

DECEMBER 2014
VOLUME XXXVIII No. 6



Walking Horse News



DEDICATED TO THE PLAIN-SHOD TENNESSEE WALKING HORSE SINCE 1977

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On Our Cover

Karla Freeman
and
Gem's Last Wind
stopping to look
at the breathtaking
panorama
of mountains
all around them.
Picture was taken
near the sheep cliffs
at the
Ya Ha Tinda Ranch
in Alberta.

*Photo courtesy
Karla Freeman,
Ponoka, AB*

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Volume XXXVIII, # 6 November/December, 2014

Dear Subscribers,

It's the last issue of *Walking Horse News* for 2014 - and how did all that time slip away so fast? Here in Alberta we are deep into winter by the feel of the past few days. Minus 30 degree temperatures this early are just NOT welcome, nor is the foot or more of snow! But the horses seem to enjoy flying through it. Still, the weatherman tells us it's warming up again, and Christmas is only about three weeks away, so cheer up. Throw the horses extra hay and enjoy how good it feels to get back inside!

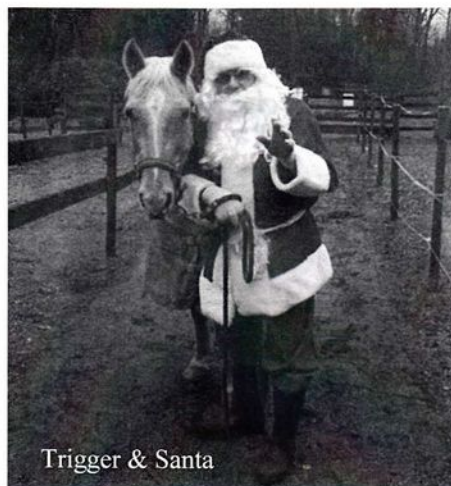
Walking Horse News still has a few cover ads available for 2015. If you have horses for sale or a stallion at stud, if you train or board horses, or have saddles or horse equipment for sale or rent, this is an excellent chance for you to put your name in front of the Walking Horse world. See the ad on page 24, then call or email.

I apologize for this issue being so late. I was away for most of October, and then when I did get back to work on the magazine, we got a virus (computer variety) that wiped out both files and programs. So I am slowly (very slowly) learning to use the new version, and I also had to rebuild the cover and page templates. (Can you find some changes? Hope there aren't too many errors.)

So enjoy the articles and photos this issue - when you finally do get it! And thank you to all contributors. We always like to hear your news and views, opinions or peeves. Remember - there's no *News* without you! (And don't forget to renew your subscriptions or place an ad - we're depending on you.)

Best wishes for Christmas and the holidays, and may 2015 be a wonderful, happy and healthy year for you all.

Marjorie



WHN makes a
great gift!

Walking Horse News

December, 2014

“DEDICATED TO THE PLAIN-SHOD TENNESSEE WALKING HORSE SINCE 1977”

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*HOW ABOUT SOME NEWS
OR VIEWS FROM YOU?*

*Thank you for advertising in
WALKING HORSE NEWS!*

HISTORY & HERITAGE PROJECT

HOW I GOT STARTED WITH WALKERS by Jayne Walker

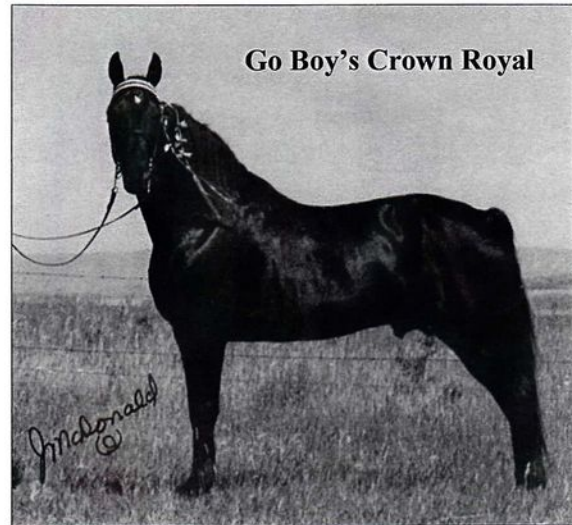
My adventures with Walkers got started in the mid-eighties with a move to Dawson Creek from Revelstoke B.C. My daughter, Diana, had a friend who had recently passed away and I thought that a horse might just help her through her grief. It did help Diana and she thought that I should get a horse also. Her horse was an Anglo-Arab but I thought that I would like a different breed. I had a friend who owned a Walking Horse at that time and she knew someone who could help me find a suitable mount. It was then that I made the acquaintance of Herm and Phyllis Abel. It was through them that I bought my first Walking Horse, a gelding, named Merry Sailor Boy, *below*.



I did lots of riding with Sailor, and though he wasn't the easiest of horses, he and I got along just fine. Here we are at a competitive Trail ride here in the Peace with our ribbon. Sailor and I did the Expo ride from Vancouver to 100 Mile House in the Cariboo. What an accomplishment; I was very proud of

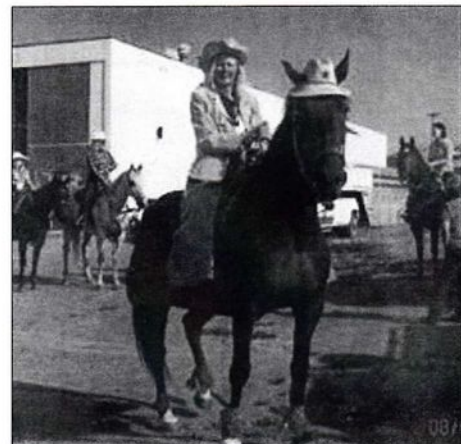
Sailor and also proud of myself!

I then purchased a big bay mare, Andadores Sue (Babe) from Earl Linsley. About this time I also got into the TWH breeding business with the purchase of the Merry Go Boy bred stallion, Go Boy's Crown Royal.



I raised a few foals from my mare and stallion, and had lots of people breeding to this royally bred big black horse. Go Boy's Crown Royal was sired by Merry Go Boy and out of a Midnight Sun mare – a Royal cross indeed.

I still have some horses on the farm from my excursion into the breeding business but I am no longer breeding horses.



That era ended with the death of my old stallion in 1994. I still ride on occasion and have my old "faithful" gelding, Secret, to ride at these times, as above in a local parade.

Jayne and Secret have recently been recognized as "Century Partners" by The Canadian Registry of the Tennessee Walking Horse, as partners having a combined age of 100 years or more!

Left is a picture of Sue's Walking Eagle and her Go Boy's Crown Royal colt Roy L Canadian Dancer.

NEWS - NEWS - NEWS

ALBERTA NEWS



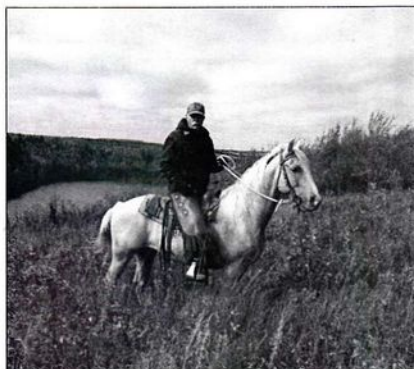
RON SMITH, LETHBRIDGE, writes, "Please renew my subscription for five years. Keep up the good work. I am still a 'dye in the wool', true-blue Walking Horse aficionado. I train two or three young horses a year, and get out on the trails when I can. I still love to show so I can renew acquaintances, see what horses are out there, and have the incentive to bring

my horse along. Of course, Canadian Perfection was sold, and Lightning died of some lung disease, so last year I rode Dominator's Star (*photo*) to the Western Canadian 3-Gait Championship."

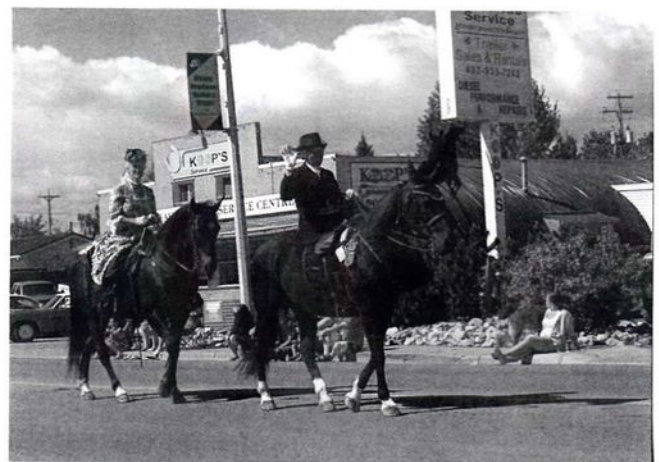
I had a phone call from BUCKY SPROWL of KINUSO. He still has his Walkers for pasture riding and checking cattle and fences, though he is spending a lot of his riding time at roping events with his QH. This past summer he parted with Stoney, a big sorrel TWH gelding with a blaze face, so Keith Denoncourt of Canyon Creek, AB can appreciate 'the glide ride'. Congratulations to Keith on his new horse. We will send him a copy of *WHN* and invite him to join us."

From MERINDA REID & DAVE BERGESEN, RIMBEY, "The Scott School Poker Rally east of Ponoka was on the last weekend of September. It was a very good ride, with an excellent trail *and* long

enough to make it worthwhile for the Walkers. Dave was riding Roy (Payback for Donny G.) purchased this spring in the Dawson Creek area. He is working out just fine."



From CHARIS COOPER, TURNER VALLEY, "Peppi and I have managed another season. On June 2 Lissa Townsend on Apollo, and Peppi and I rode in the Black Diamond Parade on one of our lovely days. Lissa won first in fancy dress, and I won first in sidesaddle (below). Then Peppi and I went down to the Bar U Ranch for a great sidesaddle weekend. In the Grand Parade on Sunday, July 7, twenty-seven of us riding sidesaddle, in both English and Western costumes, entertained the tourists. Our ages ranged from 11 years to my 84 years. It was quite a sight, everyone agreed."



"Then on August 4th Peppi and I went on the Bar U Trail Ride. It was a glorious day riding through the beautiful Southern Alberta foothills. In between we went on some more trail rides with Lissa and Brenda Baker, with me riding my little Walker mare, Trinkette. She goes very fast and furious. There's no urging this mutt – such energy."

"Peppi is now 28 so she will be retired to doing a little easy riding ranch work on our property. Our combined ages now total 112 years. We are pretty proud. I'm still enjoying the *Walking Horse News* after all this time. Keep up the great work."

I had a phone call from BILL HOWES of STONY PLAIN. He and his wife, Veronica, were about to head south to Mexico the last week of October. He had some sad news though. Their stallion, Topaz Merry Go, died this fall at 21. Topaz had been living with Claudia Duncan near Regina for the past several years.

GRANT GORUNSRUD, CALMAR, writes, "Yes, I'm still riding TWH... *IS* there any other horse?"



From KIM PIELAK, NITON JUNCTION, "I wanted to send you this Walking Horse family portrait, above. It's a picture of Bill and his 21-year-old broodmare, Sun's Prairie Lady, and her foals. The sire of all of them is Darkie's Last Chance. L-R Major By Chance (6), Hillbilly Ester (3), Sun's Prairie Lady, Hillbilly June (2), and Hillbilly Molly (5)."

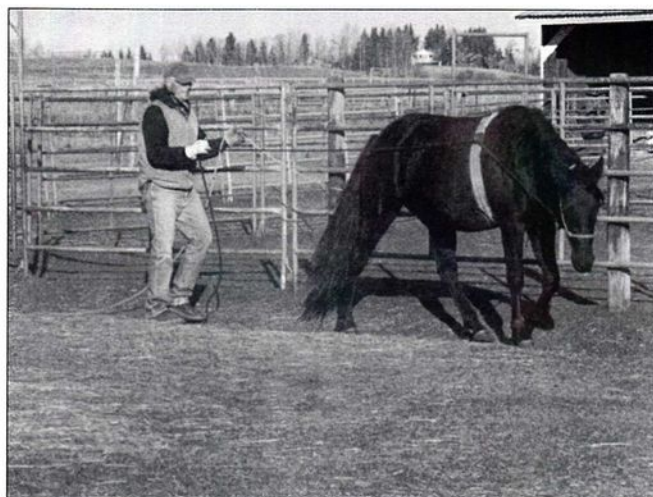
"I have sure been enjoying the nice fall we've been getting here. Lots of riding this year. Went on some really great rides for some good causes such as the Ride for Cancer at Shining Bank and Drayton Valley and the Ride for Kids Camp at Brightwood Ranch. Rode at a local Parade in Peers (and won best dressed horse and rider!). Also took in Poker Rallies at Drayton Valley and Beaver Meadows. A great bunch of us ladies have been riding once a week all summer and fall, exploring some trails in the area. We went to Shining Bank Slides north of Peers, to Chip Lake and Nojack. I have been fortunate that the ladies I ride with are all Walking Horse owners."

JEAN CHIVERS, HIGH COTTON STABLES, SHERWOOD PARK, writes, "Ari's Black Magic Prince (a.k.a. Prince - advertised in the last *WHN*) has found a new home with Darci and Jeff DeJax. We miss Prince but wish them many happy miles of trail riding with him. Please extend their *Walking Horse News* subscription by a year with our compliments. I'll drop a cheque in the mail this afternoon."

CHRISTINE KOBZA, GLENWOOD, sent some photos and this note: "The newest member of our family is 'Pebbles' (Just This Moment In Stone) from the Johnson's. Erika and Daniel have been the primary trainers. Pebbles' favorite leading lessons were when she got to eat green grass. Our neighbour actually was out cutting his lawn when we stopped by to trick-or-treat last Friday."

From BRENDA BAKER, CALGARY, "We have been enjoying the beautiful fall weather after the foot of heavy wet snow early in September. Our trees around the yard took quite a beating but most of the mess is cleaned up and we are finding ourselves in an ongoing tree trimming mode. It is a big job and won't be done before winter comes."

"As Bill Howes mentioned last issue, we sold two solid black yearling geldings by Toddy's Royal Bonanza to some very nice people. They took home Dragonstone (x Kodiaks Jinx CF) and Dynas Derringer (x Kodiaks Dyna CF). Both of these geldings are out of William's King granddaughters."



"We have also had trainer Rick Bates spending time with several of our young horses, *above*, teaching them the basics so they'll be ready to go under saddle."

"Yesterday a lady from my home town in Saskatchewan took home Pinups Fancy Lady, a sweet chestnut mare by Kit's Royal Pride and out of Pride's Pinup Lady M.B.. This is her first TWH although she has been a horsewoman for many years. I'm sure she'd like a complimentary copy of the *WHN*. We are happy that "Fancy" will have someone who is experienced enough to appreciate her!"

"And now... announcing my newest TWH filly. My friend Amy Lauzon just delivered a lovely 2014 filly, a rare combination of Kit's Royal Pride x Kodiak's Moonstone, a Williams King granddaughter! Amy has been quietly raising foals out of her Williams Kodiak mares by Kit's Royal Pride. This filly is from Amy's last foal crop by Kit's Royal Pride, (now deceased). She has recently sold most of her mares so it was my last chance to get in on this breeding. I was really tempted to speak for a chestnut stud colt, (the best of the bunch, in my opinion), but I reminded myself that I don't enjoy keeping a stallion..."

A HONEY OF A WALKER by Donna Robak

This is a story about an unlikely pair. In 2003 my husband Ron and I (Donna) moved to an acreage on the west side of Gull Lake, just north of our home in Sylvan Lake. We had so much grass on the 18 acres that we didn't know what to do with it all. Clearly the lawn mower wasn't going to work!

I had gotten to know my neighbor who had a whole bunch of horses. We thought perhaps we should borrow some of her horses to eat up the grass. So we had our neighbour bring about five horses up for the summer.



I was thrilled to have all this garden space, and was often outside enjoying my big new garden. I noticed this one horse in particular, a palomino mare (well I called her a blonde) that was always looking over the fence. Whenever I went out she always seemed to be there. I had never been around horses before (and well, actually, was kind of wary of them) but I would give her treats from the garden, like the tops of the carrots, or apples from the crab apple tree. She was on the other side of the fence, so was no threat, and all was good.

Well the summer went by. By mid to late October the grass was all gone, and it was time for the horses to go back down the road, only two kilometers away. And there went the blonde that I had gotten to know over summer. It was like, "Wait a minute. That's my buddy!", and I said to Ron, "She's taking my horse!"

Ron said, "No, they were just here to do us a favor, and eat up the grass close to the out buildings." I was sad. I had seen that neighbor girl riding every day, training and riding bareback, riding with horses in tow, and I thought, "Well. How hard can it be?"

So I talked to her about buying the horse, Honey. It didn't sound too likely. They wanted to have a foal from Honey, and she was just barely started under

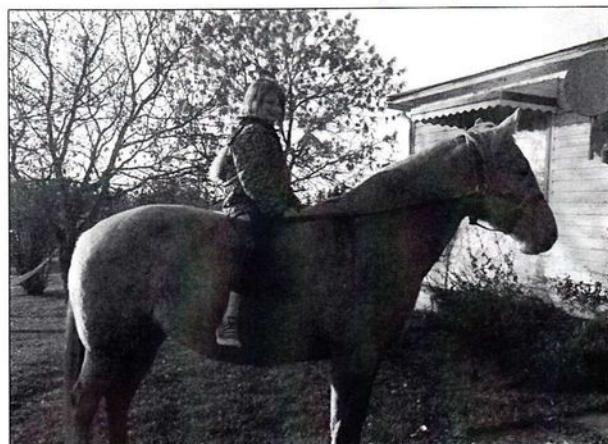
saddle, and since I didn't know how or what about horses, she said that it wasn't a good idea to buy a horse that young, and inexperienced.

But I wanted her! I knew it was a good match. And so it began... Other than my hair being blonde and the horse I wanted being blonde, we weren't a perfect team yet but at the very least we were color coordinated! And having talked to Honey over the fence for the last summer, our bond was set.

That's a long time ago now. I did purchase that mare in 2007. I remember the lessons and having to line-drive Honey, and thinking, "I thought the horse was supposed to do the work!" And of course the seller wouldn't let me ride Honey with a saddle to begin with, and with just a halter on her because I was so inexperienced. Keep in mind that I was not a spring chicken at the time, but I was up for it. I rode Honey around the yard, and then graduated into a saddle and a snaffle bridle. I even managed to ride her through the big pond in the spring run off and of course, she kept me company in my yard (where she doesn't ever poop!).

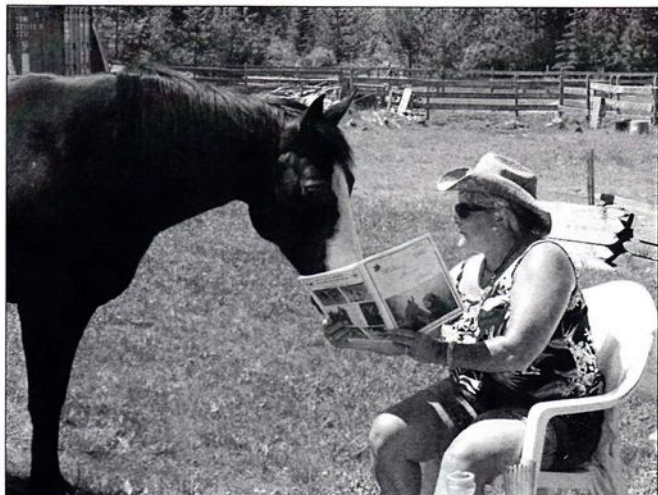
She would stand and let me fool around getting that saddle on and one time I even put her bridle on backwards. She just looked at me like, "Oh you Human! But give me treats and I will forgive you..."

A couple of years ago, I tripped and fell on the sidewalk and cracked my arms and injured my shoulders so badly I could hardly use them. Honey had to stay in the pasture. I gave her treats, but I didn't bring her out, because I couldn't risk hurting my arms until they were healed. Poor Honey - she must have thought she'd done something wrong. But this past summer, I finally was able to saddle her, and get on. Well, what an amazing horse! She didn't forget a thing, and was even better than before, I think. She stands calmly, waiting for instruction, and I have even put my granddaughter on her, bare back. I let her take my granddaughter around the yard, and I don't have to worry about either of them. Honey just takes care of us all. I love my Honey. She is worth more to me than her weight in gold. She is now 13 years old, and is the best horse in the world - just sayin!



Honey in 2014 with Donna's granddaughter, Leia.

BRITISH COLUMBIA NEWS



DEBBIE SMITH writes, "I've been meaning to send in a short note and it's taken me 'way too long. We sold our farm, and now live in a condo – a total life change! Dave's magnificent mare, Hurricane Hanna, now lives with Genevieve and Sandy Amy at Sky Keep Ranch, Lone Butte, B.C. Hanna has 10 acres of grass to graze on and can wander all day if she likes. Sometimes she'll even break a fence to go exploring! She is one very special mare and has the BEST home where she is spoiled (and gets away with being bad!)."

"We had a lovely visit this summer to see Hanna, Delite, Finally and Sandy and Genevieve. What a great few days we had with them. The summer weather was on our side, it got hot those days, so don't know why we didn't ride. We sat around visiting with the horses wandering around us in the yard...so cool!" (Above Debbie reads Finally an item of interest from the June WHN.)

"We are heading south to Arizona for the winter. I have arranged to have a pinto Walker mare for my new mount. Trails are numerous and scenic, very different from what I am used to though. They are not green like what we always had."
"Merry Xmas and may 2015 bring happiness and good health to all!"

PAT JOHANNSON, KAMLOOPS, writes, "We are moving – again! Enclosed is our new address and a three year subscription for the very informative, interesting and lovely Tennessee Walker magazine."

"We have been so busy with our move that I will not be able to get my CRTWH Triple Challenge videos in on time. I will work on that in the spring!"

From NATALIE SPECKMAIER, VANCOUVER, "Here is my renewal. I do so look forward to my WHN. Even my "non-horsey" husband enjoys reading them."

"I visited Trigger yesterday and she is looking her usual beautiful self. She is getting a new shelter built and is quite happy in the temporary one. Her spot is the best, as there is a border of trees so she has shade and sun, with access to a pasture in the back. All the horses are rotated on several pastures and they're all happy with that and overnight in the barn."

"The vet comes on Monday for the semi-annual check-up. I hope to get back to riding soon – but am not quite ready yet. Happy Trails!"

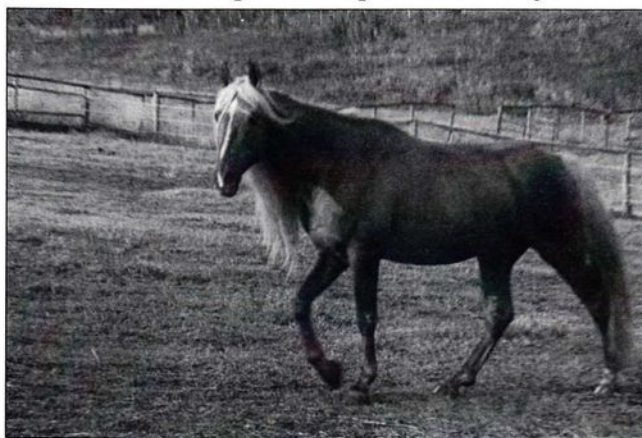
JO-ANNE McDONALD, POUCE COUPE, writes, "We decided to let our 10 year old granddaughter, Hannah, have a ride on 29 year old Monterey Snip. Snip is my old saddle mare; a daughter of Laddie's



Monte Ray and Little Toot Wilson, two of our early Walkers. Snip is our last living daughter of Ray and Toots so thought we would give Hannah a taste of what addicted us to the Walking

Horse. The 'thumbs up' we got during her ride is the answer we wanted, plus the ear to ear grin is also a telltale sign."

'Smokey' (Uphill Heir Trigger) has gone to live at Woodhill Walkers near FALKLAND, BC. Below, he checks his new pasture - uphill all the way!



IT'S A LONG, LONG TRAIL...

by Jane Hurl, Trail Boss
Wild Pink Yonder Charitable Society

On June 17th, 1968, Hugh Ashwell of Edson, Alberta, signed on as a track maintenance man for CN. It was a life that suited Hugh well. He enjoyed the physical labour and it kept him out in nature where he feels so at home. And whenever Hugh wasn't working, he was still outside - riding his beloved horses.

For many people who fool around with horses there isn't much that's more fun than a trail ride. At 76 years of age, Hugh is still one of those people. He was excited when he read in the Edson paper about a trail ride called *Wild Pink Yonder* that would happen in August.

Wild Pink Yonder is a not-for-profit charitable society that raises money for breast cancer research. But the thing that caught Hugh's eye was the fact that this happens via a 500-kilometer trail ride! 500 kilometers! Unique in the entire world, this ride takes horses and equestrians on a 23-day trail that goes through a minimum of 23 towns, all of which participate in this venture!

Hugh has a big chestnut Tennessee Walking Horse, a truck and a stock trailer. He figured he was set to go... until he discovered that he had to come up with \$4,000 in pledge money! That posed a problem he wasn't sure he could surmount, but the *Wild Pink Yonder* organizers offered to waive his fees if he would allow us to use his story and picture in the media. Hugh was in! With the help of a media release to radio stations and newspapers around the province, support from total strangers who wanted to help this 76-year-old cowboy didn't take long to follow. Meanwhile Hugh carried on looking for his own sponsors too.

The ride started in Lloydminster, going west to Vermilion, then Myrnam and on to the Graham family's *Nothing Barred Ranch* near Marwayne. It was the day after that at Dewberry where Hugh joined us. His biggest surprise wasn't the day's ride but the supper and next day's breakfast that Dewberry put on for the riders.

That kind of hospitality, sharing and caring happened again and again as our group went from Dewberry to Heinsburg, then on to the Iron Horse Trail: Lindbergh, Elk Point, St Paul, Bonnyville, Glendon, Mallaig, Ashmont, Spedden, Vilna, Bellis, Smoky Lake, Warspite and Waskatenau. We rode from town to town, moving our trailers ahead in the morning, being shuttled back to our horses and then riding to our rigs. At the end of the Iron Horse Trail, we trailered to rides around Gibbons, St Albert, Fort Saskatchewan and finally, to the Whitemud Equine Learning Centre in Edmonton's beautiful river valley. 23 towns in 23 days and every town did its level best to help the cause. Even now,

months after the fact, Hugh still finds it hard to believe the astounding support this ride gets from the towns we visit.

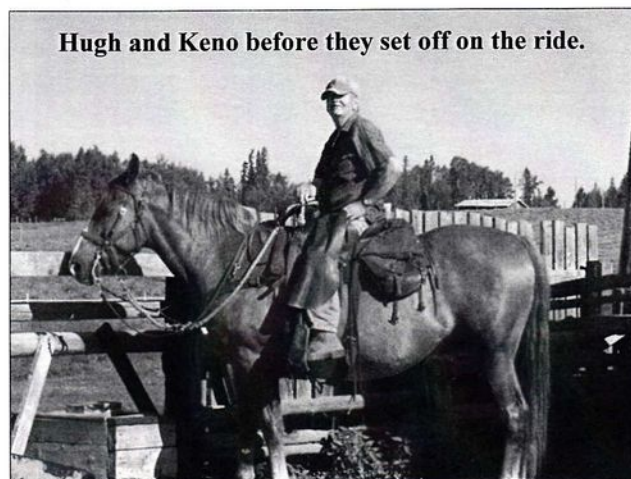
But none of this support is on a whim. Each year, the towns visited are challenged to see which can be *The Pinkest Little Town in the West*. To win, a town must raise more money (per capita) for our cause and make itself the pinkest literally! (We have seen some amazing pink sights over the years!) The winner gets beautiful reflective highway signs proclaiming its status, plus a free music concert that the town can use any way that it sees fit. Many towns charge for attendance and use the money for library books or to spiff up their municipal playground.

From Dewberry on, Hugh rode Keno, his big chestnut Tennessee Walking Horse every day, and every day that horse led the way. He's big. He's bold. He's a lot of horse - but not too much for Hugh! Fortunately, we didn't have any bad weather this year. (In the past we've had monsoons and tornadoes and days of crushing heat.) Each day our intrepid equestrians rode for about 4 hours. At the end of the day, they paraded down Main Street in many of the towns, set up electric fencing for their horses for the night, and then partied with the locals.

In its first five years Wild Pink Yonder (WPY) raised more than \$630,000. Most of our funds stay in Alberta to be used as directed by the Alberta Cancer Foundation, because Alberta is where we are most active, and where the majority of our money is raised. (Smaller amounts are also raised in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Money raised in those provinces stays in those provinces.)

This year Hugh Ashwell raised nearly \$6,000 for the Alberta Cancer Foundation, and I think he's hooked! He's already asking which towns "we" will be visiting in 2015, and he's already talking about getting that big chestnut Walking Horse in shape because we're hoping that 2015 will have us doing a lot of mountain riding.

I have no doubt that Hugh and his Tennessee Walker will lead the way! (Photo courtesy R. Parker)



Hugh and Keno before they set off on the ride.

MANITOBA NEWS

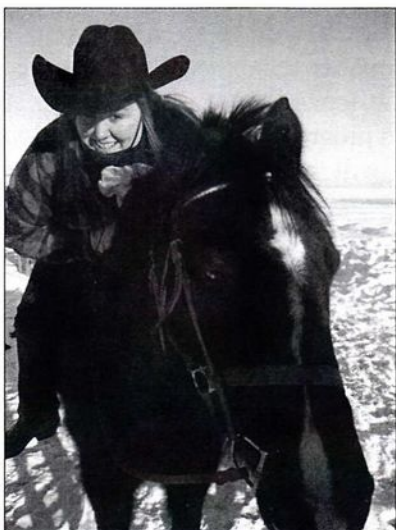
BEA STORM, BRANDON, writes, "We took a trip to Iceland in September. It was wonderful. Found the location my grandfather left from 135 years ago almost to the day. It was the same place where my grandmother was born. Grandpa came to Glenboro with his uncle and a group of 50 others. They walked from Thunder Bay, ON to Winnipeg settling in the Baldur-Glenboro area of MB. Grandma came to Canada with her family 14 years later."

"We flew in a small plane over the volcano that has been active since August, and also over Askja, the 1875 volcano that sent my grandparents and so many thousands of others from Iceland to Manitoba and other places around the world. Another 50 year dream crossed off my bucket list!"

"Shortly after we left, Iceland has winter and will be going into the season of only two hours a day of light. We'd better not complain about *our* winter this year!"

"Enjoying the *WHN* – and what a pretty foal, that picture that Charles took on the cover of the last *News*. I still have my mare, Caribou's Carbon Copy, born in 1991, plus a goat and two cats at the Rivers acreage. I'm lucky to have a boarder to oversee them, but I still go out every seven days to see how they are for myself."

Best wishes to Cole and Celine on their marriage in November. Celine is KEITH DOLL'S step-daughter, shown with Doll's Honey Dew, *below*.



NOVA SCOTIA NEWS

From YVETTE HYAM, UPPER STEWACKE, "I still have my three Walkers but I have not been riding much. I took the four-year-old mare to a Gordon Dearle clinic. He is an awesome trainer. Even

at my age I learned a lot. (The mare had not been started.. There aren't many TWH here. Ria McKay has 12 beauties though. I stopped in for a short visit with her last week."

NEWS from our U.S. SUBSCRIBERS

From GRACE LARSON, "I am now living in KALISPELL, MT. The Forsyth place is in the process of being sold. The buyers are a young couple who are taking the dog, cat, Fawn, the chickens, and two goats. I bought the two little wethers to keep Fawn company after Sharon's mare left last summer. It worked well; they walk under her, between her legs, etc. They are always with her in the pasture but they require Houdini fences! I had to fence the hay barn and the roses in the front yard. They love roses!"

"I was able to get moved in by October 31st. With this cold weather it was just in time. I drove down to visit my elderly aunt, uncle, and his wife yesterday. They live at Ronan and Polson. Aunt Fay will be 89 soon! Uncle Bert and his wife, Grace, are 87. Fay is in the Montana Cowboy Hall Of Fame. She and her late husband, Bill Haynes, raised and trained AQHA horses. Fay won the barrel racing at Calgary and took the Northwest in the sixties on her stallion, Jule Bar, and after his death, on his son, Jumpy Jule."

"I have just completed a family history entitled An Immigrant, A Homesteader, and Sheep and sent it to the publisher. Grandpa Polson came over from Romania in 1916. Grandma Deschamps Poloson was born in Indian Territory, Arkansas, on the border between Arkansas and Oklahoma. She homesteaded near Three Forks, MT. Grandpa went to work for a big sheep outfit near Helena. Mom, Fay, Bert, and Fred were all born in Helena. In 1929 my grandparents bought the place at Lonepine, MT and went into the sheep business. Horses were a very important part of their ranch. Summers were spent in the mountains of Idaho and that required pack horses and good saddle stock. Mom and Fay grew up on the backs of horses as their brothers did. Mom went on to raise TWH. Fay started with Arabs and went to AQHA when she married Bill. I am thankful to be close (51 miles) to Fay and Bert now. My grandparents, Mom, and Fred are gone but we have their history."

"As long as I live I shall never see another horse as great as Silvertip-Rickey. I've ridden many over the years and he was the best. He was smooth, quick, and even young girls could ride him. He could "turn on a dime and give back change" too! And Tegun's Mt. Fawn was so good at this when she was younger. We took home many ribbons in all-breed shows. And if I needed to bring in a bunch of horses she was the best at heading them off, turning, etc. I didn't even have to use the reins; it was the same as with her great-great-great grandsire, Rickey."

OUR DRIVING JOURNAL, ENTRY 4 by Brenda and Stephen Woodall

We took the summer off from driving training to enjoy our favorite riding trails. We were rather tardy in getting back to driving so it was the end of October before we figured we had better take advantage of the nice weather and dry ground to hook Grace up for the first time. We spent a week reviewing all the past steps with her since it had been 5 months since she had a harness on. She had also never been ground driven with blinders on yet so a number of sessions were spent driving with them on as well as practicing backing into the cart shafts. Once she had no issue with any that we proceeded on, using a borrowed cart that Bill Fraess has made specifically for training. It is shaped like a chariot and is easy to step in and out of for quick exits.

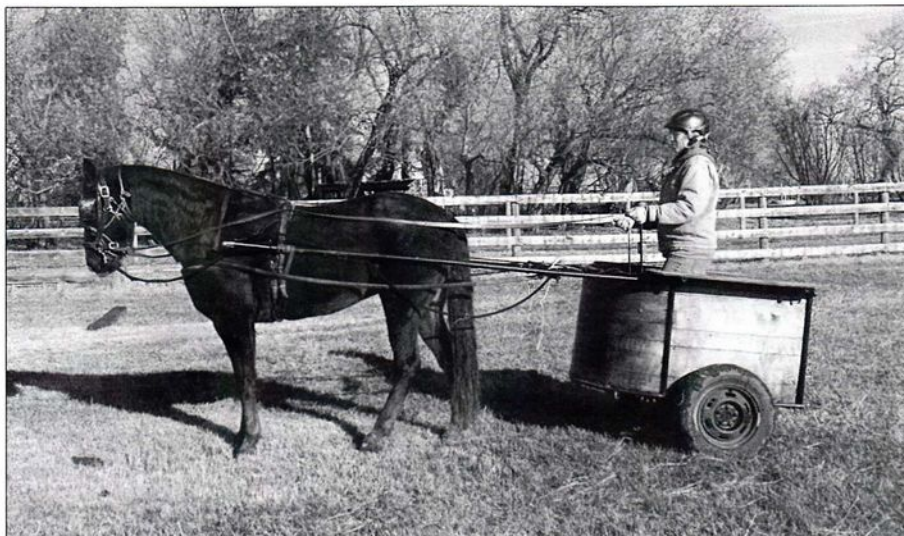
We chose to do our first drive in a large corral that had good footing. We put the harness on her and added a web halter over top of her bridle. On the left side of her halter we attached a 20 foot lead line and on the right side we attached a 10 foot lead line.

We backed her into the shafts then moved the cart and her forward about 12 feet without actually hooking her to it, and then had her back up again. She had no issue with this so we then hooked her to the cart. Steve stayed on her left side with the longer lead line and I stayed on her right side and we simply led her about 30 feet straight ahead. She handled this fairly calmly. We stopped and unhooked her, walked her out of the shafts and around the cart for her to exam once again. We wanted to give her plenty of time to process what was behind her making noise and bumping her sides. We then hooked her up once again and this time did 2 rounds of the pen to the left before stopping. The reason why we used a long lead line on her left side was so that if she became afraid and bolted, Steve could act as an anchorman and turn her left off the web halter until she settled down. Thankfully we never needed to use that precaution.

Next we graduated to the driving lines. We unhooked the lead rope on her right side but let the left rope remain attached. We attached the driving lines and I stood behind the cart and controlled the lines while Steve stayed on her left with the long lead line. We then did a number of rounds around the pen in this manner. We did have a few issues here because she was uncertain if she was to wait for halter pressure or reign pressure for directions. When she didn't want to move forward I had little control because my driving whip couldn't reach her from my extended position behind the cart. But these were minor problems that quickly sorted themselves out with a few more rounds of the pen.

We then left the pen and moved into a slightly larger pasture

area and I stepped into the cart to do a few rounds there. Grace took it all very well and we quit while everything was on a positive note. We'd hoped to do this a number of times again over the next month until we



were all confident of her reliability, but it snowed a foot last night and it looks like winter is here to stay now. We do plan to progress with driving but it looks like the first step will be to attach runners to the training cart in order to get through the winter snow.

My goal is to learn the skills required to do the CRTWH Training Levels Challenge, Driving Level 2 and maybe even Level 3 over the winter months, and if Grace proves reliable enough then I'm looking forward to giving sleigh rides to the neighborhood children and grandkids.

CRTWH PROGRAM FOR EXCELLENCE and TRAINING LEVELS - *You can send the tests in at any time. If you've missed the Oct 31 deadline, you can still get them assessed for 2014 by paying a rush fee.*

Contact Dianne Little,
CALGARY, AB at
ddlittle@telus.net or





READERS WRITE

MARGIE PERRIN MAPLE CREEK, SK wrote in response to the History and Heritage article in the October *News* that mentioned her American Walking Pony, Quincy. She says, "I thought you might be interested in a copy of Quincy's registration papers, that show his sire as Honey Boy's Rebel #763515 and his dam as Carona Princesa #263 and this photo of me riding him. He is a rather hyper little guy. The extra white on his face is due to his running into a steel gate in the dark, and the hair came back in white."

"He had a good running walk and canter. He was also a real good cow pony and very athletic. I sure miss being able to ride him, but I appreciate all the many years I did."

MAUREEN GERMSCHIED, EVANSBURG, writes, "I was interested and pleased to read your comments in the October *News* about the time it takes to train a horse. Greg and I were talking one time about how much money we made raising, training and selling horses. We started with the imprinting that takes place when the foal is born, to halter training, farrier prep, weaning and barn manners. Then you start the basic ground work, leading behind the quad and ponying from another horse.. By the time your horse is 3 ½ to 4 years old, you finally get to start riding and packing it."

"Basically, we figured that after the first 30 days of riding, if the horse sells for a 'good' price, we will have made about 10 cents an hour for our training. The breeding, feeding, farrier and vet care costs haven't even been factored in yet. Getting a horse to the 'bomb proof' stage takes much more time. And by the way, it seems that even the best horses have their little issues. I'm not sure I have ever seen a bomb proof horse. With enough time and experience though, we can produce a horse that is pretty close. So if we are making that kind of money, why do we do it, you ask? We love the horses and we love the life, and that makes it worth it."

BRENDA BAKER, CALGARY, AB also responded to my article last issue on "Searching for a TWH", as follows: It is as you mentioned in your article last issue, Marjorie. It takes many hours to produce a trail or pleasure horse, starting from day one.

Our two 2014 fillies, Lola and Lucy, are weaned and very content in their little pasture by the yard. They come when they are called and their tie-up lessons will start next week. We start halter breaking our foals the day they are born and lead them twice a day for the first 30 days so the standing-tied lessons are not a big deal. All of this takes time but it really worth while.

We've had Rick Bates out to train some more horses this fall. He's been working on our two and a half year olds, getting the groundwork started so they'll be ready for some light riding next spring. I've done a lot of trail riding out in the 2 quarters of bush and pasture on and over the hill from our place on Kodiak's Dyna CF. She is utterly dependable with or without company; I think she even might prefer just our dogs for company as we can set our own pace.

TERRI GREEN, CALGARY, asked about placing a display ad in *Walking Horse News*. Below some advice to help those who are thinking of advertising.

First, describe the horse you have to sell. Give all the information you can - the animal's age, height, build, colour, markings. If it is a registered horse, give its name and number so those interested in a purebred animal can look up its breeding on clrc.ca. (If you advertise it as purebred or registered, know that you are required by law to transfer its papers to the new buyer within 6 months of the sale.)

Then, what does it know? Describe its ground manners - is it friendly to people, easy to catch, halter and lead, good about picking up its feet, loading in a trailer, etc? And how about its education and experience? (Starting to sound like a job interview, isn't it? And that's not far from the truth.) How much training has it had? What have you been doing with the horse - arena riding, trail riding, mounted games?

If you want to use a picture of the horse, be sure you have a *really good* photo! If the only one you have is mediocre, you are better off just placing an all-text or classified ad. Remember that the photo will be reproduced in black and white. Beautiful colour will not show up. I can scan an actual photograph or use a digital photo (preferably a .jpg). If you email the ad to me, I need your text and the photo sent separately. I will format the ad for you or you can send me a rough outline of how you'd like it. I'll then set it up as closely as possible to yours. Lastly, let me know what size ad you want - a quarter, half or full page, and include a cheque for the right amount. Prices are on page one.

THE EQUINE TAPESTRY: AN INTRODUCTION TO COLORS AND PATTERNS

Author: Lesli Kathman Blackberry Lane Press, Charlotte, NC c.2014

With an Introduction by Dr. Phillip Sponenberg,
Professor of Pathology and Genetics,
Virginia-Maryland College of Veterinary Medicine,
Blacksburg, Virginia

As the author explains in her preface, she was in World Champion Horse Equipment in Shelbyville, Tennessee to buy a copy of The Echo of Hoofbeats. She was looking for pictures of foundation Tennessee Walking Horses in connection to her profession as an equine model artist. She knew from the studbooks that many foundation Walkers had white patterns and "I hoped that the photographs (in Echo) would help me determine what kind they had."

The Equine Tapestry differs from other color genetics books written for the general horse-loving population in that it incorporates an historical perspective on color as well as the most recent scientific discoveries about it. It began as a series of color charts, done from the author's artistic perspective, which were organized by breed, and provided historical data on extinct colors within the breeds as well as current information. The color charts were to eventually be included in a booklet. This evolved into a four volume set on horse color by breed type, the first volume of which appeared in 2012. As a breakthrough in print technology made it possible to reproduce color charts of various patterns, a fifth book, this introduction, was added to the series as the first introductory volume.

Like other color genetics books, this one begins with the genetics behind the basic coat colors of chestnut, black, and bay/brown. It then presents chapters of general modifiers, beginning with "Dilutions", which the author defines as "modifiers which make the base color of the horse paler." (p. 23). Dilutions included are dun, palomino, silver dapple, champagne, pearl, and others like mushroom which is found only in European Shetland Ponies.

The section on "White Hairs" covers grey, dark-headed roan, spontaneous roan, white ticking, and other patterns of white hair. "

"Pinto Patterns" has the most sections, as recent research has disclosed a number of patterns and recent mutations that had not been discovered when other books on equine color genetics were being written.

Of interest in this section is the long description of the sabino1 gene, and the revelation that sabino1 is

the "oldest identified pinto pattern gene." (P.85)

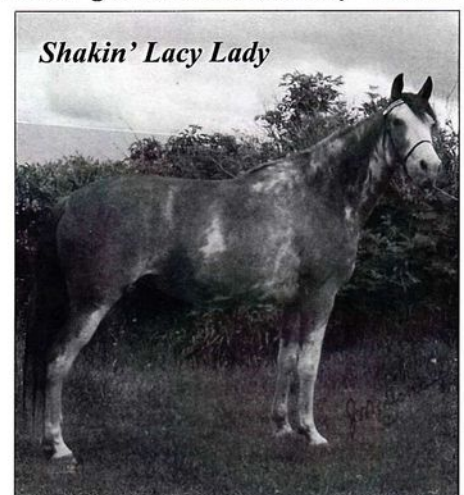
A long chapter on "Appaloosa Patterns" concludes the sections on colors, modifiers, and patterns. The final chapter is entitled "Markings and Distinctive Traits", and offers interesting facts as well as intriguing photos of horses with unusual markings. The chapter also contains information on eye color.

Three appendices follow the text of the book. The "Horse Color Time Line" begins in 15000 BCE and continues through the present in presenting the most recent genetic work in locating markers for various colors and patterns. A Glossary of Terms follows Appendix C, then a bibliography, photo credits, and a comprehensive index, providing page information for colors and patterns, breeds, and even individual horses, including the Walking Horse's famous champagne pair - Champagne Lady Diane and Champagne Look.

The Equine Tapestry: An Introduction to Colors and Patterns adequately achieves what its title implies. The book provides the latest information on colors identified in horses, whether tests are available, and the breeds where each color exists, as well as breeds where it has been proven by DNA testing or stud book records to have existed in the past. The photo illustrations are excellent, with horses under saddle as well as standing posed for the photographers. It is highly recommended as a reference tool for anyone who wants to keep abreast of the latest scientific discoveries in the field of horse color genetics. While it is not light reading for novices, it is also interesting as a cover-to-cover nonfiction book. People who collect books and articles on horse color genetics will certainly want to purchase

Volume III
Spanish and Gaited Breeds.
Very serious readers will want the four volume set that follows this introduction.

What pattern is illustrated here?



Shakin' Lucy Lady



The Canadian Walker

Volume 13, Issue 6

www.crtwh.ca

www.facebook.com/crtwh

December, 2014

CRTWH EXECUTIVE

President: Fran Kerik, AB

1-780-603-3391

president@crtwh.ca

Vice-Presidents:

Western: Bill Roy, BC

250-379-2022

vice-president@crtwh.ca

Eastern: Sue Gamble, ON

705-642-3746

Secretary: Leslie Hunchuk AB

403-931-2105

secretary@crtwh.ca

Treasurer: Dianne Little, AB

403-271-7391

treasurer@crtwh.ca

BOARD MEMBERS

AB Karla Freeman

rideeasy@hotmail.ca

AB Hilton Hack

403-826-0308

AB Marjorie Lacy

780-723-2547

BC Ralph Livingston

250-764-4482



*Seasons Greetings & Smooth Riding
to All Our Members in the New Year!
From the Directors of the Canadian Registry
of the Tennessee Walking Horse.*

ASK REGIE

Dear Regie,

I just sold a registered filly to some folks. I told them I'd send the papers in to CLRC and have them transferred into their name. But they also want me to give them a Bill of Sale for her.

Why would they want both? And what should a person include on a Bill of Sale anyway?

Just Wondering

Dear Wondering,

Since you, as seller, are obligated to transfer the registration certificate of the horse, you will have to keep the registration certificate in order to mail it off to CLRC to be recorded in the new owner's name. So it makes sense to provide the new owner with a bill of sale at the time of purchase. That way he can prove his ownership until the papers come back in his name.

As well, it is just good business practice to give the purchaser a bill of sale for a horse he's bought from you. It is even better to give the purchaser one and keep a duplicate of it for yourself. Then if there is any dispute about the sale later, or if the registration papers should be lost in the mail, both of you have a written record of the transaction. Always keep your Bills of Sale in a safe place with the registration papers for your horses.

As for what should be included on a bill of sale, check Livestock Identification Services. You can find many examples on the internet by googling 'Equine Bill of Sale'. When you find one that's suitable, 'customize' it for your particular sale. Good luck,

Regie

UPCOMING EVENTS

CRTWH BOOTH at MANE EVENT,
Red Deer, AB, April 24 to 26. If you would like to help out at the booth or in setting it up and taking it down on the 23 & 26, email Karla at rideeasy@hotmail.ca

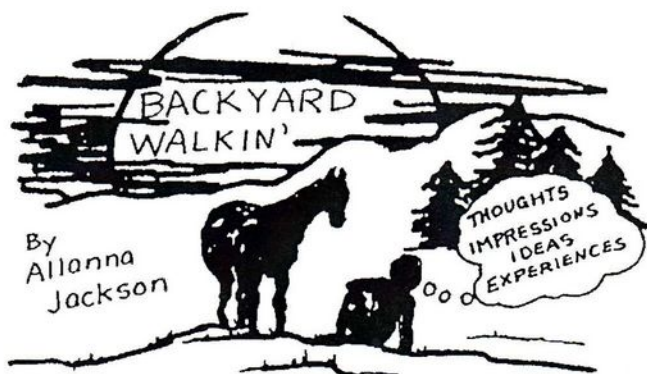
CRTWH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
will be held on Saturday, May 9, 2015 at Klondike Victory Farm, Sylvan Lake, AB. Mark it down on your (2015) calendar!

GAIT FROM THE GROUND UP CLINIC

May 9 & 10, 2015
at Klondike Victory Farm, Sylvan Lake, AB.
Bill Roy will once again be giving an individualized clinic in conjunction with the AGM.

This is a rare opportunity for you and your horse to work one-on-one with Bill on whatever problem you may be having. The number of participants is limited to eight, so if you want to take advantage of this opportunity, book early. For more info contact Bill at woodhill@telus.net or to book a spot contact Dianne Little at ddlittle@telus.net.





TRYING A.C.T.H.A.

by Allanna Jackson, © Nov 2014

When the American Competitive Trail Horse Association posted a notice on their website about a ride in Star Valley, Arizona, on October 3 to 6, 2014, I asked Dianne Little if CRTWH would accept that as Cinnamon's third Training Levels Challenge optional activity. She confirmed they would. Each day's activities were a separate event, but I could afford to do only the Saturday ACTHA CTC ride.

It rained 5 inches during the two weeks prior to the ride. Cinnamon and Velvet stayed on the higher, drier spots in their corral, going around the very large puddle to get to their water tank. I couldn't school

Cinnamon on ACTHA's preferences for negotiating obstacles.

Cinnamon's first ACTHA ride would be her first time overnight away from home, alone with me. It would also be Velvet's first time home alone overnight. My preparations included replacing several lights and repairing the brakes on my horse trailer. The weather cleared up, dried out, and was perfect for the ACTHA weekend.

Cinnamon and I left town two hours later than I'd planned on the afternoon of Oct. 3, but we had a pleasant, easy, two-hour drive to Star Valley.



Wilder-Patterson Blaylock Ranch is down in a canyon so dusk was rapidly approaching when we arrived at 5:40 p.m. The ride host met me at the gate and directed me to a parking spot / camp site directly in front of the pen I had reserved for Cinnamon. After unloading Cinnamon I paid to ride as a competing non-member Scout. There were 38 riders. Cinnamon took an immediate dislike to the palomino gelding in the pen next to hers. She spent all night squealing at him while he quietly pestered her. They kept the whole camp awake.

At 6:20 a.m., Oct. 4, I was chilly, and hadn't had much sleep. I got up for the day and fed and watered Cinnamon and myself. The pre-ride meeting wasn't until 8:30 a.m. so I packed my tent and loaded the truck for the trip home. At the pre-ride meeting we were told we had to ride in groups of two to four, which would be sent out at five minute intervals. We had to stay in our group and maintain the distance between groups. There were six judged obstacles in the approximately seven mile ride, each with a maximum possible score of 20 points: 10 points for the horse, 10 points for the rider. A score of 14-15 points per obstacle is good. I signed up to ride in the first group. The pre-ride meeting ended at 9:45 a.m.

so the start time was delayed until 10:15 a.m., but with only half an hour to saddle up, I didn't have time to study the map and instructions we'd just received.

At the start line it was decided I would ride with Kathy and Jim Edward from Tucson. We'd never met before and this was the first ACTHA ride for all

three of us. Kathy and Jim had owned their Foxtrotters, a palomino gelding and a chestnut mare, only a few months, though they are experienced horsemen. (Kathy's palomino horse was not Cinnamon's nemesis!) Our tack and equipment was deemed acceptable.

We were the second group out. We followed the first group down the road we'd driven in on. Cinnamon was uptight and buzzed on adrenaline so I had to restrain her more firmly than usual. We met the first group coming back toward us saying they'd gone the wrong way. We all backtracked to the ranch where one of the ACTHA volunteers directed us to the correct route.

Our horses gawked at the resident horses, sheds, machinery, vehicles, and other things as we rode up a private driveway to get to the National Forest. We briefly followed a dirt road beside another private property before the trail dropped down into the canyon where we found judged **Obstacle #1 Don't Stop Now: Downhill.** Cinnamon and I went first. Cinnamon was still buzzed up but walked down the hill. I stopped Cinnamon at the bottom to wait for the Edwards and pulled out my instruction sheets to see what we were doing next. I dropped the papers and had to dismount to pick them up. While I was on the ground I adjusted Cinnamon's tack.

We set off down the canyon looking for yellow ribbons that indicated the trail, or blue ribbons that indicated a left turn, or red ribbons that indicated a right turn. The trail followed the stream, then crossed a slightly marshy area, climbed a hill, and crossed the paved road just in front of a cattle guard. We'd been advised there was a wedding party at one of the ranches. We didn't see anything but a very curious mule who followed the group in front of us as far as he could from his side of the fence. After passing the mule we climbed a hill. The ribbons seemed to indicate we were to descend the same hill, but it was so steep Kathy wondered if we were on the right track. All three of our horses made it down safely. We continued following the ribbons and found we'd gone in a circle so we backtracked to the blue ribbons and figured out the intended route.

At the bottom of a gradual slope to a small flat we found obstacles 2 and 3. The group in front of us was still negotiating them. We stopped in the shade of some trees and let our horses graze a little, which helped to settle them. Cinnamon was still uptight and had worked up a nervous sweat.

When it was our turn we proceeded to **Obstacle # 2, "Got Thrown: Dismount."** We'd decided Jim

would go first on this obstacle, Kathy second, and Cinnamon and I would go third.

Following the dismount we were to lead our horses to **Obstacle # 3, "Up We Go: Mount"** which was a short distance from Obstacle 2. Mounting blocks were supplied for both obstacles. Cinnamon was still a little buzzed up and had never seen a green plastic step mounting block so I had to dismount directly to the ground. I led Cinnamon to the third obstacle. Cinnamon let me position her close enough to the mounting block to use it to mount. Cinnamon waited until I told her to walk out of the obstacle area.

Our route wandered around another hill then descended into the canyon again where we found **Obstacle # 4 "Deep and Murky: Water Obstacle."** Cinnamon crosses water almost every time we ride so I thought we'd do well on it. The obstacle turned out to be a narrow, water-filled ditch on one side of a wide, dry path. There was no reason to ride into that puddle at all, except that it was the judged obstacle. The flagged path into the puddle was only a fraction of the available dry pathway. Cinnamon and I went first. Cinnamon was calmer, but still uptight. True to all her prior experience with narrow puddles surrounded by dry ground, and the boggy, clay mud in her waterlogged corral, Cinnamon refused to set hoof in the ditch, opting to sidestep around the edge of it. My misguided attempt to force her into the puddle gave us both zeros for that obstacle.

A short distance after the judged water obstacle we found a large, shallow puddle beside the trail we were on. We practiced taking the horses through it, then resumed following the ribbons. Within another quarter mile we found a puddle covering 90% of the trail. We found several more puddles along the trail. All three horses went through these puddles. All of these puddles looked like the type of water obstacle I'd been expecting from reading the ACTHA web site so I was disappointed with the judged water obstacle.

We had several miles to just enjoy the trail before the last two obstacles. The scenery was gorgeous. Cinnamon's adrenaline buzz had worn off and the Edwards horses had relaxed. We discovered that the three horses were perfectly matched for speed at the flat-walk. Cinnamon was quite happy being in

(Continued on next page)

front, Kathy and her gelding were second, while Jim and his mare brought up the rear. We chatted as we rode along. Jim had suffered a serious riding accident in June and the mare he was riding was new to him so they were grateful that Cinnamon was compatible with their horses and a natural leader who would wait for them.

The trail made a U-turn in the process of going by a stock tank. Some of the ribbons had been torn off so they were hard to find. We met a group of four riders coming back toward us who had gotten confused by this. I spotted a yellow ribbon, hidden in some bushes. We followed the ribbons on a squiggly path through the brush and under a low hanging tree limb. The route then dropped into a narrow canyon, as we'd been told it would. The trail went up and down several slopes that were steeper and longer than the judged downhill.

We found **Obstacle #5 "Say Cheese: Take a Picture"** in a wider portion of the canyon. For this obstacle we rode our horses up a small hill past a cone, stopped to take a photo, then rode down the hill again. Cinnamon and I went first, then Kathy, then Jim.

The trail dropped down to the creek again, and crossed it. One of the professional photographers was there taking pictures. Cinnamon and I started the wrong direction. When the photographer called us back Cinnamon waded in the creek back to the trail crossing. Kathy recognized this creek crossing as being the one they had used in the clinic the day before.

The trail climbed up to a private driveway where our horses again gawked at the resident horses, most of whom ignored us. We were less than a mile from the start/end, when we had to get off the road for the ride host's truck. He was responding to an emergency, which turned out to be only a lost group of riders.

The **Final Obstacle** was **"Keep it Still Behind: Turn on Haunches."** We had to climb down the hill below the road to get to it. The judge and assistant said we were their first group. Cinnamon and I went first. The obstacle consisted of a square of logs laid out on the ground which we were to ride the horse into, do a 180 degree turn on the haunches to the right, stop for a count of 5, then walk out the way we'd come in. Cinnamon was totally relaxed, but we didn't score as well as I'd expected. Cinnamon and I have practiced walking turns on the haunches more

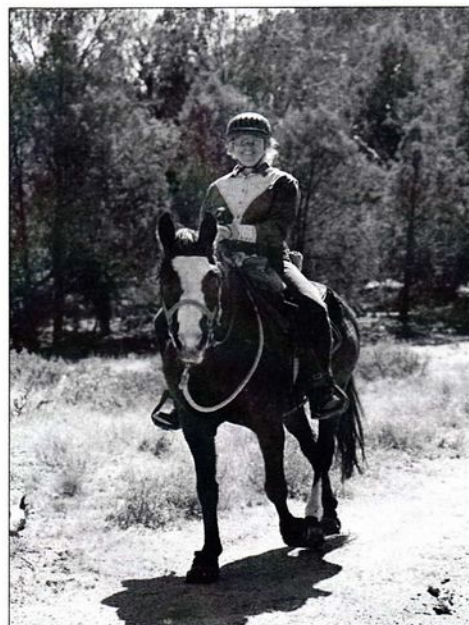
than the pivot turn on the haunches that ACTHA wanted, and I forgot the 5 second stop.

When the Edwards had completed that obstacle we climbed up the hill to the road and strolled the last quarter mile to the start/end line at the ranch. The score keepers were surprised they had riders back already and had to find the soundness judge. By that time our horses were all calm, cool, and relaxed. When the judge arrived she had us remove our ride numbers and drop them into a basket as we rode by. We then trotted, or gaited, our horses for 20 feet. Jim and Kathy dropped their numbers neatly into the bucket. I missed. All three horses passed the soundness check.

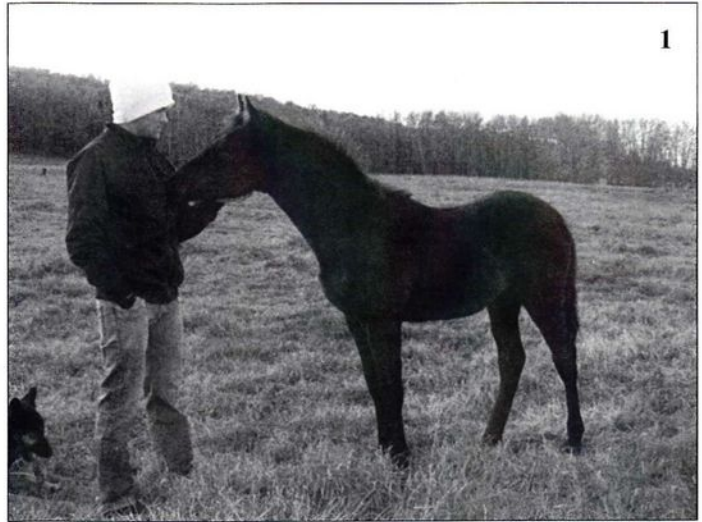
When all the riders had come in, the host emceed the awards ceremony. Sixth place in the Scout division scored 80 out of a possible 120 points, first place scored 103 points. Cinnamon and I did not place. (I did win a door prize.) Cinnamon scored higher than I did on three of the obstacles. I'm the only trainer Cinnamon's had so I don't know how I trained her to perform better than I ride.

I had no reason to stay for the whole awards ceremony so at 4:30 p.m. I slipped out and finished loading. My truck ran rough and weak going home. The trailer lights failed on the road, but we made it home safely in the dark. Velvet was cool, calm, and very glad to see us. And Cinnamon and I might try an ACTHA event again some time.

*Photos of Allanna and Cinnamon on the ACTHA Ride, pages 14 and 16, are by Jennifer LaBelle, Silver Buckle Photography
623-340-3601 / silverbucklephoto@gmail.com*

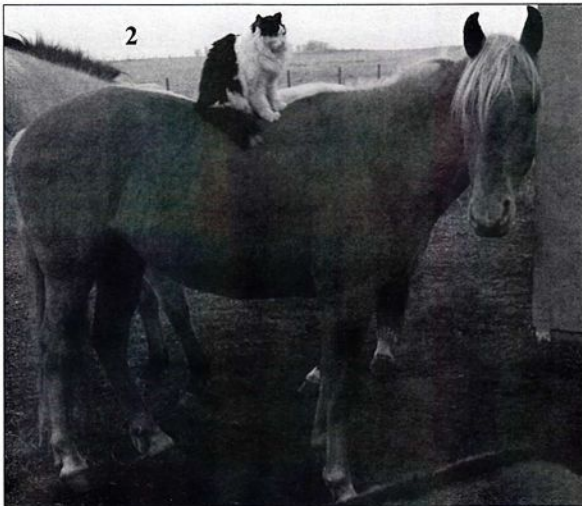


What Do YOU Teach Your Walkers?



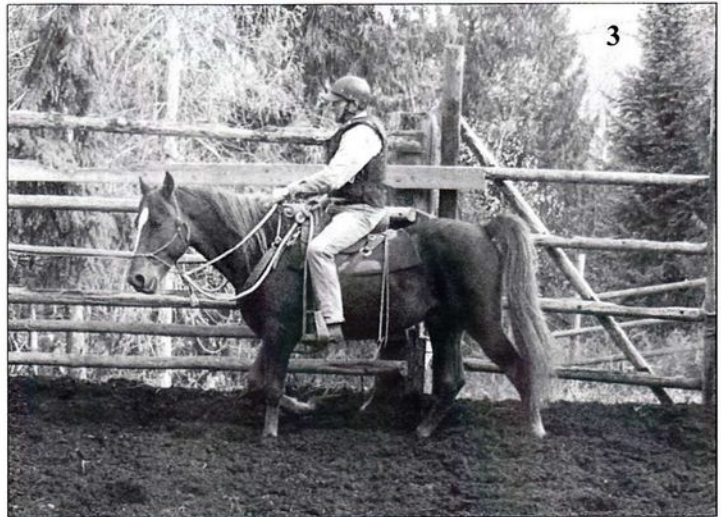
1

DRAGONSTONE, above as a weanling, learns to trust these strange two-legged creatures called humans.



2

FIRST RIDE! This is the first ride for Kitty - and the first rider for 3 year old Karlas Midas Touch. Just for fun - but it helps to 'de-spook' youngsters.



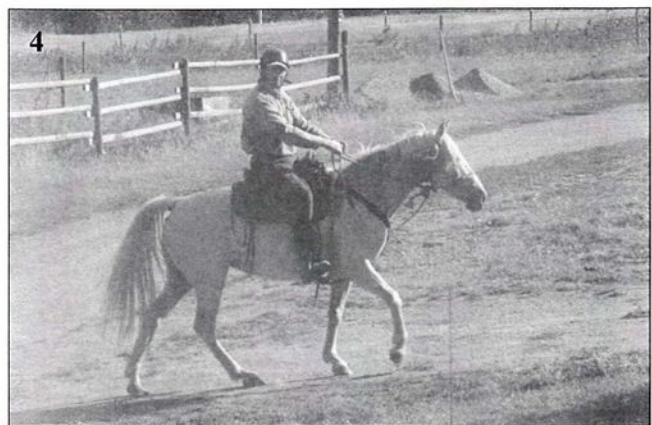
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WALKIEN JESSE SKYWALKER - early corral lessons.



5

BACKYARD CINNAMON is now a well seasoned trail horse after many lessons and miles of trails. It takes a lot of time, patience and riding to develop a horse to this level.



4

BELLA (R.Diamond Smokey Autumn Gold) on her first rides out through the trails and over the property. A youngster needs outside experience once it has learned the saddle basics in a safe and confined area.

SADDLE TYPES - Myths and Marketing Part 2 by Jessica Sparrow

Last issue we talked about *why* saddle fit is important. This month I would like to talk about saddle construction and how it can affect your horse. We all know that there are different types of saddles depending on what you are doing with your horse (jumping, endurance, roping, etc.). It is important that the saddle be sport specific, designed to put you in the optimal position for your discipline. But what about the construction of your saddle?

Treeless saddles have been marketed purposely to gaited horses by a number of companies. They claim to conform to any horse's shape, to fit multiple horses, and have better weight distribution systems than traditional saddles with trees.

In a presentation to the International Society for Equitation Science in 2011, respected author, researcher, and veterinarian Hilary Clayton had this to say, "What you can see with the treeless saddle is a very definite concentration of pressure right underneath the rider's seat bones." (Leste'-Lasserre, C. 2011). Trees in conventional saddles are better able to distribute the rider's weight over a larger surface area. The study also notes that a heavier rider would intensify the pressure that the horse would feel, and therefore put it at higher risk of injury.

A second independent paper found similar results concluding that "Compared with the treeless saddle, the conventional saddle distributed the rider's bodyweight over a larger area, had lower mean and maximal pressures and fewer sensors recording mean pressure >11 kP." (Belock et. al, 2012). Since protecting the horse's back from external pressure is of utmost importance, it seems as though the treeless saddles fall short of their claims to superiority.

A more detailed study went further to develop "high pressure areas were a consequence of a narrow gullet and highly-sloped panels". It was concluded that, even with a treeless saddle, the size, shape, angulation, and position of the panels must fit the individual horse" (Clayton, et al. 2014). This is an important finding that highlights the need for each saddle to be individually formed to each horse.

I am not suggesting that there is no place for treeless saddles, and overall, if I had to choose a well-fitting treeless saddle over a poorly fit traditional saddle, I would. My hope is to educate the consumer that treeless saddles may not necessarily be in the best interest of the horse (particularly with a heavier rider +140 lbs), and that they *must* have the panels custom fitted to each horse.

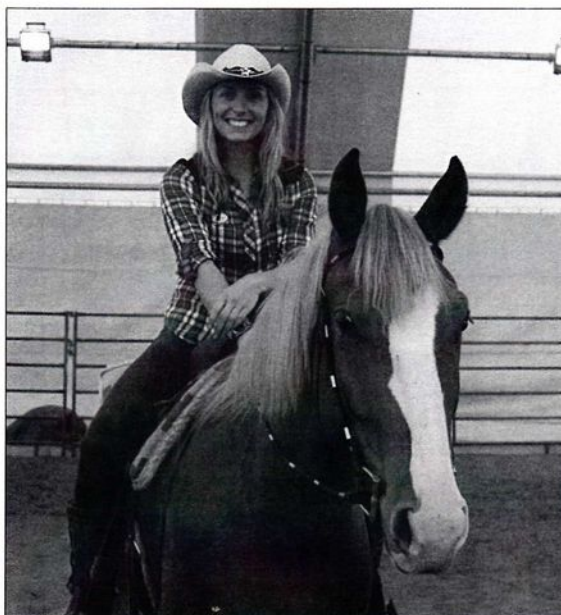
Above all I would encourage a person shopping for saddles to look for *independent* and *scientific* research that backs any claims that a saddle company may make, and to look through their marketing strategies. Just because it is "for a gaited horse" doesn't mean that it is necessarily the best for your TWH.

Personally, my next saddle purchase for my TWH will still be a well-designed and properly fit treed saddle.

REFERENCES:

- Belock, B. et all (2012) Comparison of pressure distribution under a conventional saddle and a treeless saddle at sitting trot. *The Veterinary Journal*, 193(1), 87-91.
- Clayton, H. et all (2014) Force and pressure distribution beneath a conventional dressage saddle and a treeless dressage saddle with panels. *The Veterinary Journal*, 199 (1), 44-48.
- Leste'-Lasserre, C. (2011) Treeless vs. Conventional Saddles: Back Pressure Evaluated

Jessica Sparrow (below) is currently taking classes at the University of Guelph towards an Equine Science Diploma. Her final paper in the Anatomy Course was an extensive research project into the different types of saddles and their effect on the horse's back. She has been working with TWH for many years at Calta Stables, in Calgary, AB. Jessica says, "I was surprised to learn of so many unhealthy aspects of some saddles, and I am hoping to share this information with other horse enthusiasts and in particular those with gaited breeds."



WHAT IS A GOOD HORSE?

by Dianne Little, Calgary, AB

Over the past few years, I have had numerous occasions to discuss horses. After these discussions one thing has become apparent – not everyone likes or wants the same type of horse. Everyone assigns a different set of attributes to a description of a good horse. Obviously each of us believes we are correct - and we are correct - but only for ourselves.

“What is a good horse?” I can answer this question from a variety of perspectives – a judge, an owner, a user, and a prospective buyer. I have decided to describe what I consider a good horse *for me*.

I do not have the luxury of keeping my horse in my yard. Of necessity I have always boarded my horse at a facility reasonably close to my home. I visit my horse three or four times a week and do not want to spend my time driving rather than enjoying. I want a horse that can survive in a boarding situation: a horse that is easy to handle and easily adapts to the regime of living in a stable with many different people, horses and lots of activity. My life is simplified if my horse can be easily blanketed morning and evening, is easy to catch, can relax in a stall, does not resent attention from other boarders, is comfortable alone in a paddock, does not continually fight with other horses over the fence, and can be ridden in an indoor arena with many different horses and many disciplines. In other words, a horse that is not too aggressive or too submissive and gets along with horses and people. Now some will say all horses have these attributes. Any owner of a boarding facility will assure you that not all animals are the same: the horse that is perfectly happy in the field may not tolerate the restricted life in a paddock and stall. Adaptability to the situation is a question of the nature and mind of the horse.


I want a horse with good feet. What ‘good feet’ means is highly debatable, but I would like to see a strong hoof wall and evidence of good hoof growth. I don’t want to deal with a horse that requires corrective shoeing to keep him sound or rideable. I believe a good horse has good teeth - those that grind not chomp. I like well positioned attentive ears. I cannot discount the eye of the horse. Many people try to describe the eye as kind etc., but first of all I want a functional eye well positioned on the head. Even if the eye was kind and gentle, if it was not positioned to be functional the vision is not good. I do not want to deal with a spooky horse.

Colour and gender are not prime considerations for me: however for me, a good horse is not tall. I am short and do not expect to grow any more, nor become more limber. My ability to mount a very tall horse would not be pretty or easy. Also, as I age my strength decreases and I would have difficulty in lifting the saddle over my head.

Soundness is important. From a financial or personal perspective I cannot afford to keep a horse that has a predisposition to unsoundness. I want to ride, not deal with layoffs caused by conformation. I stay away from a conformational fault that could lead to a potential unsoundness. For instance, I would not be interested in a horse with a badly turned out front leg. The probability of that leg ‘breaking down’ is high. Consequently, I take a good look at back, legs, feet, eyes and ears. A blemish (a scar or old injury) does not worry me if it does not affect performance

Having stated that I do not want to deal with unsoundness problems, I have dealt with a variety of health problems with Tiffany. None of these problems was the result of potential unsoundness, but rather with the health concerns that are the result of living. Four years ago, Tiffany developed Allergic Bronchial Asthma. What she is allergic to is unknown: we only know that she reacts only when the season is unusually dry. I would rather this problem went away but that is wishful thinking. To have a opportunity for a reasonably healthy life she requires medication morning and evening. I cannot be there to administer this medication. Fortunately Tiffany is a cooperative patient and will allow stable staff to medicate her. Twice a day a large plastic mask is put over her head and she is given the same puffers people with asthma require. Never in three years has she been resistant. On the contrary she stands patiently and waits. Again she possesses the type of mind I was describing above.

Now what do I want? Assuming soundness is not an issue, my primary concern is having a horse that is easy for me to work with. I want a horse that likes people and would just as soon be with me as with the other horses. I guess I want a ‘people horse’. I want a horse that can focus and pay attention – one that likes to work or learn and will focus on me and not on other horses. I want a partner where we each learn from the other. This requires a cooperative and respectful attitude on both our parts.

I enjoy and appreciate a ‘fiery’ horse, but I do not want to own one. I do not want a deadbeat either. I don’t consider it a pleasure to constantly encourage a horse to keep moving. I want a horse that is responsive to slight aids. I want a horse with 

good ground manners. I want a horse that is easy to catch and lead. I want a horse that stops when I want to stop and stands until I want to leave.

All my wants translate into what I consider a good horse. Now in the ideal world that horse would have the mind, the size, the conformation and the perfect movement. Much as I get goose bumps when watching a flowing long-striding ground-covering horse doing the Running Walk, I am willing to sacrifice movement for attitude or mind. Sure it would be nice to have both, but if I can't have both then I will choose the mind. Compatibility is the issue for me. I don't want to increase my stress – after all, horses are my hobby, my relaxation, and my pleasure.

I don't expect anybody but me to consider Tiffany the perfect horse. Those who handle her on a daily basis consider her an easy to handle and well mannered horse. She is short; has a long back (remember the back is the last part of the horse that stops growing); has a beautiful head, great front legs, and back legs that are considered too straight for Walking Horse standards; is an easy keeper; seemingly enjoys working (although I have not pushed this to the limit); stands patiently for the farrier; will stand without being tied; understands the words and the body language for stop; is easy to catch and load; proceeds carefully and slowly when she is not comfortable; prefers the fox trot as her middle gait; has a beautiful canter, and will try anything I ask her to do.

Tiffany is smarter than me. She is so soft and responsive that she taught me most everything I know about body communication between horse and rider. She has taught me things I didn't know I wanted or needed to learn. When she messes up, I look at myself and after much digging usually discover that she did exactly what I asked her to do. She puts up with my mistakes and willingly keeps on going. I respect her and she respects me. She understands our relationship and puts up with me.

What I have described as a good horse may not bear any resemblance to what you consider a good horse. So what do you consider a good horse?

Reprinted from *Walking Horse News*, 2002

What are the attributes of a 'good horse' for YOU? Can you list the physical and temperamental characteristics you feel you need and want in your personal saddle horse? Let us know your opinion of a 'perfect horse'.

AB ANNUAL HORSE BREEDERS and OWNERS CONFERENCE

The 33rd Annual Horse Breeders and Owners Conference takes place January 9-11, 2015 in Red Deer, Alberta, at the Sheraton Hotel. Presented by the non-profit organization Horse Industry Association of Alberta, the conference is a must-attend event for horse breeders, owners and riders with topics of interest for every horse enthusiast.

The Horse Breeders and Owners Conference welcomes delegates at 7 pm on January 9th with an "Open Barn" reception in the Exhibit Hall. Due to popular demand, the "Open Barn" reception is once again open to the public free of charge to attend, socialize, network and shop around the equine trade show of over 50 sponsor booths. *Quarter Horse News* editor, Stacy Pigott, will kick off Saturday morning's session at 8:40 am. Saturday evening provides a chance to network and socialize with wine, dessert, and entertainment. The conference continues until Sunday afternoon, and closes with the Fred Pearce Memorial Lecture delivered this year by Dr. David Fraser.

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Claudia Cojocar (British Columbia) - Being Better
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Dr. Bob Coleman (Kentucky) - The Young Horse:
Growing Up Is Hard Work *and*
Is My Horse Fat? There's an App for That

Dr. David Fraser (British Columbia) - Understanding
Animal Welfare

Dr. Rebecca Gimenez (Georgia) - "Improving Safety
on the Road and on the Trail

Dr. Sheryl King (Illinois) - How Stable Management
Practices Impact Horse Behaviour Patterns

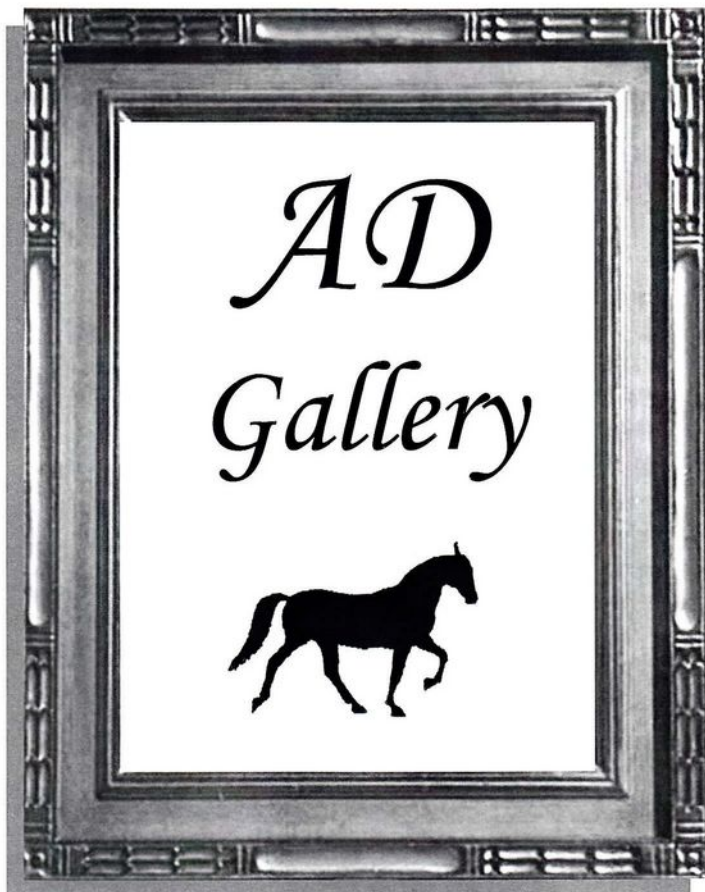
Dr. Stephen Peters (Utah) - Your Horse's Brain:
An Owner's Manual

Stacy Pigott (Texas) - What is Acceptable?

Dr. Tony Willing (Ontario) - Fair Market Value:
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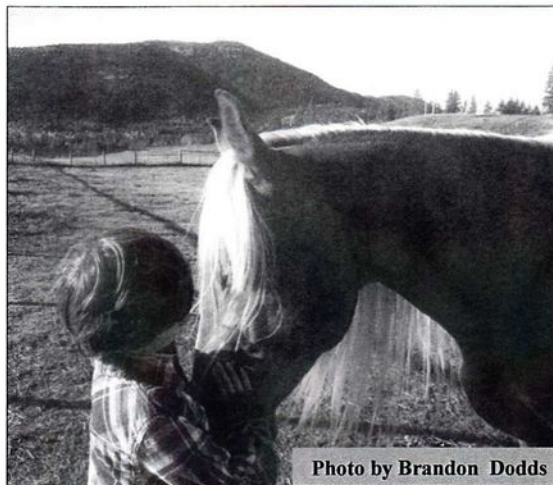


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B.C. EQUINE EDUCATION SUMMIT - March 13,14,15, at Radisson Hotel, RICHMOND, BC. See www.HCBC.ca

MANE EVENT, RED DEER, AB - April 24, 25, 26, 2015. Contact Karla Freeman at rideeasy@hotmail.ca re booth.

CRTWH AGM - KLONDIKE VICTORY STABLES, SYLVAN LAKE, AB. May 9, 2015. Fran Kerik, 780-603-3391

'GAIT FROM THE GROUND UP' CLINIC - KLONDIKE VICTORY STABLES, SYLVAN LAKE, AB May 9-10/15. Contact Bill Roy at woodhill@telus.net or 250-379-2022. To book your space call Dianne at 1-403-271-7391

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