

# The San Mateo HORSEMAN

Summer 2019





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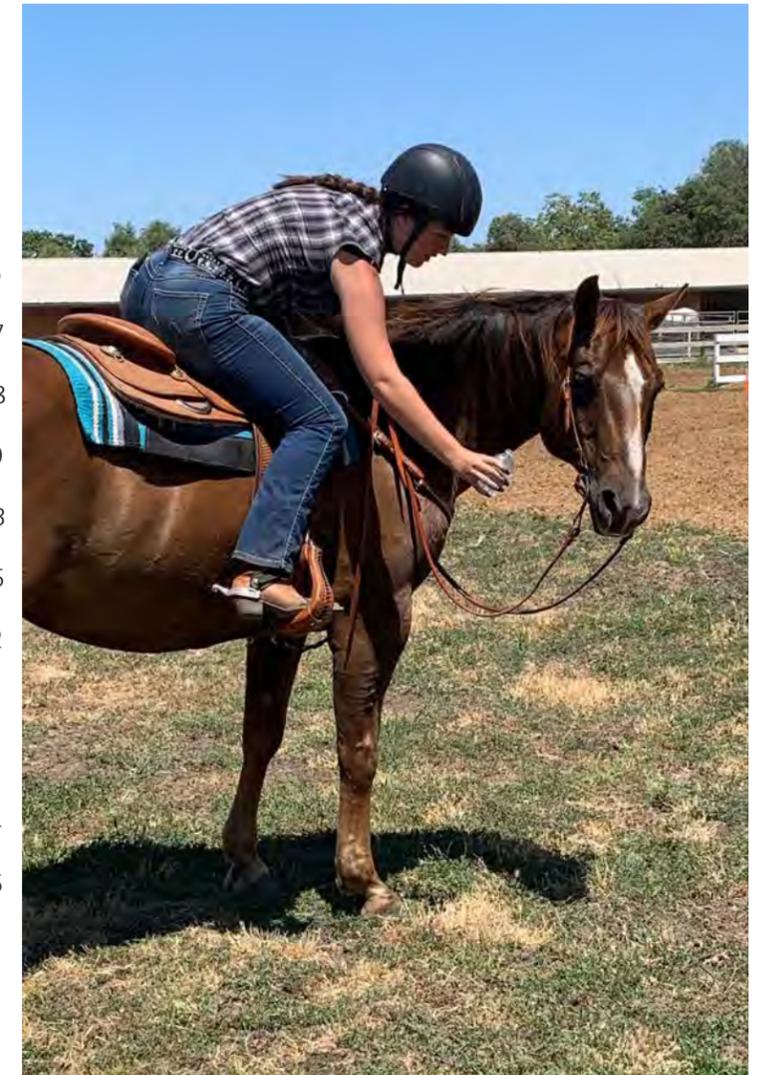
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### ON THE COVER

Trainer Joan McLaren participates in  
the Ranch Horse Versatility Show.

Photo by Martha Greene



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17  
Ranch Horse Versatility  
Show and Clinic



12  
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27  
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## DidYaknow?

By Bob Rosenberg

When horses spook and run from things, it's simply their innate instincts kicking in. The only safety mechanism horses are armed with is their "life-saving" behavior -the ability to run. Equine dominance is not based on brute strength or size, which explains why humans can become dominant figures in a horse's mind.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS



Summer! Every horseperson's favorite time of year is winding down! The days are longer, and the nights are warmer; the perfect time to be out enjoying our wonderful horses. This time of year is also when SMCHA hosts many fun events for our wonderful horse community.

Events such as the Portola Valley Celebration of the Horse provide an opportunity to interact with different members of the community who may never have been around horses before. The Clarkia Trail workday was in the beginning of June and many members came out to help keep this wonderful multi-use trail in working order before the winter rains take their toll again in a few short months. For the first time in many years, SMCHA teamed up with the California State Horsemen's Association to provide the Obstacle Challenge at the Horse Park at Woodside which showcased many riders working their horses over and under all kinds of challenging obstacles. A few short weeks later, Joan McLaren taught an obstacle clinic at Webb Ranch where riders in both a morning and afternoon session were instructed on how to navigate through certain patterns and objects with finesse.

The end of July is everyone's favorite time to go horse camping at the amazing Jack Brook Horse Camp. We had great weather, food, and trail riding and spent time getting to know quite a few new horsey folks as we extended invitations to several other groups in our area. Can't wait for next year to do it all over again!

The first weekend in August, SMCHA teamed up with the Horse Park at Woodside to provide a wonderful Ranch Horse Versatility Clinic and Show. This was the first time cattle have been to the Horse Park in recent memory. Riders spent Saturday learning about the many different skills it takes to compete in the variety of different events from cutting to reining and were then able to showcase these newly-learned skills during the show on Sunday. These are just a few of the many fun events we have going on and we certainly hope to see you out and about enjoying this wonderful time of year!

*Christine Friis and Jenny Mize*

## The San Mateo HORSEMAN

SUMMER 2019

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Horsemen's Association

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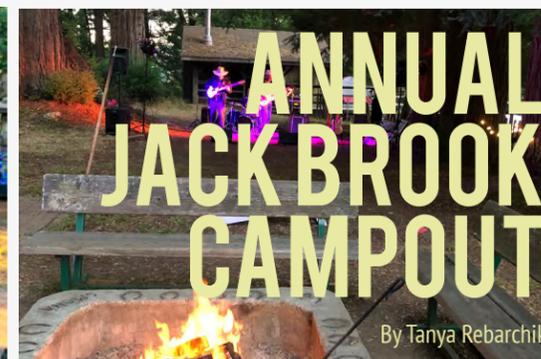
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A beautiful fog-free long weekend was in store for our annual SMCHA campout at Jack Brook Horse Camp in Pescadero Creek Park above La Honda. Several members from other horse clubs such as San Francisco Horsemen, Santa Cruz County Horsemen, Monterey Bay Equestrians and one or two others accepted our invitation to camp with SMCHA.

Wonderful catered food, a fun raffle and dancing under the stars to tunes by the DB Walker Band on Saturday night were some of the highlights of the weekend. A special thanks to Mike Bushue who cleared several trails just in time for our campout, so everyone could have a great ride! By the way, Mike is working very hard on getting the West Book Trail and Bridge reopened this season as well.

Also a BIG THANKS to Adeline Forrest who organized the event and hauled all the liquid refreshments and ice up to the camp! Mark your calendar for next year! Our Jack Brook dates are always the last weekend in July and we look forward to seeing you in camp! Oh, and don't forget to bring your family and friends!!



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## MOUNTED PATROL'S JUNIOR RODEO

By Mark Lindberg  
 (member of the MPSMC since 2008)

This 4th of July marked the 69th Woodside Jr. Rodeo by The Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County.

It is now common to find several generations who have attended this annual event. Each year we are reminded how Rodeo and the 4th of July are often hand and glove across the USA.



The Mounted Patrol has had an opportunity to share its 77 years of Western tradition and community service using a beautiful 23-acre facility. Our unique Jr. Rodeo gives youngsters a chance to demonstrate horsemanship skills while practicing sportsmanship and building character.



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# JUST ASK ATHOS

Athos is a 26-year-old Arabian who lives in Woodside, CA. Standing 14 hands tall, he's literally a pony, but what he lacks in size, he makes up in brainpower. If you find his quarterly column helpful, please feel free to take and share the advice. Should you have questions of your own, please shoot Athos an email (athosthetrickpony@gmail.com) and he'll answer your question in our next publication.

Today's question is from Cathy, who lives in Redwood City, CA.

**“ Dear Athos, my sweet horse died 6 months ago, and I still miss her every single day. How do I deal with the loss of my cherished partner? ”**

Dear Cathy,

Thank you for writing to me about the loss of your friend. I've just been through a similar situation, so I'm going to answer you by starting with a personal story.

One morning, while eating breakfast and listening in on the early morning banter of my humans, I heard that my step-sister Chyna had died unexpectedly. She was only 16. I thought I had misunderstood, but by observing everyone's slumped shoulders and grim faces, I knew something had gone terribly wrong. Chyna was not coming back home.

When we were at Page Mill Pastures, she and I used to go out on the trails together. Everyone we passed used to say, "Oh, what a cute little pony!" to me and to her, "What a majestic and gorgeous Paint!"

Mesmerized by her appearance, people just did not realize just how smart I am, so I did not take all their praise of her to heart. Sometimes, you just keep what you really think to yourself and move on.

I was not thrilled to go on trail rides with her because her long, lean legs enabled her to run like the wind. To keep up with her walk, I had to trot, and when she trotted, I loped. But when she galloped, I simply ate her dust! She did not appreciate my slowness and on the final stretch back to the barn, she always acted annoyed and swished her tail at me and turned her head, baring her teeth (she never did bite me; she just wanted to show me who was boss). She simply did not have a lot of patience for a slowpoke like me.

When we moved to the Horse Park in Woodside several years back, Chyna had a change of heart. She switched tactics and protected me like a real sister would. When she hurt her ankle, she moved to a rehabilitation center where she did pool therapy, got massages and was pampered. Feeling anxious and abandoned, I missed her at first, but after a while, I made new friends and integrated well. Losing a sister, a long-time friend and companion is awfully hard, even for the toughest cowboys and cowgirls, but here are some lessons on loss I learned from my people I see daily, my riding partners who never seem to cease talking:

**1. Cry.** If you feel like crying, let it out. A healthy horse can live to the ripe old age of 25-30. With a lifespan that long, a horse can easily become a confidant, a best friend and a constant companion throughout all of life's ups and downs. It's okay to feel blue for as long as it takes to grieve the loss. In time, you'll be able to move on and cherish the memories of your adventures and relationship.

**2. Give it Time.** Some people may start looking for another equine companion right away. Others may remain involved with their horse community by volunteering at a stable, riding friends' horses or getting involved with a rescue. Yet others may take a break from horses all together until the wounds heal. Listen to your gut and follow your heart.

**3. Let friends In.** Talk to friends who have gone through similar situations and who can empathize with what you are feeling. Choose those people you feel comfortable expressing emotion, releasing all the pressure building within. People and horses are stronger, together.

**4. Routine.** As much as possible, keep to your schedule and go to school, work or regular activities. Staying engaged in the outside world may actually provide some relief from your grief, if only temporarily, by keeping your attention at the task at hand.

**6. Seek Closure.** With the passing of time, the pain of loss will lessen, and the memories of your cherished relationship will become a source of positive energy. Many like to memorialize their horses by commissioning a portrait, having a special piece of jewelry made or creating a memory book.

On behalf of my owners, I'd like to thank everyone for all the support and love given to my family during this very difficult time. We have the best friends and vets ever, keeping memories of my sister alive and joyful. Our horse community is strong and vibrant, always willing to lend a hand, honoring those who have passed and welcoming those who are new to the community. Hope you feel better soon Cathy!

Love,  
Athos



PS: Everyone kept talking about Chyna and the Rainbow Bridge, and I had no idea what they were talking about so I looked it up and found an enjoyable story I'd like to share with you.



## The Rainbow Bridge

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge. When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor. Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. His bright eyes are intent. His eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together...

Author unknown

## CAN HORSES GET LYME DISEASE?



Yes, but very rarely, especially in California. Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* which is carried by ticks, notably the black-legged deer tick. An infected tick typically has to be attached to a horse for about 24 hours before it could transmit Lyme disease. This helps us with prevention if we are able to identify and remove ticks on a daily basis.

Reported clinical signs (symptoms) of "classic" Lyme disease in horses are incredibly nonspecific and can include generalized stiffness, hypersensitivity to touch, shifting-limb lameness, loss of muscle along the topline and croup, low-grade fever, chronic weight loss, and poor performance. Interestingly, researchers have never been able to reproduce "classic" Lyme syndrome in horses so it's difficult to prove they are even affected in this way! There are a few other syndromes this bacteria has been demonstrated to [rarely] cause—meningitis, uveitis, and skin masses.

Lyme is very difficult to diagnose because the only available test, a blood test, can be positive in healthy horses and negative in horses who may actually have the disease.

Experts agree that Lyme disease is way over-diagnosed in horses due to the vague clinical signs and difficulty in diagnosis. Lyme disease remains an enigma in both the veterinary and human medical fields.

Nora Grenager, VMD, Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine, Steinbeck Country Equine Clinic, July 29, 2019



Illustration by Jean Abernethy

## I LOVE FEEDING SPECIAL TREATS TO MY HORSE. WHAT KIND OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ARE SAFE TO FEED YOUR HORSE? ARE ANY FOODS TOXIC TO A HORSE?

The safest treats are carrots, apples, bananas (with or without the peel), molasses, cinnamon, peanut butter, applesauce, oatmeal, honey, sugar, peppermint, bran, dried fruit, pumpkin, cereal, pretzels, ginger snaps, graham crackers, butterscotch, and marshmallows. Moderation is key as excess sugar can cause laminitis (founder) or colic. If your horse is obese or has insulin resistance (metabolic disease), avoid these treats altogether and feed a specially formulated "low carb" treat.

Foods to avoid include caffeine, chocolate, onions, garlic, tomatoes and tomato plants, pepper plants, eggplants, fruits with large pits, potatoes, and a wide variety of houseplants. Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, kale, brussel sprouts) are dangerous in excess because they can cause gas colic. For more information, visit the following website: [https://horse-canada.com/magazine\\_articles/what-not-to-feed-your-horse](https://horse-canada.com/magazine_articles/what-not-to-feed-your-horse).

As a side note, avoid feeding lawn clippings because there could be toxic plants mixed in. Also—never, ever allow your horse access to cattle or chicken food; both can be deadly.

Mackenzie Adams, DVM, Diplomate, American College of Veterinary Surgeons Steinbeck Country Equine Clinic, July 19, 2019

Please email Elizabeth Ouellette (elizabetho@outlook.com) with your vet-related questions and we may print the answers in our next publication!



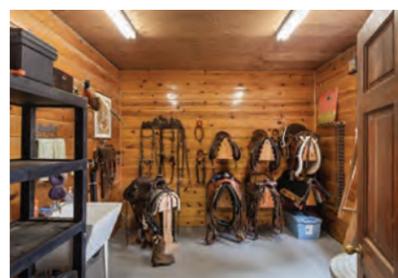
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# Everything Will B.O.K.

## The Very Special Horses of the BOK Ranch

By Tish Dipman, Executive Director, B.O.K. Ranch, Inc.

Thirty-five years ago, the BOK Ranch founding family made the decision to purchase two very young, very green Norwegian Fjord geldings named Ryvar and Vilar. They were located in Illinois and were shipped to California sight unseen. When these two youngsters first stepped foot on the trailer that day, they could have never imagined the amazing adventure they were embarking on. Upon arriving on the West Coast, "The Boys" as they were known became Zeke and PJ. For over 20+ additional years, Zeke and PJ carried the load of hundreds of very special equestrians at the BOK Ranch. They set the bar high for all the equines that would follow in their hoof prints for years to come.

These days, BOK Ranch – a bit older and a bit wiser, has developed a complex system of acquiring new horses for the program. Gone are the days of purchasing baby horses with the hopes of them becoming great therapeutic riding horses in the future. In a typical year, BOK staff conducts up to 25-40 equine initial intake assessments. Out of every 25+ horses that are screened, BOK finds 1 horse or pony that makes the cut. The first factors that are considered are temperament, soundness, and versatility.

The average person may say temperament and soundness, I understand, but how versatile does the horse have to be? Aren't we talking about children on pony rides? The short answer is: "No pony rides here." The horses must be well versed in many different genres of the equine world. Our horses must be comfortable being ridden English, Western, and Bareback. They must be comfortable being vaulted on, ridden on the trail, going out in

groups and alone. Each horse must be stoic enough to tolerate side-walkers and leaders, but sensitive and responsive enough to be ridden safely by independent riders who walk, trot, and canter.

Within the BOK Ranch barn there are also sub-contracting trainers and therapists who offer very specific Equine-Assisted Therapies and Activities to our participants. Each BOK Ranch horse needs to be able to fill the roles needed by these programs as well. Whether the focus is Summer Camp, Vocational Training, Hippotherapy, Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy, or a recreationally based Equine Wellness Program, the horses of the BOK Ranch need to take it all "in stride".

Eq Wellness is one such program that is embedded within the BOK Ranch umbrella. Since the BOK Ranch offers an ideal setting for people to discover and connect with nature on horseback, it was the ideal place to launch the EQ Wellness program here. The mission of EQ Wellness is to use the innate nature of the equine environment to empower individuals and deepen their connection to both themselves and the world around them. EQ Wellness offers horsemanship lessons utilizing the western traditions of riding and groundwork intertwined with a wellness aspect. Horses are the guides and teammates to a world of strength, empathy, communication and confidence. This rewarding work also provides fulfilling lives for the horses who are used not as tools, but as teammates and coaches themselves.

If you are interested in any of BOK's programs, please refer to our website: <http://www.bokranch.org>



## Save the Date!

Sunday, October 27th  
SMCHA's Play Day and  
Halloween Extravaganza

## FUN FOR ALL AGES!

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## Obstacle Challenge

By Deb Cutner Alvarado

On Sunday June 16th, SMCHA put on its first Obstacle Challenge at the Horse Park in Woodside. It was sanctioned by the California State Horsemen's Association and we had 32 riders from all over the Bay Area and beyond! The horse and rider teams competed for some fun prizes donated by Mackey USA, Western Saddlery, Portola Feed, Janis Friedenberg Grube Real Estate and myself. The riders were judged on their horsemanship skills while negotiating different types of obstacles. The obstacles included maneuvering through water boxes, walking over bridges, backing through barrels, riding through a pond and under a covered wagon, dragging a log, going through a gate and using a pulley to lift and lower a bucket from a tree.

Some of the horse and rider teams were amazing to watch and you could tell there was a lot of trust and training that had taken place. It was also

rewarding to watch those who were challenged and had to work through an issue, and then accomplish the task. There were different styles of riding represented as riders used both Western or English tack, with any breed of horse. What fun it was to see such a variety of riders and horses participate! The head judge was Heather Shupe, who kindly showed up at 7 a.m. to help set the course. Our course judges did an amazing job scoring the teams and were very proud of all the participants, as some of the obstacles were quite challenging. Mike Raynor, who put on the EXCA Cowboy Race the day before, also got up early to assist, as his event ended up having a large turnout and ran late into the evening. We had some participants compete in both days of competition and it was great to see so much camaraderie and support for each other.

It takes a lot of work to put on these events and a lot of volunteers to make these events successful. I am so thankful for the great team of volunteers that showed up and helped make this memorable event take place. If you would like to see more of these types of events, please let any of the SMCHA Board members know. May this inspire you to try some obstacles with your favorite equine partner, and work on building that trust we all desire to have!

# Aloha!



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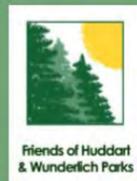
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# Ranch Horse Versatility Show and Clinic

By Jenny Mize



SMCHA and The Horse Park at Woodside teamed up to provide a fantastic Ranch Horse Versatility Show and Clinic, which brought cattle to the Horse Park for the first time in many years.

A great turnout of riders participated in the clinic on Saturday. Split into three smaller groups, they spent time learning the different skills required for the different divisions within Ranch Horse Versatility. Riders practiced the finesse required for a reining pattern, learned how to cut a steer out of a herd and box it back and forth on the fence, and maneuvered over and through trail obstacles at the north water complex on the cross-country course.

Mike Lund provided expertise with his many years of working with cattle. Riders of all different capabilities learned how to work their horses on cattle. It's quite an art!

Kathy Torres broke down the different elements of a reining pattern and taught riders how to start with the fundamental pieces and work towards putting all the different elements required for one pattern together. Kathy also honed skills on the Ranch Riding Pattern.

Ryan Smit instructed riders how to properly and safely navigate a trail course with obstacles such as a log drag, crossing a pond, and opening a gate.

Mike Raynor made arrangements for the cattle, built the pens and made sure they were fed and watered for their three-day stay at the Horse Park. He also designed our Trail Course in the North Pond area. Everyone loved this course and most horses willingly went through the water.

All riders had a fun day while learning many different skills with their equine partners.

Sunday morning brought out the fancier show clothes and riders were able to display the many different skills they had learned the day before during the various clinics. Multiple arenas allowed for reining and cutting to go on simultaneously in the morning and, after completing the ranch trail course, riders went back to the arenas in the afternoon to finish the cow work and ranch riding. Riders were helping and encouraging their fellow competitors and everyone was able to have fun while competing.

Martha Greene, our photographer, had her camera clicking all day Sunday so be sure to check our website for her awesome action shots. [www.smcha.org](http://www.smcha.org)

Once the showing was completed for the day, riders gathered under the gazebo for an awards ceremony where everyone was able to take home a ribbon. *cont. on page 20*



Five shiny silver belt buckles were presented to the top rider in each division.

DIVISION	RIDER	HORSE	SPONSORS
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Walk/Trot	Marty Raynor	Whiskey's Smart Shiner	Adda Quinn & Will Johnson
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Amateur	Heather Bryant	Sparklin' Wine	Steinbeck Country Equine Clinic
Open	Jennifer Harden	Sanjo Lights	Sarah Rivers and Half Moon Bay Feed

Thank you to our generous sponsors; this show could not have happened without you! It takes many amazing volunteers to make this show a success and we would like to acknowledge and thank the following:

Jenny Mize  
Chris Friis  
Sharon Butler  
Aleta Reed  
Karen Rowley-Shawback  
Carin Cartt

Susan Jakubowski  
Deb Cutner Alvarado  
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In May of 2011, on a packing expedition in the Eastern Sierra, I found myself alone on the trail, trusting my life to Cindy, a lovely and intrepid red roan mountain-bred mule. Cindy carried me safely back to base camp over the treacherous 11,000-foot Cottonwood Pass, while I took deep breaths, balanced my body, and prayed. As she methodically picked her way down the granite steps hewn by the Forestry Service at a 45-degree incline, and navigated the switchbacks 100 vertiginous feet above the Kern River, I fell in love with mules.

Mules and mule trains are the iconic images of the pioneers and prospectors who explored, mined for gold and borax, trapped, and settled the Old West. Mules packed in 1,000s of tons of machinery, tools, and building materials for dams, camps, homes, and park offices, and hauled supplies for recreational and rescue operations. Louise Jackson's book *Mule Men*, relates in colorful detail the history of

mules and packers in the Sierra Nevada, including Yosemite and Sequoia National Park.

In the middle of my adventure in the High Sierra, two young mules tied together in a string on their first pack trip, fell down in the river with heavy loads and couldn't get up. Where most horses would have freaked and flailed, these youngsters were, like, "Oh well, the humans will know what to do." And they sat quietly in the current as we cut their lines, freed up their packs, and extricated them from their tangle.

Ever since that trip with Cindy, the annual Memorial Day Weekend Mule Days in Bishop, CA, had been waiting on my bucket list while I learned more about these amazing equines. And this year I got to go!

Mules go back to Biblical times in 3000 BCE when asses were crossed with horses. A mule is usually a cross between a male donkey (a jack) and a female

horse. (Just remember "mare mama" and "donkey daddy.")

Donkeys have 62 chromosomes and horses have 64, so the mule, either male or female, ends up with 63 and is rarely able to reproduce. A less frequent cross is between a stallion and a female donkey, resulting in either a male or female mule called a "hinny."

World champion mule breeder, show competitor, and judge, Meredith Hodges, writes, "Both the mule and the hinny have more endurance by far than the horse and are more resistant to parasites and other diseases. They require less feed for good health, have tougher hooves than the horse, and have an incredible sense of self-preservation that keeps them safe. The horse has a flight reflex when startled and the donkey has a freeze reflex." Mules can exhibit both, but often it's the donkey side that causes cooler heads to prevail.

This year's Mule Days was attended by SMCHA's own mule aficionados, Mike and Annie Tyo who walked (and trotted and loped) away with top prizes. I had the pleasure of visiting with their mules Essence and Betty Lou every day where they were boarded at the Bishop Fairgrounds. The San Mateo Horseman interviewed Annie for this article:

#### How long have you had mules?

*Mike and I have had three mules since 2006.*

#### How are mules different in temperament and capabilities from horses?

*Mules have a reputation for being stubborn, but this is because they are extremely smart and self-preserving. They won't do something that will endanger them—or you—even if you, in your ignorance, prod them on unwisely. This is why they use them in the Grand Canyon and on other rough terrain. They are tougher and stronger than a horse. They can go where even horses cannot and in a calmer and more judicious manner.*

#### How many times have you been to Mule Days?

*Mike and I have gone every few years since about 2005.*

#### What was different about this year?

*This year was special because it was the 50th Anniversary. It was the biggest crowd since the event began. Some of those folks, especially the locals, had been coming for 50 years!*

#### What was the best thing about this year?

*We always watched the wonderful Mule Days parade over the years and this year we got to ride in it. My mule Betty Lou was a superstar carrying the wagon and sporting miner overalls and a hat. The theme was Going for Gold, so we were able to reprise our prize-winning Day of the Horse costume.*

*Mike spent 4 months preparing his diorama and painted saddle that his mule Essence showed off. He studied the many routes that people used to get to the Gold Rush by land and sea. We were told they were the best costumes they had ever seen... and that is a big compliment!*

*We won 1st place for Comedy Saddle Mule and 1st and 2nd in the Costume Class.*

Although there were several show classes exhibiting mules' abilities in dressage, jumping,

roping and other Western disciplines, I opted to mainly attend the various clinics, including a three-part series by the Tyos' esteemed trainer, Jerry Tindall. During his last clinic, he espied a woman having difficulty with a young, rambunctious mule who was pulling her and rearing up. He asked if he could work with the youngster for a little while, and within minutes, the mule was best friends with Jerry—very calm and trusting. A main take-away for me from the clinics was that mules are trained just like horses, only more slowly and with more patience. The most patience and precision is required for training donkeys.

My favorite event by far was the pack scramble by ten college teams. Not only was it a blast to watch, but it is satisfying to know that there is a new generation of packers keeping the tradition alive, throwing diamond hitches and box hitches.

#### References:

1. Experience your own pack trip—learn to pack mules (or go on a cattle drive, horse drive, or wild mustang ride) with Rock Creek Pack Station. They are the best! [www.rockcreekpackstation.com](http://www.rockcreekpackstation.com)
2. Coming in October to Napa, CA, Jerry Tindall Clinic. See you there! [www.jerrytindall.com](http://www.jerrytindall.com)
3. *Mule Men: A History of Stock Packing in the High Sierra*. Louise A. Jackson. Mountain Press Publishing, Missoula MT, 2004
4. Meredith Hodges, Lucky Three Ranch. [www.luckythreeranch.com](http://www.luckythreeranch.com)

By Beverley Kane

# Bishop Mule Days



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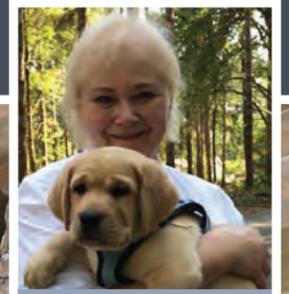
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## The Pre-purchase Exam: Tips and Tricks for a Successful Assessment

By Kelly Zeytoonian DVM, CERP

Finding the perfect horse can take what seems like forever. Once you have a prospect in mind, the financial and emotional investment really kicks in. Is this horse the right fit? Can you afford it? Will it be able to do the job you are asking?

Some of these questions can be answered by your trainers and friends, (and don't forget your bank account summaries), but the suitability of a new horse — for a particular job — is harder to assess. A thorough veterinary evaluation of general health and soundness is recommended before the purchase of your next equine partner. In the following article, I will outline the pre-purchase evaluation process and give you tips for extracting and evaluating the information available to you.

### What to Do Before the Exam

Accessing as much historic information (medical records, show records, farrier schedule, diet, exercise routine, etc.) prior to scheduling a veterinary evaluation is a must. Not only will the information be invaluable should you purchase the horse, but it may also help to identify **red flags** that will stop an exam before it has even started (read: save yourself the expense and upset by doing your homework).

Red flags that warrant consideration and further explanation from the seller include but are not limited to:

- Repetitive lameness
- Multiple colic episodes
- “Special” shoeing
- Large gaps in a horse’s show schedule
- Missing veterinary care  
 (i.e. skipped routine care visits may suggest the patient was leased out, seen by another vet, or even gone for rehabilitation)

### The PPE Process

While each individual veterinarian may have a slightly different approach, the general goals of a PPE are consistent. The veterinarian strives to assess all body systems and identify any abnormalities present. It is not their intention to say “buy” or “don’t buy” and is rather an opportunity to educate you on potential veterinary concerns should you purchase the patient. For example: arthritis in a patient may not stop the exam from continuing, but will open a conversation about general joint support and therapeutic exercises to prevent compensatory injuries.

### Caveats

It is extremely important to understand the limitations of a pre-purchase evaluation. The examination gives us information about the patient’s health on a given day and does not guarantee future soundness or freedom from health issues. You should look at the information given as an opportunity to understand the health management likely needed to support your new horse and allow them to do the job you are seeking.

While there is no 100% guarantee, the investment in a pre-purchase evaluation will help to mitigate risks and ensure you start off on the right hoof with your equine partner.



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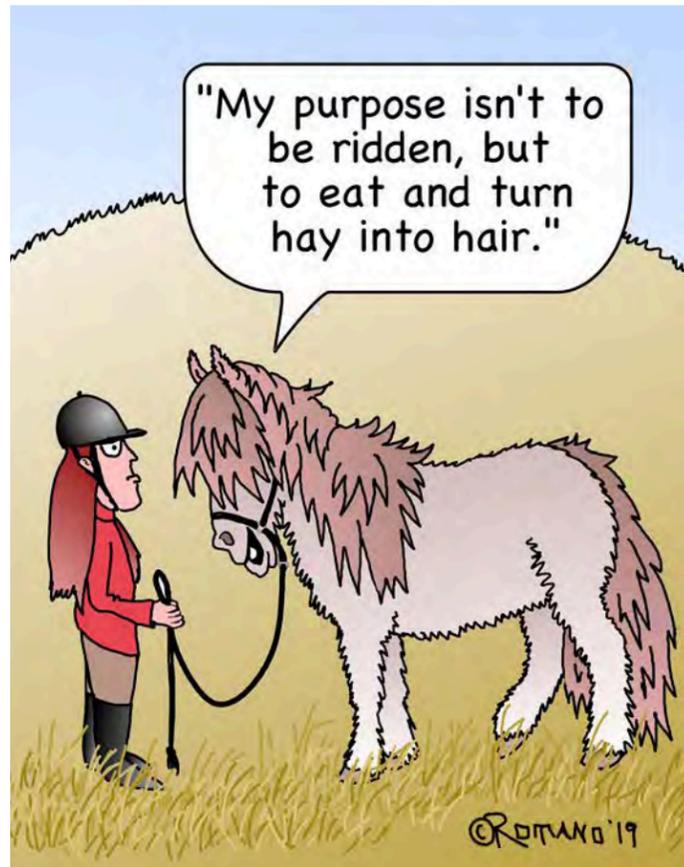


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People do unexpected things with horses, don't you agree? My mother did exactly that when my sister Emily was a Theater Arts major at UCLA. She was having a cast party at our ranch-style home for over fifty people and I was banned to my room because I was underage. My mother loved to entertain and was always a gracious hostess. Toward midnight, she was having a conversation with a cast member and was telling him about our horse in the barn, Missy Owena. My mother said, "Missy is a genius and there isn't anything she couldn't do." To which the gentleman replied, "I'll bet you five dollars she can't come into the house and eat a salad off the dining room table."

The door to my room opened abruptly and I was ordered to go down to the barn and bring Missy into the house. By the time I came back from the barn, newspapers had been placed on the oak flooring. Missy came right into the house and up to the table where she enjoyed a salad of carrots, apples and lettuce. She was the hit of the party and was a perfect lady – she did not leave a calling card. The gentleman then paid his gambling debt.

The SMCHA Magazine editor wanted stories of horses owned by members and this is Missy's story: It all started when we moved from St. Paul, Minnesota to Tarzana, California in the San Fernando Valley. My father, Dr. George Ruhberg, had to retire because he had had three heart attacks. Our new home was on an acre of land, with a three-stalled barn and a corral for Chuck, the horse for kids. Chuck simply came with the house! The five neighborhood kids all had horses, so my sister Virginia rode with them on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. I rode with my friend Everett on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We really needed another horse! Our neighbor called us with an offer. They had a registered Quarter Horse filly for sale from a huge ranch in New Mexico. This filly was by Daybreak, by Silver King (Mays), by Old Sorrel from the King Ranch in Texas. She was two years and four months old. My mother had been a show horse judge in Minnesota and was a very experienced rider. She tried out Missy in the corral and on the trail. She thought that Missy was the greatest two year old she had ever ridden and wanted to buy her despite her young age. So naturally, my father wrote a check for the horse deal of the year - \$175.00 - which included a ton of hay, a horse blanket, and a bridle.

We rode Missy with our friends three hours in the morning and two hours at night, singing western songs, trying to harmonize. We ran around like kids did at the time in the Sepulveda Dam Water Basin and in the hills West of Ventura Blvd. Two months later, I saw a flyer in the Tarzana Times announcing Amateur Quarter Horse Racing at Devonshire Downs in Northridge. First place would win three sacks of oats, second would get two, and third place would receive one. "Missy is a Quarter Horse." I said. "She could win all her oats for a while and we could save money." I told Virginia. So, we rode one hour

to Devonshire Downs. It had a quarter mile track, a starting gate, a grandstand, and big beautiful fancy barns. Missy always carried her head very low and never got excited. She didn't look like a race horse. Besides, Virginia rode her in a hackamore with horsehair reins. The organizers led the six horses into the chutes. When the bell rang, Missy came out like a bullet from a gun. She won first place! She won all of her oats for the entire summer. Some man came up to Virginia and slapped a bunch of bills into her hand, exclaiming, "I've won \$5,000.00 on your horse!"

Winter came. A real cowboy by the name of Baker, from the biggest ranch in Oregon moved into the house up the street. He took the "Tarzana Terrors", as he called us, under his wings. He made us stop running around. We had walking races instead. He taught us to rope. We learned to open the gate four ways. We

hobbled our horses. We learned to read a field. He showed us a variety of western saddles with different riggings. He showed us western bits and how they worked. We dragged lots of logs. And we always carried a pocket knife.

The culmination with Baker was riding to Easter Sunrise Service in Pacoima – all seven of us!! At midnight, we left with our ropes on our saddles along with our hobbles and pocket knives. We also wore our new Bailey straw hats. Baker packed a real six-shooter in his holster. He was a true cowboy!

In the Tarzana Times, I read about weekly horse shows at Sunshine Rancho in Canoga Park. Every fourth class would be free and we would get a lesson. SMCHA used Sunshine's format at its Western Schooling Show for years.

We saddled up and rode two hours to Sunshine Rancho. A painted sign on the entrance read, "Where the Pavement Ends and The West Begins". They taught us Equitation, Pleasure, and Showmanship. We learned leads, figure eights and confirmation. We did musical tires and fun races. The cost? Fifty cents a class every Saturday night.

My sister and I went to Westlake School for Girls in Los Angeles. A girl in Virginia's class showed her

American Saddlebred on the "A" circuit. She invited Virginia to come to the Flintridge Horse Show near Pasadena. "Why not?" Virginia replied. "We could say Missy had been in a real horse show with real judges."

My parents wouldn't buy us a trailer because they said we would get too horsey. So we rented a yellow and orange topless trailer from Sam's U Drive for \$3.00 and headed to the Flintridge Horse Show. All of the trainers were there. This was a big deal! Missy entered ten classes. One class was the Trail Horse Open. Miss Owena had never done this class. We had never heard of it. Mac McHugh rode in the class. Virginia watched intently. She and Missy won the blue and the trophy! Missy won six other ribbons, too. What a day!

.....To Be Continued in Winter Edition

By Noel Moody



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