

Marin Horse Council

2015 SPRING EQUINOX NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 122

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From the Saddle

And so it begins.....

Actually the RTMP (Road and Trail Management Plan) has been going on for 4 years now. It's just that last Sunday was the first public test of the RTMP implementation process, and what a test run it was! Mill Valley Community Center was the chosen site to roll out the proposed plan for the preserves contained in Region 1 of the Marin County Parks and Open Space District. The meeting space was set with 200 chairs that were mostly filled. The audience was a fairly good cross section of trail users. MCOS planner, Carl Somers, was at the head of the room using a power point presentation to describe the RTMP, then going into greater detail to describe the process by which future trails and projects can be proposed, new trails redesigned and others decommissioned. After Carl's presentation, the audience was asked to break into groups at smaller tables to review site maps, exchange ideas and discuss changes. There was a district representative at each table to write comments and answer questions.

Three maps were displayed on the tables that showed all of the trails throughout Region 1. One map showed the trail system as it looks today. Another showed the trail system with numbers on each trail that pertained to a key giving that trail an environmental score (based on a evaluating system created by staff, and then applied to each trail and fire road, or as they are referred to, "facility".) Bear in mind that the overall goal of the RTMP is to lower the total environmental score of each preserve while enhancing visitor experience. The third map showed a proposed trail system for Region 1. All of the trails were colored as to their proposed use. Orange was hike/horse only, green was multi-use; red meant that the trail was to be decommissioned. Decommissioning a trail would lower the overall environmental score for the preserve while opening up opportunity for other trails to be re-routed or re-designated. An underlying premise is that social trails and trails that would be too difficult to meet environmental standard would be decommissioned.

There are issues with re-designating some of the trails in Region 1. From the beginning of the RTMP process, we were told by district staff that trails close to horse facilities would remain horse/hike only. The proposed changes in Region 1 include the possibility of re-designating a utility service trail near Horse Hill as multi-use. Unfortunately, we cannot simply oppose those changes; instead the process asks us to research and develop an alternate proposal. Another concern is around the Bob Middagh Trail which is a great connector trail to Blithedale Summit and primarily used by equestrians and local hikers. The mountain bike community is lobbying heavily to make it multi-use and we anticipate that one of their "project proposals" will include that. Tread width, sight lines, loamy soils, stream crossings, and the extensive use by horses and local neighbors walking it, makes this conversion a poor candidate for shared use. The way the RTMP works, however, is for those who covet this trail to expend time and energy to create a plan that supports its current designation. One caveat - any project proposed must include a broad range of "partners" to be implemented. We anticipate that the bike community may not find partners for some of their proposals due to equestrian and neighborhood opposition.

All in all the RTMP process is a good one, because it sets a very high standard for a project to be accepted by the staff of the Open Space District (Parks Department). However, developing a project will require research, networking and hours of hard work. The Marin Horse Council will be reaching across the aisle to environmental groups to develop proposals that protect resources and the opportunities for equestrians to continue to have safe access to trails and protect the natural resources of the preserves. We must remember first and foremost what is at stake, the natural resources and habitat of our open spaces and the wild creatures that live within. It must be understood that our first {continued on page 2}

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OUT ON THE TRAIL



MHC's 32nd annual SPRING RIDE!

SATURDAY APRIL 25TH

Join us for the 32nd annual SPRING RIDE!

Marin Horse Council will be supporting the Bay Area Ridge Trail's "Ridge to Bridge" Ride!

Riders will start at Presidio Riding Club's Staging area at Rodeo Valley Stables and ride an easy ride to a gourmet lunch at Tennessee Valley Trailhead, then make the short ride home. Horses in good condition may want to add Coastal Trail and pick up a second dessert from the dessert bar before heading up Old Springs Trail to go home. Riders will also ride in from Muir Beach Stables (Ocean Riders) and from Miwok Stables at Tennessee Valley. Please do not park your rig at Tennessee Valley on this busy day. Rodeo Valley Stables (Presidio Riding Club) has lots of space for parking your rig and trailer. That is where the ride begins.

The lunch will really impress you. Creative, Delicious! All proceeds go to the Bay Area Ridge Trail. Cost for horses is less because we do not need a bus to transport us over the bridge. Hikers will start in the Presidio in San Francisco and will hike in over the Golden Gate Bridge. You also get a cool t-shirt with this ride. Last year's t-shirt was cool! Riders will ride in small groups, not one large group. Barbara Weitz will be smiling down proud on us!

For all the details and to Register:
<http://ridgetrail.org/events/ridge-to-bridge>

Please RSVP with the Horse Council so we can prepare for you and your horse's comforts!

job is to protect the natural beauty that we are surrounded by and have the privilege to travel through. Only then can we begin to better understand how to "tread lightly" on the landscape, and support our land managers as they manage the incredible system of Marin County trails. The RTMP is planned to address Region 2 next; this will include the Gary Giacomini, French Ranch, Roy's Redwoods, Loma Alta, and Cascade Canyon Preserves. We will keep you posted on the date for that community meeting.

I think it's important to understand who is pushing for what and what the goals of each "user group" are. The horseback riders are looking for safe, quiet trails, enjoying flora and fauna, and some nice loops with good vistas. The same goes for the hikers, walkers, joggers and dog walkers. It is our impression that most mountain bikers are looking for the same experiences along with adding connector trails as some wish to ride for longer distances. There are some mountain bikers who are looking for the thrill of riding on narrow trails or racing and logging this data on Strava. These goals create safety issues for other users and wildlife and often create environmental impacts when illegal trails or off road riding takes place. Marin County Bicycle Coalition (MCBC) appears to be seeking more connecting trails and loops and a narrow trail experience. Access for Bikes (A4B) is pushing for complete unchecked access on every trail. Understand that both groups are planning to submit trail proposals that favor the creation of more multi-use trails. Both groups would like bike priority trails (bike only) and temporal sharing (alternate day use, or time zones for bikes only and then horses and hikers.) Both of these groups are planning to submit trail proposals that favor the creation of multi-use trails. And, equestrians need to know that the Marin County Parks Department and the Board of Supervisors are listening. We need to be proactive in the development of our own plan. What we need from membership is:

- The willingness to participate in attending meetings.
- Reporting any trail issues (illegal, unsafe use on the trail) to the appropriate land managers.
- Your help in developing proposals.

If you would like to talk further about this, have questions, and want to help, please call or e-mail me at 415-897-8212 or contact@marinhorsecouncil.org

Happy trails – let's keep 'em that way! - Monte Kruger | *President, MHC*

Great Trail Riding on Mill Valley's Blithedale Summit

Apparently the best kept secret within the Marin County equestrian community is that we have wonderful trail riding in Mill Valley. It seems a little horse lonely up here so I would like to encourage riders from other parts of Marin to please visit. The Blithedale Summit trails are nice, wide, horse friendly trails that offer one spectacular view after another as well as a diverse selection of plant and animal life. Marin County Open Space does an excellent job maintaining and marking these trails so that they are always in good condition and easy to identify. However, it is always a good idea to bring along a trail map. The trail heads are quite easy to access from Hwy 101 and offer adequate parking for trailers. These trails are a nice alternative to Pt. Reyes and Mt. Burdell. The elevation changes are significant – great for conditioning your horse. And now is the perfect time to come for a visit. The wildflowers are blooming, the grass is green and some seasonal creeks are still flowing. And, although we are always happy to welcome visiting equestrians at Horse Hill, there are a couple of other parking options if you would like to start your ride closer to the mountain.

OUT ON THE TRAIL



Gorgeous views from Horse Hill and from East Peak of the ocean and headlands.

The Escalon and Glen Drive trailheads are both excellent jump off points for several nice loops around the Blithedale Summit trails. You can create loops that vary in length from as short as one hour to as long as four to five hours. The Escalon trail head is quite conveniently located off of Camino Alto Ave. at the intersection of Overhill and Escalon – no more than a 5 minute drive from 101 on wide streets. There is more than enough room for trailer turn around and parking. The Glen trail head is also easy to access and will get you even closer to the Blithedale Summit trails as well as allow you to avoid the steep uphill climbs of Middle Summit and Summit Drive. It is located off E. Blithedale Avenue at the top of Glen Drive and no more than a 5 – 7 minute drive from 101 on wide streets. However, turn around at this trail head is pretty tight so I would only recommend it for those with a truck pulling a two horse trailer – And no gooseneck trailers. (In fact, before going, please contact me for best trailer turn around spots on Glen Dr.) Several lovely riding options commence from both trail heads. My favorite is taking the Old Railroad Grade all the way up to the West Point Inn for a picnic lunch and looping back home. The ride is beautiful and the Old Railroad Grade has a fascinating history.

Start by riding down the Escalon Trail. This is a completely level trail so a nice way to let your horse warm up. Take your second left up Middle Summit. This a steep climb through groves of old oak trees and lovely meadows which are liberally sprinkled with pretty wildflowers this time of the year. (On your way home, the grass provides wonderful snacking opportunities for your horse.) At the top of this trail, you will want to hop off your horse to hike up a very steep, and mercifully short, stretch of Summit Ave. There are only a few houses this high up Summit so you will not need to worry about street traffic.

Summit Ave ends at the Corte Madera Ridge fire road where you will want to remount. This trail is not steep. It climbs up to the Blithedale Summit fire road at a gentle to moderate rate. The trail will take you through *{continued on page 4}*

Reporting Info for Marin Public Lands

If there is an Emergency, the Parks Dispatch Number is: 911. They will pass you to the Sheriff or appropriate Park Police/Ranger. That is the quickest way to report an emergency, accident, illegal bikes on trail, dogs off leash attacking horses, or a crime in progress.

Marin County Open Space District:
Marin County Open Space Ranger "Field" Office: Checked frequently 473-2816 (field office) There is usually a ranger there. Please also file an incident report:

<http://www.marincountyparks.org/depts/pk/contact-us/main/incident-report-form>

Go to "Contact us" and click on the Citizen Incident or Observation Report

Situations requiring immediate attention:
Marin County Sheriff's Office
Communications Division at 473-2311 or 911 and they will contact the appropriate Parks, Open Space, or Landscape Department.

Marin Municipal Water District:
Bill Hogan, Chief Ranger. Non-emergency: 945-1187. Active visitor misconduct (Non-emergency): 945-1500
e-Mail: bhogan@marinwater.org

Pt. Reyes National Seashore: 464-5137
Follow the prompts. Pt Reyes Dispatch, non-emergency, is 464-5170 (this is a recording); Sheriff's dispatch line (noted below) may route you to a live ranger, if appropriate. The Sheriff's Department has a substation in Pt. Reyes Station.

Golden Gate Recreation Area (GGNRA):
Park Police: Non-emergency: 561-5656
Emergency: 561-5656

Calif State Parks: Mount Tamalpais, China Camp, Olompali: Roberto (Rob) Walton, Supervising Ranger
388-2952. 388- 3653 General Ranger Line. e-Mail: rob.walton@parks.ca.gov

Samuel P. Taylor State Park & Tomales Bay State Park: Rosemary Blackburn, Supervising Ranger 488-0291

e: Rosemary.Blackburn@parks.ca.gov

ANY EMERGENCY SITUATION CALL: 911

OUT ON THE TRAIL



Tails and Tires Rides Again!

Dickson Ranch in Woodacre was transformed Saturday March 21st as 30 Mountain Biking team members from Drake High School came to a Tails and Tires Safety Workshop sponsored by "Trail Partners".

The Workshop began at 10:00 when the students were asked "what was it about mountain bike riding that made them really like the sport?" Interestingly enough the responses given were similar to the reasons horseback riders love their sport. It's fun, it gets me out in nature, the exercise, the connection with my community. Bravo!

The purpose of Tails and Tires is to familiarize mountain bike riders with horses, teach them how and why horses may react to mountain bikes, and demonstrate safe techniques for approaching and / or passing people on horses.

Thanks to Kim Kouri, Hayley Marsh, Michael Willin, and Monte Kruger of the Marin Horse Council who had some calm horses, the students were led around to feel what it was like to ride an animal with a brain! Our workshop leaders, Tom Boss from Marin County Bicycle Coalition and Curt Kruger from the Marin Horse Council explained how to safely approach a horse on foot, where the safety zones were, (don't stand directly behind or too close, watch the ears) and why horses may use their flight response when approached by a mountain bike. That amygdala response gets them every time!

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madrone, chapparal and oaks and after a couple of bends in the road you will be rewarded for your steep climb up Summit with your first jaw-dropping view of your destination – the East Peak of Mt. Tamalpais.

Continue to follow the Corte Madera Ridge fire road until its end at Blithedale Summit fire road. Turn right onto Blithedale Summit. This trail makes a gradual descent through more oaks and madrone – please take the time to enjoy the views of Mill Valley's hillsides before the trail descends into a grove of redwood trees.

Shortly after entering the redwood trees, make your first left onto the H-Line fire road. This trail will take you on a moderate descent to the bottom of the Old Railroad Grade. It never ceases to amaze me how after a whole lot of climbing and what seems like only a moderate amount of descending that you are now back at the very bottom of the mountain, deep in the heart of Mill Valley's W. Blithedale canyon. The Old Railroad Grade is a wonderful trail. As it gradually winds its way up to the West and East Peaks of Mt. Tamalpais, this picturesque trail offers an exhilarating combination of breathtaking views and colorful history. The trail follows the route originally carved out for the Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway which opened in 1896. Locals soon fondly dubbed it the "crookedest railroad in the world". The route is best known for its "double-bow knot" – a place where the track parallels itself five times in order to gain elevation in a very small area on the mountain. People flocked to the railroad – which transported visitors and locals to Mt. Tam's summit and then whisked them back down the mountain in "gravity cars" which achieved speeds of ten to twelve miles per hour. (This sounds quite thrilling!)

So – get ready for a very gradual, but steady five mile climb to the West Peak of Mt. Tamalpais. The degree of the ascent never exceeds seven percent due to the engineering constraints of the railroad. This makes for a nice ride up. You will start by ascending through a mixture of plants, trees and wildflowers accompanied by the cheerful babble of the Corte Madera Creek flowing below the trail. After about a half mile, the trail makes a sharp turn to the left. At this turn, the creek intersects with the trail and is a nice spot to offer your horse a drink. As you continue to ride up and out of the canyon, you will start to become quite distracted by views of the Bay, the Headlands and the East Peak.

This stretch of the Old Railroad Grade ends at a fire gate. Simply ride through the gate and make your first right onto Fern Canyon Rd. There are only two or three houses on this road, so you should not encounter any traffic. In a few minutes you will ride through the fire gate at the end of the road – once again leaving civilization behind to complete the final two and one half mile ride up to the West Point Inn. Along the way, you will pass the unmarked, but obvious, start of the double bow knot as well as a marked and paved gravity car platform. (Pretty cool!) As you continue to wind your way up Mt. Tam, please pause to savor the increasingly fabulous views.

The West Point Inn is a fine spot to take a break and re-energize. It was constructed by the Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway as a restaurant and stop-over for its passengers. Although the restaurant permanently closed its doors in the 1930's, the Inn's rooms and cabins are still available for overnight visitors. You must make a reservation. The West Point Inn remains a haven for hikers, cyclists, runners and horseback riders. Its amenities include picnic tables, restrooms, a hitching post and a water trough – as well as awesome views of the East Bay, San Francisco, the Marin Headlands and the Pacific Ocean. However, you will probably want to avoid the dates of its pancake breakfasts. They are much too popular for the tolerance of the average horse. Be sure to check the West Point Inn web site first if planning to ride up on a summertime Sunday. <http://westpointinn.com/>

There are a couple of different ways to loop back after your picnic lunch. You can either continue up the trail a couple of minutes to the East Peak, cross the road and

OUT ON THE TRAIL

return home via the Eldridge Grade or you can make the return trip via Hoo Koo E Koo. Regardless, you might as well ride up to the East Peak – just to say you did it. At an elevation of 2,571 feet, the East Peak is the highest point on all of Mt. Tam.

If you choose to return directly from the East Peak, simply cross the street at the top of the Old Railroad Grade. This puts you directly onto the Eldridge Grade – which also has an interesting history. The Eldridge Grade was originally carved into the mountainside to transport Chinese laborers up to the summit by cart to assist with the construction of the railway and the West Point Inn. Be that as it may, Eldridge is not my preferred route back home. It is quite liberally strewn with largish rocks which can be difficult to navigate. (I am guessing that the Chinese laborers went through a whole lot of cart wheels.) If you decide to take this trail you will probably want to hand walk your horse - which might actually be nice after a big picnic lunch. Just follow the signs for Mill Valley and the Blithedale Summit fire road which will head off to your right. There is a water trough along the way. Once on the Blithedale Summit fire road, simply retrace your steps back home.

I prefer to return home via the Hoo Koo E Koo fire road. The Hoo Koo E Koo is a lovely trail that descends at a gentle rate through trees and ferns to the Blithedale Summit fire road. The trail's footing is quite nice and there is a water trough towards its end. To reach Hoo Koo E Koo from the West Point Inn, simply start back down the Old Railroad Grade. Shortly before you hit Fern Canyon Road you will see signs and arrows directing you to the opening of Hoo Koo E Koo. At the end of Hoo Koo E Koo, make a right onto Blithedale Summit, a left onto the Corte Madera Ridge fire road followed by a hike down Summit Ave. and Middle Summit fire road. (Please don't forget to let your horse nibble on the lovely meadow grass off of Middle Summit.) At the bottom, make a right back onto Escalon.

Duration: 4 – 5 hours from the Escalon trail head. 3 – 4 hours from the Glen trail head. This estimate takes into account time to linger over a picnic lunch.

As I mentioned earlier, there are many other lovely riding loops of varying distances to be made from either of these trail heads. Among my favorites are the Horseshoe trail loop, the Maytag trail loop and the Southern Marin Line loop. Please feel free to contact Robert Eichstaedt or myself with any questions in regards to trail routes, and especially, trailer parking and turn around on Glen Drive. (Robert is Horse Hill's foremost authority on all Southern Marin trails.) We are both more than happy to help. In addition, you can visit the MCOS website to download accurate and easy to read trail maps for the Camino Alto Preserve as well as for the Blithedale Summit Preserve. <http://www.marincountyparks.org/depts/pk/divisions/open-space/main/preservemaps>

Marin County Open Space is currently finalizing its Road and Trail Management Plan. The more horses that we can get on these trails – the better. A more visible equestrian presence will give our collective opinions a lot more credence, credibility and clout with the MCOSD. Bicycle enthusiasts wish to gain official access to many of the little single track trails that lead up to the back entrance of Horse Hill. These are extremely serene and quiet trails that are lightly used by local hikers and horseback riders. They are also quite narrow and contain quite a few blind spots. This poses obvious safety concerns. In addition, bicycle access to the single track trails that lead up to the back gate at the top of Horse Hill will result in an enormous increase in the number of cyclists riding through this preserve. Bicycles flying down Horse Hill's fire road and "catching air" off of its water-run-off bumps poses a real threat to the safety of our horses. Please help in maintaining safe trails for the equestrian community. Bring your horse to Mill Valley for a ride on our wonderful trails.

-Amory Willis

For information regarding trail loops, trailer parking and trailer turnaround (especially on Glen Dr.) please contact: Robert Eichstaedt: re@well.com, 415-259-9787 or Amory Willis: amoryhw@comcast.net, 415-505-4648

Our group of mountain bike students was joined by several horseback riders from Dickson Ranch who wanted to give their horses the experience of being on the trail with mountain bikes. Two adventurous folks from Walnut Creek joined us as well. We used the cross country course to demonstrate the proper way for mountain bikes to pass horses, how to best communicate while on the trail and what a horse looks like when he's startled. No one was hurt in the making of this demonstration! In the end we all rode around the cross country course together taking turns successfully passing and practicing our communication skills. The horseback riders who joined us had a good day buddying up their horses with seasoned mounts to help them understand that bikes are not predators after all! In the end, heads were down and feet had slowed.

During lunch, thanks to Marin County Bicycle Coalition and Tom Boss, the students wrapped up their experience with good feedback about what they learned and how they will handle themselves on the trails for the future. We were all very impressed with how they really seemed to understand the importance of riding safely and to be aware of others on the trails. Drake's mountain biking team coach Sandy made it mandatory that the students attend the workshop and continued by emphasizing how important it is to obey the rules on public lands and ride on legal trails only! If only it were this easy to positively influence some others we encounter!

- Monte Kruger



AT THE BARN — IT'S SHOW TIME!



Successful Horse Hauling

Many people enjoy the freedom and flexibility of hauling their own horse(s). Before you set off down the road I would like to talk about some things to keep in mind. First order of business is the rig you will be using. Has the truck been properly maintained and is it strong enough to pull the amount of weight you need it to? Is your trailer large enough to accommodate your horse? Countless trailering issues arise when trying to cram a big warm blood or other large breed into a space that is too small. Make sure that your horse can adequately spread its legs for balance and raise its head.

Next, be sure to have your trailer brakes and bearings checked every 6 months to a year depending on how much you travel. While brakes may seem obvious, getting your bearings packed is equally important. When bearings are not properly lubricated and packed they will freeze up and cause your axles to fail. At this time also peel your floor mats back and inspect your floor for rotting or rust. Before every trip check your lights and check your tire pressure and tread before heading out. It is recommended to use at least a 10-ply tire on your horse trailer. I always pack both a tool kit and a first aid kit in my tack room. Some of the key items that I keep in mine are flares, a basic set of tools including a hammer and screwdriver. Also, a roll of

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From the Vet

The days are getting longer and the weather is saying "Come ride with me!!" So you clean the dust off your tack and boots and head out to take a good look at your horse. Hmm – Looking a little chunky?? OR just a smaller version of the horse you rode a few months back? What do you do to get him ready for those spring shows?

In order to answer that it's important to think about what activities you are going to be doing in the next few months. Are you trying to burn off excess weight? Or improve a dressage score?? Or bump up a height jumping? Or try for a 50-mile endurance ride?

The good news is that horses – just being horses – retain a significant amount of muscle mass just wandering around their paddocks or fields. Why? Gravity!!! They have a heavy weight to keep off the ground every minute of every day (apart from the true pasture potato!) But that doesn't mean they can just instantly perform in your chosen discipline – fitness takes time – a minimum of 6 weeks before you see significant changes in the form and function of their bodies.

The other good news is that horses are built to MOVE! They have specialized systems in their musculoskeletal system, which increases the efficiency of movement exponentially. This is probably the most important reason why they can do all the amazing things they do for us.

The primary organ systems that can and do change with an exercise regime are the cardiovascular system and the musculoskeletal system.

The cardiovascular system is roughly comprised of heart, lungs and blood volume while the musculoskeletal system is the muscles, tendons, ligaments and bones.

So if your primary goal is endurance you are going to focus on improving the cardiovascular system first knowing that the musculoskeletal system should tag along. However if you are stepping into the oval for the first time then you are likely going to be primarily focusing on increasing strength and control in the musculoskeletal system.

Exercise can change the body systems in some very specific ways.

Despite being a muscle you can't increase heart size; however, you can improve efficiency of contraction with practice and therefore increase cardiac output. Horses have a unique ability to hold a large portion of their blood volume in their spleen – to be called upon at a moment's notice. This holding volume can be increased as well with exercise focusing on cardiovascular activities.

Increasing the size of a muscle belly increases its strength whether its job is to support weight, minimize vibration or increase push off. Improving the reaction time (speed of contraction) and increasing the storage of energy resources are also affected by the increased workload.

So how do you do this? The easiest answer is to 'do what you do'. So if you trail ride – start trail riding. If you dressage – start 'dressage'ing. The best way to improve fitness is to practice the activity that you want to perform. It will naturally strengthen the systems as you ask for longer rides and harder maneuvers.

There are some general 'fitness' rules of thumb that should be adhered to – they are primarily taken from human research but seem to hold true in equines as well.

1. Exercise a minimum of 4 days per week – less than that will not improve the fitness level substantially
2. Start with what seems easy to you and your horse and increase by approximately 5% per week
3. You can increase workload by increasing time (think reps) or intensity (think

weight) – they achieve different goals so use the one that is best suited to your needs at the time

4. In order for a horse to compete at speed or a multi-day competition a general rule of thumb is they should be able to walk 30 minutes trot 20 minutes and canter 10 minutes without significant (longer than 1 minute) breaks.

So why is cross-training so popular? Different activities can isolate out and focus intensity on particular functions. For example – learning some basic dressage moves can increase the holding strength of the endurance horse's muscles – and improve the symmetry of muscle development; whereas trail riding a dressage horse can improve cardiovascular fitness and improve proprioception (knowing where their feet are).

So in summary – Take assessment of what your plans are and start a targeted fitness regime early enough to allow you to reach your goals. When your horse is fit enough to do the exercise you will be asking of him then start looking at how to improve different parts of his performance using training methods from other disciplines. And remember to smile and have fun!!

- Carrie Schlachter, DVM

Not Just Another Dressage Trainer

Jasmin Becker Makes Classical German Training Accessible at Dougherty Ranch

Remember back in school, that one teacher that was just meant to be a teacher? Where their deep understanding and fiery passion for both the subject and the students made learning easy and accomplishing great things possible? Jasmin Becker is that kind of a teacher.

Being a typical horse crazy girl, Jasmin has been riding and competing since age 6. From hunters to eventing, she was able to succeed and develop as a rider. With a graduate degree in biology and environmental policy, she worked as a consultant but never lost sight of her passion for horses. At the next decision point in her life, it was either studying cheetahs in Botswana or following her equine inclination.

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duct tape and a can of wd40 can save the day!

It may be helpful to consult with your veterinarian on what to include in your first aid kit. I always carry banamine, bandaging materials, sedation, and a long cotton heavy duty lunge line for pulling a downed horse in case of an accident. Some of this may seem like overkill but it's always better to be prepared and not have the need, than be stuck on the side of the road without.

Now that you are prepared, let's think about your horse. I always ship in a leather halter for safety. A nylon halter with a leather crown piece will also suffice. I do not blanket horses unless it is a very cold morning and the horse is freshly body clipped. Under those circumstances I will put a polar fleece sheet or cooler on them. Horses generate a lot of heat while in the trailer so generally nothing is needed. Wrapping is a matter of personal preference. Many people put shipping bandages on their horses for support and protection. If you choose to wrap your horse's legs, be sure that your horse is accustomed to wearing wraps before you set off on a trip. Many of my clients like to give their horse a dose of ulcer guard before a long trip. I also find it helpful to give them a good wet bran mash both before and after to help with gut motility. Always pack plenty of hay and at least 5 gallons of water from home.

While it is a good idea to stop every several hours and check on your horse and offer water (don't be surprised if they won't accept water while on the road), I don't recommend unloading in a strange place to let them stretch their legs. When tying a horse in a trailer I always make sure one end has a quick release snap and tie horses long enough so that they can drop their head. Ideally you want them to be able to drop their head as low as their heart without their tie being so long that they can get a leg over it. This allows horses to clear their lungs while traveling which greatly reduces the chance of shipping fever or other upper respiratory problems. Always bed your trailer with clean dust free shavings. I prefer the coarse shavings that you can find at many feed stores and at Tractor Supply. I find that they have fewer dust particles to blow around and end up in your horse's eyes and nose, while still being absorbent enough to keep the trailer floor from becoming slippery. Especially after longer trips it's always a good idea to check your horse's temperature. An elevated temperature can alert you to possible colic or shipping fever before your horse shows any visible signs. Happy Trailering!!

- Alisha Robinson

AT THE BARN

Shows & Events

Dickson Ranch

June 6, July 11, August 8: English/Western
May 16, September 9: Dressage Schooling
May 9, September 12: Play Days
June 29, July 13, July 27: Summer Camp.
Contact Grace Tolson 415.488.0454

Halleck Creek Ranch Therapeutic Riding and 4-H Club Events

- Volunteer Trainings – HCR is always on the lookout for youth and adults who would like to help out with our programs and learn horsemanship at the same time. We have openings on weekdays and Saturdays. No experience necessary, fun and rewarding! Contact Mesa at mnordbye@halleckcreekranch.org.
- Flying Changes – this is a new program for women using the healing benefits of nature and horses to help overcome personal obstacles. Horsemanship lessons and riding. Meets on Mondays at HCR for more information contact Molly mscannell@halleckcreekranch.org.
- Summer Riding Clinics – Enrollment is open for 4 weeks of clinics for youth with special needs. Spaces are limited, ½ day program teaching horsemanship, horse health, grooming and riding. Please contact Molly to enroll (or volunteer) at mscannell@halleckcreekranch.org.

More information on these and all of our events at www.halleckcreekranch.org. Thank you!

Horse Show: Halleck Creek Ranch holds its annual Horse Show & Open House on Saturday May 30 9:00am-4:00pm. Potluck lunch, BBQ, live music, games and 6 riding classes. 50+ riders will show their stuff and compete in a variety of classes, Western & English. Free and open to the public. More information on our website www.halleckcreekranch.org.

Marin County Fair 4-H Horseshow:

July 3, 2015 Marin Civic Center. Halleck Creek Ranch riders will compete in English classes for adaptive riding. This is unique among recognized shows in the area.

Napa Valley Horsemen's Association

The list is set for our 7th annual open horse show series. The dates are June 28, July 26, August 23, September 27".

For more information contact Jonnie Hagen--nvhahorseshow@gmail.com

With a German family lineage, and her innate belief in quality education, going to Germany--where the training program for riders and horses is one of the best in the world, due to its long history and very systematic approach--was a natural choice for her.

On her first travel to Germany, Jasmin went to the famous Nordrhein-Westfälisches Landgestüt, the state stud in Warendorf, the horse capital of the world. "I came here to train and was super excited to ride one of the famous stallions. However, my first ride didn't quite go as planned. In good German manner, the head trainer, Peter Borggreve, had to relay some instructions quickly. Although I had to relearn a lot, I knew immediately I was on the right path."

After a few years of back and forth between training in Germany and the US, Jasmin was asked to join a licensing program. The licensing program itself was an eight-week intensive, consisting of six days a week of theory as well as riding and instructing in dressage, stadium jumping and cross country; and seven days a week of taking care of the horses, including cleaning stalls and feeding. On the testing day, Jasmin had to ride and teach all three sports, pass an oral and a written examination, all of which was judged by eight judges including one FEI judge. She earned her license with distinction with particular mention of her teaching skills. In the process she also made valuable connections with FEI riders and trainers in Germany. Peter Borggreve became her mentor and business partner in Mane Imports LLC, a horse import and sale business she founded in 2003.

Having recently moved to Northern California, Jasmin's excellent education and dedication to her students and horses have begun transforming horse/rider pairs in Marin. "Jasmin's instruction is incredibly clear. She creates correctness along the training scale and in the details of the riding -- all the while being encouraging and wonderful to work with. She makes it "black and white" for both horse and rider; and that leads to rapid advances and improvements. My position, understanding of my seat and use of the inside rein have gotten much more refined within just a few months of working with Jasmin -- much to the delight of the horses I have the privilege of riding," says student and assistant Yvette Koth.

Jasmin's goal now is to "build a great, fun, successful dressage barn at beautiful Dougherty Ranch, the best kept dressage secret in Marin."

More information at maneimports.com



PROJECT
H.O.P.E.

Project H.O.P.E.

Project H.O.P.E. (honoring our veteran personnel with equine therapy) is a nonprofit organization sponsored by Marinlinks

This program offers Equine Assisted Psychotherapy or (EAP) for Veterans and their families. EAP is experiencing and learning through activities with horses. Individuals may begin to see their patterns of behavior and gain valuable insights about themselves. These activities are designed to reflect real life issues associated with anger and other strong emo-

tions, goal setting around making different choices, exploring positive lifestyle changes and allowing people to find healthier solutions to life's challenges.

Project H.O.P.E. is a hands on approach for people used to action based results and is solution oriented. Our activities are ground based, non-riding and previous

AT THE BARN



Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP)

horse experience is not required. These activities take place in an arena set back in a canyon peaceful, private and completely surrounded by trees.

Our leaders are EAGALA (equine assisted growth and learning association) certified. EAGALA is part of a network of over 4,500 Mental Health Professionals and Equine Specialists in 50 countries; many of these successful programs are working with veterans.

Veterans will be participating in 4-6 week workshops. Our consecutive weekend workshops will be available for individuals, families and units. There is no cost to veterans as funding is provided by Project H.O.P.E.

For more information contact Kim Mac Lean at ridgeranch@comcast.net or theprojecthope@comcast.net. We are located at Ridge Ranch 765 Atherton Ave. Novato

Our Newsletter is Going Green

The Marin Horse Council is going "Green"! We will be sending out our quarterly Newsletters via e-mail. In doing this we are conscience of our responsibility to the environment and financially we will be saving money that can be put towards supporting our equestrian presence in Marin County. However, if you must have a hard copy of the MHC Newsletter mailed (USPS) to you, please contact me at 415.488.0950 or email pr@marinhorsecouncil.org



The Marin Horse Council is on Facebook. Check out all of the events and activities we are involved in.

Shows & Events

Santa Rosa Equestrian Center

Combined Test & Dressage Shows on Sundays, May 17, June 28, July 19
Test "A" for the eventers. Jump judge Amy Woodruff, dressage judge Cherry Bauman. Dressage riders come practice the new tests in a friendly, low stress environment. Please get your entries to Tracy.
email tracy@srequestrian.com, FB or text her at 707-975-2097.

San Mateo County Horsemen's Association

Fusion Horsemanship® Clinic designed and taught by Susan Tomasini May 16-17, 2015
8:30AM – 4:30PM each day
The Mounted Patrol Arena, Woodside, CA
For more information contact Dawn Williams at 650-851-1128 or dawnwilliamsdes@yahoo.com

Sonoma Horse Park

SPRING CLASSIC (A): May 6-10
HMI EQUESTRIAN CHALLENGE (A): May 13-17
HMI JUNE CLASSIC (A): June 6-17
HMI EQUESTRIAN CLASSIC (AA): July 21-26
For more information contact Ashley Herman: 415 518 2145
Ashley@sonomahorsepark.com

Woodbridge Farm 2015 Shows

Schooling Show Series

April 25th: Ivetta Harte
May 30: Gail McGuffey
June 27: Patti Schofler
July 25: Cherry Bauman
August 29: Jeannette Deramlaere

Shows: May 17 ***CDS Marin Chapter Show at Woodbridge Farm. Judge D Schmutz

For more information contact the Marin CDS Chapter directly

July 12 ***Mid-Summer Classic
S Judge Melissa Creswick
Opening Date: May 1, 2015
Closing Date: June 27, 2015

Clinic Event May 2-4:

- Introduction to Working Equitation
- J.P. Giacomini
- Classical dressage - Obstacle training

Show contact Dawn Bennett at Woodbridge.Dawn@gmail.com

JP Clinic contact Lisa Everett at LisaEverett22@gmail.com or 805 630 6795

AT THE BARN

horse show preparation guide **READY, SET, SHOW**

You've got a lot to think about when getting ready for show season! Follow the timeline below and use the shopping list at right to help ensure that nothing is forgotten.



12 ^{weeks} BEFORE **ORDER CUSTOM BOOTS** Custom boots (such as Konig and Cavallo) require a minimum of three months. Make an appointment to be measured and order your boots no later than three months before you'll need them.

9 ^{weeks} BEFORE **START SHOPPING** Make your first pre-show shopping trip to The Equestrian's Concierge to determine what other custom items you may need. If you need a tack trunk, tack trunk cover, or custom riding coat, this is the time to order them.

6 ^{weeks} BEFORE **MAKE SURE YOU'RE COVERED** Take a blanket inventory. Send out blankets that need cleaning and/or repair. Order any new custom show blankets now.

4 ^{weeks} BEFORE **PERSONAL SHOPPING APPOINTMENT** Try on and assess your show clothes. What needs replacing? Shop for breeches, helmets, show shirts, socks, gloves and other apparel. Make sure you've got new show pads and plenty of wraps for your horse. Order name plates for tack and send out any custom embroidery items.

3 ^{weeks} BEFORE **GET IN CONDITION** Bring in your saddle, bridle or boots for cleaning / conditioning / polishing. Drop off any tack that needs name plates affixed or that requires leather stamping. Take care of any remaining items on the shopping lists at right.

1 ^{day} BEFORE **PACK IT UP** Make sure your tack trunk is packed, covered and ready to load before you leave the barn. At home, pack your garment bag and personal items. If you're driving out of town, fill up your gas tank and get some cash for the trip.



SHOPPING **CHECKLIST**

Tear at the dotted line, and bring this list to The Equestrian's Concierge.


FOR YOUR **TACK TRUNK**

- Embroidered Show Sheet
- Stable blanket w/name
- Scrim sheet w/name
- White show saddle pads
- Shipping wraps:
 - 12"/14" for ponies
 - 14"/16" for horses
- Shipping halter w/nameplate
- Bridle w/ nameplate
- Martingale w/nameplate
- Girth w/nameplate
- Saddle w/nameplate
- Eq /Jumping boots for horse
- Tack cleaning supplies
- APPROVED helmet
- Crop / Whip
- Spurs with sturdy straps
- Supplements
- Medications
- Paddock Boots
- Half chaps
- Square baby schooling pads
- Polo wraps
- Checkbook
- First aid kit


FOR YOUR **GARMENT BAG**

- Jackets/Coats
- Shirts with collars
- Show breeches
- Hair ties/nets
- Gloves
- Belt
- Clean boots
- Boot socks
- Boot pulls
- Boot polishing kit
- Futis (boot covers)
- Sewing kit

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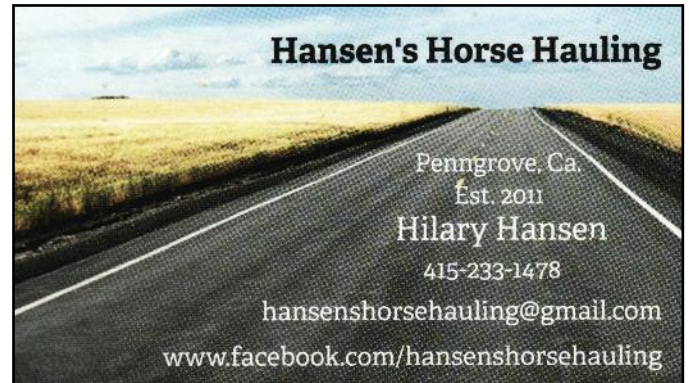
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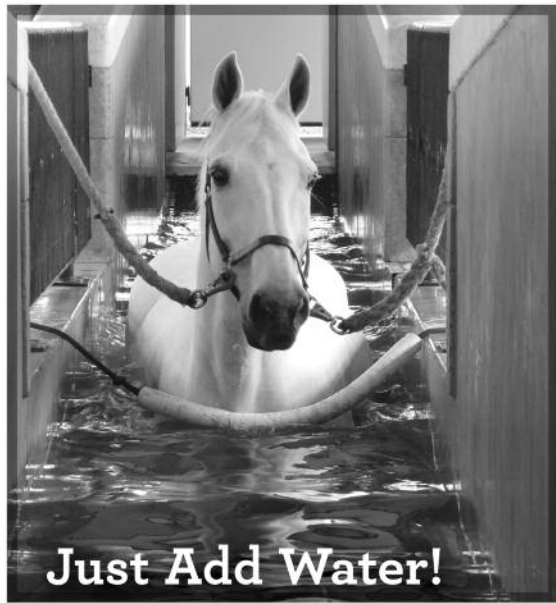
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REMINDER!

All MARIN HORSE COUNCIL memberships now renew on JANUARY 1st. You can renew online or use the renewal form included in our quarterly newsletters. Email us at contact@marinhorsecouncil.org to ask about the status of your membership. To smooth the transition from our old system to this new "everyone renews on the same date" system we are extending 2015 membership to those people who renewed in November or December of 2014.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT!

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Marin Horse Council Membership Application

- Adult \$25 Junior/Senior \$15 Family \$40 Business \$50
 "Silver Buckle" \$50 "Golden Horseshoe" \$100 Life Member \$250 Club/Organization \$40

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

email _____

Help MHC to better serve you -- tell us about yourself. The MHC never shares or sells its members' information.

What stables do you ride at? _____

- Own a horse?** Yes No
Your interests: English Western Trail Riding Endurance Show Jumping Dressage
 Rodeo Eventing Driving Breeding Animal Welfare Other _____

- MHC needs volunteers! Please indicate if you can help us with:** Finance, Communication, Membership, Barn Liaisons,
 Government Affairs, Horse Course, Eq Evac, Events committee, Marin County Fair, Volunteer Co-coordinating

Your membership in the Marin Horse Council helps support the Council's many activities on behalf of Marin's equestrians and equines. Donations are also welcome. Fees and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Thanks for joining! Mail your check to Marin Horse Council | 171 Bel Marin Keyes Blvd. | Novato, CA 94949-6183 4/15



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Thank You!

The Marin Horse Council depends on the continued generous support of Marin's horse lovers. Thanks to all members, and in particular, thanks to those who join or renew at Lifetime, Golden Horseshoe, or Silver Buckle membership levels.

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