



# Divide Horsemen's Association

Spring Edition Newsletter

April 2012

Welcome to our "spring" edition of the newsletter. What a crazy "mix of seasons" we have seen thus far. Weren't we ever fortunate to have such great riding days through January and February though?

*Happy riding everyone!  
Charlotte*

---

***Reminder: Spaghetti Feed Fundraiser - May 12  
Pilot Hill Grange, Cool  
Sign up soon and get the word out!!!***

---

At the March DHA meeting Isaak Egge, Development Director, American River Conservancy (ARC) was the guest speaker. Isaak gave an overview of the Salmon Falls Ranch project and conveyed the need for the ARC to raise \$185,000 by April 27 for the Project. Securing these much-needed resources would:

- Finalize acquisition of 605 acres west of Salmon Falls Road, north of SF American River;
- Build new trails that expand and connect to the existing Salmon Falls trail;
- Establish parking lot, equestrian staging area (on the east side of Salmon Falls Road) and connector trail to the existing South Fork trail, running upstream to Hwy. 49;
- Restore and protect habitat for 17 rare native species and local wildlife, and nearly 200 species of resident and migratory birds.

The gentle topography would accommodate all levels of outdoor recreation and provide for generations of outdoor enthusiasts. New trails will benefit hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians through longer and more varied terrain. Issak is himself an avid mountain biker who realizes the importance of this project to develop a unique buffer and recreational resource for all to enjoy.

**Divide Horsemen's Association P.O. Box 64, Cool, CA**

For more information on this important project and how to show your support, you can visit [www.arconservancy.org/donatesalmonfallsranch](http://www.arconservancy.org/donatesalmonfallsranch).

---

*American River Conservancy is about 'preserving rivers and land for life.'*

---

***Getting to know Russ Grossman, trainer at Cool Hills Ranch.***



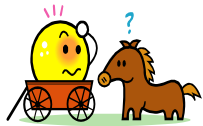
Growing up in Burbank, California, Russ was riding the hills of Griffith Park and heeling steers with his dad and early mentor from the time he was nine years old. As an adult, he pursued a career in advertising in newspapers in the Sacramento & Grass Valley markets. After 15 years in this field, Russ contemplated that life was simply too short and decided to pursue a different path, a path that would put boots back on his feet, a rope in his hand and a hat on his head.

Russ' first full-time 'horse job' was as a wrangler for Rawah Ranch in Colorado. When he returned to California, he studied Animal Husbandry & Equine Studies at Sierra College while working as a bartender. Upon completing the program, he went to work as a riding instructor/trainer at Stage Stop Ranch in Auburn. It was a great facility, but lacked one thing, access to trails. Seems all of his clients wanted trail horses. In June of 2005, Russ moved his business to American River Ranch in Cool. With 10 miles of trail just outside the gate, he found his niche in the market training trail horses using natural horsemanship methods.

[www.divideha.org](http://www.divideha.org)

For romantic reasons, Russ moved to Oregon in September of 2007. While in Oregon, Russ managed a 150 acre Arabian breeding farm located in the coastal range. As fate would have it, the romantic interest went south on him, so he decided to head south as well and back to Cool where new owners, John & Cristine Grey had just acquired what is now Cool Hills Ranch.

Russ works with various breeds and offers colt starting, foundation work and trail training. There are group lessons on Saturday mornings and private lessons available by appointment. Watch for information on weekend clinics being offered for spring, summer and fall. Russ may be reached at 530-305-1977 or [russ@russgrossman.com](mailto:russ@russgrossman.com).



*Now everyone likes a good horse story, and we have a few members who have shared their favorite horse story. I decided to share a "horse story of sorts" that you might enjoy. It goes as follows:*

You must know the old adage of "there is no such thing as a free horse." And, I'll bet we horse folks certainly know why that is. I have to tell you, though, that there is no such thing as a free bale of hay either.

Let me explain. In the days when my hubby and I were in a "different age category," it was nothing to load up the pick-up truck with a hefty load of hay, stacked to the hilt to get the maximum benefit from the trip and return home to unload and stack it in the barn.

I recall this one trip to the feed store when the young man was doing his best to load the hay in a stack that would set well going through the canyon. And, anyone who knows our canyon knows the perils of what those twists and turns might do for an unstable bale in the stack. So, what did he do but reinforce the stack with one "extra" bale right on top in the middle for a good balance. Indeed, I thought that was an ingenious idea for that young man to add that one last bale of hay to balance the whole load. Oh, did I tell you that bale of hay was a freebee?

Divide Horsemens Association P.O. Box 64, Cool, CA

Well, we got through the canyon and home with the load of hay intact. However, upon unloading the hay from the truck, it was apparent that the free bale did not make the journey. It obviously didn't stay in its designated spot on the top of the hay bales and most likely catapulted off in one of the turns going through the canyon.

Now, it is likely that we will always laugh about this one. Had one of the other bales fallen off that we paid for, I guess we would have cut our loss for the one bale. However, in retrospect, just let me say that there is no such thing as a free bale of hay!!

---

*Karen Viani shares her story of "The Rocket Scientist," a wonderful find from the track.*

My good friend, Pam, sent me an email one day. "Hey! Would you like to go to the race track and look at a four year old Standardbred mare with me?" She knows me too well! I love to go and look at horses, so I said yes. Mind you, I already have five horses and don't need another one; I just like to look. We emailed a few more times, and it was decided that we would go the following Sunday morning.

Sunday came, and it was a windy cool January morning. I got there before Pam and met the trainer. The trainer asked me if I was there to see the six year old gelding. I told her that I didn't know that there was a gelding; I was there to look at a four year old mare with Pam. She led the bay mare out of her stall and turned her out in a small pen. The mare proceeded to buck and play, tossing her head and heels! She was a lovely mare.

The trainer then went and led the gelding from his stall. I asked what his name was and she told me, "Rocket Scientist." I thought what a funny name for a pacer. He was black bay in color; his coat looked like purple velvet. I thought it was funny that he had a long winter coat; don't they blanket them at the track? The trainer turned him out in another small pen and he just stood there and looked at me. Hmmmm.

Pam arrived, camera in hand, ready to take some pictures. She saw the mare kicking up her heels and thought that it might be better to take pictures of the gelding first. She went into his pen, but she couldn't get a picture because he wouldn't stop following her around. She asked me to come in and hold him so that

[www.divideha.org](http://www.divideha.org)

she could get a picture of him. He stood quietly for his pictures and when we were done, he started to follow me around. I think that he was looking for a friend.

The mare calmed down enough for Pam to get pictures of her with the trainer. We thanked the trainer, and Pam told her that she would put the word out to get homes for these nice horses. I got in the car and thought I was not tempted to take home either one of those horses! Not that they weren't nice horses; I already had five and didn't need another project.

That night I began to think about "Rocket Scientist." He had such a kind eye and calm demeanor. He was looking for a friend, and my heart started to hurt with the thought that he might not find a good home. Do six horses make you a horse hoarder? I struggled with these thoughts for several days when I finally emailed Pam to find out if the gelding had found a home. She said that there was a lady interested in him who had rescued another Standardbred from the track a couple of years ago. I told her to let me know if the lady didn't want him.

Well, you can guess what happened! One week after seeing Rocket I was on my way back to the track, trailer in tow to pick him up. He has been in my herd a little over a month now and doing well. He has raced most of his life, so he will be getting some well-deserved time off. I will have a friend help me start him under saddle in the summer.

Standardbreds make wonderful trail horses, just ask Pam! She has a beautiful Standardbred gelding that she has been riding for more than two years now. Claudia adopted a three year old off the track not too long ago. Standardbreds are usually easy to start under saddle, and they tend to be calm and not spooky. Cart horses are exposed to so much at the track, cars, ambulances, flags, bright lights, crowds, and a variety of loud noises, that they are well desensitized when they are done racing.

Standardbreds are versatile and often have shining second careers as police horses, jumpers, dressage, carriage horses, pleasure horses and of course trail horses. I think that these wonderful horses are a well-kept secret. I am so glad that I got Rocket, and I am looking forward to our journey together. There are always horses at the track looking for homes, so if you

are looking for a great trail horse, consider a Standardbred. Just ask Pam!

---

*What a great story shared by Margo Seabourn about her Arabian stallion "Aldar Madrid"*

I own an Arabian stallion named Aldar Madrid. He came into my life in 1992 at the age of 9, with very little experience in the show ring, having been shown only a few times in halter and Western Pleasure. He is the first, and only, stallion I have ever owned.

One day, we noticed that when he was turned out in the riding arena, he would jump the fences that were set up on his own, just for "fun." I had been raised in hunter jumper circles with thoroughbreds, but had never thought a 14'3" Arabian stallion would have a talent for such activities! I enlisted a 19 year old Pony Club graduate, Jennette Scanlon, to teach Madrid to jump. Not having any clue about the caliber of competitors, we decided to take him to the Arabian Scottsdale Show in 1992, (On a complete shoestrings budget) where he surprised everyone by coming home with several ribbons. (Nothing like starting at the top.)

That was the start of an exciting 8 years of showing Madrid at class A shows all around the West. We showed him successfully in hunters over fences, hunter pleasure, western pleasure, and dressage. At the age of 18 he was headed to the Arabian National Championships when a routine vet check discovered he had injured his suspensory ligament and would need months, if not years, of recuperation. Madrid basically retired at that point and after he recovered, I took him to a few dressage shows at the age of 21. But, soon thereafter it became clear he was happy in retirement, so I only rode him on the trails after that. The whole time we were competing, we were hoping he could be inducted into the Arabian Horse Association Legion of Honor, which celebrates horses who have earned at least 75 show points in performance categories. This is the source of the "+" designation that you see after the names of some Arabians, but due to his unexpected injury, he never qualified.

Madrid is still vibrant and healthy, and celebrated his 31st birthday on March 2, 2012 with a small party of close friends. When I returned home that day, I found a letter in the mail from the Arabian Horse

Association, informing me that they had discovered an error in counting his show points, and that he should have been awarded the Legion of Honor designation in 1999! We are now eagerly awaiting the arrival of his plaque. We plan to hang it right next to his Proclamation designating him as a "Horse of the Round Table" from Medieval Times in Los Angeles...

What a fitting tribute to a beloved horse, who is still winning accolades 12 years after leaving the show ring!

---

*Here is a wonderful story from Jenny Gomez, who tells us about her "dream horse" come to life.*

Several years ago, this vision came to me out of the blue. It wasn't a real dream, like the ones you have when you are asleep. It was more like a daydream, smack dab in the middle of the day. In the dream, I owned a sweet little black mare named Glory. She was a little thing and just as cute as a button.

At the time, I had a Friesian gelding and would have given my right arm AND leg to have another Friesian. Naturally, I assumed this sweet black horse was a Friesian filly, and the dream came from wishful thinking on my part.

Time passed along and events unfolded as they always do. With a number of new horses in and out of my life, I'd completely forgotten about that dream. Last fall, I had begun nosing around, looking for a possible distance horse that I could learn to ride endurance on. Even though Friesians are my very favorite breed, I've also always thought I'd love to have a wild Mustang.

I'd been looking at all sorts of horses, Arabs, Walkers, even already trained Mustangs. The right horse was just not coming into the picture. One day, while getting hay, I struck up a conversation with the Compliance Officer for BLM in the Mother Lode Region. He was getting hay from the same grower. Of course, he campaigned for me to adopt a Mustang. I explained to him that although I'd love to have a Mustang, the idea of another young horse that would need three or four years of growing up was not ideal for me. After all, I am not getting any younger! If I'm gonna do this, I need to get with the program!

Well! Did he have the horse for me! They had just brought in an eight year old mare. She'd already been

gentled and trained, but the adopter didn't follow the rules so she'd been repossessed! He told me that she was just a sweet, cute little thing, barely 14 hands on her tippy toes! Oh, and she's black! How'd HE know I have a thing for hairy black horses????

Since I was in Sacramento, I thought what the heck, I'll go meet this little gal and see what's up. It was an instant connection. I did do the prudent thing and told the Officer that I wanted to think about it though! That turned out to be just fine as they could not adopt her out for at least 30 days. The previous adopter was entitled to a 30-day appeal period.

A few weeks went by and after filling out the paperwork and being approved by the BLM, I was on track to adopt the cute little black mare. I had to wait until the appeal period was over, which was going to be sometime in mid to late December. Finally, the date was set, December 15, 2011.

The little mare arrived with no name. Since her arrival felt a lot like a Christmas present, I decided she needed a holiday name. Holly, Berry, Merry, Eve, Noelle, all the usual names were springing into my mind. Finally, Glory popped into my head with not a memory of the dream at all. But, I liked Glory and it seemed to fit her. I promptly went down to visit with her and see how she liked her new name. As I was explaining to her that I decided on Glory, she rested her head gently on my shoulder and blew softly into my ear. There it was... the realization and memory of my dream! I couldn't believe it. Was she the horse in my dream those years ago? She sure seemed to say yes. Then true to her sweet but spunky spirit, asked me what took me so long to find her!

We are on track with getting to know each other. It turns out that she probably wasn't handled in the kindest of manners prior to coming to me. She's got some issues that we are working through. But, the trust and the bond we have is amazing! Watch for us out on the trails! We will be there soon!

---

*It is important to think about life from the horse's perspective and not act on our emotions or take out any of our stress on him. We always want our horses in the best shape possible and are obligated to do the same ourselves inside and out. (an excerpt taken from an article in Dressage Today.)*

---

*Helen Harvey is a certified Centered Riding Instructor, and I talked her into doing an article for the Newsletter. I posed as the "leaning rider" in the pictures.*



### What Happens when you Lean

You hear that you should be balanced on your horse, but what happens to you and your horse when you are not in balance? What happens if you lean when you make a turn or try and ride in a straight line?

You can think of yourself on your horse as if you were a backpack. You all know what happens when the backpack is unbalanced - you need to lean to one side or the other to regain your balance with every step. You feel unbalanced yourself, and unable to turn or step over obstacles easily. When you're not balanced in the saddle, your horse feels a bit less balanced and has to adjust himself to compensate.

When you're in the saddle and lean, you also need to compensate by stiffening somewhere in your body. You can try this by sitting in a chair with your back away from the back of the chair and your feet on the floor and notice if you have even weight on both seat bones and buttocks or if you have more weight to one side or the other. If you're not sure, put one flat hand palm up under each seat bone and see if you feel more weight on one side or the other. Now keeping your feet flat on the floor lean to the right. How does your weight shift on your seat bones? Do you stiffen your right ribs? Do you collapse through your right ribs and shorten the distance between your shoulder and pelvis? Does the weight on your feet change? Do you feel a bit off balance? Where do you need to stiffen to lean and keep from falling over? Now try leaning to the left. The feeling might be different than leaning to the right.

Now imagine what your horse feels like when you lean in one direction or the other. You need to stiffen and shift weight somewhere in your body to stay on your horse. Your horse feels this just like you feel the uneven weight of a backpack.

When you lean, your weight shifts on your seat bones, so your horse feels more pressure and weight on one side. Your horse will tend to move under your weight. If you are turning to the right and leaning to the right your horse will tend to fall into the circle or the turn. In the picture, weight is on the right seat bone, right shoulder is lower than the left, head is tilted to the right, and the whole body leans to the right.



If you are turning to the right and leaning a bit to the left your horse will tend not to turn easily and may skitter to the outside of the turn to stay under your weight. If you usually weight one seat bone when riding straight your horse will tend to either fall in if you're weighting the inside, or fall out into the rail. In the picture, the weight is on the left seat bone, the whole body is leaning to the left, and the head is compensating by tilting to the right.



Your horse isn't entirely even, so his shoulder may fall in or his haunches out depending on which is his stiff side. If his left side is stiffer, his shoulder will often fall in. If his right side is stiffer, his haunches may also fall out.

The pictures make it easy to see how the rider is leaning. Your horse will feel even a slight lean to one side. How do you know if you are leaning when you turn? If it was more difficult for you to lean in one direction and shift weight from one seat bone to the other when sitting in a chair you probably keep more weight on one seat bone. If it's easier to lean to the right, you probably weight your right seat bone. If the left, your left seat bone. You will probably lean in the same direction.

On your horse, check and see if you feel even weight on both seat bones. If you don't feel even weight you are likely to lean or collapse in a turn. Also, check and see if your shoulders are level, if not, you will probably lean or collapse on the side of the lower shoulder.

Have a friend watch you from behind while you ride. Do you drop your head to one side when you turn? Do your shoulders stay even? Does your weight shift to one seat bone? Do you lean? Do you and your horse have more difficulty turning in one direction than the other?

To stay balanced in a turn and not lean, think of a line through the center of your body and through the center of your horse, somewhat like the pole on a carousel horse. When you start to turn rotate your whole upper body around that line. If the line stays in the middle of your body and your horse, and your weight stays balanced on both seat bones, and your shoulders are even you will be balanced through the turn. It is easier for your horse to turn?



Here is an exercise you can do on your horse if you feel safe. If it's not safe on your horse you can do the same exercise sitting in a chair. If you lean to the right, use your right hand. If you lean to the left, use your left hand. Take your hand and softly lengthen it into the air over your head with your elbow straight and your palm facing towards the center of your body. Do you lengthen though your side? Are you more even on your seat bones? If it's safe, have a friend lead your horse. Keep your hand over your head and have your friend turn your horse. Is it

easier to stay balanced? Try turns in both directions. Now bring your hand back to your normal position and do a few turns in both directions. Do you stay more balanced? Is it easier for your horse to turn and bend in both directions.

I appreciate Charlotte Bancroft and her mare Jolie's willingness to be the models for the leaning rider. Jolie was rather confused by the proceeds, but was kind enough to attempt to comply with her owner's requests.

---

***I couldn't resist putting this article in by Jane Savoie, Author/trainer.***

### Have A Great Ride Every Day!

Do you want to know how to have a great ride everyday? Stop expecting perfection. Rather than looking at training and competing in black or white terms, learn to see things in "shades of gray".

The key to seeing shades of gray is to recognize when things are just "a little bit better." For example, when you think of your ride, ask yourself if:

- Were your hands a little quieter?
- Did you sit a bit more centered today?
- Did you keep your eyes up for more of your ride than you did yesterday?
- Were you able to use your legs, hands or seat a bit more independently? That is, when you used your legs, did your hands stay somewhat quieter than last week?
- Did you remember to use your legs before your hands more often?
- Did you control your emotions a bit better so that you were more relaxed, patient, brave, or calm?
- Did you stay slightly more focused throughout your ride?
- Did you remember to breathe more often?
- Did you reward your horse for every effort he made that was a bit closer to what you want as a finished product?

As long as things keep getting "a little bit better," pretty soon you'll be riding "a whole lot better."

***If you missed any of these tips from our last issue, here they are again.***



### "Barn Tips"

*Ants in you dog/cat food? Put a couple of inches of water in a large bowl and set the bowl in pet food in the water. Ants can't cross the water and the dog/cat will still have access.*

*Digging for your hoof pick in the bottom of the tack bucket? One of those 'bucket buddies' from Home Depot makes it easy to find stuff.  
(Ann Blankenship)*

---

*I use the blue bags from Ikea for my hay. They are great, hold about 2 flakes and you can pre-load them when you travel, and leave them for someone to feed; no mess no trail of hay to barn, etc., and they are under a dollar each. You can carry one in each hand also and carry 4 or 5 flakes at once!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

*Another tip...I carry a rubber mallet to put on my easy boot gloves..picked it up in the bargain bin at Ace. Since I started doing that I have never lost a boot!!!  
(Patty Engman)*

---

*This summer my son told me about a garage he had worked in where the owner had hung bags of water to ward off flies. He swore it worked, so I tried it. It WORKS!!! It didn't totally eliminate them, but it did cut down on the numbers considerably. The ultimate test was when I walked in the chicken coop and had to swat the flies away; hung a bag, and they were gone. . it has something to do with the refraction of light on the flies' lenses. No stinky traps to discard, no harsh chemicals, just good old water.  
(Sue Robbins)*

---

*Gold Bond Medicated Powder for sensitive pink skin on white haired heels. You can get a big bottle of it at Costco and just poof it on the heels. Works great after a bath and even seems to block the sun. Told a friend about it with a horse that tended to get scratches and she had no more problems after using the powder.  
(Janice Mills)*

---

*I did not want to have to buy a tractor and already had an ATV. The spreader hooks up to the ATV and easily spreads the manure around a field. It is a great item, well built, light, compact and I couldn't manage without it.  
(Elke Schlosser)*

---

*I have two hints that I use and love. 1) Use Listerine mouthwash on moldy leather--it cleans up the mold and helps to inhibit further growth. 2) A gentle fly spray--use Avon Skin So Soft, Listerine mouthwash, and water in equal amounts and put in a spray bottle and spray away!!! (Peggy Christensen)*

---

*Visit "Equaide.com" about a medication as a proud flesh eliminator; also an effective solution for cuts, wounds, abrasions. This is well worth checking out. (Linda Mitcham)*

---

*Solar flood light are fantastic if you don't have electricity to your barn. They work really well, are motioned sensed and don't stay on long but you do get a lot of light out of them.*

*Storage for blankets - I have found that the rectangular 30 gal garbage cans work really well and don't take up much space. 3 large winter blankets fit in easily and stay clean and bug free. (Heidi Babcock)*

---

**2012 Board of Directors**

- Paula Anderson Keiffer, President
- Katie Yaranon, Vice President
- Claudia Gibbens, Treasurer
- Marlane Gregoire, Secretary
- Pamela Greer, Communications Director
- Charlotte Bancroft, Newsletter Editor

**[www.divideha.org](http://www.divideha.org)**

***DHA meetings are held the  
3rd Wednesday of the month  
@ 6:30 p.m., Greenwood Rec. Center***

