailor-made it geared toward these foals. What is it the foals need nutritionally? She guided us; we bought alfalfa pellets, and we were soaking the alfalfa; we had Dyna

Pro®, the prebiotic; we had Miracle Clay™ for their stomachs, and we created this concoction in a syringe, and we syringed all foals twice a day in their mouth to settle the guts. It was really important, because the advice we had gotten was if we dewormed them and the system goes into shock, and there's ulcers in their system, they will die. And the first thing the vet wanted to do was deworm them. I stood up for the foals and said, "Can you give us three or four days, where we can just line that stomach, get their system out of shock, support them?" And Bill Stiffler said yes. The vet, bless him, said no; Bill had to stand up on the foals' behalf, on my students' behalf, on my behalf. But Bill said, "Yeah, you've got a few days." So we did that and we split the deworming; we did half one day, and half the other day.

Continued on page 16

# "Whispers from the Wild Ones, Mustangs as Our Master Teachers™"

Continued from page 11

transferrable; it is possible to immediately begin incorporating it into your language of actions and responses. And it works. Try it out, begin to get the hang of it, catch the nuances in your own and your horse's language.

"She was eager to learn, almost, and then there was this moment when, like, she 'clicked,' and there was confidence, and then she really started to enjoy herself. A lot," comments ROTH graduate, Elaine Ackerly on her interactions with Niagra, a beautiful dapple grey mus-



tang mare. "The methods create this open door of, 'Where's your voice, and let's explore it together. Let's find out what you can handle now, with what you've endured.'"

As the subtitle of this 2-DVD set suggests, this demonstrated work with mustangs is highly applicable and transferrable to "the untouched [not necessarily wild], rehabilitated, spooky, sensitive and traumatized horse." These methodologies could be invaluable on rescues, in retraining, in really any situation. Imagine not only saving time, but effort and trauma (and possible injury) for already traumatized horses. Twinney's mantra is "go slow to go fast." If wild, untouched mustangs can be transformed into understood, communicative, willing to learn, trusting, contented partners within a relatively short period of time, imagine what can be done for other horses in need, or for

the "average" horse. Imagine the relationship and interaction to be had through this shared language.

To that end, to support this work and get the knowledge out there and circulating, Twinney and Reach Out to Horses® is offering a free copy of this DVD to support organizations and rescues with a \$10 donation. Contact Reach Out to Horses, nominate your organization, send in your \$10 dona-

tion to cover shipping and handling, and the DVD will be sent to the organization. Learning this language could be an invaluable tool for use in so many areas. It is a valuable language to know in these days of "bigger, better, faster, more." The nuances get lost—between humans and horses, and humans and humans. Unnecessary wounds are created. And if the horse reflects the path to authenticity, wouldn't we all function better by being more authentic, more grounded, more present and aware. Like a mustang. Go to <http://www.reachouttohorses.com/bethevoice.html> to donate a DVD to your favorite organization or organizations, or for more information. Help the mustangs, help the organizations, help yourself.

have it any place else in the world. You're so lucky. They are fine horses, and so intelligent. And it gives you a lot as a person to see them, just be there and watch, and work with them. Just go and see. You will find it in yourself."

Sonke Dose from Germany said, "The most impressive part still was going out to the Pryor Mountains and see them in their natural habitat. It was like going to Africa on safari, kind of."

"It's kind of overwhelming to think that there's tens of thousands of them, and they're really not going to get that empathy, they're not going to get that release. And they're not going to be able to explore the world that they're crammed into: they'll just have to deal with it," said Ackerly.

"To help the mustangs," says ROTH graduate, Tricia Hatle, "people can continue writing congressmen and their local BLM [Bureau of Land Management] offices where mustangs have ranges and herd management areas. They can also form local support groups. That really helps and supports a mustang range. That would be the biggest benefit I have seen in 19 years of working with the BLM as a local support group. And continue voicing that you want mustangs on the range. And

don't quit."

Janne Jensen from Denmark said, "They bring out all of your emotions in a way higher level than a normal horse does. You can't describe the feeling of touching a wild horse for the first time, because it's nothing like touching a domesticated foal for the first time. So you can't even describe it, but you can feel it, it's so different."

"Whispers from the Wild Ones: Mustangs as Our Master Teachers," is a primer, a template for a whole new way of working with horses on a significantly deeper and more satisfying level—for both the horses and the humans. While it would be wonderful to work directly with mustangs—and it is recommended that only people highly trained in and familiar with these methodologies work with mustangs—you can begin learning the language of the horse with your own horse, and in turn apply that language to helping spooky, traumatized horses in need to become more comfortable citizens of "this domesticated environment."

The world is changing; we stand on the brink of losing forever the very last truly wild horses on this continent—think of that. Most will never regain their freedom. As Americans, we prize freedom and liberty highly, and work to defend others who have theirs threatened. These are our mustangs, to protect and preserve. What will happen when the wild isn't wild anymore? What will we and the mustangs lose? We can't even begin to calculate the breadth and depth of the losses. Over 50,000 mustangs are already in captivity; wild numbers are dwindling.

One of the best solutions on the table is PZP, a non-invasive form of birth

control for the mustangs. PZP works as a viable solution toward managing their numbers, regulating population growth in a manner that does not interfere with family units and structure, behavior, or lead to the removal of these wild horses from their ranges. And it is a reversible, non-permanent



form of birth control. The DVD provides an excellent discussion of this option for preserving our wild mustangs.

In my opinion, the American mustang is a symbol for the spirit of this country, equal to the bald eagle: independent, proud (authentic), wild, free, a powerful spirit with strong family connections. What will it mean to lose that being which embodies our American spirit? We connect with these symbols to strengthen and inspire ourselves. What if the only way to attempt to connect with that wild, proud, fierce spirit in the future is to drive a Ford Mustang? Does a car inspire the way a wild, free and independent mustang does? If you were

Photos by Anna Twinney



in the mustangs' shoes, would you choose freedom and independence, or being rounded up, terrified and traumatized, imprisoned into a system you don't understand, and made into a servant/slave? Would you prefer to be treated with respect, kindness, understanding and an invitation to live well and partner, even if not in the environment you would choose? In my opinion, the resemblance to

the way mustangs are being treated is highly similar to the way the Jews and others were treated in World War II, and other genocidal situations in which one population is targeted as "in the way": First they are demonized and targeted, segregated into contained areas such as the Warsaw Ghetto (herd management areas—HMAs), then brutally rounded up, families separated, sent to containment facilities for imprisonment such as the concentration camps (BLM containment facilities), often leading to death and seldom freedom or rescue.

If it comes down to it, it seems to me that the least we can do is to help them adjust to a certain quality of life and relationship in a vastly different environment—one not of their choosing. If the mustangs, given the right opportunity and the right treatment, may be invited to co-habit with us humans, it seems the least we can do is to learn their language and their wisdom. We can learn to listen to the "Whispers from the Wild Ones."



## Feedlot Foals Continued from page 14

But we sorted them out, and that was huge.

Within the fifth day, this vet came in with this syringe so freak-ing big, God knows how it went through the skin and the hide, but these foals were ready. They were ready for thermometers, they were ready for the syringe, they were having syringes in the mouth. We nursed these foals, they got food twice a day, they got the syringe twice a day, they ended up getting dewormed. A whole bunch of my friends came in. I put calls in to see who could come out that week and help us. I've never seen foals needing so much help. They had free-choice hay throughout the training,

was: these foals need support, they need care, they need to be checked over. He has been a vet for decades, I guess, so he has his personal style of just entering that stall and getting on with his job. So that takes some skill for these foals to learn, and the students brought them to that level where first they were handling them independently, solely, and ultimately two students would go in at a time and try to prepare them, either for the syringe, and that would mean pinching the skin on the side, etc., and we'd do that two or three times a day with the more nervous ones.

It was touch and go. There were two or three foals where a cough

well, to detox. So that's the tough thing; plus you just don't know the breeds, you don't know their age. The vet checked Hermes, and said he's younger than six months, but he couldn't give a pinpoint. With the teeth, its six days, six weeks, six months; by six weeks they have a certain amount of teeth. We have to now look at Hermes—who's at home with us because Vin fell in love with him and wanted to bring him home—and we believe he was no more than six weeks old when he came home with us. That's tiny. And if you look at him today, he's still small, he's still rimbby, he hasn't put on any weight. We gave him Dynamite® for months afterwards with the clay, and he got the alfalfa.

He's got grass. He's on the paddock, on two and a half acres, the two foals Major and Hermes who we brought home. Major keeps Hermes company.

What was magical about this clinic was that six of the students adopted horses. Six of them. That's never happened. It's never happened on any foal clinic where that many go. We had an adoption day, where people came, and barely anybody showed up.

It was a sad thing. But the really cool thing was Laurent [Nicault] adopted two, Grace [Gabielli] supported him with one, Phoenix. Unfortunately Phoenix didn't make it. Laurent took him home with Dakota; those two were the tribal horses, the Native American horses, and they were the body score two, and they were eating so much. They were pawing at the food, and they couldn't eat enough. They were doing so well, they went from a glazed eye to a little sparkle in the eye. Grace bought them blankets, and she does energy healing. Laurent took them home. And one day I got an emergency call from him, saying, "Phoenix isn't doing well." He called the vet in; and they weren't sure if it was colic or otherwise. They struggled for his life for three days, and then he ultimately passed naturally. What was going on internally, who knows? Who honestly knows? It was about a month after the adoption. Was

It's phenomenal to see, in one sense, how weak they are, how vulnerable they are, and the other sense, how strong they are, just the contrast: the vulnerability with the cold that reaches the chest, and not getting up, and then the strength of getting up and pulling through.

So what makes them different? They came in more sickly than anything I've ever seen. They came in with unknown sickness, so you can't pinpoint if it was virus, cold, worms. We had dewormed them; we used the natural as

## One Person Can Make a Difference

Bill Stiffler of Friends of Horses Rescue and Adoption, [www.fohrescue.com](http://www.fohrescue.com), on Feedlot Foals and Horses:

Bill Stiffler started going to kill sales because he was interested in retired thoroughbreds, and started buying some. He also discovered weanlings, Premarins, and surrogate mares to be available. "They're constantly available," he said. Kill buyers tend to buy mares because there is more meat, and there is a restriction on slaughtering foals up to 600 lbs. There are beneficial groups that try to buy horses at the kill sales, and there are the restrictions from the EU on horsemeat, and the restriction of sending horses to slaughter that have been treated with drugs.

A large part of the problem of horses winding up at feedlots and being slaughter-bound is the result of over breeding. The "undesirable" horses get culled and sent to the feedlot, to slaughter. "People everywhere over breed," said Stiffler, "and more people need to practice selective breeding." The Jockey Club has recently put out a call to stop over breeding. "In vitro transfer mares have value only by the pound," said Stiffler. There is also the problem of people turning out domesticated horses with wild horses in some areas. The feedlots fill up and the horses are sent to Mexico or Canada for slaughter.

Stiffler said that recently he found a handsome 17-hand grey warm-blood gelding, six years old, at the feedlot, two days away from slaughter. He bought him, and brought him back to the rescue. Stiffler figures that he probably was papered, but because the owner was embarrassed about sending the horse to slaughter, didn't include the papers, not realizing that the papers could have helped to get the horse back out of the feedlot when someone else bought him. "People have to think of what's in the best interest of the horse," said Stiffler. [This horse is currently available for adoption and has a clean bill of health. Go to [www.fohrescue.com](http://www.fohrescue.com).]

it that he had found peace and quiet at Laurent's, and could give up there? Was it that? Was it an intestinal issue? Was it that his heart was broken, that he saw his mum go into a big truck and never come home? He decided to leave. He left, and it was heartbreaking to all of us.

Dakota's still around, though I haven't heard from him in a little while. Christina adopted who she called Sasha, Clea adopted Orion, and he's gone to New Mexico. Bill adopted Major, who came here, and Vin adopted Hermes. So six of the foals got adopted, but ultimately all of them did. Bill placed the other four before the week had come to an end. All foals got adopted out, which is mind-blow-

ed buyers. Locally, the number of available foals has been down lately, but later this spring there will be "constantly available" foals in the feedlots. Many foals are born there, when a pregnant mare is sold to kill buyer. Or perhaps the foal is at the mare's side when she is sold to the feedlot. When the mare is taken away for slaughter, the foal is left behind. Sometimes it will find a willing mare to nurse from; often groups of foals will gather around a mare and wear her down into letting them nurse. Some mares won't allow a foal not their own to nurse, and will kick them away. The foals will try to nurse on anything: an ear or sheath of another foal, anything they can reach. But the foals are left at the feedlot; some get rescued, most do not. They are left to grow to 600 lbs., facing slaughter if they survive that long. Many die of starvation and neglect.

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ing and special. Is it the matching? Is it the fact they pulled the heartstrings? No student entered that course wanting to adopt or needing to adopt. Nobody did. And by day four, within four days, those six came out, going, "We're adopting." Signing the papers the day they left. It was unbelievable. The day after the clinic, Laurent picked up his two, we picked up our two, and they were immediately brought out to a bit of space, a bit of land, which is amazing.

**Continued next month with Part 2: Rehabilitating Feedlot Foals: It Takes a Village.**

Photos by Anna Twinney

## Six Breaths of Compassion

By Katherine Windfeather-Thompson

compassion?" Shaking my head to indicate that I wasn't, he continued.

"There is a prayer called The Six Breaths of Compassion; you repeat it six times, and as you do, you raise your vibration higher, to heal not only your own situation, but others of like experience.

"Simply say: 'I am breathing in compassion, I am breathing out compassion, across space and time, for all of those who have ever felt this way.' As you do this, visualize energy coming up through your feet, a cylinder of golden light, coming up and encompassing your aura, out into the universe, and then let it go. Then, you say it again, and you see the energy coming up again. It will change your vibration, and you can accelerate your own healing and clarity of spirit. It is a most powerful tool.

I was having a very hard time with this, and had begun to grieve, more intensely than I might have expected. As the daughter of a cattleman, and as a former race horse trainer, I have lost many animals, especially horses, throughout my life. And this was particularly bewildering to me.

I asked a trusted spiritual teacher why this was so unusually difficult for me to handle. His reply helped me put it into a context of deeper understanding and compassion, both for this filly, and for myself.

"You see, as you release these special ones, with love and compassion, the resulting healing process helps the soul to move forward into a more personal life of the spirit. It is a catalyst for you to relieve all of the accumulative grieving, and this is a very deep grieving. You grieve not alone; you grieve for all of humanity, and as you grieve your own circumstances and losses, you help heal humanity.

"You will not do this alone, as Katherine. You will do this with the assistance of your special spirit guide, and you will be in your true power. You will understand that this little one has come in for the experience of being loved by you, and needs to leave. But you will know when the time is appropriate. You will be guided and you will receive assistance in releasing this little one.

"Do the Six Breaths of Compassion for seven days, and it may change the situation. Set them free! Love with an open hand, and you will have the universe at your disposal. You have a connection with all. You will be moving to Divine Love when you remove yourself from the grieving. It will take you to a place of loving, with an open heart, and your life will be filled with these four-leggeds in new ways. You must empty the container so that it can be rebuilt for what is more appropriate for

Then, unexpectedly, he asked, "Are you familiar with the six breaths of

you at the time."

I asked him if I was to do something special in the use of my telepathic abilities with the animals. He told me that I would begin to help the animal kingdom, but I would also begin to help humanity, to understand that the animals are very precious in our consciousness. He said that humanity had forgotten how to express joy through spirit, and that in the coming times there was much joy to come forth. I was instructed to prepare my own consciousness and to that, I replied that I still seemed to have a lot of housecleaning to do.

"Oh yes, that seems to be a condition of humanity. That is why we, the Ascended Masters, work with you, the Descended Masters, to clean house for the Golden Era. It's like peeling back the skin of an onion, layer by layer."

He finished by telling me: "Go forth in the Golden Orb of the Oneness, with the deep peace of the Son of Peace, and the compassion of that One also."

I knew firsthand what he meant about that love and compassion, as I had experienced it during a rare near-death experience I'd had some years before. I missed it sorely, with a deep longing I can't begin to describe. Though I had no clue as to how this would all unfold for me, or exactly how it would take form, something had definitely happened to me during my encounter with The One, the Son of Peace that he spoke of.

Much to my surprise, within a few weeks of doing this exercise, the changes in the filly's front leg began to cease. Not only that, but as she continued to grow, the changes in her front leg actually began to reverse, and while it was, ultimately, not absolutely perfect, she was most definitely not as hopelessly crippled as the veterinarians had assured me that she would be.

I wish to share something else that happened some time after this experience with my teacher friend, as it pertains to the prayer I was taught to repeat.

A friend of mine was considering whether or not to euthanize her

crippled gelding. Unlike my filly's development, his seemed to be somewhat age related. He had advanced ringbone, and when she could no longer keep him sound enough for her to ride, with medication and expensive shoeing, she donated him to a therapeutic riding program, hopeful that he could still live a useful life, relatively pain free, in that capacity.

Meanwhile, she had been looking for a replacement horse for some time, but had not found anything suitable, affordable, or sound enough for her. She did not want to go through this sad experience again if it could be avoided, but she desperately wanted another horse she could ride.

Then came the day when the riding program's representative called her and told her that the little bay Arab simply would no longer do. He was great with the children, but his lameness had worsened, and he was too sore to even walk in that capacity. They wanted her to come get her horse and take him home.

She called me, emotionally torn with guilt, grief, and indecision. I could only empathize, as I did not have the heart to give her what to me was the clear resolution. Then I remembered the prayer I'd used before, and I shared it with her, thinking she may find some clarity on the issue, as well as some comfort for herself.

She hung up the phone, went into a light meditative state, and then recited the prayer just as I'd instructed her. Suddenly, her little

bay Arab appeared in her conscious mind's eye, staring at her intently, as if he had actually been standing right before her, physically. With a profound gesture, he turned and walked a few steps away, then turned to look back at her meaningfully. He gazed intently into her eyes, as if trying to tell her it was OK to let him go. And then he turned and galloped soundly off into the clouds above. She called me back later to say she had the answer, and the next day called the veterinarian who would help end the horse's obvious and severe pain. She did so with compassion, and completely without guilt.

But that is not the end of the story. In less than 24 hours, she got a call to go look at a new horse, and when she did, it was love at first sight. She realized that could not have happened until she was willing to commit to the act of compassion that would help her Arab move on, his pain ended, and his life on this plane of existence complete. He, in turn, released her from her agreement with him, and both moved on in their separate journeys.

*Katherine Windfeather-Thompson is a former racehorse trainer, a teacher, consultant, clinician, and certified clairvoyant healer. She's a graduate of the Avalon Institute for Psychic Development and Healing, and has lectured at many of the major horse expos in the United States during the past 18 years. She is the author of, "When Doves Cried, and Horses Wept," and another will soon be released. She currently resides near Sacramento, California. Visit her website at, [www.katherinewindfeather-thompson.com](http://www.katherinewindfeather-thompson.com), Write her at [returtothedove@gmail.com](mailto:returtothedove@gmail.com), or call her at 916-770-9376.*

**Katherine Windfeather-Thompson**

*"To Heal the Creatures of the Earth is to Alter the Very Course of the Universe"*

Katherine Thompson

**"Connecting with the Horse's Emotions"**

**Trainer, Author, Clinician, Equine Consultant, Certified Clairvoyant Healer**

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## “LET US ‘EQUI’TAIN YOU”

The 2015 Iowa Horse Fair Wants to Entertain & Educate You With Equine Events Galore!

The 31st Annual Iowa Horse Fair will take place April 10, 11, & 12 at the State Fairgrounds in Des Moines. This event is designed to educate horse owners about ways to care for and train their horses and also to entertain the general public with exciting drill teams, trick riding and numerous horse demonstrations.

Featured clinicians include Wendy Murdoch from Virginia, Van Hargis from Texas, and The Texas Trick Riders from the beautiful

Texas White Horse Ranch. Wendy Murdoch specializes in the Sure Foot methods of improving you and your horse's balance. Van Hargis is known as The Horseman With a Message, working on ways to improve your riding and your horse's responses. The Texas Trick Riders will demonstrate cooperation between horse and human with feats such as Roman Riding Liberty and Whip Acts. Joining these three are Four-Star Parelli instructors Kristi Smith and Ryan Rose. Bob Smith utilizes common sense,

“herd mentality” horsemanship and Indalecio Macedo develops a horse's natural athleticism through High School training.

But a horse fair isn't a horse fair without horses and the Iowa Horse Fair will feature over 50 breeds and registries in the Avenue and Parade of Breeds. From Andalusian to Zweibrucker, from mini donkey to shire, from quarter horse to Georgian Grande, Curly to Gypsy. The Horse Barn will be filled with over 250 horses including a Stallion Avenue featuring several Friesian stallions and more.

Returning are favorites such as the Wright Rodeo, a full rodeo held Friday and Saturday evening, free pony rides and wagon rides - even stage coach rides. Also to entertain and educate will be the Cowboy Mounted Shooters competition, Colt Starting Challenge, Charrros el Carretero, drill teams, Queen's Contest, and Driving Derby. New for 2015 will be Cutting and Ranch Horse demonstrations.

Over 100 vendors will be set up to offer for sale all things equine - from trucks and trailers to jewelry & clothing - even saddles and tack for the horse owner. Western and equine art is a speciality of many vendors.

For additional information please visit [www.iowahorsecouncil.org](http://www.iowahorsecouncil.org)

Lexington, Kent. - February 12, 2015 - Every year at USPC's Annual Meeting clubs are recognized for their dedicated longevity with Pony Club. The Club Milestone Award is awarded when a club reaches either its 25th or its 50th anniversary. This year we had a total of 12 clubs reach a milestone anniversary.

During the Annual Meeting Awards Banquet on Saturday Night, nine clubs celebrated their 25th Anniversary by receiving a 25 Year Club Milestone Award. Those clubs include, Beartooth Pony Club (Big Sky Region), Brass and Bridle Pony Club (Midwest Region), Cardinal II Pony Club (California Region), Fiesta Pony Club (Rio Grande Region), Honey Hollow Pony Club (Metropolitan Region), Lincoln Creek Pony Club (Northwest Region), Misty Mountain Pony Club (Northwest Region), Prairie Jumpers Pony Club (North Central Prairie Region), and Royal Oaks Pony Club (North Central Prairie Region).

Celebrating even bigger milestones, three clubs were honored this year with the 50 Year Club Milestone Awards. Those clubs include Alamo Pony Club (Rio Grande Region), Chesapeake Pony Club (Delmarva

Region), and Whidbey Island Pony Club (Northwest Region).

“The 2016 USPC Annual Meeting and Equine Symposium will be hosted by the Sunshine Region and DoubleTree Universal, in Orlando, FL. We look forward to congratulating additional clubs who reach these milestones,” stated Karol Wilson, USPC Director of Member Services and Regional Administration.

About Pony Club - The United States Pony Clubs, Inc. (Pony Club) was founded in 1954 as a nonprofit national youth organization to teach riding and horsemanship through a formal educational program. There are approximately 9,000 Pony Club members in over 600 clubs and riding centers throughout the country. Many of the nation's top equestrians, including several of our Olympic team members, business professionals, government leaders and career military officers, have roots in Pony Club. Youth members range in age from as young as four through age 25. Pony Club also offers educational opportunities to over 500 adult members in its Horse-masters Program. [ponyclub.org](http://ponyclub.org)

## Groups rally behind National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act

New legislation calls for improved investments in National Forest Trail System WASHINGTON (February 10, 2015) - Outdoor recreation and conservation groups including the Backcountry Horsemen of America, The Wilderness Society, the American Horse Council, motorized recreation groups, outfitters and guides expressed their support for congressional legislation that would improve access and public safety on national forests and better address the persistent, growing backlog for trail maintenance on public lands.

The National Forest Trails System Stewardship Act of 2015, introduced today by Representatives Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Tim Walz (D-MN), would keep more trails open and accessible by expanding the use of volunteer and partner organizations and providing increased focus on a handful of priority areas around the country.

More than 50 diverse recreation and conservation groups requested the legislation after a 2013 Government Accountability Office study found the Forest Service trail system is being squeezed between the demands of growing public use and shrinking budgets. According to that report, the maintenance backlog for forest trails exceeds \$314

million dollars and threatens to limit public access, harm natural resources, and increase future maintenance costs.

“Improving safety and access in our national forests provides a significant return on investment for America,” said Paul Spitler, Director of Wilderness Campaigns at The Wilderness Society. “These trails fuel a powerful outdoor economy and keep our public lands accessible for Americans. They are simply too important to lose. We applaud Representatives Lummis and Walz for their leadership on preserving and maintaining America's trails.”

The United States National Forest System contains the largest network of trails in the world and receives roughly 165 million visitors a year. While more people than ever are heading into national forests in pursuit of exercise, relaxation, and adventure, only one quarter of all trails are maintained to standard. The trails backlog prevents public access, poses dangers to public safety, and degrades clean water.

The Back Country Horsemen of America says the effort to create a more robust and coordinated trails-focused volunteer program is essential to preserving American's access to the great outdoors

“Congress recognizes that our national forest trail system is deteriorating,” said Jim McGarvey, Chairman of Back Country Horsemen of America. “This bill emphasizes greater collaboration with volunteers and partner organizations and seeks to leverage additional resources to augment the important role played by Forest Service trail crews.”

“The recreational horse industry contributes \$32 billion a year to the economy and supports nearly 435,000 jobs nationwide,” said American Horse Council Vice President of Government Relations Ben Pendergrass. “However, it is dependent on access to public lands and well maintained trails. The current Forest Service trail maintenance backlog is a serious threat to its continued growth and health. This bill will help address the problem and ensure equestrians and all trail users continue to have access to, and are able to enjoy, trails on our national forests.”

In addition to expanding the use of volunteers the legislation also requires the Secretary of Agriculture to identify nine to 15 priority areas throughout the country for increased trail maintenance.

Hiking groups also hailed the legislation. “We appreciate what the bill sets out to accomplish,” said Peter Olsen, Vice President at American Hiking Society. “The bill would significantly increase the role of partners and volunteers in maintaining trails throughout the national forests. During times of limited agency budgets, the role of volunteers is critical to ensuring Americans can continue to explore the great outdoors.”

Contacts: Paul Spitler, The Wilderness Society (202) 360-1912. Jim McGarvey, Chairman of Back Country Horsemen of America (706) 669-1015. Ben Pendergrass, American Horse Council (202) 296-4031

## Great Lakes Equestrian Festival Makes Debut at Flintfields Horse Park in Traverse City, Mich.

February 16, 2015 - Flintfields Horse Park and Stadium Jumping, Inc., [www.stadiumjumping.com](http://www.stadiumjumping.com), announced today the debut of the all-new Great Lakes Equestrian Festival, a three week long hunter and jumper equestrian festival, to be held at the Flintfields Horse Park, located at 6535 Bates Road in Williamsburg, Michigan. The show grounds are located just 10 miles east from the beautiful resort town of Traverse City.

The new series of shows are scheduled to run three weeks: July 8-12, July 15-19 and July 22-26, 2015.

The summer series will be highlighted by:

- \* Weekly \$5,000 National Hunter Derby
- \* Weekly \$25,000 Jumper Classic
- \* Week 1 \$50,000 Grand Prix
- \* Week 2 \$50,000 Grand Prix
- \* Week 3 \$50,000 Grand Prix
- \* Week 3 \$25,000 International Hunter Derby

Management suggests that those planning on attending this year's shows, book their housing early due to the popularity of the region and the resort nature of the area surrounding the events.

“I feel very strongly about the shows continuing at Flintfields, both for the exhibitors as a safe place to show their horses and for the community of Traverse City,” said Karin Flint, the owner of Flintfields Horse Park. “They have welcomed the show and exhibitors with open arms. I'd love to expand on the show series and bring in other disciplines in the future.”

“I am so pleased that Stadium Jumping has agreed to work with Flintfields Horse Park to produce the Great Lakes Equestrian Festival,” Flint continued. “They are a world-class team and will add a whole new dimension to the series.”

Plans are underway for additional improvements to Flintfields Horse Park. “We are always keenly focused on how we can improve our horse shows, from the footing, to equine safety and the daily scheduling, all in an effort to improve the overall exhibitor experience,” Flint said.

“I've received numerous phone calls from Traverse City area businesses who are very excited about getting on board and they are excited to welcome Stadium Jumping as the new producers of our shows,” she added. “I've also heard from exhibitors who are thrilled to be returning to our area and are looking forward to another great summer in one of the most beautiful places in Michigan.”

## UMC Equestrian Teams Achieving at High Level for 2014-15 Season

CROOKSTON, Minn. - The University of Minnesota Crookston equestrian teams have posted unprecedented success during the 2014-15 season. The Golden Eagle hunt seat team currently tops the region standings with 261 points, ahead of University of Minnesota's 248 points and North Dakota State University's 227 points. In western, the Golden Eagles are just three points behind NDSU's 188 points with 185 points, while Minnesota has 179 points.

In addition to their team success, UMC hunt seat riders Emily Steeley (Jr., Portsmouth, R.I. /Equine Science) and Sable Bettencourt (Sr., Cloquet, Minn. /Equine Science) have had a large amount of individual success. Steeley and Bettencourt currently sit at the top of the standing's for the region's Cacchione Cup. This is the first time UMC has ever had two riders at No. 1 and No. 2 in the standings. Steeley won the Cacchione Cup for the region during the 2013-14 season.

Named for Mario “Marty” Cacchione, whose son Bob founded the IHSA in 1967 and still runs the

Cacchione Cup is presented every season at IHSA Nationals to the top hunter seat open rider. Every open rider who finishes the regular season with the most combined flat and fences points within their region advances directly to IHSA Nationals to compete for the cup.

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

Follow the Golden Eagles on Facebook at Golden Eagle Sports and on Twitter at @UMCAthletics.

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



Carly Haiby, BS in Animal Science, with Rookie after his joint fusion.

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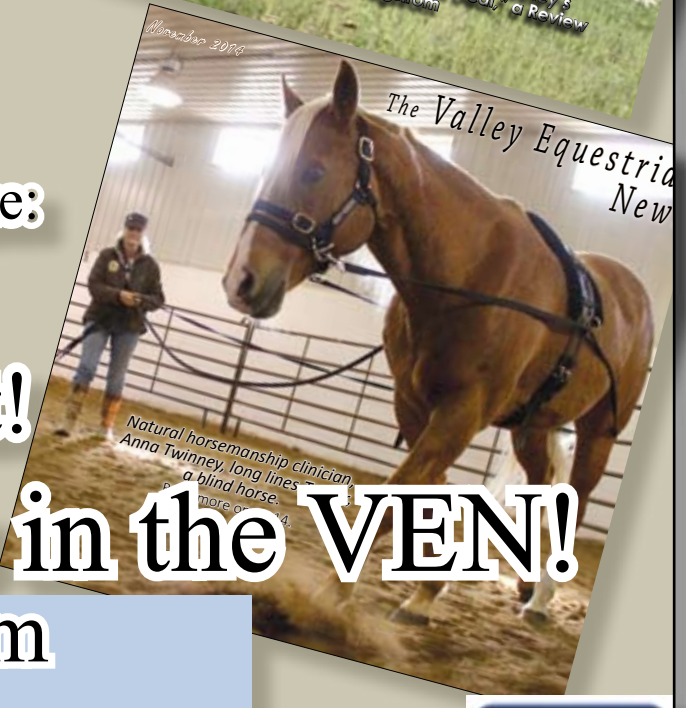
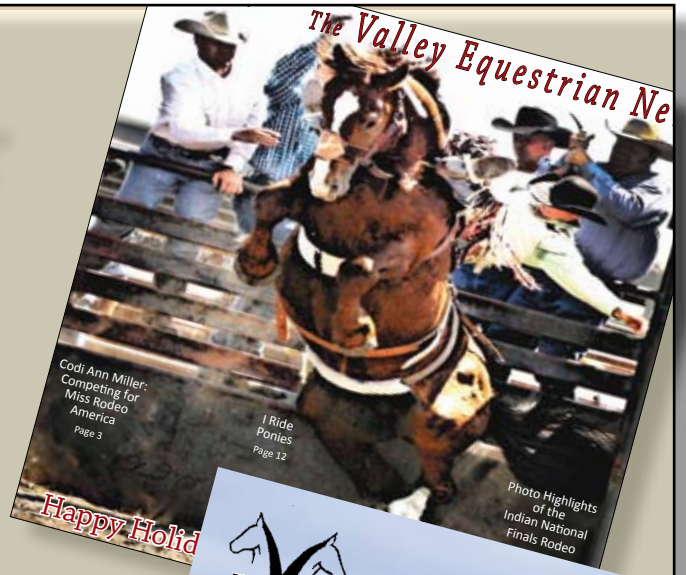
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