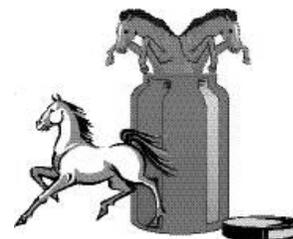


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# CONTENTS OF THE JAR

## The Newsletter of Joder Arabian Ranch

*With News of Mountain Meadow Holistic Equestrian Center and  
Rocky Mountain Equi-Rhythm: Horses Balancing Hearts*



**Winter 2006 - 2007**

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### **As the Barn Turns**

By Caroline Roy

*This column shares news sent by Caroline via e-mail over the past quarter plus updated news.*

**H**appy New Year to all! We hope your new year is filled with love, joy, and peace.

#### **MMHEC Will Have Its Own Website**

Thanks to Jeff Cloud and Greg Joder for their work in creating a MMHEC website. We will be adding all MMHEC policies and forms in the next few weeks as PDF files, so you will always have access to boarding forms, including all the forms referenced in our communications. When the site is ready, it will be linked from the Joder Arabian Ranch website.

#### **Board of Boarders Election Results**

Thanks to all who participated by voting in the MMHEC Board of Boarders election in November. Congratulations to our new board members Carter Flanders, Susan O'Kelley, and Michelle Slaughter and alternate member Sandi Rosewell. Board of Boarders meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. January's meeting, scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m., will be devoted to the ranch's vision and budget and finances for the past year and new year.

#### **Horses Coming and Going**

- Welcome to Mr. Cool Beans, a very sweet older palomino gelding Christy Cramer has brought to MMHEC to try out for lessons.

- Goodbye to Jen Reid and Nik, who are moving to Kentucky. Congratulations to Jen on her new job!
- Farewell to Gracie, who returned to Stephanie Wendorf's Knick o' Time Horse Rescue and Rehabilitation in November. Equi-Rhythm was unable to adopt Gracie due to financial reasons, but she did very well with us, gaining about 300 pounds. Thanks to Stephanie for sharing this wise and kind old soul with us last year. Gracie, MMHEC, and Equi-Rhythm all benefited from this collaborative partnership.

#### **People Coming and Going**

- Welcome to Kjell (pronounced Chell) Even-son, who will be cleaning stalls and moving horses on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Kjell is a high school student who has volunteered at Medicine Horse and is currently taking lessons at Academy Stables. He is interested in working with horses and attending farrier school.
- Good by and thank you to Mindy Gallaher, who finished her last day at MMHEC before the holidays. Mindy took wonderful care of the MMHEC stall horses and her kindness and dedication to their care was always a priority. They and their people appreciated it so very much.

#### **Virus Update**

The diarrhea outbreak appears to have abated. Most affected horses seemed to have a few days of diarrhea and were lethargic and then got over

it. It seems that if horses had other health issues, they were more susceptible to getting sicker. Dr. Marty Butley stated that a vet needs to be called in the event your horse has a high fever and goes off feed in addition to diarrhea.

### **Fall Vet Day**

Thanks to Connie Hopkins for organizing the Fall Vet Day. Boulder Valley Veterinary Clinic vaccinated more than 30 horses in record time! We are pleased to offer this service to MMHEC boarders and appreciate the great job the vets do each fall and spring to ensure that MMHEC horses receive the vaccines they need.

### **The Mice vs. the Ranch**

The mice at the ranch have been running rampant far too long. We knew it was time to be more aggressive in containing them when they started greeting us in the grain room! We contacted a pest control agency who has installed mice stations in the classroom, tack rooms, grain rooms, and other strategic sites at the ranch, which should greatly reduce the number of mice.

### **Mountain Lion Sighting**

The lion was sighted just behind the Joder pen and upper arena in late November and a few days later Christy Cramer found a deer killed by a mountain lion on the back part of the ranch. Please keep your eyes open during dawn and dusk, the two main times when the lions are hunting the deer.

### **Halloween Show a Success**

Thanks to all of the 4-H parents and MMHEC boarders for your help in making the Halloween Horse Show a huge success. After expenses, Blazing Saddles was able to put \$700 towards their fund to go to Kentucky. Special thanks to:

- Christy Cramer for being the show manager in Caroline's absence
- Hallie Sabo and 4-H parents for preparing the young riders for their classes
- Alamar for providing candy treats
- Greg and Karen for their assistance in keeping things running smoothly.



*The Halloween Show was great fun, as usual! Top to bottom: Lucky and Rosemary Reitz; Thunder and Rachel Chaknova; Annie and Talia Hershaft. Photos by Greg Joder.*



### **Winter Ranch Hours**

Winter hours at MMHEC began on October 29, the first day of daylight savings time. During the winter, horses are fed at 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., compared to 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. during the late spring, summer, and early fall.

### **Five-Day Weather Forecaster and Winter Blanketing**

I purchased a weather forecaster which we have placed in the lounge so we have a better idea of the weather at the ranch (as long as the person predicting the weather is accurate), so maybe we'll have a 50% chance of getting it right. Don't forget that you need to fill out a special services form for your horse if you want blanketing this winter. Please leave the form in Karen Eiffert's box. We will be sending out an e-mail with our blanketing parameters so you know when staff will be blanketing. Weather changes quickly in Colorado, from cold to warm and back, and we want to be uniform in our blanketing policy to ensure consistency.

### **Unlabeled Blankets and Halters**

Just a reminder... We will not be handling or blanketing any horses whose halters or blankets are unlabeled. We went through all the blankets and halters and placed the unlabeled ones in the shavings building. However, some blankets have been showing back up unlabeled. Please check your blanket and halter to make sure your label is still there. You can write your horse's name in the inside of your blanket (there is often a place to write this information in permanent ink), but staff would prefer that you use a name tag on the outside as it is easier to read as we go through the blankets to find the one for your horse. Thanks for making our job easier when we have to blanket 40+ horses in inclement weather!

### **Joder Ranch Road in Bad Weather**

We have had our share of wintry weather in the past month. At times, the road to the ranch has been treacherous despite Greg and Alfredo's attempts to keep it maintained. Ranch staff duties related to horse care take priority and, depending on the impact of the weather, can keep us occupied the entire day. Please do not attempt the road if you do not have an all-wheel or 4-wheel drive vehicle. We are working on a plan to keep boarders better informed as to conditions at the ranch but, until we do, please understand that staff who are at the ranch and aware of the road conditions are usually working with the horses

and not able to transmit an e-mail or return phone calls about the road. If the weather is bad in the Boulder or Longmont area, more than likely it is worse at the ranch. So please make good decisions about driving to the ranch so as to not impact others. Cars that go off the road and get stuck block the road and then need to be pulled out, which the staff do not have the time or equipment to deal with. So if you do choose to attempt the road without AWD or 4WD and you get stuck, please call a tow truck.

### **Change in Driving and Parking Policy**

If you are a boarder or leaser, you may park your car in the lower part of the ranch *if* your car has all-wheel or 4-wheel drive. Instructors have been asked to inform all of their students that they may not drive down to the lower part of the ranch for lessons but should park on top and walk down. This is in part due to our experience that folks who are new to horses often drive too fast or do not give the right of way to horses or humans since they are not used to sharing roads with horses, dogs, and riders. With the increase in boarders and folks taking lessons at the ranch, there is a big increase in numbers of people driving to the lower pens and, along with that, an increased chance of injury to animals and humans. We need to minimize this as much as possible.

### **Ranch Closing That Windy Day!**

We had to close the ranch on Monday, January 8th, due to high winds and dangerous conditions for humans. Greg and Karen were both at the ranch and advised that all humans who do not work at the ranch should stay at home to prevent injury due to the possibility of flying objects. Stall horses and horses who live in individual care pens were not turned out; the pen horses were fine as it was quite warm and they all hunkered with butts to the wind or in their shelters.

### **Yucky Weather = Cramped Space = Irritability**

When the weather is cold, wet, and wild and the pens are full of muck and mire, moving around the ranch and in the pens is not exactly fun. If you're feeling irritated and observe that in oth-

ers, it likely is because of the loss of our usual spaciousness and the stress of battling the elements, which is very wearing. This includes MMHEC staff who are in the muck, mire, and ice 8 to 10 hours a day. Please remember to be respectful of others and don't forget to be safe in the indoor arena, which gets crowded with riders in inclement weather.

### **February Deworming**

For those who deworm their horses on a quarterly basis (the minimum required by the ranch), February deworming must be done by February 28th. Deworming forms are located on the file cabinet in the lounge. Please turn in a form or e-mail Connie Hopkins at [constance\\_hopkins@hotmail.com](mailto:constance_hopkins@hotmail.com) to report the date and type of dewormer you have used.

### **Pest of the Month: Ticks**

You will see an article posted at the ranch on Pest Management. It was discovered that Christy's beloved older horse, Cool Beans, was tick-infested after his arrival at the ranch. Beans was a horse at high risk for tick infestation due to poor management at his last home. The ranch has always had some Rocky Mountain wood ticks and winter ticks, and a few will occasionally show up on a horse. Beans has been treated to kill off the ticks that are hosting on him. He has his own grooming bucket and saddle pads so as to not spread the ticks.

### **Fire Drill Postponed Until Spring**

We had to cancel the fire drill and decided to reschedule this event for the spring. Just a heads up: A new personal fire plan form will be sent out within the next few weeks, which will include a section that describes volunteer positions that you can sign up for to help in the event of an emergency at the ranch.

### **Horse Trailer Form**

As we continued to finalize the ranch fire plan, we discovered that Autumn Hill requires that anyone who stores their trailer at AH allow the use of that trailer in the event of an evacuation. I think that this is a good policy as it will allow us

access to every means available to move horses off the ranch to a safe location in the event of an emergency. So if you keep your trailer at Joder ranch, please fill out a horse trailer description and waiver form and put it in my box, and let me know if you have any questions.

### **Revised Policy on Horse Burial at JAR**

Based on a memorandum by the Joder Family, each boarder will need to fill out a new Permission to Seek Veterinary Care and Equine Living Will for each horse that is at the ranch. New forms are located on the file cabinet. The Joder memo dated December 5, 2006, essentially informed us that they have reconsidered the practice of burying horses on the JAR property because of "the growing area of land disturbance associated with horse burial and the limited amount of already disturbed space remaining in the area where horses have traditionally been buried. In keeping with the ranch mission and conservation easement guidelines to recover and/or keep intact native grasslands, horses will no longer be allowed to be buried at any location on the ranch. Exceptions will be considered by JAR and MMHEC management. Because the ranch is considered home by many boarders and their horses, boarders can still spread their horse's ashes and/or set up a stone marker at a location of their choosing as a way to honor and remember their horse."

### **Holiday Festival and Potluck**

Thanks to all who participated in the Holiday Festival and Potluck, especially to:

- Santa Greg and all the wonderful Santa helpers who facilitated horse games and the horse gift exchange
- Dawn Fisher for her wonderful dressage demonstration on Juan
- All who contributed food to the tasty potluck
- Alfredo and Alamar for their wonderful punch and Alamar's famous tamales
- Sarah Bowman for festive leftover food bags
- Wiley Gillmor and Grace Maddox for creation of the Western Soil Awards
- The Joder family for sponsoring the Sombrero Ranch wagon rides

*Top to bottom: Everyone enjoyed the wagon rides, sponsored by the Joders; Juan is wondering if Santa has any horse treats; does Carter Flanders have an advantage in the egg and spoon contest riding a Missouri Foxtrotter?*



### **Small Hay Bales Shortage**

Small bales are harder and harder to come by. We will be bringing small bales in as we can from Wyoming. Please do not cut the large (900 lbs) bales of hay as once cut they are difficult to move and manage. Until we get more small bales in, you will see cut large bales at various locations around the ranch. If there is no hay in the boxes by the hitching rails please ask staff to direct you to an existing cut bale of large hay and you can take a section for your horse. Please remember to clean up your hay at the rail. Thanks!

### **Many Horses, Many Ways of Working with Them**

People have different ways and standards of taking care of their horse. As long as it is not abusive or detrimental to the horse's health, please honor an individual's right to make decisions about his or her horse. My grandmother used to say, "If you can't say anything positive, don't say anything at all." If you must make a comment, please ask the person if they would like to listen to your suggestion before offering advice. Please help MMHEC be a pleasant place for all.

### **Suggestion Box**

I will be placing a locked suggestion box in the lounge by the desk. Please place your suggestions there for improvements at the ranch. We will prioritize requests as we are able to, based on staff availability and money.

### **MMHEC Quadrille**

Quadrille has been postponed until February. Please contact Karen Flood if you are interested in participating.

### **HorseYoga at the Ranch**

We have a potential yoga instructor to offer classes at the ranch if we can get enough participation. We need a minimum of three students at \$10 each per class. Please let me know ASAP if you are interested in attending a yoga class at the ranch and what day works best for you. MMHEC has mats, blocks, rugs, and straps for your use during classes.

## Highway Cleanup

Thank you to Billie Myers for organizing the fall highway cleanup for the Joder section of Neva Road and 47<sup>th</sup> Street. And thanks to the cleanup crew: Billie Myers, John Brumder, Julie Rudy, Greg and Brian Joder, Rachel Stearns, Alexa Schild, and Connie Hopkins. Highway cleanup, which is JAR's way of giving back to the community, happens in the spring and fall each year. We hope to have you join us in the spring to see who can win the award for the most interesting item found!

## Thanks for Sharing the Load!

MMHEC is truly becoming a community shared ranch, with so many people pitching in to help. Thank you to:

- Carter Flanders for doing a wonderful job (and so quick!) completing the shelter in Pen 7 and for putting circular holes in the hay feeders so the horses can see while they are feeding.
- Kelly Kanizay, Greg Joder, and Al Bowman for laying the electricity and cement foundations for electric waterers in the Individual Care Pens.
- Cristen Poole, Christy Cramer, Pat Cantwell, Marie Bach-Greene, and Amanda Cyboron for helping with ranch chores.
- Larry Langer for arranging an equine dental day with Andy Dean of LaPorte Animal Clinic.
- Julie Rudy for editing and publishing our newsletter, *Contents of the JAR*.
- John Brumder and Al Bowman for the electrical work that enabled installation of electric water buckets in the stalls, which the staff and horses have really appreciated on frigid days!
- Kelly Kanizay for helping Alfredo feed during the blizzard when the ranch was short-handed.
- Alfredo for his wonderful above-and-beyond-the-call-of-duty work during the holiday blizzards.

## Equi-Rhythm Update

By Caroline Roy

*Rocky Mountain Equi-Rhythm is a non-profit equine therapy organization housed at Joder Arabian Ranch. The Equi-Rhythm website (at [www.equirhythm.org](http://www.equirhythm.org)) is temporarily not available but should be back up in a couple of weeks.*

## Naropa Students Experience Equine Therapy

In early November, 16 Naropa University Wilderness Therapy Master's students attended a week-long equine therapy field experience at Joder Arabian Ranch, coordinated and facilitated by Caroline Roy, Karen Eiffert, Jenny Key, and Carolyn Eberle. This is the fourth year that Naropa students have attended the equine field experience at JAR.

A variety of equine therapy experiences were scheduled which allowed the students to experience equine therapy in three separate roles: as group participants processing their own group and individual process, as therapists using equine therapy as a therapeutic modality, and as beginner or seasoned equestrians working with the horse from a new perspective. The majority of these students had little or no horse experience. The students' intent for the week was to become aware of the internal journey that horses could guide them towards if they were open to embarking on the journey.

The Naropa students were offered a variety of guest presentations that provided a lecture and/or a hands-on experiential session with the horses. Janet Quinn presented Healing and Wholeness, a model for working with wilderness therapies. Jenny Key provided Equine Therapy with Teens and Substance Abuse. Carolyn Eberle explored Energetic Body Centered Horse Initiated Team Building and Group Dynamic and Family Therapy with the students and horses in Pen 8. Duey Freeman, a professor at Naropa and an equine therapist, presented Equine Therapy from a Gestalt and Family Systems Perspective. Lisa Shafer worked with the Naropa students and helped them experience natural horsemanship with Doc, Majic, Li'l Joe, and others. Billie Myers and Cristen Poole provided support in

tacking horses and hiking with the students and horses. Delectable delights were provided by Caroline's Catering.

The week ended with an external journey with the Equi-Rhythm horses, Tommy Joe, Doc, and BJ, who provided a silent, contemplative journey trail ride around Joder Mountain and a closing ceremony on the back section of the mountain. Thank you to all the facilitators and horses, who generously donated their expertise and time to Equi-Rhythm.

### What's Next?

Rocky Mountain Equi-Rhythm's work in the community continues to grow as a solid foundation is built and its mission and vision are realized. Therapists Caroline Roy, Jenny Key, Karen Eiffert, and Carolyn Eberle will be holding group and individual equine therapy sessions at the ranch throughout the coming year.

## Blazing Saddles 4-H Update

**L**ate in November, Blazing Saddles 4-H Club members selected their secret Santa and arranged to purchase gifts for our adopt-a-family through social services. On December 19th, the 4-Hers and their parents celebrated the holiday season with a skating trip and pizza party. Included in the holiday festivities was a visit to a local senior center to sing carols. Members and parents displayed some very impressive holiday singing! The club members finished the celebration with pizza and an exchange of secret Santa gifts at a Longmont restaurant. Other 4-H news:

- The 4-H club has begun its new year with 22 members who have registered to participate and it looks to be a great new year!
- A trip to the stock show is scheduled on January 18th to see the Dancing Horses.
- 4-Hers are creating a library of horse books and magazines. Please donate books and magazines you no longer need. You can leave them on a table in the classroom.
- Donations of tack will be accepted for the annual 4-H Tack Sale on February 24th. 4-H

is fund raising to earn money for a trip to the Kentucky Horse Park Equine Affair or Rolex three-day event in the future.

- Boulder County 4-H Carnival in the Wild West will be March 10th at the Boulder County Fairgrounds Exhibit Building from 11:00 a.m. – 6:30 p.m. All local 4-H clubs have booths to fund raise. Please let Caroline know if you have any items to donate to the silent auction on behalf of Blazing Saddles.
- The next 4-H meetings are scheduled for the following Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.: January 23rd, February 6, and February 20th.



*Kendra Chilcoat's Pippin has decided he is capable of training himself.*

## A Week at The Riding School in Warendorf, Germany

By Dawn Fisher, MMHEC Dressage Instructor

**I**t's been almost a year since I received the letter from Jill Hassler-Scoop inviting me to attend The Riding School in Warendorf, Germany. How surprised was I to receive the invite! I was one of nine selected to go! So after a year of waiting I finally boarded the plane on October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006 headed to Warendorf, Germany for one solid week of German education. We were the first Americans in the history of the school to attend for such educational purposes and I am so grateful to have been chosen. So now I'd like to share my experience.

First you need to know the purpose of the school. It's no ordinary school. The school is responsible for the training, preparing, and testing of riders who will become professionals, as well as being central home of all German professional riders. So you can imagine the quality of riding that I was surrounded by!

Our week started by meeting at the school for an introduction to the stallions that we'd be in charge of and riding for the week. The school runs within the State Stud, so most of the horses are stallions—all 150 of them. Each of us oogled over our "new horse"—found in their prescribed stall, bedded in straw up to their knees, with their name and lineage hanging above. It was amazing to see so many horses with such incredible bloodlines all in one barn—and there were four barns filled with such incredible horses.

The next day we would be riding our horses in the morning, followed by a discussion of how it went and goals for each horse for the week. My stallion was the infamous Ferragamo! I could hardly believe I'd be riding such a fine horse, never mind coming up with goals for him. My first ride on him gave me the opportunity to feel him out. He was wonderful so I decided my goals for the week would be based on what I needed to improve in my own riding since he was so good in his work and such a pleasure to ride. My primary goal for the week was to improve my timing of the half-halts for tempi changes. My secondary goal was to get my head around half-pass to make it smooth and flowing.

Hannes Muller, director of the school, taught us theory in the classroom draped in pictures of such great riders and horses as Nicole Uphoff and Rembrandt, Reiner Klimke and Alherich, and many other recognizable names. It was amazing to be in the presence of such greatness!

Our theory discussions gave us insight on how to reach our goals for the week. Mr. Muller gave us a "system" to use when riding an unfamiliar horse to determine where the horse is lacking and what to start with. Other discussions included the use of school figures and the illusive half-halt. In addition to our daily rides and theory lessons, we worked horses on the double, worked in hand, lunged each other in the "lunge

house," and worked over cavaletti and small fences. We were expected to be well rounded riders with well rounded horses, capable of any of the three disciplines (dressage, stadium, and cross-country).

One thing that really hit home with me was how all the riders at the school were great dressage riders. Even the professionals who specialized in jumping could easily take their horse through the equivalent of a 4<sup>th</sup>-level test. There wasn't the division that we see here between dressage riding and hunt seat. In fact, they don't even have hunt seat riding. All riders are good riders first, then specialize once they've achieved what the Germans would consider basic skill level (about 4th level-PSG).

During my week spent at the Riding School, we were lucky enough to witness the young stallions being tested for their "right" to become breeding stallions. The test itself, which lasts for 70 days, tests stallions as young as three years old on their ability to jump stadium, cross country, dressage, and drive. We watched the stadium jumping phase and it was really obvious which stallions came from dressage lines and which were bred out of jumping lines. They all jumped well, but the jumping lines were so eager for the jump versus the dressage lines that went over but didn't really care if they saw a jump ever again! I overheard an owner saying that every good German horse should be able to jump at least 3'6".

Creating a new "picture" was a theme that Mr. Muller encouraged all of us to go home with. Training the eye and body to have new and better pictures was more easily achieved when surrounded by such fantastic horses and riders—with invisible aids and quiet, but not stiff, bodies and horses who could sit so well in piaffe and passage that you could see wrinkles in the skin of their hind quarters! Those images are now embedded in my mind and are new goals for me and my students. With my new pictures, combined with the training by Eckart Meyners and the Balimo<sup>TM</sup> program, I have infinite ways to help my students and their horses.

My only regret is that the program wasn't longer. I could totally immerse myself in German, no-nonsense, straight-forward culture. But I

absorbed everything I saw in my short time there and have brought back the information to help rider education in our area. I could go on and on about how beautiful the school was, how clean and organized the buildings were, and the history of the 300-year-old buildings—not to mention the wonderful culture of the town of Warendorf, the kindness of the people, and the food! Rather than take up space with those details, I'd like to thank my mentors—horse and human—for the opportunity to be part of such greatness.

Although this was my first trip to Germany, I can't help but think of how lucky I am as an American going to the School at Warendorf. Many riders go over seeking education, and I hope that they receive the full-on attention of the trainer they ride with as I did. I am grateful to have sat down with my trainer for dinner, to have met his family, and to have developed a relationship and plan for future trips and continuing education. I am so lucky to have had my trainer, Hannes Muller, care about my education and share all he can about making it better. Thank you to Hannes Muller for letting us experience The Riding School. Thanks to Eckart and Christianne Meyners for their determination in helping riders outside Germany and, of course, Jill Hasler-Scoop for having the vision and commitment to bring us all together. This article is dedicated with love and gratitude in Jill's memory.

*This article is reprinted with permission from the December 2006 issue of The Centaur.*

Postscript: Peter Borggreve, First Riding and Training Master from the Landgestuet in Warendorf, will be in Boulder March 31-April 3 for a clinic. Please contact Dawn Fisher for details.

## Eco-Bits: The Yucca and Its Moth

By Greg Joder

There are nearly 40 species in the genus *Yucca* (family: *Liliaceae*), many of which are found in the southwest U.S. Yuccas are cold-tolerant succulents well adapted to high elevations and cold winters. *Yucca glauca*, also

known as soapweed yucca, can be found from southern Alberta Canada to the desert southwest. It is also found in abundance on the ranch.

The spines of the yucca can be a literal pain when found alongside trails, but when one looks a little closer the yucca is actually a very interesting plant. The most interesting aspect of the yucca is its association with a moth (genus: *Tegeticula*). The yucca and the yucca moth have evolved a mutualistic relationship, that is, a relationship in which both species benefit. Specifically, the yucca is pollinated only by the yucca



moth. In return, the yucca moth receives a safe place to deposit her eggs and food in the form of seeds for the larvae. If you look closely at a dried yucca fruit, you can often see a tiny hole in the side of one of the

segments where the larvae exited. If the seeds are still present, you can also find the area within the layer of the seeds that had been the home and food source for the larvae.

Last year appeared to have been a good year for the yucca on the ranch—there was an abundance of beautiful white blossoms for several weeks. So this spring, when you're riding the trails on the ranch, stop by a yucca plant and look for signs that the yucca moth had visited. In a practical sense, yuccas might be a pain but they are also an important part of the dynamic ecology of the ranch.

*Thanks to Greg for keeping us informed in this newsletter column about plants and wildlife at the ranch.*

## God Jumps

By Lauren Davis Baker

**G**od gives us horses and compels some of us to love them. Yet why does the horse, an animal with such a big heart, live such a short life? Perhaps it's because if our horses lived any longer, we wouldn't be able to bear losing them. Or, perhaps it's because God wants to jump.

Perhaps God looks down on the fine horses we raise and decides when it's His turn to ride. He gives us a few good years to care for and learn from them, but when the time is right, it's up to us to see them off gracefully. OK, perhaps not gracefully. Blowing into a Kleenex™ is rarely graceful. But we can be grateful.

To have a horse in your life is a gift. In the matter of a few short years, a horse can teach a girl courage, if she chooses to grab mane and hang on for dear life. Even the smallest of ponies is mightier than the tallest of girls. To conquer the fear of falling off, having one's toes crushed, or being publicly humiliated at a horse show is an admirable feat for any child. For that, we can be grateful.

Horses teach us responsibility. Unlike a bicycle—or a computer—a horse needs regular care and most of it requires that you get dirty and smelly and up off the couch. Choosing to leave your cozy kitchen to break the crust of ice off the water buckets is to choose responsibility. When our horses dip their noses and drink heartily, we know we've made the right choice.

Learning to care for a horse is both an art and a science. Some are easy keepers, requiring little more than regular turn-out, a flake of hay, and a trough of clean water. Others will test you—you'll struggle to keep them from being too fat or too thin. You'll have their feet shod regularly only to find shoes gone missing. Some are so accident-prone you'll swear they're intentionally finding new ways to injure themselves.

If you weren't raised with horses, you can't know that they have unique personalities. You'd expect this from dogs, but horses? Indeed, there are clever horses, grumpy horses, and even horses with a sense of humor. Those prone to

humor will test you by finding new ways to escape from the barn when you least expect it. I found one of ours on the front porch one morning, eating the cornstalks I'd carefully arranged as Halloween decorations.

Horses can be timid or brave, lazy or athletic, obstinate or willing. You will hit it off with some horses and others will elude you altogether. There are as many "types" of horses as there are people—which makes the whole partnership thing all the more interesting.

If you've never ridden a horse, you probably assume it's a simple thing you can learn in a weekend. You can, in fact, learn the basics on a Sunday—but to truly ride well takes a lifetime. Working with a living being is far more complex than turning a key in the ignition and putting the car in "drive."

In addition to listening to your instructor, your horse will have a few things to say to you as well. On a good day, he'll be happy to go along with the program and tolerate your mistakes; on a bad day, you'll swear he's trying to kill you. Perhaps he's naughty or perhaps he's fed up with how slowly you're learning his language. Regardless, the horse will have an opinion. He may choose to challenge you (which can ultimately make you a better rider) or he may carefully carry you over fences—if it suits him. It all depends on the partnership—and partnership is what it's all about.

If you face your fears, swallow your pride, and are willing to work at it, you'll learn lessons in courage, commitment, and compassion in addition to basic survival skills. You'll discover just how hard you're willing to work toward a goal, how little you know, and how much you have to learn. And, while some people think the horse "does all the work," you'll be challenged physically as well as mentally. Your horse may humble you completely. Or, you may find that sitting on his back is the closest you'll get to heaven.

You can choose to intimidate your horse, but do you really want to? The results may come more quickly but will your work ever be as graceful as that gained through trust? The best partners choose to listen, as well as to tell. When

it works, we experience a sweet sense of accomplishment brought about by smarts, hard work, and mutual understanding between horse and rider. These are the days when you know with absolute certainty that your horse is enjoying his work.

If we make it to adulthood with horses still in our lives, most of us have to squeeze riding into our oversaturated schedules, balancing our need for things equine with those of our households and employers. There is never enough time to ride, or to ride as well as we'd like. Hours in the barn are stolen pleasures.

If it is in your blood to love horses, you share your life with them. Our horses know our secrets; we braid our tears into their manes and whisper our hopes into their ears. A barn is a sanctuary in an unsettled world, a sheltered place where life's true priorities are clear: a warm place to sleep, someone who loves us, and the luxury of regular meals. Some of us need these reminders.

When you step back, it's not just about horses—it's about love, life, and learning. On any given day, a friend is celebrating the birth of a foal, a blue ribbon, or recovery from an illness. That same day, there is also loss: a broken limb, a case of colic, a decision to sustain a life or end it gently. As horse people, we share the accelerated life cycle of horses: the hurried rush of life, love, loss, and death that caring for these animals brings us. When our partners pass, it is more than a moment of sorrow.

We mark our loss with words of gratitude for the ways our lives have been blessed. Our memories are of joy, awe, and wonder. Absolute union. We honor our horses for their brave hearts, courage, and willingness to give.

To those outside our circle, it must seem strange. To see us in our muddy boots, who would guess such poetry lives in our hearts? We celebrate our companions with praise worthy of heroes. Indeed, horses have the hearts of warriors and often carry us into and out of fields of battle.

Listen to stories of that once-in-a-lifetime horse, of journeys made and challenges met. The best of horses rise to the challenges we set before them, asking little in return. Those who know

them understand how fully a horse can hold a human heart. Together, we share the pain of sudden loss and the lingering taste of long-term illness. We shoulder the burden of deciding when or whether to end the life of a true companion.

In the end, we're not certain if God entrusts us to our horses or our horses to us. Does it matter? We're grateful God loaned us the horse in the first place. And so we pray: "Dear God, after you've enjoyed a bit of jumping, please give our fine horses the best of care. And, if it's not too much, might we have at least one more, good gallop when we meet again? Amen."

*This article is reprinted with permission from the author from Flying Changes, June 2006.*

## **New Boarders, New Horses!**

*We welcome these new horses, who have come to MMHEC since the last newsletter was published.*

### **Kid Reno and Franktown: Jill Colby**

According to Jill, "Reno is a 14-year-old Pinto/Paint gelding who has sorrel and white markings that cause little kids to ask if he's Hidalgo. I bought him as a 5-year-old from a lady who had decided to start breeding mules (????) and Reno was the only horse she had left in her pasture. He stuck out like a sore thumb with his colorful markings among all those dull, gray mules! The lady had shown him as a halter horse as a youngster, but had not broke him to ride yet, so when I got him I did lots of groundwork to get



him ready for the saddle. He was a lively guy, but always seemed pleasant to work with and very obedient—until we started riding! Shortly after he was broke to the saddle I realized that he was more than I could handle, and he would not be the trail horse I had hoped he would be. It was then that I discovered Christy Cramer. She started working with Reno, and I soon found him to be a delight to ride (in the arena) and a horse with great potential for the English pleasure show ring. But it wasn't that easy—Reno's tantrums got worse for quite a while, and Christy and I still reminisce about all the times I wanted to just give up and be rid of him. But I knew that if he ever grew out of his evil ways he would be a super horse. That finally came true and now, thanks to my decision to keep trying, and billions of hours of hard work by Christy, Reno is the wonderful, fun, and delightful adult that he is today. He has won many pleasure classes and, while he has little talent for it, he loves to jump—he is even starting to enjoy the trail rides around Joder! You may hear people who know him call him 'Butt Head,' but I think that nickname is all that's left of that horrible juvenile—he's a sweet boy now!

“Frankie is a 3-year-old Pinto gelding who is a mostly-white overo bay. I bought him as a



weanling and, because I had spent so much time dealing with the horrible antics of Reno, I wanted a horse with a very sweet temperament. Those who are familiar with Frankie know that he is one of the most 'laid back' and mellow horses around. The other things they know about

him are that he should be named Houdini because of his ability to magically get through gates and fences, and he's about the dirtiest horse around. There's no other horse that enjoys wallowing in a manure pile more than Frank! I've just started riding him, and his mellow attitude continues under saddle as well. It looks like he'll soon be a horse that will be a pleasure to ride on the trails. But we'll see—horses never stop surprising us! Frankie was very sick in November and December with some sort of liver infection. He responded well to the medications, and he is back to being his same cheerful, mellow, and dirty self!”

**Tika: Hannah Moench  
(and mother, Elisabeth Caspari)**

Tika, also known as Diamond, is a 13.3 hh black Connemara/Quarter Horse mare who will be 11



in the spring. According to Hannah, “My family and I have free leased Tika since October. Tika's owners are Karen and Mike Farley, who live in North Broomfield with two daughters and four other horses. I have ridden in a variety of places: with retired Indian polo horses in Nepal and, closer to home, at Medicine Horse and Autumn Hill. When one of my best friends (also my instructor) moved, I didn't know where to turn. I had been riding with her for a couple of years. I took some lessons with a friend of mine, and we worked toward leasing a horse. When my family felt ready for it, we looked and quickly found Tika. She was happy in her home, but was not

being ridden often as Shayla, who had been riding her, had found other interests.

“Though she acts silly sometimes, Tika is one of the sweetest ponies I know. You can often see Tika, my mother (Elisabeth Caspari), and myself around Joder. Tika spends the majority of her time in pen 8 with her friends. Aside from loving her I’m excited to learn about natural horsemanship, jumping, western pleasure, and maybe gymkhana. My main interest is learning to communicate well with my horse. I’ve had lessons with Brittany Johnstone, Christy Jemail, and (coming up) Hallie Sabo, and I’m also learning a lot from lots of helpful people at Joder (you know who you are). Thank you to everyone at Joder for helping and welcoming us during our first lease.”

### **War Paint, a.k.a. Bubba: Sabine Dordick (and parents, Gwen and Peter)**

According to Gwen, “Bubba is a 12-year-old, registered ½ Arabian gelding about 16.1 hh. He is a chestnut paint with one glass eye and one brown eye. Some of his markings we have been told have special significance to the Native Americans. Sabine, age 10, began riding at eight years, and most recently had been living in California and was leasing and caring for a Connemara named Chester, who finally retired at 40



years old. The search began for her new equine partner and Bubba came to us last spring from a family whose daughter was heading for college.

“Bubba has had five years experience showing in the Orange County Interscholastic Eques-

trian League, where he and Sabine made their debut as a new team this past fall. Bubba was originally trained for western pleasure, but showed promise with his bigger gaits (could not jog!) and became a dressage horse. Bubba also likes to go on the trail and can’t wait to explore the Joder Ranch trails.

“Bubba is very social. We are looking forward to him being accepted into a herd and being at liberty in pasture, something that he had not been able to do these past years in California. We are excited about becoming a part of the Joder community and participating in the many wonderful programs and events that Joder has to offer!”

## **KOTHRR Update**

By Stephanie Wendorf

*Knick o’ Time Horse Rescue and Rehabilitation (KOTHRR) is a partner of Rocky Mountain Equi-Rhythm. From time to time, Equi-Rhythm sponsors a KOTHRR horse that promises to be serviceable in the Equi-Rhythm program.*

**F**irst of all, thanks to everyone who helped make 2006 such a wonderful year! All of us at KOTHRR are very thankful for the support and kindness we received, as are all of the horses that were given a second chance at life. We are pleased to be working closely with Colorado Horse Rescue as well as Equi-Rhythm, and look forward to another successful year for all!

2007 is starting off to be a very busy year already here at KOTHRR. Here is a quick peek at just a few of our available horses.

- Hannah, a wonderful black AQHA filly around eight months old, is very sweet and gentle and hoping to find a wonderful home soon.
- Junta is a retired polo pony, very fun to ride, well trained, sound and sweet, and best suited for an intermediate or experienced rider.
- Long Shot, whom many of you may remember from last year, has recovered from his

numerous fractures, injuries, and serious abuse far better than any of us thought possible. He will be available for adoption to an approved home soon, and although we will all be sad to see him go, it will be wonderful to see him finally find that forever home!

We were heartbroken when we lost Stella, but her horrible condition had taken a far greater toll on her poor body than the best of care and veterinary efforts could overcome. After a valiant struggle to save her, she finally succumbed to the severe starvation and neglect she had suffered, losing both her life and the life of her unborn foal. Thanks to everyone who kept her in their thoughts and prayers.

Perhaps someday the abuse and neglect will stop, but until then, thank you to all who help to save the lives of these majestic and sensitive animals. KOTHRH has several other horses, ponies, goats, and ducks available for adoption and, as usual, all adoptions require applications and contracts. Please feel free to visit our website to see who is currently looking for a wonderful home ([www.knickotimehorsescue.org](http://www.knickotimehorsescue.org)).



*Michelle Slaughter applies The Equine Touch™ to her gelding, Auggie. Michelle, along with Caroline Roy, Julie Rudy, Billie Myers, and Jackie Nairn, completed a Level 1 Equine Touch Seminar presented at JAR by Raian Kaiser in late October. "The Equine Touch is a non-diagnostic, non-invasive, hands-on system of bodywork addressing the whole horse with an organized series of unique, gentle, vibrational moves over soft tissue."*

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## **Riding Thru Winter: Overcoming Limitations**

**A 6-week Unmounted Course  
Offered by Dawn Fisher at Joder Ranch**

*\*Learn to Overcome Riding Limitations\**

### **Guest speakers include:**

- Dr. Margot Nancy—Sports Psychologist for Equestrians
- Yasmin Becker—Mane Imports American/European Connection

Thursdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m., beginning January 4. Attend all six classes for \$150 or drop in for \$35 per class. Ask Dawn about special pricing for Joder boarders or 4-H members!

Call 720-272-5706 or e-mail Dawn at [equibalance3@comcast.net](mailto:equibalance3@comcast.net).

## **BCHA / CTRC News**

By Sandi Rosewell

*Thanks to Sandi for informing us of Boulder County Horse Association and Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center activities. Sandi is a CTRC instructor and BCHA's Volunteer Coordinator.*

### **2006 Year-End Reflections from BCHA**

- Educational seminars in 2006, included:
  - Preparing a Draft Horse for Show
  - Clicker Training
  - Equine Touch and TTouch
  - Balimo (Balance in Motion)
  - Equine Dentistry
- The Halloween Fun Show was held at the Boulder County Fairgrounds with over 60 riders competing in a variety of classes.
- The Horse Lovers' Fling was held at the Gate House in April and was a great success.
- BCHA continues to be a very active voice in the many legislative discussions that are being held throughout the county on trail use.
- Weekly trails rides are sponsored by BCHA for members.

- Annual Membership meeting was held in February with featured speaker Temple Grandin.
- Public Lands Appreciation Day was held at the Mud Lake Trailhead in September.

If you are not a current BCHA member and would like to join, talk to Sandi Rosewell or check out the website at [www.boulderhorse.org](http://www.boulderhorse.org).

### 2006 Year-End Reflections from CTRC

- CTRC served over 600 riders this year.
- Paint the Pony is a fundraising and friend-raising campaign to raise awareness about CTRC in the community, recruit new volunteers, and raise much needed program funds. Volunteers and riders let friends, family, and business associates know what CTRC has meant to them and ask for their support. CTRC paints a wooden pony as donations come in to the program. We have now raised our goal of \$26,000 and painted our pony!
- The Summer All Abilities Camps have been a great success for CTRC. They offer an opportunity for children with and without disabilities to gain riding skills and learn about horses in a safe environment.
- Carmella (mini horse that was trained at MMHEC last summer) continues to be an active member of the CTRC Outreach Team. She made a recent visit to a local retirement facility and had great fun with the residents there.
- CTRC hosted NARHA Registered-Level Workshop and Certification twice last year.
- The Annual Used Tack Sale was held last April and brought in much needed supplies and dollars for the center.
- Chi Chi, a very sweet 25-year old Morgan mare who can still be used for pony rides, is looking for a home. If interested contact Carol Brice at 303-652-9131.
- The Grand Prix of Estes Park donated proceeds from their August event to CTRC. Each rider was assigned a CTRC rider to sponsor. Our riders were able to compete in a lead-line class and were thrilled to have their names announced with each competitor.

CTRC is a great place to volunteer. If you are interested in volunteering, call 303-652-9131 or send e-mail to [volunteer@ctrcinc.org](mailto:volunteer@ctrcinc.org).

## Memorial

### Fiddle Le, Beloved January 1976 – December 2006



Le's dame was Fiddle Bee and his sire was Quilchenalearaca. We are grateful that he was not named after his sire. We bought Le when he was 9 years old. He came with an "owner's manual"—two pages, typed, single spaced: "He is allergic to sugar; loves carrots and apples; requires high caloric intake to maintain body weight (translation: he is a hard keep); easy going on the trail; never kicks (well, hardly ever); must be sedated to tube worm; and he will load in any trailer (well, most trailers)." He was a gentleman in halter but one had to catch him first. When he arrived at Joder Ranch in 1985, it took a "wall of people" to catch him. His early training must have been severe because he sweated when tied at the rail and assumed the "dressage head position" when mounted. He preferred women to men. Under Al's gentle hand and in a side pull it still took about three years for him to become a relaxed trail horse. Le took care of all those who rode him—especially children. It was his job to see that the children were safe. When being led by a child, he put his head down and shortened his stride. He hated to be alone in his pen and told all the world about it until his pen mate returned. He was loving, steady, charming, alert, had a sense of humor, and welcomed all who had treats. We miss him!

*Al and Sarah Bowman*

### Calendar of Ranch-Related Events

4-H Meeting	January 23
Board of Boarders Meeting	January 24
Riding Thru Winter	January 25
Riding Thru Winter	February 1
4-H Meeting	February 6
Riding Thru Winter	February 8
4-H Meeting	February 20
4-H Tack Sale	February 24
Board of Boarders Meeting	February 28
Deworming Forms Due	February 28
4-H Carnival in the Wild	
West (at Fairgrounds)	March 10
Board of Boarders Meeting	March 28

MMHEC Board of Boarders meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of each month.

### MMHEC Board of Boarders

Carter Flanders	720-560-1097
Larry Langer	720-406-7897
Susan O'Kelley	303-652-6069
Sandi Rosewell	303-449-0401
Michelle Slaughter	303-823-8426
Veronica Volny	303-443-7866
Margaret Wilson	303-669-0327

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Caroline Roy	303-919-3946
Greg Joder	303-859-5393

Joder Ranch does not endorse the products or services or warrant the competency of any establishment or individual mentioned herein. Please submit articles or news by March 31st to Julie Rudy for the spring newsletter.



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