

Marin Horse Council

2015 SUMMER EQUINOX NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 123

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Marin County Fair, left to right: Horse Ambassador Finnegan (owned by Hank Miller) sent lots of kids home dreaming of horses. Driving demonstration by Anne & Jim Austin and their teams from Eleven Roses Ranch. Fair visitors enjoyed Sam Durham's live demonstration.

From the Saddle

Volunteers are the life blood of any organization. It's amazing to witness the momentum an organization can obtain when good volunteers get on board. The number of hours volunteers give and the service they provide to their favorite organization often go under appreciated or taken for granted. The MHC has a number of activities throughout the year that requires volunteer staffing. The latest one was the Marin County Fair. Board member Lauren Terk has taken on the job of "booth fairy" for eight years now. Lauren does a remarkable job. The booth is staffed in three shifts with three people per shift for five days straight. Do the math. Through those volunteer efforts the MHC is able to meet and greet countless fair goers who stop by to see the pony, get information, and ask questions or just reach in the box for a sticker. It's all great PR and only goes to show that "Yes, Virginia, there are still horses in Marin County."

Thank you all for all of the volunteer hours you so lovingly donate to the Marin Horse Council. Without your kind support we would not be able to offer a glimpse of our world to those who may wish to become more involved or to those who are just curious about our four-legged companions. The MHC will be hosting a fall ride; we hope you will come out not only to ride with us but perhaps to help us pat each other on the back for another great year of volunteering to a great cause.

There is a petition afloat to allow California Equestrian Park and Event Center to acquire undeveloped land at the Sonoma Developmental Center. The CEPEC would be a world class complex to be used by the public for recreation, equestrian competition, veterinary services, education and wildlife land preservation. While this venue would be in Sonoma County, it would be created in response to needs expressed by the equestrian community from all over and would certainly benefit the equestrian community in Marin. Wanda Smith has championed this project for many years and I for one really hope CEPEC moves from a brilliant vision to a successful reality. Check out www.cepec.us

I hope your summer riding is going as planned. The days have been ripe for long trail rides and not too hot for those who prefer the arena. We are so lucky to live in a County that holds all that Marin has to offer our precious equestrian community. If you are looking to supplement your wardrobe, Coco has just ordered new tee shirts in those great colors that show off our happy faces. Look to October for the Fall Ride! See you there.

- Monte Kruger | President, MHC

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OUT ON THE TRAIL



Equine Tour de France

It's hard to beat the beauty of trails in Marin. But France beckoned us with its quaint villages and centuries-old architecture not to mention fabulous food and wine.

We've ridden 3 times before with Cap Rando in Provence, a terrific horse outfitter and were itching to go again & share it with friends. So we started talking it up last summer to a carefully vetted out group of friends we knew we could travel with (requirements: excellent rider, horse owner, fun lover and non-whiner, but wine lover) and got 8 enthusiastic participants: 6 riders + 2 non riders + us = 10.

Didier Simonot, the owner of Cap Rando, picked us all up in Aix en Provence and drove us to his ranch Mas de Reaute where we had dinner and spent the night. We separated and packed just enough for the ensuing 5 days of riding, storing the rest there. We dined, caught some zzz's and reconnoitered at breakfast after which we met our horses. They all live together in pastures so the pecking order is well established. Since they all get along great, we could easily mix the order on the trail. The horses are sturdy trail wise combos of Barb, Arab, Selles Francais and other breeds and wear "wide web" shoes for the local terrain. We sorted out our tack and saddled up in French Randonee saddles, similar to English but with wide panels for even weight distribution for distance riding and took off into the Grand Luberon region of Provence. Not long into the ride we were grabbing cherries off the trees that overhung the trail and marveling at the scenery. Seeing tile-roofed farmhouses with periwinkle shutters and old villages perched on hillsides is awe inspiring along with the vistas, cliffs, flowers, about to bloom lavender fields, the magnificence of Roman ruins, wineries and centuries old stone villages. Riding cobblestone streets into a 500-year-old village to water our horses at the equally old fountain in the village center was amazing.

We rode 5-6 hours, close to 20 miles, a day. Midway we would enter a shady meadow with a sumptuous picnic lunch set up with various salads, meats, cheeses and of course wines. Our lunch cook drove a van and not only fed us but transported our bags from place to place. We unsaddled our horses and tied them to bale twine tree savers on the trees so they could rest as well. At lunch our guide Jeff recommended tying my mare Katlinka, who was in season, next to her gelding buddy. They put on a show, getting lead lines twisted in a moment of passion, and I taught Jeff a new English expression "friends with benefits". We decided that tying them so close was not such a good idea.

After a relaxing lunch, we saddled back up and continued until we reached our evening destination, each night a charming, immaculately clean inn or farmhouse, often on a ranch where the horses overnight as well. We all cleaned up and met for apres ride cocktails and a leisurely delicious home cooked dinner with more wine of course. After all, it's France where a bottle of fine vino can be procured at the exorbitant cost of \$10.

We had 5 consecutive days of thrilling scenery, great horses and meals, lots of laughs and the camaraderie of new and old friends including Jeff's adorable dog Pongo who won everyone's heart.

On Friday at the end of the ride we returned to Cap Rando for one last celebratory dinner together, spent the night and were driven after breakfast to the Aix en Provence train station to carry on to our next destination loaded with memories and a gazillion photos we're all still sorting through.

This was our 4th ride with Didier's Cap Rando and he offers many programs from single to multi-day rides all through Europe & other countries. This won't be our last. Spain in 2017 perhaps?

Ridge to Bridge Ride

Bay Area Ridge Trail's "Ridge to Bridge" was a great success! Over 30 horses, from many parts of the Bay Area, enjoyed a delicious lunch, the wonderful trails and helped raise money to open more miles of Ridge Trail. Special thanks to Lyndall Erb of Bay Area Barns & Trails for organizing the equestrian component, the Marin Horse Council for helping to promote the ride and the MHC volunteers. Thank you to Miwok Stables for providing water for the horses.

- Karen Johnson

OUT ON THE TRAIL



Drinking at an ancient fountain in the village's center, and riding under an overhanging cliff.

Check out www.horsebackridingvacations.eu. This is the itinerary of the ride we just did, my favorite: <http://www.horsebackridingvacations.eu/details-trail+ride+in+provence+inn+to+inn+horseback+trip+luberon+to+upper+provence-79.html>
-Duffy Hurwin

Horse Camping at Devil's Gulch – a great “starter” horse camping trip

For about 20 years, the Feral Women's Dining and Riding Society has made two annual horse camping trips to Devil's Gulch horse camp in Samuel P. Taylor State Park. I joined this group about 18 years ago, and these trips are the highlight of my year. We've braved rain, yellowjackets, extreme heat, extreme cold, marauding raccoons, and even had a cow raid our hay supply. And we did it all while enjoying gourmet meals, wine, and hours in the saddle and by the campfire. We eat eggs benedict, oysters, paella and pineapple upside-down cake; there's nary a hotdog in sight. Because it's so close to home, we'll drive our vehicles out and unload, then return to Dickson Ranch and ride out; it's about three hours, if you dawdle, up and across San Geronimo Ridge Road, down to Shafter Bridge, and through the park. It's also close enough that non-campy friends and family can pop out for lunch or dinner, or, if you forgot one of the ingredients for your famous Thai chicken curry, you can dash home and grab it.

Have you been dying to try camping with your horse? Devil's Gulch is the ideal spot. You don't need to bring your own pens or tie to trailers overnight. There are eight 12x12 pipe corrals and three pastures that can be shared by 2-3 horses. There's a faucet near the horse pens, and a manure compost bin and wheelbarrow to make it easy to clean pens and pastures.

There's plenty of parking adjacent to the campsite, and loads of room to turn your trailer around. This convenience lends itself to some serious “glamping”...the main site has ample space for several large tents -- you can back your car right up to your tent spot to unload. I bring a full-size regular bed mattress – no lumpy camping mats for me! There's a fire pit and three or four picnic tables, and the toilets are well maintained.

Trails from Devil's Gulch are great, too: the beautiful Jewell Trail, leading from the park bike trail up to the Bolinas Ridge, is one of my favorites. From the ridge, you can ride east and drop down at Shafter Bridge to reconnect with the park road back to camp. Or, there's a tiny cutoff that leads from the ridge down to Olema, where the Olema Farmhouse has hitching posts so you can park your pony while you go in for beer and calamari.

{continued on page 4}



Tips for Trail Riders

SHARING THE TRAIL

Yield when it is safer to do so. All other trail users are expected to yield to equestrians, but sometimes it is safer to yield to others.

Pass Slowly. Horses can be intimidating to others.

Train your horse to be accustomed to trail riding and other trail users.

Stay calm. It helps your horse remain calm.

SAFE COMMUNICATION

Pay attention to your horse. He will hear and sense others before you do. Call out "I'm on a horse, please say hello".

Direct others how to pass. Others may be unfamiliar with horses and horse safety, so take the lead to direct a safe passing.

Help others to act safely. Ask them to move to the downhill side of the trail so you can pass; horses perceive up slope creatures to be predators.

Look ahead, look behind. Be alert to other trail users behind as well as ahead so you can help others act safely around your horse.
- Trail Partners



West Point Inn Ride

A group of seven riders from Horse Hill rode up the Old Railroad Grade for West Point Inn's pancake breakfast - a six hour round trip. A great ride, and the horses put huge smiles on the faces of many children!



Here and There on Marin County's Trails

Marin Conservation League thanks Linda Dahl, Director and General Manager of Marin County Parks Department since 2010, for her service to the county. Linda has announced she intends to retire this summer. One of Dahl's major achievements has been transformation of the Parks Department itself. Most of the same highly qualified professionals who were there in 2010 are still in the department, augmented by recent staff, but Linda can take credit for redirecting those talents into a much more effective working team. She was also a main energizer in assembling a broad coalition to support Measure A, which has restored investment in parks, agriculture, and open space throughout the county, and for spearheading the Road and Trail Management Plan.

County rolls out Road and Trail Management Plan (RTMP)

MCL considers the RTMP to be more a process than a road map for the county's thirty-four Open Space Preserves. That process began officially at a Sunday workshop in March attended by an estimated 200 outdoor enthusiasts: mountain bikers seeking access to narrow trails; walkers, joggers, equestrians, birders, and botanists interested in maintaining safety on existing trails and preventing damage to plants and wildlife; and neighbors championing local foot paths.

County Parks staff outlined the process by which the Department will determine which roads and trails constitute the current ("Baseline") Trail System, beginning with Region 1 of the preserve system (There are six regions). Staff also outlined how interested parties can submit proposals annually for new or modified trails, or even trail closures, to the Department for consideration. Region 1 extends across the northeastern flank of Mt. Tamalpais from Mill Valley to Kenfield and includes four preserves, three of which contain critical habitat for the threatened Northern spotted owl (pictured). The Department will next tackle Region 2, which includes the heavily used Cascade Canyon, Giacomini, Roy's Redwoods, White Hill, and Loma Alta Preserves. *{continued on page 5}*



Devil's Gulch Horse Camp and a happy horse!

Take the Riding and Hiking Trail to connect with the Barnabe Fire Road for a spectacular climb to the top of Mt. Barnabe. Bill's Trail (currently under construction) is another way to access the Barnabe peak. In the park, the Pioneer Tree trail in the main park makes a nice, shorter loop, and the fire road at the end of the camping area is a beautiful, easy out-and-back ride, where you might even encounter a few of the Devil's Gulch Ranch cows.

If it's a hot day, the swimming hole in the main campground is just a short walk away, and, just across Sir Francis Drake, there's a spot to wade or sit in the shade by the creek.

We go every June and October, and while many of our horses, and even some of our friends, are no longer with us, we carry on. After all, what's a Feral Woman without a seat by the campfire, a glass of wine in one hand and a plate of blue cheese-pecan spread and crackers in the other?
- Cyndi Cady



Sonoma County Trail Blazers Trek

This past June I had the pleasure of joining the Sonoma County Trail Blazers as a first time guest on their annual trek. The five-day camping and riding adventure, this year on the beautiful 43,000 acre Bar Z Ranch near Covelo, has filled my mind with a myriad of images and remembrances.

Now, mind you, for many years I have heard stories about a wild bunch of rough and tumble cowboys known as the Trail Blazers. They rode hard during the day and partied hard at night. There is surely more truth than fiction in

some of these stories. And for sure, there is plenty of exuberance, especially in the evening, around the large open bar in the main base camp. But it's also fair to say that many of the members simply enjoy the great outdoors, and the trek provides a chance to renew old acquaintances and enjoy horseback riding over some beautiful country. All of the members respect the motto, "Horses come first." All take care of their horses before themselves, which has been the "Trail Blazer Way" since the inception.

Our trek this year consisted of over two hundred riders plus the well stocked horse and mule-driven wagon teams that carried the provisions for meals on the trail.

OUT ON THE TRAIL

The riders ranged in age from the mid-20's to a few in their mid 80's, and they came from just about every walk of life. Physicians, farriers and veterinarians provided valuable services. My sponsor, Dr. Ted Stashak, along with some other veterinarians, were able to provide emergency care to a couple of exhausted horses.

The riders were assigned to various satellite camps (Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Marin Camp, etc.). I became friends with a great bunch of guys in the Sebastopol Camp. My bed was a cot in the back of my horse trailer. At 6:30 every morning we would rise and shine to the crow of a rooster and "Oh What a Beautiful Morning" blasting over the PA system. We would ride out at 9 o'clock on rides from about six to 15 miles long; however, some estimated our first day's ride to be about 20 miles. The days were hot, but water troughs had been conveniently placed every couple of miles or so along the trails for the horses. The troughs provided an opportunity for horses to refresh with water and riders with water or a cold beer. Midway through the rides a hearty and delicious lunch seemed to appear out of nowhere.

Breakfast and dinner were served in the main camp area. The stage for evening entertainment was also here as well as the large open bar where members had a chance to enjoy a brew and to jaw with old friends. As you might imagine, much of the revelry occurred here in the evening, including some of the initiation rites that might include, among other humiliations, throwing new guests into a water trough.

Trail Blazers was founded in 1941 with the purpose of perpetuating our western heritage and the cowboy way of life. Some of the "old timers" come on the trek without their horses just to enjoy the camaraderie and fellowship of the Trail Blazers.

This year's trek was known as "The Henry Trione Memorial Trek." This was to honor Henry Trione, not only a long time member since 1952, but a stalwart in the Sonoma Community. He was honored at a very solemn "Empty Saddles" Memorial recognizing all members that have passed along since the 2014 trek.

One afternoon we had the opportunity to participate in a "trail course" – a chance to see how well you and your horse could negotiate obstacles you might find on a trail ride. And some obstacles you would not likely find on the trail, such as a teeter-totter bridge or the chance to gallop along holding a long rope stretched out behind you with rattling tin cans attached to it.

On "Play Day" there was no regular trail ride. This day was devoted to Horse Show, Gymkhana and Rodeo. Included in the events were team roping, team penning, pole bending, reining, a relay race, and the guest boot race. To my knowledge, none of the participants were professional, but there sure were some expert horsemen out there in the arena.

First year guests (and that means Me!) were asked to participate in the boot race. All 32 of us rode from one end of the arena to the other. We dismounted and dumped our boots. Then we then turned around and rode back to the other end of the arena in our sock feet. During this time, our boots were scattered around the arena. At the same time, cattle were released into the arena. Then a water truck began to hose down the opposite end of the arena. We were instructed to now turn around and ride back to the other end of the arena to get off our horse, find our boots, put them on, and race back to the other end of the arena. It was pure turmoil with all of us on foot with our horses trying to find our own boots. I remember hobbling along for quite some time on foot with one water soaked boot on trying to find the other boot and avoid being stepped on by a horse or cow. It was a lot of hee heeing and har haring – mostly by the STB audience!

From forging new friendships to creating wonderful new memories, and yes, even bringing home an unanticipated souvenir – a battle ribbon butt blister – my first Trail Blazer trek was a wild and wonderful ride. I look forward to next year's adventure!

Wishing you all wild, happy times in the saddle.

- Joel Bartlett

As the process continues through the regions, interested parties can begin to submit their own proposals for additions to the road and trail system. MCL expects that protecting sensitive resources from excessive recreational use will be countered with demands for increased access. The governing principle of the RTMP is to reduce overall environmental impacts across the preserves over time, even as recreation increases. MCL will participate closely to ensure that this principle holds true and that shared-use trails remain safe for all users.

County Parks closes illegal trail in San Geronimo Valley

Recent reporting of the closing of an illegal trail in Giacomini Open Space Preserve missed key points that support the action taken by Marin County Parks. In 2012 the County, with major grant assistance and many public donations, purchased the 22-acre "Morrison Property" in San Geronimo Valley. In recent months, County Parks closed a trail that had been illegally cut on that property, first in 2012 and again in early 2015. Local residents claimed that a footpath had pre-existed the County's acquisition. If it did exist, it was on private property and therefore was not included in the County's 2011 inventory of roads and trails. The RTMP (Chapter 4, Policy SW.2) established November 2011 as the cut-off date for trails to be eligible for consideration as part of the system. Any trail constructed after that date could be decommissioned at the discretion of the Department.

The first illegal trail was cut during the spring of 2012, when the County's pending purchase of the property became known. Parks staff covered both ends with brush, and posted "trail closed" signs. Early this year, the trail was re-opened illegally by removing the obstructions and digging new benches across waterways. Parks staff again closed the trail, this time by felling trees and piling already downed trees in a renewed attempt to block access. The County staff described its methods for closing trails as "standard" when queried by MCL's Parks and Open Space Committee. The conclusion of the Committee was that the County Parks' action in closing the trail was entirely justified. *{continued on page 6}*

NEWS & UPDATES

State Parks converts Easy Grade and Bill's Trails to multi-use

The Superintendent of Marin Sector State Parks announced recently that State Parks staff is evaluating the possible conversion of Easy Grade Trail in Mt. Tamalpais State Park to multi-use to allow access for mountain bikes. The trail is currently open to hikers and equestrians only. This is not a complete surprise. In 2007, California State Parks began to implement in Marin a new state-wide policy to increase access to all Park facilities for a variety of users, in particular for mountain bikes. China Camp State Park trails already had been designated as multi-use for bikers, hikers and equestrians.

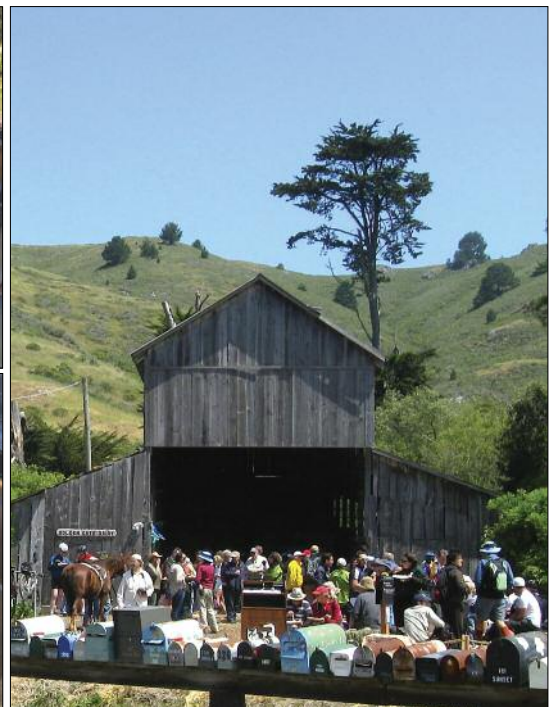
Four trails in Marin State Parks were identified in 2008 as candidates for conversion to multi-use. The first to be studied further was the 3.9-mile Bill's Trail in Samuel P. Taylor Park. In 2009, MCL challenged State Parks' attempt to convert that trail to multi-use without review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Over two years' time, MCL was successful in forcing an EIR but failed to prevent the conversion. Bill's Trail is under reconstruction and is expected to reopen to mountain bikes, horses, and hikers in 2016.

In the meantime, State Parks commissioned a Programmatic EIR to cover a wide range of possible impacts of similar road or trail conversions in any park in the state and thereby fulfill most CEQA requirements for such projects, lacking only site-specific study of impacts unique to a particular project. That is the process under which proposed conversion of East Grade Trail will be evaluated. Easy Grade is a favored footpath for hikers between Pantoll Camp and the Mt. Theater. Mountain bikers have been advocating for access to the trail for many years. The public was notified of possible change in use for the trail in late March. The evaluation and design process, as laid out in the Programmatic EIR, has just begun, and the plan appears to be headed for implementation sometime in 2016 or 2017. MCL will track the process and comment later this year.

MCL responds to trail issues MCL Trail Policy

The prominence of trail issues over the past few years has gained considerable attention from MCL. In addition to participating

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Golden Gate Dairy Has a New Lease!

A celebration is in order! Ocean Riders has signed a ten-year lease for the Golden Gate Dairy with the National Park Service that is effective July 2015. This long-term effort began in 1997 when Ocean Riders of Marin took over the operation of the Golden Gate Dairy Stables from the Pervier family when their lease had expired.

As most equestrians in Marin County know, the National Park Service has been negotiating with the stables at Tennessee Valley, Rodeo Beach and the Golden Gate Dairy in Muir Beach to continue equestrian operations. That process concluded this month with the presentation of ten-year leases to each of the facilities. The more than fifteen-year effort to secure our lease and gain permission to operate programs at the Golden Gate Dairy for young people and others from the surrounding communities, and from under resourced communities in Marin and elsewhere was led by Maureen Pinto and the Board of Directors of Ocean Riders of Marin.

We now look forward to continuing the exciting programs that we have offered this year to children from the Sausalito/Marin City Boys and Girls Club, the Women Helping All People (WHAP) Academy, the Presidio Community YMCA, the local community in Muir Beach, and half-day camps in conjunction with Bob's Adventure Camps. In addition, through EquinicityMarin, equine assisted psychotherapy sessions are happening at the Golden Gate Dairy, and workshops in developing effective leaders through Perspective2 are planned for the coming year. These programs are all a part of our continuing commitment to education. They offer a variety of opportunities to experience the value of connecting with a horse, the natural world, our local history, and each other, while raising awareness of essential wetlands and land stewardship while learning leadership skills. These programs also bring people to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area who may never have visited a National Park to share with them the beauty of the unique Redwood Creek Watershed.

To expand our program offerings we need to do some major work, including restoring the historic hay barn, replacing its roof, building a covered arena, and installing rainwater harvesting systems on roofs to reduce our draw from local creek resources. We have many challenges ahead but what we need to accomplish will

NEWS & UPDATES

benefit the entire equestrian community by keeping horses in the Frank Valley, expanding the recognition of what horses can do for people, and modeling green and sustainable horse-keeping methods that can help others view horses as a valuable part of our urban community.

We welcome the continuing support of the equestrian community for all of our programs, including horse boarding, overnight and short term accommodations for horses and summer boarding, with accessibility to many miles of beautiful trails.

A celebration is in order and we hope to see you at our "Barn Raising" event to be held at the Dairy in Muir Beach on September 19, to help us salute and acknowledge our goals and to raise funds for our restoration projects. Details and ticket information will soon be up at our website: www.oceanridersofmarin.org

- Leida Schoggen

Our Love for the Presidio Riding Club

I will never forget the moment that I received an email from the Presidio Riding Club. My horse Kasanova and I had been accepted into the club! When I first moved to San Francisco, I often drove to the Marin headlands to escape from the city and would pass by the stable. The PRC seemed to be a dream location to board your horse but I had assumed it was only available for Park patrol. Before I was accepted into the club, it was looking like I was going to have to sell my best friend. We had been together since I was 14, and he was 6. Luckily I met a boarder, and learned that the stable was available to horse owners who had family members affiliated with the military. I quickly sent my application in!

(Note: The restriction for military affiliation has been removed in 2015!)

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in all aspects of the RTMP process and commenting on trail issues on other public lands, MCL has developed its own recommendations concerning environmental and safety standards for management and recreational use of trails on public lands. MCL's 2015 Trail Policy (see marinconservationleague.org/advocacy) notes the rich parkland, open space, and watershed resources that Marin residents and others can enjoy. It also describes the mounting threats of overuse and outlines the conditions and standards that MCL believes are necessary to protect the physical, biological, aesthetic, and safety qualities that make our public lands so appealing to so many.

Trail Partners Safe Trails Campaign

MCL recognizes that Marin County roads and trails are known for long-standing, simmering differences between equestrians, hikers, mountain bikers, and dog-walkers. On occasion the simmering heats to a boil, and someone is injured. Often, walkers and equestrians fear an unexpected encounter with a speeding biker, while many bikers feel that they are unfairly accused of dangerous behavior, when in fact it may be a minority of "rogue" bikers who are responsible.

There is no ready solution beyond increased enforcement of regulations, which is limited by staff resources. As an alternative, MCL has been collaborating with Marin Horse Council (MHC) and Marin County Bicycle Coalition's off-road program (MCBC) as "Trail Partners" to examine the causes of conflicts on trails and to develop a campaign focused on changing trail culture from conflict to courtesy. The effort is being supported financially by Marin's public land managers, who deal with conflict and illegal behaviors daily. The Trail Partners plan to launch the campaign on National Trails Day, June 6.

The Partners will be asking people on the trail, especially the faster moving mountain bikers, to "Slow and Say Hello"—"Hello" can be as simple as a "Hi", a wave, a smile, or a nod. It means acknowledging and respecting the presence of others on multi-use roads and trails and sharing responsibility for lands everyone can enjoy.

- Nona Dennis.

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RIP – Gayle Richardson Murphy, 1930–2015

Gayle Murphy passed away peacefully on June 8, 2015 surrounded by family after a courageous three-year battle against cancer. She had a lifelong love for all animals and a particular passion for horses. She was an active and valued member of the Marin equestrian community since she moved to Marin in 1954.

An early member of the Marin Horse Council, Gayle served as its Secretary in its early years, worked on the MHC Newsletter for many years, and headed the equestrian program at San Domenico School for 14 years. She also worked with horses and children at Circle V Stables (now Baywood Canyon), Sleepy Hollow Stables, Forest Farm Camp, Marin Stables, Giant Steps Therapeutic Riding Program, and Creekside Equestrian Center. She was a founding member of Tamalpais Trail Riders and a leader of the Marin Mounted 4-H Club. Her dedication to the care of horses is credited as having inspired more than one of the children she taught to pursue careers in veterinary medicine.

Gayle is survived by her daughters, Lisa Murphy Collins of Redding and Phoebe Murphy Gaston of Guerneville, her son Morgan Murphy of Fairfax, and by four grandchildren, a great granddaughter, a sister, and many nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews. An article "Honoring Gayle Murphy" appeared in the Summer 2014 issue of the Marin Horse Council Newsletter.



I also learned the PRC was run in a cooperative way. Members worked together to keep the stable running smoothly. Everyone pitches in to help take care of the horses. Another plus to the cooperative nature of the club meant that the boarding would be more affordable for me. Being a new college student, at the time, meant that I couldn't afford the usual 800\$ or more price range of boarding stables. After being accepted, I quickly became attracted to the hands on work that was required to be a member. The extra work is not for everyone, but to be able to drive fifteen minutes from San Francisco and ride my horse, it was worth it! As I drive through the Rodeo tunnel towards the headlands, cell reception disappears and all feeling of being near a major city is lost. One day I can ride Kasanova on the beach, while watching the surfers catch some waves. The next day we can trot up Bobcat Trail to gorgeous views of Sausalito and the Bay. The next, we push up a steep trail to Slacker ridge and brave the strong fog winds to see the city's skyline and the epic Golden Gate Bridge. I feel the Equine world is becoming history for the urban world and it is wonderful to combine these two by sharing the trails with other city folk while on horseback. We also share the trails with wild animals, often seeing quail, bobcats, deer, and coyotes. While enjoying the trails, one can't help take in the smells of sage and the colors of lupines and California poppies.

Being accepted into the Presidio Riding club also allowed me to continue my relationship with my now 23-year-old horse and has given me the opportunity to share my love for horses with other people. Many curious visitors come by the stable for the chance to pet a horse for the first time, or to get a famous "kisses for carrots" from Kasanova. I've watched new visitors' initial fear of a thousand-pound animal change to a calm respect as they learn how to groom a horse. Kasanova has even participated in a few art projects for local and even international artists. Kiwi artist, Brydee Rood, tested Kasanova's trust for me as I rode him completely surrounded by 15 large inflatable garbage bags, in the "Waste Whisperer series." Another artist Nan Lu, tested my trust for Kas as I sat on the stall floor bounded with stirrup leathers and reins, while Kas towered over me for the photograph series, "trapped in reality."

With every interaction Kas and I have with new visitors, I hope they leave with a little bit of horse love and knowledge. Unfortunately, I feel like I am one of the few lucky horse girls that had the chance to keep her relationship with her beloved horse into adulthood. Finding the PRC gave us this chance. With the Golden Gate National Recreation Area removing the military requirement for boarders, I hope this dream can be experienced by more horse owners, especially young women who don't want to let go of their best friend.

- Tessa DeFranco & Kasanova

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Tenaya rides in her first equitation class at Marin County Fair. Having fun at the Halleck Creek Summer Camp 2015.

Why Therapeutic Horseback Riding?

We try to come up with a simple phrase or word that captures the magic of this special kind of therapy. It's so many things working together, freedom, fun, challenge, friendship, and accomplishment, you run out of words trying to describe it. Horses are so well suited to what we do. Inherently trusting, willing and naturally oriented to people, so sensitive they can feel a fly on their flank, so focused that an over excited youngster wiggling on their back elicits no response.

This is what we know: therapeutic connections between people, animals, and nature can transform lives. Therapeutic riding and equine assisted activities are a dynamic and exciting activity recommended by medical professionals as a complementary therapy for a broad range of special needs. Through its unique physical movements along with equine – human bonds and adventurous nature, riding helps participants build physical strength, develop confidence and gain skills needed to live independent, healthier lives. By stretching and strengthening core muscles and improving flexibility and balance, riders increase their ability to sit, stand, walk and/or run. Learning to trust a large animal increases a rider's self-esteem, improving a rider's relationships with friends and family.

Academics someday will truly quantify the benefits of hippo therapy and other kinds of equine assisted activities and therapies, in the meantime those of us in the field build on what we learn from our riders, their families and the latest research.

- Barbara Hill, Executive Director | www.halleckcreekranch.org

Halleck Creek Ranch serves Bay Area youth and adults with special needs. We offer ½ hour, 1 hour and 1.5 hours lessons. Our staff is PATH certified to teach therapeutic horsemanship. Tuition is affordable and scholarships are available. Volunteers are always needed and if you have a retired schoolmaster who is suitable for our program, he has a forever home with us.

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

Five Brooks Ranch

Fifteen years ago I discovered Five Brooks Ranch. In those days I sponsored a horse. Sponsoring lasted seven years until I bought my own horse and I've been boarding her there since she was a youngster. I loved the idea of having immediate access to wonderful trails and not have to deal with a trailer. These trails are spectacular which is why people trailer their horses from all over in order to ride in Point Reyes National Seashore.

Besides offering trail rides, Five Brooks sponsors their horses as well as provide boarding for private owners. They also offer temporary boarding for those who prefer to board their horses for a weekend and stay in a local Inn for a romantic get away. Five Brooks has comfortable paddocks, and about 80 % of the horses have access to a huge pasture where they run wild all night. I was thrilled that my horse could have access to the pasture and be able to play with her friends. During the day the horses that are in the herd are in a large corral. The stable is currently in the process of installing some roofing in the corral and the paddocks. This will add extra protection in the months that are hot or have heavy rains.

It is also comforting knowing that there are employees who live on the premises. If there ever is a problem someone is always nearby. The management is very knowledgeable about horses and committed to delivering excellent care. All the horses are treated with love and respect.

- Dennis Portnoy is co-author of *Riding the Pt. Reyes Equestrian Trails*: written by horse and rider.



Horse Sales

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BIG TROT: can't canter within a two mile straight-away.

NICELY STARTED: lunges, but we don't have enough insurance to ride him yet.

TOP SHOW HORSE: won a reserve champion 5 years ago at a show with unusually low entries due to tornado warnings.

BIG BONED: good thing he has a mane and tail, or he would be mistaken for a cow.

BOLD: runaway.

GOOD MOVER: runaway.

NEEDS INTERMEDIATE RIDER: runaway.

SHOULD MATURE OVER 16 HANDS: currently 14 hands, dam is 14.2, sire is 15.3 hands, every horse in pedigree back 18 generations is under 16 hands, but *this* horse will defy his DNA and grow.

WELL MANNERED: hasn't stepped on, run over, bit, or kicked anyone for a week.

PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED: hasn't stepped on, run over, bit, or kicked anyone for a month.

RECENTLY VETTED: someone else found something really wrong with this horse.

TO GOOD HOME ONLY: not really for sale unless you can

- 1) Pay twice what he is worth
- 2) Are willing to sign a 10 page legal document to allow current owner to tuck him in beddy-bye every night.

EXCELLENT DISPOSITION: never been out of the stall.

FOR SALE DUE TO LACK OF TIME: rider cannot afford to spend anymore time in the hospital.

ANY VET CHECK WELCOME: Please pay for us to find out what the is wrong with him!

SUITS ANYONE: except us, we hate him!



One Dream

My name is Emily Press. I am thirteen years old and am going into eighth grade at Mill Valley Middle School. Contemplating growing up in a large Catholic family, I have faced minimal adversity and have been given great privileges. Since a young age, my parents, both veterinarians, have shown me how to love and care for animals. We have five children in our family, including myself, and we each play at least two instruments, two sports, speak two languages, and attend religious education. I play on a competitive travel softball team in Livermore and ride my horse, Muffin, a thirteen-year-old bay quarter horse. Muffin is an adaptable, bombproof horse that loves everyone. He is the closest thing to a safe horse. I play the piano at an elite level and the cello in statewide competitions.

Some people need an escape from their lives that will give them relaxation and relief of stress, pressure and the responsibilities of our modern world. Everyone handles their escape differently, either negatively or positively. For example, some people choose drugs to push themselves through difficult situations while they think that the grass is greener on the other side when it is just painted cement. Horseback riding is my escape: it always seems to clear my mind. A Washington State University study proves that equine activity and interaction significantly lowers stress hormones in youth, which will help prevent the development of mental and physical health issues. High base levels of cortisol (which equine activity reduces) is a risk factor for the development of psychopathology. The environment produced and maintained that Muffin and I are surrounded with is inspirational and offers a unique opportunity to learn and develop skills including responsibility, patience, leadership, and how to communicate with body language. Because of horseback riding, I have the benefit of conveying my personal and deep emotions with myself and others through my actions.

During the winter and fall, Muffin lives at Horse Hill and during the spring and summer, he lives at Ocean Riders, the Muir Beach stable. Both of Muffin's homes have fascinating elements that create magic. I often look at the five barn owls that inhabit the barn at Muir Beach. They have compelling faces that captivate me with such fascination that time almost seems to stop; pausing the busy world surrounding me. The five owls rarely move. Once, I glanced at the ground and pick up a furry object. I examined it closely and realized what it was: the bottom half of a

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rabbit that was thrown out by an owl. I quickly dropped it and looked up. Only four owls were there: one disappeared. Where did it go? I spun around. A single owl stood directly across the barn from the others. It flew right over my head without making a sound. Because it has interlocking feathers, the owl has an advantage over other birds with the ability to fly with virtual silence.

Around each corner at Muir Beach, there is always a new adventure or magical experience, some larger or more significant than others. Two dolphin fins have danced through the waves as I loped on the sea shore. One of my favorite places is an old arena down the road from the stable in Santos Meadow. Even though there are dangerous gopher holes, I can usually find safe ground to ride on. On the way back to the stable from the arena, there is a trail that is interrupted with a shallow creek that the horse has to plow through to continue onto the trail.

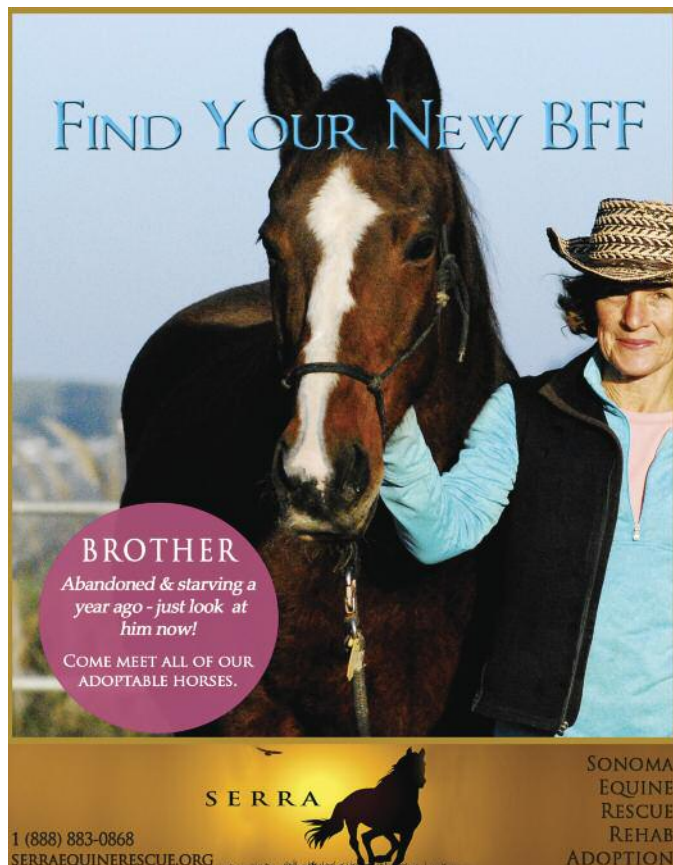
Aside from riding on the beach and trails, my favorite activity with Muffin is rodeos. Rodeo work is the only sport derived from an occupation. I choose to ride western because of the rodeo culture, which is fun and casual. Helmet requirements are not enforced and a barbecue is common to follow. The rodeo participants are friendly, competent, respectful and excellent horsemen. The warm-up arena is always chaotic and free form riding. Barrel racing is an exhilarating western rodeo event that Muffin and I love to participate in.

3 barrels.

2 hearts.

1 dream: to be free on the beach.

- Emily Press



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September 19: Dressage Schooling

October 3: English/Western

Contact Grace Tolson 415 488 0454

East Bay Hills Benefit

September 2-7. Contact Morris Older:

925 254 8943 or ebhillsride@comcast.net

Golden Gate Dairy Stable

September 19: Fundraiser Event

Contact Oceanriders@prodigy.net

Napa Valley Horsemen's Association Open Horse Show Series

August 23- September 27

Contact Jonnie Hagen

nvhahorseshow@gmail.com

Novato Horsemen

August 15-16: Cherie Cross Cowboy Dressage Clinic

September 19: NHI Club Party

September 20: Tamalpais Trail Riders Test-Jan Tharsing: J@gmail.com

See www.NovatoHorsemen.com Calendar

Woodbridge Farm 2015 Schooling Shows

August 29: Jeanette Deramlaere

Contact Dawn Bennett: Dawn@gmail.com

Marin County Sheriff's Posse's Monte-Shone Ride Fundraiser.

Riding, camping, dining, dancing at the Stewart Ranch Horse Camp September 25 - 27. Purchase tickets by calling (415) 250-0168 or emailing monteshone@gmail.com



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.

All MARIN HORSE COUNCIL memberships now renew on JANUARY 1st. Renew online or use the renewal form included in our quarterly newsletters. 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. To ask about the status of your membership: contact@marinhorsecouncil.org

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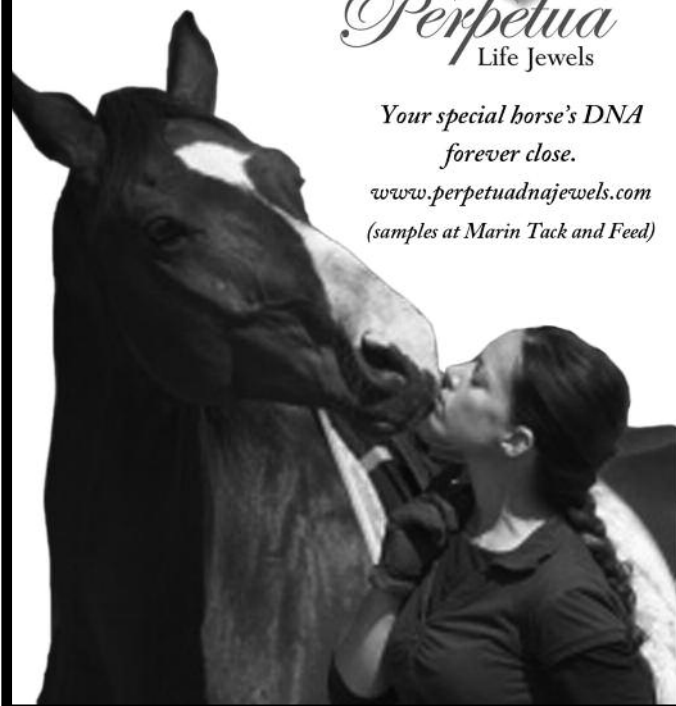
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 "Silver Buckle" \$50
 "Golden Horseshoe" \$100
 Life Member \$250
 Club/Organization \$40

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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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 7/15



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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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