



# Divide Horsemen's Association

Summer Edition Newsletter

September 2012

My goodness, we are definitely fast-tracking to the end of summer now and heading down the home stretch to Labor Day and the onset of fall. I hope that you have had a great summer of riding and fun horse adventures.

I rounded up a few good stories and articles of interest that I hope everyone will enjoy.

*Happy riding everyone!  
Charlotte*

Some of you may remember the DHA sponsored "fun day" at Cool Hills Ranch in late June. It was the brain child of Katie Yaranon to create an obstacle course of mishmash obstacles in and out of the covered arena.

A lively and brave group participated with their trusty steeds over and through the various obstacles. My mare never could figure out how to dunk for an apple, and that was a surprise to me being the chowhound she can be!!

After we had all mastered the various challenges bestowed us, the best was yet to come. Those willing to race for a bag of dress-up goodies were invited to play the game. I'm not sure who the winner was that day, but the fun was evident with this photo and brave heart, Jenny Gomez.



Needless to say, the hot dog lunch was a delicious addition to all the fun. A very special "thank you" to all those volunteers who made this a very successful and fun event!!!

For those of you who missed the August meeting, we had as our guest speaker Dr. Jill Higgins from Loomis Basin Equine Medical Center. She gave a presentation on the latest diagnosis methods and treatment of lameness, followed by a question/answer session with members. I was amazed about how far we have come with the new technology now available to assist horse owners in the early detection of lameness issues.

*Ann Blankenship tells us about her outing during the Tevis Cup. Sounds like a lot of fun.*

*"Blankenship's Go to Robinson Flat "*

On July 4, we loaded up two horses, gobs of hay, bags and bags of food, ALCOHOL, firewood and a sweatshirt and headed down 49, across the bridge, turned right, through Foresthill and on up to Robinson Flat. If you haven't been to Robinson Flat, it's the first big vet check on Tevis. There are 'people' camping on one side of a lovely meadow and horse camping on the other side...and never the twain shall meet. The highlight of the meadow, aside from lovely knee-deep grass which horses are not allowed to graze on, is the old-time water pump. Vigorous pumping will result in ice cold water. However, the thrill of all this pumping soon wears off as you realize that your arm is going to fall off before you get enough water to satisfy your horses' zest for tipping over their buckets. Note to self: tie buckets to tree. Note to prospective campers: 100 pumps = one big blue water jug full. If you have a little cart for hauling water, now is the time to use it.

Robinson Flat boasts the most gorgeous fire lookout ever. The lookout is balanced on a rocky prominence with an amazing panoramic view. It always reminds me of a lighthouse. If you go, be sure to check it out.

Being right on the Western States Trail, of course you can ride back toward Tahoe or west, toward Auburn. In addition, there are lots of little side trails to explore and some creeks here and there for watering stock. You may well run into free ranging cattle (with bells) or the wrangler who always seems to be looking for them. One of my favorite little loops out of the campground takes you back toward Tahoe, then cuts off to the right and switchbacks up to the top of the mountain. This little ride is beautiful and again, the view from the top of the mountain is spectacular. Bring your camera.

Riding back toward Tahoe, the trail is really REALLY rocky with that loose rubblely kind of rock that you can't trot on. Tevis was rerouted this year to avoid that section, but the trail committee plans to work on that section next year to clear off most of the rock. I'm telling you this so you remember to pad or boot up your horse. If you don't, he will be a sad pony indeed.

We spent lots of time sitting around roaring fires and throwing stuff for the dogs. We needn't have brought firewood as there was a ton of down, dry stuff close by. A chainsaw would have been good though. Did I tell you that it's ok to bring your dogs?

We make this run to Robinson every year with our friends, Patrick and Lucy. They are Real Endurance Riders, so they go far afield while we do shorter rides enabling us to spend more time in camp eating and drinking and reading and napping 'round the fire.

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*Here is a shared story from Joan Frommhagen and Linda Mitcham when they ventured out on their annual horse camp-out this summer.*

#### A TECHNICAL RIDE

We went horse camping in mid-July for six days with the LARK (Ladies Annual Ride Kaper) group at the Plasses Resort (209 / 258-8814) at Silver Lake off of Highway #88.

One horse was in a portable pen and the other horse was on a high line between two trees and the rocks. The

large meadow was green, and there were still some wild flowers about.

The altitude on the lake site was stated to be 7200 feet, so we gave ourselves and the horses a whopping one day to acclimate.

For our first ride we chose to ride the Hidden / Granite Lake Loop, which was stated to be a three-hour ride. We can do this! The loop was, in my mind, like a big "U" turn; you just keep going left. We were told there would be a sign at the top of the hill: "Granite Lake" at a crossing of trails.

Getting there involved going across a shallow creek and the paved road and parking lot for the resort office and small store. This was rather stressful as there were cars, people walking dogs or riding bicycles, and a noisy propane truck discharging its load. We then passed the trailer camp, the unoccupied Stockton cabin camp, over a bridge and by the Kirkwood Serra Outfitters (209 / 785-7066) location where some horses were moving about and a furrier's hammer could be heard. Needless to say, our horses and we were super vigilant through this transit. We were close, as the paved staging area was indeed at the end of the road.

Finally, we were at the trail head and moving into the forest. It was a beautiful well-traveled trail winding up the mountain. We stopped several times to take pictures and water the horses at small creek crossings. There were some easy switchbacks and moving off the trail was relatively easy to let horses pass who were coming down the mountain. Sure enough there was a sign at the top of the climb. We meandered through some lovely meadow area and came to an unidentified small lake. We did not let the horses drink here as the shore looked a bit muddy, and there were NO horse prints up to the shore line. Moving on, we came upon a larger lake, maybe this is Hidden Lake, and met up with some fellow LARK riders who were resting their horses and having lunch.

As we moved on after the usual hellos, etc., a lone male rider was talking with some LARK riders. The guy said, "... over there there is a short cut" back to horses camp. It did not look so traveled but that is OK.

Well, here comes the TECHNICAL TRAIL. I (Joan) have done a lot of Boony Crashing (making my own trail) in mountain environments over many years of riding.

You have to keep your bearing (the Lake is that way) and if available, watch where deer have traveled as they will not go to a cliff. We very soon discovered finding the trail was an intellectual and physical challenge for horse and rider. There were trees across where the trail probable was. Those that were two feet elevation the horses could step over or jump when asked, then the bigger trees required us to pick our way through rock to get round and get back to what appeared to be a trail. Because we were uphill from the trail, we could scan the environment to site a little spot that appeared to be a trail. But getting from here to there was a challenge. OOPS, this way involves a three to four foot drop off of rock to other rocks. OOPS, this is a mini box canyon and we need to do a pirouette or back through rock to get out. There were some very pretty areas where we wandered through trees (watch you knees)! There were NO cairns / ducks (a pile of three rocks to notify a hiker or rider the location of the trail) on this "trail." Finally, we get down and spot the lake through the trees and turn left toward camp. What an adventure we had and it was FUN too.

Back in camp we untacked, washed the horses' legs and back with a dilute solution of "SORE NO-MORE" liniment and gave them extra beet pulp with their supplements. (The riders had a gin and tonic!)

POST SCRIPT: When we went to saddle the horses the next day, one of them just looked at us with a kind beautiful eye, "I need the day off, I do not want to do that again." So, in hand, we walked the horses on a level trail by the Lake and let them graze. GUESS WHAT!!! That trail had not be cleared for at least several years. On another day we rode the traveled trail in reverse up to Granite Lake. It was absolutely beautiful. The clear water is set in a bowl of granite, and that trail was marked with cairns where you had to traverse solid granite slabs. Thank goodness for well trained, balanced horses who were a joy to ride and camp with. We are blessed.

*And lastly, Linda concludes:*

This wonderful ride with Joan and all our LARK buddies was a turning point for me. I enjoyed my LARK ride last year on Charlie, my big horse, but this year at Silver Lake, I think I gained some real confidence back as far as riding goes. This particular ride was a real challenge for me. I have done a lot of boony crashing in my years of riding, but not since my horse wreck and

not on a horse new to me.

Joan's horse, Romeo, is responsible for turning the tide for me. He has now given me many wonderful rides both at Silver Lake and here in Cool. I thank you Joan for owning and training a "horse you can rely on" like Romeo.

Other than some pretty technical issues, coming off of that mountain I wanted to say that this was my first experience in the high country riding a bare foot horse. It is not for every horse, certainly not my 1,800 pound Belgian Warmblood, but it was a great experience to see how it can work for some horses. These two horses came down that mountain like cats. Joan went first so I was able to watch Bezt pick his way navigating some pretty difficult and rocky areas. I was confident that Romeo was focused on watching where he put his feet and would not mis-step either. Neither horse lost focus. Neither horse slipped or slid on the rocks. Neither horse rushed or panicked. Because there was really no trail to follow, we gave them direction but let them find the best way to get there. It was a pleasure to ride and watch what happened in front of me.

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*Linda Mitcham shares her experience, and now expertise, in dealing with summer sores.*

## SUMMER SORE IN HORSES

I would like to share with you my experience, success and failures to treat "summer sores" in horses.

I ride an 1,800 pound, 17 hand Belgian Warmblood named Charlie. He came to me from my sister in NH, a well trained large horse for me to ride and enjoy. I have owned horses for almost 50 years now, and this was to be my first experience with summer sores.

Sometime in June of 2011 the first lesion showed up on his left front heel where I thought he might have clipped himself over reaching. At any rate, the flies started on it and the lesion continued to grow. I had kept it as clean as you can keep a wound on a horse's heel. I washed it a couple of times a day. I used antibacterial ointment on it. I used vet wrap with a telfa pad so it did not stick and re-open the wound every time I changed it. The wound would appear to get better for a few days and then get worse again. I thought he was continuing to over reach and re-opening

the wound, so put him in Bell boots. It seemed no matter what I did the cycle continued. My vet came and determined there was an infection, so we gave Charlie a course of antibiotics. That seemed to really help. He got better for a few weeks, but the sore never completely healed. My vet told me what it was and what caused it. He said when we worm our horses most of them throw off the dead worms in their feces. Some more sensitive horses will additionally shed these worms through any lesion or scratch on their body. The cycle begins. The flies come to the lesions or scratches and lay eggs, and it is all down hill from there till the flies finally die off in the winter. Meanwhile, his left eye started to tear, so I treated that with saline solution and antibiotic ointment as well.

While we were on vacation in September, my house/pet sitter called to tell me there was a new lesion in the corner of Charlie's mouth. It was quite swollen and nasty. My vet came back out and gave Charlie another course of antibiotics and again told us this would continue till the flies died off in winter. We were doing everything we could for Charlie.

In mid-October I removed his fly mask one evening to find the eye that had been tearing most of the summer shut, his eyelid swollen and obviously painful. Our vet came in the morning and advised we take Charlie to Loomis for evaluation. Dr. Fielding felt that the best course of treatment would be to go in and remove the 2nd eyelid to stop the infection before we lost his eye. This was really getting serious. Fortunately, before they removed the 2nd eyelid, Dr. Fielding peeled the 2nd eyelid back and found several fly eggs that were like sharp pointed rocks in his eye. They were so far back they never could have been removed without the eye being completely numb. After Dr. Feilding removed those fly eggs, Charlie got immediate relief and within a day had his eye open and all swelling went down. What a relief. It was now November and the fly season finally came to an end. As predicted.....when there were no more flies, all lesions quickly healed.

Charlie had always been wormed regularly, but my vet advised we worm him monthly over the next year with Ivermectin.

In June and July this year Charlie did not have any summer sore problems. Then that hot spell in August hit and one morning we discovered that he had summer sores on three of his four legs.

I went out and bought a case of vet wrap, but this time instead of telfa pads, (which tend to keep a wound moist) my good friend, Joan, suggested that we try to keep the wound dry with some kind of dressing. She also suggested I spray the wounds gently with 10% salt water after cleaning them. I bought a package of panty liners and stuck them to the vet wrap. Then I invested in two sets of Cashel Leg Fly wraps, two fly masks with ears and nose piece and three fly sheets with a belly band. I wash his leg wraps and fly masks every night and his fly sheet once a week. A lot less expensive than three or four vet visits and three courses of antibiotics by mouth.

Within three weeks, two of his three legs healed up. I am still treating the left front leg, but instead of three courses of antibiotics he has had none yet this season. His eyes are clear and bright and no lesions on his belly or mouth, just antibiotic ointment on the wound every other day. It is now down to dime size and healing over quickly.

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*I came across this article in the June issue of EQUUS. The brief overview "Choose Wisely" gives us just a few questions to ask when selecting a supplement product.*

- Is there a complete label?

*Not a requirement, but a reliable company will list ingredients and amounts clearly on labels.*

- Is there a phone number?

*A company that is happy to answer questions about its product will provide a phone number on its label.*

- Is there a lot number?

*Companies use lot numbers to track batches of a product. A lot number is a sign of conscientious quality control.*

- Does it have a National Animal Supplement Council (NASC) Seal of Quality?

*The NASC is a non-profit organization of supplement manufacturers and suppliers who self-regulate to maintain the quality of their products. The manufacturer must meet strict criteria before being allowed to display the NASC logo.*

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***Pride makes us do things well, but it is love that makes us do them to perfection.***

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***Heidi has a little reminder to share:***

Please be sure to check your tires:

Check the tread and make sure they are wearing evenly.

Check for bulges - inside and out.

Make sure they are inflated to the correct pressure (tires will loose air over time) - check what PSI your trailer says (should be on the side of your trailer). Do not inflate to what the tire states - that is the maximum that the tire can hold.

All tires are dated - you should replace your tires every 5-7 years even if they look brand new.

Don't forget to check the spare.

You can also get your tires balanced for a better ride for your horse.

You can also buy insurance - at least at some tires stores, when you get new tires. This can be very beneficial down the road.

Also be sure and cover your tires to protect them and they will last longer.

Other important trailer checks:

Check the floor boards

Have your hubs lubed and brakes checked every year or two.

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***A tip I found in Equus:***

To keep bugs out of a horse's bran mash as it soaks, use a shower cap and stretch the elastic band around the top of the bucket.

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***To finish, I took these excerpts from an article in Dressage Today by Lilo Fore, respected FEI judge, clinician and lifetime trainer. As we know, good horsemanship and equitation are essential ingredients in the "art of riding."***

No. 1 Attitude - the rider's goal should be improvement, not perfection.

No. 2 Position - the horse can only be as correct as the rider.

No. 3 Aids - only precise riding will train the horse well.

No. 4 Thinking/Feeling Rider - from the moment you get on, you are training the horse.

**For the Horse:**

No. 5 Rhythm - the quality of the gait is essential.

No. 6 Relaxation - A horse that chews the reins out of the hands correctly is relaxed.

No. 7 Connection - hold your reins like you are holding something precious.

No. 8 Impulsion - send you horse forward as if you've put his energy in a slingshot.

No. 9 Straightness - the horse's neck must be straight in front, just like the hood of a car.

No. 10 Collection - collected strides are smaller, not slower.

Refining the 10-track mind: The essential ingredient of these points is to get out of your mind and notice only what you feel and detect what stands out as incorrect or insufficient; correct it quickly and move on to what you notice next. Let your horse be your teacher, pay attention to his invaluable feedback. Stay focused, slow things and ride every step. Commit to quality.

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***And, one of my favorite quotes by William Penn:***

***I expect to pass through this life but once. If, therefore, there is any kindness I can show or any good thing I can do to any fellow being or creature, let me do it now, for I shall not pass this way again.***

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So, there you have it. Please remember that your horse stories and barn tips are most welcome, and we need them to keep our newsletter interesting.

Also, remember DHA meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Greenwood Recreation Center. Hope to see you there!!

Your editor,

Charlotte Bancroft

