Horse Com

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Monte Kruger presenting trophy to rider at Southern Marin Horsemen's Association Junior & Open Horse Show

FROM THE SADDLE

Summer is upon us, the horse show season is in full swing and trail riding couldn't be better. Flies are in abundance, please take precautions as we really don't want to see another outbreak of Pigeon Fever like many barns experienced last year. It's not the end of the world but it can sure slow you down.

Marin County Parks will be examining and making recommendations for Region 3 and 4 this Summer and Fall through the Parks Road and Trail Management Plan. I've written enough about this issue in the past that you all should have a pretty good feel for the process. Region 3 is Indian Valley and Pacheco Open Space while Region 4 is Mt. Burdell, Little Mountain, O'Hair Park and Indian Trees Open Space. Community planning meetings will be held to discuss which trails are to remain open, which ones will be slated for closure or which are appropriate for a change of use. As Max Korten, acting director of Marin County Parks, explained to me each of the open space preserves that the County manages is in someone's back yard which makes these changes difficult since people who live and use their local open space feel a particular ownership of that land, just as I do as my ranch backs up to the Indian Tree Preserve. However, we all must remember that at the end of the day it's the protection of the environment that takes precedence. We may love the paths that we use, yet they are not part of the official trail inventory. These "social trails" and our favorite trails that already exist in the Park's system are under increasing impact as the user count grows. This impact shows up in the decline of habitat for animals and sensitive native plants but it also means we are rarely alone on the trail. With more users, interactions are more frequent and conflicts are more likely to arise. This is one of the reasons equestrians find solitude in Pt. Reyes National Seashore. That said, it is important that we make a point of letting Marin County Parks know that equestrians and hikers need to retain the existing narrow trails in our Open Space for limited use. We need to push the point that user safety is second only to environmental protection. I know I keep harping on these points, but this issue is important for all equestrians even if you are not a trail rider, and I'll explain why. Last week a message went out to Baywood Canyon Equestrian Center that Marin County Parks would like to temporarily re-route the Old Grade fire road for mountain bikes as the Parks Department was going to be working on the road and wanted to give the mountain bikers an alterative route as they exited from Tamarancho. The alternative route would have dropped mountain bikes down a steep grade right on top of Baywood Canyon's outdoor arena where jumping lessons and arena riding take place and where horses are turned out in paddocks. Fortunately, a call for help went out from Holly Ford of Baywood which was answered within a very short time by Linda Novy and yours truly and

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THE SACRAMENTO VALLEY MORGAN HORSE CLUB (SVMHC)

and Marin Hose Council have partnered to be involved in the decision making of the future of the Morgan Horse Ranch at Pt Reyes Nation Seashore.

SVMHC has spearheaded a fundraising drive to provide much needed maintenance on the ranch and facelift of the static displays at the ranch for the 100th celebration of the National Park Service. To date, we have raised \$1,100 which has been made available to the Ranch Manager for restructuring the roof on the storage area of the tractor. So that Sacramento Valley Morgan Horse Club can establish a database of Morgan Horse Ranch supporters, and so we can track monetary donations, we request that donation checks be made out to Pt. Reyes National Seashore Association or PRNSÁ and in the "For section" of the check it be identified as "Morgan Horse Ranch Only". We ask that checks then be mailed to Connie Barker, 4340 Garfield Avenue, Carmichael, CA 95608. Connie is the Co-Chair of the SVMHC Pt. Reyes Committee. That way donors get the tax deduction, Connie inputs the information into a data base for future evidence of support for the ranch, the donations are officially transferred to PRNSA and Connie can make sure when they are made available to the Ranch Manager. If donations for the ranch are sent directly to PRNSA they go into a general fund and do not go to the Morgan Horse

The club collected donations at their booth at the Western States Horse Expo in June and will be collecting now and at their annual national Morgan Horse convention at Riverside, CA in February 2017. We are just at the beginning stages of sponsoring a Cowboy Dressage clinic at the ranch in May 2017 if permissions can be obtained. A Facebook page has just been created called "Friends of Pt. Reyes Morgan Horse Ranch" so please like the page and review it regularly for updates! SVMHC and the Marin Horse Council have partnered up to be involved in the decision making of the future of the Morgan Horse Ranch. We have to save the horse presence at the Morgan Horse Ranch.

- Connie Barker

others who wrote letters to MCP asking then to reconsider the re-route siting any number of safety reasons. MCP heard our plea and quickly opted to call off the re-route. Baywood's arena riders would have been put in a potentially dangerous situation; fortunately that was avoided.

Watch your email for the Marin Horse Council Constant Contact e-news emails that will give you dates and locations of the public input meetings regarding Region 3 and 4 and plan on attending. Even if these open space preserves are not in your back yard your voice is important and should be heard.

- Monte Kruger | President, MHC



Jordan River at Golden Gate Fields.

MY LUCKY LIFE AT GOLDEN GATE FIELDS

Golden Gate Fields opened for its first meet on February 1, 1941. Heavy rains caused the meet to close after only 5 days. The track stayed closed for racing for 6 years, being used instead as a naval amphibious landing craft base during WWII.

Bill Shoemaker, broke his maiden by winning his first race at GGF on April 20, 1949. Records have been set and broken several times over throughout the years, and many a famous jockey and horse have raced it's course.

I was taken to the track in February of 2013, by an old school acquaintance, to meet a trainer friend of hers. We met him at the barn gate on an early Thursday morning, the wind blowing the cold air and fog off the bay. It was still dark, only being about 6:30am. By track standards, we were late. As we walked to the barn, the Trainer, Jerry, asked about my experience and began telling me all about thoroughbred racing. Jerry is about 78 years old, a friendly smile and easygoing manner ever present. He had about 10 horses, and even tough I have been around hundreds of horses, these took my breath away. I always rode Quarter horses, riding western and showing all over the bay area. These were the most beautiful, athletic, perfect looking horses I had ever seen. I. Was. Hooked.

I went back the next morning with my friend, and then on Sunday, I went by myself to meet with Jerry and watch his filly, Dan's Plan B race. That afternoon he offered me a job.

Golden Gate's track is open for training Tuesday through Sunday, opening at 6am, closing for a break from 7:45-8:15, and then closing for the day at 9:50. Therefore, work starts for many around 3 or 4 in the morning. I arrived at 6am, fresh and eager on the following Tuesday. My job was a fairly simple one; stand

with the horses while they spent 20 minutes on the Theraplate. The Theraplate is a set of vibrating platforms that we have the horses stand on. It promotes bone density, and massages the muscles. As Jerry learned of my competence, my duties began to increase, to holding horses for bathes (not always easy), and placing them on and taking them off the hot walker – much like a merry go round only these horses can Kick! The Assistant trainer and Groom, Jose, began teaching me his methods of horse care. After 40 plus years of riding, I thought I knew a lot, but I had to forget Everything and start from scratch. I learned the racetrack way of cleaning stalls and tacking up. One thing you'll notice is that in the early hours, even though there is some talking, most of the people are working too hard to play around. Stalls are cleaned in 5 minutes by the pros, and the exercise riders will get on upwards of 10 horses a day.

It will be 4 years in February 2017 that I have been working for Jerry. In that time I have been given my best friend – Jordan River – who was the first horse to win a race when I started working for Jerry, and then became my true savior as I battled breast cancer and won. A typical morning in our barn at the track is as follows:

4:30am - horses get grain

5:00 am- every horse is haltered, their temperature is taken and the legs are checked for heat and swelling. The stalls are cleaned while the horses stretch their legs on the hot walker.

6am – track opens. Our exercise rider isn't available until after the break, so we can focus on getting the stalls cleaned, scrubbing the water buckets and filling all the hay nets.

7:45 – The horses training for the day are lightly groomed and tacked up. Regular training, like jogging or galloping, is done by the exercise rider. Horses working specific distances at race or almost race speed are generally ridden by the jockey you intend to have race.

The horses go out 1,2,3, - it's a mad dash of getting them out, then bathing them once they return and getting them on the walker before the next one gets back and so on. I swear these guys must have trained at a car wash – the horses go through the process so fast!

Things wind down by 9:30, with maybe 1 -2 left to go. Now the grooming begins. Galloping horses get iced for 20 minutes, and most of them will end up with standing wraps over night. Walking down barn aisles you will see all manner of wraps; butcher paper or paper towels are frequently used over mud, and saran wrap is used for sweating.

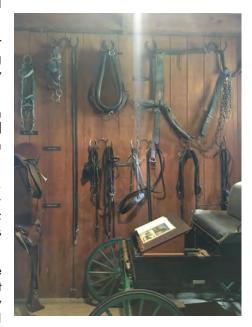
It's a big, Latin Community at the track, with literally hundreds of people living there full time in 12x12 rooms in and over the barns. There are easily 1200 horses at one time, and approximately 200 trainers. I don't speak Spanish fluently by Any means, but I have learned much, can understand more, and sometimes, I wish I didn't understand at all. Working in a male dominated setting has advantages and disadvantages, but all in all the people are nice and respectful. I may be just a groom now, but I have dabbled in being a Pony Rider, and I am hoping to get my Asst. Trainer's license by the end of the year. I feel very blessed to have been given this opportunity – I get to be around horses all day, rub elbows with the likes of Russell Baze, and even place a kiss or two on horses like Shared belief. Its not a glamorous life, but it's one I won't be giving up anytime soon!

- Sara Kaplan





Honcho at Morgan Horse Ranch





EATON'S RANCH ANNUAL HORSE DRIVE, SHERIDAN WYOMING



Watching a herd of 100+ horses trotting through a Wyoming town sounds like a thing of the past but this spectacle can still be seen each spring. The drive leaves the winter pasture in the Wyarno area around 7:00 in the morning and the horses reach their summer home at Eaton's Ranch in Wolf Creek around 11:00. Eaton's is the oldest dude ranch in the United States, founded in 1879. They kick off the season with their annual horse drive.

Last month on May 22nd at about 9:00 am, I was fortunate to watch the herd travel through Sheridan, where my mother and sister live. It was a thrill to see wranglers urge the herd at a quick trot down 5th Street past the Historic Sheridan Inn, Buffalo Bill Cody's home and where he auditioned acts for his famous Wild West Show. In a classic cowboy scene and as if on cue, one of the horses spooked and bolted as it reached the train tracks and with lasso assist was coaxed back to his herd mates. I contacted the folks at Eaton's the day before the drive to ask if I might be able to join the wranglers on their ride through town. I was told they needed more than a day before heads up and to see about joining the drive for next year. It's on my 2017 list!

For more information about Eaton's Ranch visit http://www.eatonsranch.com

- Suzanne Gooch





Golden Gate Stables, Golden Gate Park

JOHNNY WALKER

Every stable seems to have a certain magical light, one that shines through its stalls and plays with shadows on the ground, patterning each horse with its dreamlike glow. The Golden Gate Park Stables has an even more special light for those lucky enough to remember—the light of nostalgia for what existed for over a hundred years and might still exist in the future if the project for a new Golden Gate Park Stables ever gets off the ground again.

I am one of those lucky enough to remember, and even luckier because the magical light of the stables is coupled for me with my childhood love for one special horse. His name was Johnny Walker.

My family in the San Francisco Bay Area didn't have horses and never went riding. I begged my parents for a horse, but they just thought it funny that I wanted one in our suburban backyard; no matter what else I had, I did not have my own horse as a child. Though I was tenacious in other things, I quietly gave up begging and satisfied myself with some riding at summer camp. In a way, not riding more was my own fault, with so many nearby opportunities that I failed to take—having at least one horse-crazy friend and one whose father was actually a jockey; all the nearby barns and stables and miles and miles of trails; and then going to a college with a top-notch equestrian facility. Time went on, and I just focused on other things.

Yet, visiting Golden Gate Park with my grandparents from the late 1970s to late 1980s, we often stopped by the stables. There I met my beautiful, sweet friend, Johnny Walker. A fleabitten grey with a large, intelligent head and skinny legs, Johnny Walker spoke to me in the way horses sometimes do speak to us humans. Of course, he and I were just a small part of a larger picture.

The Golden Gate Park Stables had 130 years of history before it shut down in 2001. According to Golden Gate Park's website:

Sorely missed is the majestic gallop of a Palomino or the agility of a show jumper at the currently closed stables of Golden Gate Park. Today, the park is horseless where in the past, horses were allowed to lead tours throughout the park, as onlookers enjoyed wondrous views of the bay, the sight of regal skyscrapers, waterfront gems, and surrounding redwoods. Hopefully, in the future, the optimistic attempts of the San Francisco Stables Foundation will succeed in reviving the stables at the park...

Many efforts were made to continue the city-owned stables as a means to drum up profit, but all failed. The high cost associated with operating a public stable in the San Francisco area was an overwhelming task to continue. The earnings were slim, making it impossible to reinvest for improvements and maintenance of the stables.



Johnny Walker and Karen Poppy at Golden Gate Stables

Karen today at Baywood Stables in Fairfax

The Equestrian Center at Golden Gate Park is located south of John F [Kennedy] Drive between Spreckels Lake, Golden Gate Park Stadium, and Lindley Meadow. The complex consists of five structures surrounding a central riding arena. On the south of the site stands the longest structure, a concrete grandstand with horse stalls beneath the seating. The Grandstand structure was built in 1909, and the other four stable buildings were constructed in 1939 under the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program established by the Federal Government to provide work relief to Americans during the Great Depression.

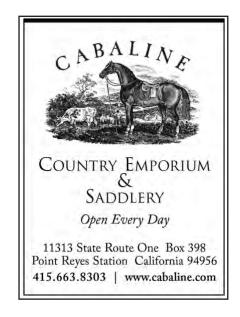
The project to revive the stables seems to be on hold at this time, but its fans continue to show an interest online. I am one of them!

If you knew Johnny Walker or know his owner or breeder, I would love to hear from you. In a couple of years, I would like to have my own horse. It would be a dream come true to have a horse like Johnny Walker, from his lineage, but in reality I will likely adopt a rescue horse when the right one comes along.

So far, the Internet has provided some clues about Johnny Walker. Rachel Burke, a trainer at Baywood, the stable at which I now ride under the instruction of Helle Ericksen, posted a photo of Johnny Walker for me on the Facebook page of the Golden Gate Park Stables group. Several members of the group have also posted their memories of the stables from various time periods. As I write, 74 people have seen the post Rachel submitted about Johnny Walker, and it has generated 17 comments. I learned from these comments that one person remembers Johnny Walker as a "big grey" from a Bear Valley rent string. Another person shared that she too remembers Johnny Walker and that John of a well-known couple at the stables, John and Patrice, used to own him, and that another regular, Sue Richardson, rode him too. She remembered Johnny Walker as "such a sweet horse" and offered to look and see if she has a picture of him.

Rachel Burke told me that at Golden Gate Park Stables, Johnny Walker was in fact one of two big greys, the other being Arctic Fog. She also suggested that I check the online Thoroughbred registry for Johnny Walker to possibly learn of his breeding. At first, I thought I had found him on Equineline.com, which provides Thoroughbred pedigrees, but the horse turned out to be another Johnny Walker—a Chestnut. Lucky for my buddy Johnny Walker, though: the Chestnut Johnny Walker was sired by the absurdly named Absurd. Not so lucky for me. Even trying alternate spellings of his name on Equineline.com, Google, and other sites, I have come up with nothing. I am hoping that people who read here about Johnny Walker the Grey will offer me more suggestions and leads.

In the meantime, I am coming back to riding. I began in earnest a little over a year







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ago at the age of 39. It is never too late, as long as the body is able and the mind is open, and I do wish I had started earlier.

I came back to it after seven months of an illness. Inspired by brain-candy novels about English riding and fox hunting that I read while stuck in bed, I made a vow that if I recovered, I would learn to ride. I made an impressive start too, one that everyone apparently still talks about. At the beginning of my first English riding lesson, with Tina Loose at Five Brooks Ranch in Olema, I fell right off the side of my mount, Hank. I think this occurred at a trot, but Tina insists it happened at a walk. The debate continues.

I realized then, following that fall, that I needed to seriously train and strengthen my body to follow through on my promise to learn to ride. I rekindled a past commitment to running, strengthening my legs on hills and stairs, and quickened my reaction and endurance through wind sprints alternating with slower paces. I also started cross-training in other ways, with Jillian Michaels fitness DVDs, power yoga, some restorative yoga, and other fitness classes.

So now, at the age of 40, I take riding lessons twice a week on average (alternating between Five Brooks with Tina and Baywood with Helle), exercise most of the other days, work full-time, enjoy time with my husband and friends, and take care of our 7-year-old son and our new puppy. The schedule is exhausting, but it makes me happy. My riding goals include learning to jump and gaining enough skills so that someday soon I can volunteer with a horse rescue group to help rehabilitate horses. I also enjoy trail rides, so am not ruling out endurance rides in my future.

For all of this, I thank Johnny Walker, the amazing horse at Golden Gate Park Stables who gave me my introduction to horses. I never had the opportunity to ride him, but I learned so much from his limitless heart.

Please contact me at: poppy.karen@gmail.com

- Karen Poppy

A SHORT HISTORY OF PENCIL BELLY RANCH



Pencil Belly Ranch

When my husband and I bought Pencil Belly Ranch three years ago, I didn't know much about its history. Since then I've done some research and heard a lot of fun stories from our new friends and neighbors. From this, we've started to piece together our little patch of Marin's horse history.

Pencil Belly Ranch is a half block from the Open Space access road in Novato's Indian Valley located at 1671 Indian Valley Road, Novato, Calif. Originally it was part of the "Rancho San Jose" Mexican land grant deeded to Ignacio Pacheco in 1840. In 1864 Pacheco passed away leaving 6,659.25 acres to his nine children and surviving wife. Over the next decades they slowly subdivided portions to successive generations.

In the 1880's the Red Barn was built with hand hewn square nails and has two stalls and a tack room. About that same time a small house was built near by. Larry Farnham, who owned the property from the late 1960s to the early 1990s told me that the house was originally a "line shack." I had never heard that term so he explained that a line shack is a building where ranch hands bunk over night as they ride their horses along the property line repairing rails and fences.

Beginning in the early 1900s the family began selling tracts of land for profit. Somewhere along the line Pencil Belly became its own independent ranch. Over time, plumbing came to town and rooms were added to the line shack a la' Winchester Mystery House.

In 1968 Larry was talking with the guy who owned the ranch and they decided to make a trade. Larry's Cessna plane for the ranch. Business was more casual back then, I guess! During the 25 years Larry owned the property he deeded much of the hill above the ranch to Open Space. This made it possible to connect both ends of Indian Valley Fire Road with the Ad & Gloria Schwindt Trail. It's the perfect loop when you only have time for a quick ride.

Larry eventually sold the ranch to Frank and Elaine who had stumbled across it while on an afternoon horseback ride. They fell in love immediately and stayed for almost 30 years.

Everyone always asks us about the name. Understandably, right? ! When we moved in Frank told me the following funny story: Back when the ranch ran cattle the new ranch hands would be put to the test by being ordered to go round up all the cattle that had a pencil mark on the bellies. The smarter ranch hands would realize they were being duped before spending too many hours ducking under cattle to examine their tummies.

Then a few months ago, after a meeting at Novato Horsemens, a member told me that the name came after a late night of drinking back in the 1970s! Weirdly, the two stories seem equally plausible.

The longer we live here, the more stories we hear. Countless people have told us how much they loved whiling away the hours of their youth out at Pencil Belly Ranch. We've heard about the girls who came out for the pony club, the past owner who kept dozens and dozens of rabbits hutches, and all about the many, many late night parties that went down on the property. (In fact, there were so many parties in the 1970s the ranch got nicknamed "Hanky Panky Valley").

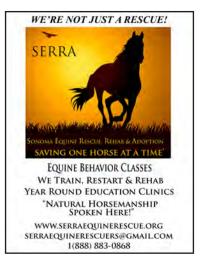
The common denominator through all of these stories are that everyone always has a good time when they're on the property. Our hope is that the fun continues as the years click by.

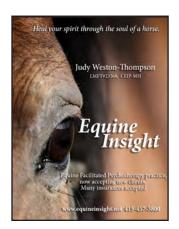
- Michelle Kaufman

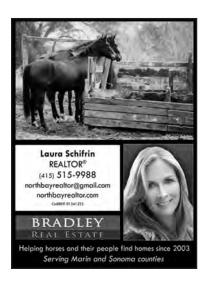


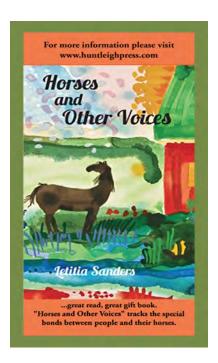




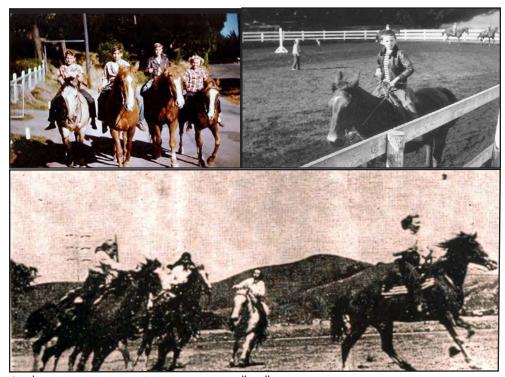








HISTORY OF RIDING IN MILL VALLEY AND THE SMHA



Southern Marin Horsemen's Association in Mill Valley

I started out planning to write an article about the history of Horse Hill. However, while researching, I became so pleasurably side tracked by information pertaining to Mill Valley's many back yard horses, the irresponsible riding habits of its youth and the consequent founding of Mill Valley's 4-H Club and the SMHA Southern Marin Horseman's Association that I couldn't resist the temptation to write an article about this period of Mill Valley's history.

Prior to World War II, Mill Valley was largely the domain of Portuguese dairy farmers and home to the families who worked on the farms and to the merchants who provided them with goods and services. The North Pacific Coast Railroad stopped at Mill Valley – facilitating the transportation of dairy products to San Francisco and points beyond. Because of this, Mill Valley's dairy businesses flourished. Although horses were a part of the fabric of Mill Valley, they served a primarily utilitarian purpose and several liveries in Mill Valley were constructed to house them – such as Dowd's Stables on Throckmorton Ave.

Post World War II brought an era of peace and prosperity to the Bay Area. As more and more people were in a position to buy cars, many wished to move to towns, such as Mill Valley, where they could live in the peace and tranquility of a semi-rural setting and commute to San Francisco for work. Most of Mill Valley's dairy farms were divided into smaller lots and sold to individuals for the building of private residences. Some of the farms were sold intact to developers for the future construction of large



Letterhead from SMHA

scale housing sub-divisions.

With disposable income now available, many of Mill Valley's new residents installed pleasure riding horses in their back yards and in the 1950's, Mill Valley evolved into a real center for equestrian activity. All things "horse" were wholeheartedly embraced by the area's adults and children alike. In addition to the back yard option, boarding and riding lessons were available at the Mill Valley Riding Club in Homestead Valley, the Flying Y Ranch on Sequoia Valley Road and Miwok Stables on Tennessee Valley Road.

The Mill Valley Riding Club, located in Homestead Valley, was the first of these facilities, opening its doors to recreational riders in the 1930's. (Homestead Valley is located behind the 2:00 AM Club and Joe's Taco Lounge on Miller Avenue) The following is an excerpt from the archives of the Mill Valley Historical Society – "On Saturday, October 8, 1939 at 8 pm the Mill Valley Riding Club Horse Show drew a record attendance estimated at 600 spectators [There must have been extensive lighting.] This was a big deal. The headline on the Mill Valley Record was "600 See Horse Show Sunday at Riding Club." The Mill Valley Record reported, "It is expected to make the show an annual affair at the popular riding club located on Montford Avenue."

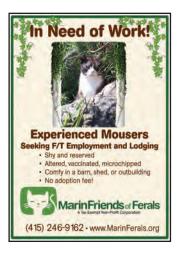
Pleasure riding was by no means restricted to the arena. In particular, the youth of Mill Valley took to riding their back yard horses all over town – on side-walks, in parks, over foot bridges and across private property (rarely with the consent of the owner.) And, all of the above often happened at a very fast pace - imperiling the safety of all in their path. The reckless riding habits of the youth of Mill Valley became a source of much concern to many who felt that the riding of horses in Mill Valley is a privilege which carries with it an obligation to respect the rights of others. (The times may have changed, but the issues remain the same – safe multi-user trail sharing in Marin County and the need to "slow and say hello".)

Some concerned citizens and horse people sought to correct these youthful abuses through education. To this end, they turned to the 4-H club, a national agriculture organization for farm youth. A unit was formed in Mill Valley on Camino Alto Ave. where the Mill Valley Community Center is now located. All children with horses were encouraged to join. Responsible horsemen instructed them in the proper care and responsible uses of horses in a community such as Mill Valley.

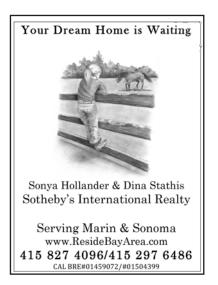
However, the 4-H club had some limitations in this respect – Since the 4-H is an organization for budding farm children with a curriculum focused on teaching profitable farming skills, many of their rules did not apply to the education of riding pleasure horses in a safe and responsible manner.

So, in 1960 Nancy Lowenthal and Joseph Brewster (both of Mill Valley) took matters into their own hands and founded the Southern Marin Horseman's Association, which took over the 4-H club's location on Camino Alto on the marshland where the Middle School is today. Its mission was to continue with the guidance and instruction









NEWS & UPDATES

MULE: LIVING ON THE OUTSIDE



Emmy-winning filmmaker John McDonald will be leading a discussion and screening a preview of his work-in progressdocumentary entitled MULE: Living on the Outside.

The film is about John Sears, aka "Mule," who has been roaming the western United States with his mules for over thirty years. The 68-year-old and his animals sleep outside, insisting on their right to move freely. Bemoaning the loss of open space, the ever-increasing urban sprawl and our dependence on the automobile, Mule advocates a simpler way of life in harmony with nature. While many appreciate and support his nomadic lifestyle, Mule is not welcome everywhere.

Confrontations with law enforcement have resulted in fines, arrests, even institutionalization. Regardless of how we personally feel about Mule as an individual, the issues he raises concern all of us. The story takes an intimate look at Mule's unique experience and his urgent message for contemporary American society.

This is what one horseman said about the film: "Mule is an epic eccentric, true to his own code, whose image is a definitive insistence on personal freedom. He stands for a time when every citizen had the right to travel freely across the landscape, sleep out under the stars, be a ramblin' man with an urge to roam the Earth. Nowadays this increasingly brings him into conflict with those who represent the



laws of property over personality, ownership over common ground. John McDonald has been filming Mule for a long time, capturing his lifestyle and his philosophy. This is a chance to meet the filmmaker and hear first-hand the details of his quest to make a record of the life of Mule."

Most of the project has been self-funded by the filmmaker. In order to help complete the film, a taxdeductible donation can be made at

www.3MulesMovie.com where you can also view a trailer and learn more about the documentary.



of young riders. I unearthed an old SMHA membership card and got a real kick out of the rules mandated by the SMHA – all aimed at correcting the less than responsible habits of Mill Valley's young riders. Here it goes:

SOUTHERN MARIN HORSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Rules governing the keeping and/or riding of horses in Mill Valley or other towns where the members may be:

- 1. Do not ride in downtown areas during busy hours.
- 2. Avoid heavily traveled streets when crossing town.
- Ride on side of road and in single file on streets and vehicular roads.
- 4. Do not ride at a gallop on streets.
- 5. Do not ride in parks or on sidewalks.
- 6. Do not ride on private property without consent of owners.
- 7. Do not ride over foot bridges.
- 8. Be courteous and observing of the rights of others.
- 9. Close gates after you have ridden through.

SMHA membership card: Rules for Kids

The Southern Marin Horseman's Association evolved into a real hub of all equestrianactivity. They had an enormous arena with an adjacent a snack shack and hosted many horse related events for riders of all disciplines and all ages. Equestrian related activities included supervised group rides, horse shows, and play events. The SMHA also provided instruction on proper care, feeding and shoeing of horses. The SMHA hosted regularly scheduled smaller horse shows as well as an annual major show which included classes in both English and Western equitation. The following is an announcement in the Marin IJ about one of the shows.

Most interesting to me was the discovery that in the 1963, the SMHA had even once been the staging area for a 40 mile endurance ride. The riders headed out from the SMHA, across E. Blithedale Ave., up Kite Hill and onto Marin County Open Space trails. The footage was filmed by KRON and is amazing as well as being of historical value.

http://www.marinnostalgia.org/portfolio/mt-tamalpais-trail-ride-1963/

Monte Kruger, who owns and runs Willow Tree Stables and is President of both the Marin Horse Council and the Novato Horseman's Association, was a part of this era as a child. She grew up in Mill Valley and roamed the town on her horse and was a longtime member of the Southern Marin Horseman's Association. Monte remembers, "By far my fondest memory was the ride Orville Peterson, Jill Peterson's dad, and Joe Brewster, father of Barbara and Bobby Brewster, took us on to Audubon Canyon Ranch. We started the ride from the SMHA arena and rode up and over Mt. Tam. When we came to Hog's Back Ridge the Shetland pony I was riding slipped under the fire gate that went across the fire road by the fire station. Of course I was swept off his back and onto the dirt as he was just tall enough to make it under. Orville and Joe caught the pony, put me back on and we kept going all the way to the big old white barn at Audubon Canyon where we put down our bed roles to sleep. As the day turned into the evening the older kids organized a Snipe hunt. (A fake bird called a snipe using a burlap sack) It scared the dickens out of us younger kids as was the point. Eventually we bedded down, not guite yet recovered from the Snipe fright. As things grew quiet, there was a big old barn owl that began to hoot which just set all of our heart thumping again. The owl kept it up all night which didn't

NEWS & UPDATES

make for a restful night, but the men had a hearty breakfast for us the next morning to give us the strength to ride back home. We might not have slept, but I remember that adventure as if it were yesterday. Good times, great mentors and wonderful memories." - Monte

Lifelong Mill Valley resident, Victoria Ordway was also kind enough to share. Victoria learned to ride in the mid 1970's. By this time, very few Mill Valley residents still kept horses in their back yards, but her neighbors on Lovell Avenue did - and they were more than happy to include Victoria in their fun. Victoria has very fond memories of riding with the Westerbach children through downtown Mill Valley (at a walk) and up Mt. Tam via the Old Railroad Grade. On their way home, they would tie their horses up in the redwood trees behind the Mill Valley Market so that they could run inside to buy refreshing Italian ices. What wonderful memories to have! Victoria boards her horse today at Horse Hill and is on the Horse Hill board of directors.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end. The 1970's brought gentrification and yuppification to the town of Mill Valley. Most back yard horses were replaced with Mercedes, BMWs and Land Rovers. The Mill Valley Riding Club went defunct and the Southern Marin Horseman's Association officially closed its doors in 1980 – due to a complete lack of interest. Even though most of Mill Valley's horses disappeared from back yards in the 1970's, and the Southern Marin Horseman's Association closed its doors in 1980, Mill Valley's children continued to love and to ride horses – just no longer with wild abandon through the town. Jim Howe offered inexpensive pasture boarding opportunities for young children at, what is now, Horse Hill and Vicky Morehouse offered pasture boarding and lessons on Kite Hill. From both of these facilities, children could ride up Mt. Tam on Marin County Open Space trails. The Flying Y Ranch and Miwok Stables both continued to offer stall boarding and instruction along with trail riding opportunities on Golden Gate National Recreation Area trails. Miwok Stables was called Tennessee Valley Stables until 1976. Here is the history we were able to find about Miwok Stables:

The Raposo family had a dairy and produced butter and by the 1950s the market had dairy market had changed and John Raposo leased his stalls out to recreational riders for their horses. Hidden behind a foggy veil the ranch was a well kept secret- a private enclave for the riders. Nobody else knew it was there.

Around that same time Raposo leased the barns and a portion of the property to Spencer Steinhoff who started a horse stable. The Raposos sold their remaining acreage to the National Park Service in 1974, taking a 20 year reservation on two acres including the main house and the little red horse barn. A clause was written in to allow Laura Lopes to live out her life on the property, and she continued to live on the property until the late 1990's.

The stables started by Spencer Steinhoff passed hands a few times and eventually John Raposo leased them to George Giannecchini in 1967. At that time, Tennessee Valley Stables was home to approximately 100 horses that were pastured on both sides of Tennessee Valley Road. The facility, however, was falling into disrepair and by 1976 the NPS/GGNRA had evicted all horses, closed the facility and had plans to bulldoze the buildings. Determined to save the historic barns and continue keeping their stable in operation, Miwok Valley Association' Limited was conceived and incorporated as a non-profit co-op. For a few months, the stables were closed while the newly formed MVA enlisted their members, friends, and families to work on repairing buildings, creating paddocks, and cleaning up the property. On November 1, 1976, after repairs were complete, the facility reopened as Miwok Stables and, soon after, received a special use permit from the NPS. For several years, various subcontractors provided trail rides for the public from Miwok









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SMART TRAIN HORSE CROSSING

Excerpts from a recent letter to:

R&R Crossing and Engineering Branch SMART Train Sonoma – Marin Area Rail Transit and The California Public Utilities Commission

Re:Pedestrian/Cycle/Equestrian Crossing at Binford Rd.-Rush Landing Rd.

Dear Sirs and Madams,

We are writing as a coalition committee with the following members: Marin Horse Council, Novato Horsemen, Inc., the Marin Conservation League, and the Marin County Bicycle Coalition to request that a long-established historic horse path, pedestrian and cycle crossing at the railroad crossing in Novato at Rush Creek and Atherton be maintained in your upcoming plans to create a public use pathway between the San Rafael Civic Center Station and the Santa Rosa North Station.

Our request is prompted by the April 6, 2016 Press Release issued by Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) addressing SMART's receipt of a "key environmental approval for bicycle and pedestrian pathway." We first wish to applaud your efforts to create the envisioned 36-mile long pedestrian and bicycle pathway. Undoubtedly, it will not only succeed at satisfying the stated goal of presenting opportunities for the public to view some of the area's most beautiful wetlands, but will also provide the public greater accessibility to other North Bay attractions and outdoor activities.

Because we understand that pathway construction is already scheduled for several areas in Sonoma and Marin, including the section between Rush Creek Place and the Novato San Marin Station in Novato, we believe that time is of the essence to address a method of preserving the railroad crossing between Binford Road and Rush Landing

Stables. On April 1, 1983, "the MVA" entered a secondary agreement with Miwok Livery to provide public trail rides and lessons at the facility. In 1999, this agreement grew into a joint use permit.

Constanza Perry remembers Miwok Stables advertised a riding program in the Learning Annex Catalog for riding classes in the mid 1980s. "You got a 6 class string of riding lessons for \$100. After that ended Suzy Saldana taught a Saturday morning lesson and you would take a break and eat your tuna fish sandwich or submarine sandwich from Amelia's Delicatessen in Tam Junction with the creaky wooden floors, and after lunch Suzy would take our group out again on a trail ride in the early afternoon. Once there was a full grown dead deer on Marincello trail and Suzy said, "We might get some rubberneckers but we are going to ride by it." We did. That went on for a few months and as it was becoming winter the horses needed riding so most of us morphed into a sponsorship program with the horses. All were trail horses in those days and very good trail horses of all breeds. In the summertime they had a campout to Stewart Horse Ranch in Olema. We would leave Tennessee Valley at 8:00AM Thursday morning, a group of about 14 horses, and ride Coyote Ridge trail to Miwok Trail and cross Highway One above the Zen Center to Mt Tam and then ride over the Bolinas Ridge to Stewart Horse Camp arriving late in the day. On Sunday after days of riding Point Reye's trails and (some of us) skinny dipping in Bass Lake during our ride, BBQs and good food at the camp, the big horse group would leave camp and ride back home to Tennessee Valley going through all kinds of different weather and fun experiences. Those campout rides went on for several years and there were often two per summer. We cherished them.

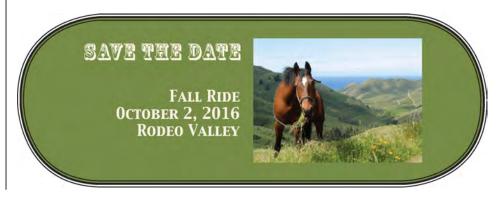
The houses in Tam Valley just north of the 7/11 above Shoreline Highway all had pasture horses on the hills. The subdivisions were built in the mid 1980s but the older houses had horses in their yards and pasture horses ran the hills which are Tam Valley hillside homes today. If you drive up there you can see where an older home had their horses on the flat paddock that is now used as a bocce ball court."

Nowadays, horse boarding and riding opportunities in Mill Valley are even more limited. Miwok Livery continues to offer boarding, instruction and trail riding in the GGNRA. And, Horse Hill continues to offer pasture boarding and trail riding in Marin County Open Space. I, for one, am extremely grateful that these two facilities are committed to preserving an equestrian presence in Mill Valley.

- Amory Willis

UPDATE ON THE FIGHT AGAINST EQUINE PARASITES

Preventative health care and the ability to prevent clinical disease in our equine friends has long been the goal of both veterinarians and owners alike. For years, we have had a united front in providing vaccinations, regular deworming, and dental care to ensure our horses live long healthy lives. As science and veterinary medicine evolves, the need arises to take a critical



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Continued from page 12

Road long-used by pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians to connect the extraordinary multi-use trails located within the Rush Creek Open Space Preserve to those found within the Olompali State Historic Park system.

Members of the Marin Horse Council and Novato Horsemen (established in 1942) as well as the numerous private horse owners on Atherton Avenue, Bugeia Lane and the surrounding neighborhoods on each side of Hwy. 101, have been utilizing this route for nearly 75 years! Other equestrians have transported their horses to either the Novato Horsemen's facility or Olompali State Historic Park and have enjoyed this route to access the numerous trails in these two areas for decades as well. Likewise, hikers and other outdoors enthusiasts have enjoyed this crossing for nearly as long. What's more, since the birth of "mountain biking" in Marin County nearly 20 years ago, cyclists by the thousands have joined the pedestrians and equestrians in taking advantage of this route to safely connect the trails on the east and west sides of Hwy. 101.

While pedestrians and cyclists can utilize the Atherton Avenue – San Marin Drive freeway overpass, it is far too busy of a motor vehicle crossing (with 4 lanes of traffic in each direction and continuous large truck usage) for even the very best trained horses and experienced riders to safely navigate. It is for this reason we collectively believe that it is imperative to preserve this crossing.

Thank you in advance for considering our request. We look forward to receiving your response at your earliest convenience.



and updated look at today's deworming programs and formulate the best plan to keep our horses free of clinical disease. These goals should also include being good stewards of the land, the environment and our horses.

When developing a parasite control program for your horses, we should begin with a few facts that might be an update on what we previous held as golden truths:

- 1. What had been the predominant parasite in horses, large strongyles, are now quite rare. Today, tapeworms and small strongyles are the predominant parasite we encounter in adult horses, where parascuris are predominant in foals.
- Resistance (the parasite's ability to survive a treatment of dewormer) to these predominant species is a real problem and one we need to monitor for.
- A horse's susceptibility to parasite burden and shedding pattern vary from horse to horse. Therefore horses require individualized attention to their parasite control needs
- 4. Juvenile horses (<3 years of age) require specialized attention as they are more susceptible to heavy burdens of parasites.

For the last 40 years, many veterinarians have advocated a rotational approach to deworming. This was at a time when large strongyles were the predominant parasite affecting equine populations and our primary goal was to stop the shedding of these parasite eggs into the environment. Large strongyles take roughly 2 months to reappear after treatment. It was considered common place and successful to deworm horses every two months, rotating products to maintain an effective kill off of parasites. Since that time, we have seen an emergence in the small strongyle population in our horses, now considered the predominant parasite affecting the adult equine population. Due to the long term frequent rotational use of dewormers, the parasites that survived treatment with multiple products carried a gene prodiving them immunity and were no longer effectively killed by many of the deworming products on the market.

Small strongyles are found everywhere in every environment. The good news is, they are relatively mild pathogens and generally only cause disease when parasite burdens reach very high levels. Therefore, our previous means of deworming are no longer advocated and a more curtailed and strategic use of dewormers is called for in our equine populations. This will reduce resistance and identify those individuals that have a high parasite burden and that shed a high number of parasites.

One concept that needs to be understood when developing a deworming plan for your horses is the concept of "refugia". Refugia are the parasites that survive the deworming treatment, not due to resistant genes, but because they are either in the environment and are not exposed to treatment, are in another untreated horse in the same pasture, or are in an "encysted" state in the host. Small strongyles can bury or "encyst" themselves into the wall of the gastrointestinal tract of the horse where they can lay dormant for extended periods of time and escape treatment of many common dewormers. The important concept of refugia is that leaving a population of parasites unexposed to dewormer can be highly advantageous when combating problems with resistance. The refugia in an equine population serve to dilute out the resistant parasites in that population so that the population no longer consists only of resistant worms.

This means that the old thinking of "treat and rotate" no longer applies when controlling for small strongyles in a population. Utilizing this concept of refugia directs us to test populations for those horses that are the highest shedders of parasite eggs and only treating those that are high number shedders. Within any group of adult horses the strongyle egg counts are concentrated such that 15-30% of the population are responsible for roughly 80% of the eggs shed in the environment. It is known that fecal egg counts tend to rise during the grazing period for that population of horses and tend to decrease in the cold winter months or the dry arid months. Therefore, it is theoretically advantageous to perform fecal egg counts at a time of higher shedding, the spring grazing period, when parasite burdens will likely be the highest.

Our goal is no longer to try to eradicate the parasites in any single horse, but rather to prevent clinical disease. It is important to understand that deworming treatments

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that are only effective at clearing adult populations yield little direct benefit to the adult horse. Instead, these treatments provide effectiveness in reducing the environmental burden by decreasing the number of eggs shed into the environment.

If our goals are to reduce the risk of parasitic disease, control parasite egg shedding, and prevent the development of resistance in our parasite populations, then we need to focus on those horses that are the high shedders to reduce the parasite load. In addition, we need to curtail our treatments to those times of the year with the heaviest parasite loads. Treating a horse in the middle of summer, when it is arid, hot and parasite numbers are at there low, will be of little benefit to your horse and to achieving your goals.

Now that we know the importance of why we should test for the parasite burden in our equine population, we need to understand some of the limitations of the fecal egg count testing. Manure egg count tests are not always a good representation of the total parasite burden of an individual horse. While they are an estimate of the adult parasites, we must keep in mind that they do not account for migrating parasites such as the parascuris species or species like small strongyles that encyst and are not actively shedding. In addition, they are not a good representative of immature parasites and can often not detect parasite burdens of tapeworms and pinworms. It is also possible to miss the presence of parasites in the stomach wall such as bots that can lead to gastric ulcers. Therefore, strategic treatment of horses may still be implicated in the face of a negative fecal sample.

When looking to keep your horses healthy, keep in mind the importance of having an open dialog with your veterinarian regarding your questions and concerns in developing a successful deworming program for your horses. It is a two-way conversation and both parties need to communicate in order to attain the best history, the best diagnostics and the best plan for you and your horses. Keeping a common sense approach to all things in life is always important to keeping ourselves grounded. On the bright side, the more arid microclimates of this county, and California in general, have a much lower parasite burden than the areas of the warm moist southeast. So just by living in this beautiful county you are already helping your horse to live a life free of parasitic disease.

- Dr Jim Myers, DVM





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Monte Kruger presenting another trophy to rider at Southern Marin Horsemen's Association Junior & Open Horse Show. Note the sandals or bare feet! Those were the days!

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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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