



West Virginia Neighs & Brays

The official newsletter of the West Virginia Equine Association
"Uniting and Educating West Virginia's Equine Community"

www.wvequineassoc.org

October/November 2008

From the Horses Mouth

A Word From Our President; Laura Riddle

The end of riding season is right around the corner, I sure hope everyone has gotten a chance to get out and enjoy your equines and the gorgeous riding weather we have been having.

We have already begun working on our events calendar for 2009. I am very excited about several events that we have coming up next year and I hope to see you there. We will be hosting Lynn Palm again in May and also a Large Animal Rescue Training clinic in July, just to name a couple.

Unfortunately lack of volunteers has limited us to only a few major events each year so we need the help of our members now more than ever, please consider taking an active role in at least one event in 2009.

Until next time, mount up and ride safe!!

Sincerely,
Laura Riddle
President

The Talk on the Fence

WVEA News
By Laura Riddle

The WV Equine Association postponed our September meeting. Our next meeting will be November 8th at Choo Choo's Restaurant in New Martinsville, WV. We will have a lunch/social hour from 12:00 – 1:00 PM and the meeting will begin at 1:00 PM. Meetings are open to everyone and we hope that you will join us.

The 3rd annual Peace Point Endurance Ride was held on August 16 & 17 and was a huge success!! A big thank you to all the volunteers who helped make this ride possible. For more details about the ride see the article on page 4.

Event planning for the 2009 season is underway, we have several big events already scheduled and are accepting entries for these events. We will be hosting Lynn Palm May 16 & 17 at the WVU Equestrian Facility in Reedsville, WV. We will also be hosting a Large Animal

Rescue Training on July 11 & 12 at the WV State Fire Academy in Weston, WV. Days End Farm of Woodbine, MD will be conducting the training. If you are interested in attending either of these events please check our Website: www.wvequineassoc.org or send an email to: info@wvequineassoc.org.

Nominations for 2009 officers and board members begins on November 1st. All members in good standing are eligible to run for an office or board seat. If you are interested in running for a position or would like to nominate a fellow member please send your nominations to: riddlell@suddenlink.net.

WVEA Officers

President

Laura Riddle

V. President

Matt Jenkins

Secretary

Kathy Beagle

Treasurer

Tina Jenkins

Board of Directors

Kim Bennett

Rachael Paris

Jane Charlton

Von Riddle

MISSION STATEMENT

The objectives and purposes for which the West Virginia Equine Association is incorporated shall be to:

Help promote and protect the interests of all WV equines and equestrians and to give aid and support to every type of equine activity.

Operate in a spirit of co-operation and to encourage communication among West Virginia's diverse equine interests.

Regulate, with others, the acquisition, building, maintenance and supervision of trails and rights-of-ways.

Share in the development of equine legislation, enhancement of the equine industry and the preservation and protection of equine traditions for the future.

Educate and be a source of information and referrals to the equine community and the general public.

Sponsor programs and demonstrations and to take such actions as the general membership directs.

"The horse through all its trials has preserved the sweetness of paradise in its blood." ~Johannes Jensen

Farm Call

What Happened to Responsible Horse Ownership?

By Kathy Beagle

I often attend Sugarcreek Livestock Auction. It is usually with a great deal of sadness, as I know the fate of 90% of the horses that are unfortunate enough to have owners who leave them there. It is heart wrenching to walk among the pens and look into the eyes of horses that are doomed to be slaughtered after a long ride in a crowded truck to Canada or Mexico. All I can do is offer a scratch or a pat and tell them I am sorry, I have no room for anyone else at our farm. I cannot stretch our finances and jeopardize the care of the ones at home by taking any more of them.

There are draft horses that have worked their entire lives plowing Amish fields, helping plant and harvest food for their owners only to be dumped when they become injured or too old to work. There are Standardbreds who have safely provided transportation for families but are dumped when the constant pounding on pavement takes its toll on their bodies or a newer model is purchased. There are Standardbreds and Thoroughbreds who have won thousands and sometimes hundreds of thousands of dollars for their owners during their racing careers who are dumped when they no longer can "hit the board" or are injured (even if it is a temporary injury). BLM mustangs and burros that somehow filtered into the system, usually adopted on a whim, not gentled and then dumped. There are Arabians and Quarter horses who may have become sour in their show careers, developed lameness or are no longer "fashionable"...also dumped.

Every breed including donkeys and mules are represented there. There are mares with newborn foals, pregnant mares, nice yearlings and young horses...who knows why they ended up at a slaughter auction. There are children's horses and ponies whose owners have outgrown them or lost interest...dumped. Some who have been starved beyond being of any value are also abandoned there. Injured horses whose owners were unwilling to pay for the veterinary costs are just dropped off.

I have seen broken bones, cancerous tumors, hernias, horrendous injuries, acute founder, blindness and everything in between...dumped like garbage at the auction. Some are brought in so sick or injured that they are euthanized there after the auction. These are horse owners who are willing to compromise any moral responsibility to suck the last dime out of their horse. I have no respect for anyone who dumps a horse at the auction, then leaves and waits for their check in the mail. It is not the best option but I do commend those owners who stay and represent their horses to be sure they go to private owners and "no sale" their horses if the highest bid is a dealer or kill buyer.

There are between 200-400 horses that go through this auction EVERY Friday. Most are herded through without a word said about them. The surprising fact that most people fail to realize is that most of these horses are sound, young, and healthy animals. I have found some of the best riding horses anyone can ask for straight out of the "meat" pen. Who knows how they came to be there? Sometimes unscrupulous traders buy or take horses on trade from unsuspecting owners promising a good home, and then send them to auction. People often view the kill buyers who attend these auctions with contempt but the real villains are horse owners who send their old, sick, starved or injured horses there to die.

If all horse owners took responsibility for their horses by finding homes or humanely euthanizing the old, injured or unusable, these "meat men" would be out of the horse business in a short period of time. There are many horse owners who believe that slaughter is needed and is a valuable tool to control the horse population. I do not agree but respect that everyone is entitled to their own opinion. I have friends who are pro-slaughter. We agree not to discuss the topic. I only ask that anyone in favor of slaughter to please attend the auction and watch what happens to your horse there. Do not sit in the stands. Stay in the back and observe from the time you drop off your horse until he is loaded on the truck. Watch as he is cornered and attacked by more aggressive horses. Watch the confusion and fear in his eyes. Watch unbiased videos of the slaughter process. Do not be an owner who "doesn't want to know what happens".

Many horse owners are not so much against slaughter but against the methods used to transport and kill the horses. I think if more humane methods were introduced, we could all agree. When you think of the volume of owners sending their horses to this auction, it is unbelievable. There is an average of close to 200 horses a week going through the auction ring without representation, meaning that over 10,000 horse owners a year are sending their horses to a known slaughter auction in Sugarcreek, Ohio alone. These people are the true "meat men" and they are among us. They are our fellow horse owners.

Hoofin' It

How To Keep Your Farrier Happy

By Anthony Nelson

Some horse owners may not think that keeping a farrier happy is important. These are the same owners who are always looking for a new farrier because they cannot keep one for more than 3 to 6 months and it's usually the farrier's choice to quit.

Here are 6 things that will help you keep your farrier

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"Horses - if God made anything more beautiful, he kept it for himself." ~ Unknown

happy:

1. When scheduling the next visit, allow your farrier plenty of time to work you into his/her schedule. Call him/her at least the week before you need your horse(s) done. Also don't surprise him/her with extra work that you did not mention while on the phone, farriers generally run a fairly tight schedule (don't assume they have nothing else to do). Squeezing in an extra horse may make them late for their next appointment so they may refuse to do your extra horse.

2. Simple courtesy and thoughtfulness mean a lot to the farrier. Have your horse in the barn and waiting. Remember the farrier is getting paid to shoe or trim your horse, not catch him out in the pasture or wait 30 minutes while you're chasing him around.

3. This is my favorite topic and a pet peeve of mine personally. If you expect your farrier to do his/her best work you need to do your part to help. You will need to provide a clean, dry, level place for him/her to work that has proper lighting. Your horse(s) need to stand quietly and cooperate with the farrier. Biting, kicking, wet, muddy and jerking horses are not very appealing to the farrier and if they are even done they will not have a lot of time spent on them and may cost extra to do!

4. Also remember, don't expect your farrier to do extras, especially for free such as removing bell boots, leg wraps, booting and or de-booting, putting on hoof dressings and cleaning off filthy feet and legs. All of these take time and are the owners' responsibility. Time is money for the farrier!

5. Payment in a timely fashion is very appreciated by farriers. I personally do not bill, I expect payment when the work is done as do most farriers. If you are not able to pay the day of services, please let your farrier know when scheduling not after your horse has been done. Remember your payment is his/her paycheck and they have bills to pay just like everyone else.

6. **DO NOT PICK YOUR FARRIER BY THE CHEAPEST PRICE!** I know you have to keep to your budget but the best farrier will probably not be the cheapest. Farriers have a lot of expenses, if you think the farrier just sticks all of the money you have just paid him/her in their pocket you are kidding yourself. However, the quality of your farriers work should be comparable to their price.

This article is provided to help horse owners, a lot of owners already do all of these things and I'm sure your farrier appreciates it. For those horse owners that do not do these things I hope this article will help you in acquiring a farrier that can provide proper hoofcare for your

horse(s). I also understand that there are farriers that need to learn how to treat and keep clients as well, that is why the West Virginia Farriers Association provides clinics, to further educate farriers on how to help and treat the horse and the horse owner as well. If you or your farrier want to learn more about hoofcare or the West Virginia Farriers Association please contact me at:
nelsonfarrier@hotmail.com.

Lunge Lines

Ground Training is the Key to Reading the Horse and Overcoming Fears

By Lynn Palm

Observing the horse on the ground gives a rider the tools to read their horse. A rider uses their eyes to interpret what the horse is thinking by watching his eyes, ears, tail, breathing, skin and overall body more easily than when riding. A rider can also learn more about their horse's personality, sensitivity, fitness, energy, response or moods such as confidence, relaxation, worry, or boredom!

Overcoming fears begins by knowing your horse, which starts on the ground. The addition of ground training in a daily routine is so beneficial! Mastering ground handling always gives a safe place to go back to if fear under saddle becomes an issue. The rider can gain respect by correcting a horse and being assertive on the ground, which is safer than when on top of the horse. Once the rider gains control on the ground through working in hand, longeing, working at liberty and ground driving this confidence and understanding of the horse can be translated to work under saddle. This is also a good time to analyze the suitability of the horse to the rider's goals. The best tool for overcoming fear is knowing the horse is suited to the skill level, interests, lifestyle and personal goals of the rider.

Keep Your Horse Happy With Proper Saddle Fit

By Lynn Palm

Have you ever tried to walk in shoes that are too small or too big? Your experience was probably very uncomfortable, and you may have developed soreness or blisters as a result. Now consider your horse and how he might feel in a saddle that doesn't fit.

What are some ways a horse "tells you" his saddle doesn't fit? He may stride out properly on the longe line, but when he's ridden he takes short strides and may also pin his ears. You ask him for collection, and he resists by inverting his back. He may pin his ears and/or swish his tail when you mount. He bucks after jumps or trips and stumbles when you're riding on the flat. He may throw his head and/or grind his teeth while being mounted or

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"If you want a stable friendship, get a horse." ~Unknown

girthed. You notice it's difficult for him to travel straight when ridden. You brush him after riding, and he flinches to your touch because his back is sore. You're going to do a sliding stop, and your horse stops on his front end instead of stopping with hind end underneath him. These are just a few ways a horse might be saying, "Help me. My saddle doesn't fit!"

Proper saddle fit is one of the most important considerations when riding. If you are unsure if your saddle fits properly, please consult a knowledgeable professional for help. Your horse will thank you with his great performance, willingness, and happiness, and you'll avoid unnecessary vet and chiropractic bills generated by poor saddle fit.

Over the Hills and Through the Woods

2008 Peace Point Endurance Ride
By Laura Riddle

Eighty-two riders descended on the small quiet town of Bethany, West Virginia, to participate in the third annual Peace Point Endurance Ride. The ride site is located on Peace Point Equestrian Center's 2,800-acre facility and offers riders a glimpse of West Virginia's beautiful scenery. The trails give riders a combination of all kinds of terrain from open fields and rolling wooded countryside to steep climbs and descents and creek crossings.

We couldn't have asked for better weather in mid-August in West Virginia: sunny and mid-80s with moderate humidity. It was definitely a pleasant change from the 2006 ride at which we battled through heavy rain, strong winds and deep mud.



On Saturday morning 61 riders headed out on the 50 and 25. At 8:15 a.m., 50-mile riders were returning to base camp for their first vet check and reports began to circulate about a loose horse on the trail but there was little information about what had happened, only that the rider was OK and walking in to camp. I headed off to find the trail master to let him know he needed to go out and pick up the rider and to discuss the best possible way to locate

the loose horse without interfering with any riders still on the trail.

As we were preparing to leave camp to pick up the rider and search for the horse, the rider returned and informed us that she had dismounted to fix a horse boot and dropped her reins and her horse decided to continue on without her. She was optimistic that he would come in with the other riders and told us to put the search on hold.

After the last rider had returned to camp for the first vet check we decided it was time to start the search. A mile in, the trail master informed me that he must return to base camp to re-fuel his ATV. I decided to continue the search on foot instead of wasting time going back to base camp. Big mistake! I would find out hours later, after walking 10 miles back to base camp, that when the trail master returned to re-fuel his ATV the missing horse had been found and a small section of trail had been vandalized that he had to re-mark. Needless to say, re-marking the trail took precedence over picking up the ride manager.

Deb Shaffer on Sheik Abu Galihad was the first to finish in the 50. Miz Vandansk ridden by Corie Ann Gregg was best condition and also received high vet score. Amanda Munson on Studs Hooligan was the first to finish in the 25 LD, Dennis Thompson on Cochise received the vet's choice award and Teresa Izer on Raffala Derama received the optimal time award. There were six pulls in the 50 and two overtimes and only one pull in the 25.

Sunday morning we had 21 riders starting and thankfully all riders and horses managed to stay together. Claire Godwin on PL Mercury was first to finish in the 50. PL Mercury earned both BC and high vet score. Patricia DeMott on CMK Lees April Love was first to finish in the 25, John Welch on MB Fyre Khracker received the vet's choice award and the Loomis family—Shannon riding Quest For Star, Christopher riding Quail Meadow Star and Morgan riding Be A Quiet Man—received the optimal time award. There were two pulls in the 50 and one in the 25 with no overtimes in either.



The ride is a joint effort between Peace Point Equestrian Center (www.peacepointfarms.com) and the West Virginia Equine Association (www.wvequineassoc.org), both non-profit organizations.

Thank you to all the volunteers, sponsors, Dr. Art King, Dr. Nick Kohut and his wife Ranelle for helping to make this ride possible.

"Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people." ~W.C. Fields

WVEA Large Animal Rescue Training

The West Virginia Equine Association is hosting a large animal rescue training clinic with Days End Farm on July 11 & 12, 2009 at the WV State Fire Academy at WVU Jackson's Mill in Weston, WV. We strongly recommend advance registration for all participants wishing to receive a certification; certification will only be guaranteed for the first 40 registrants.



An event flyer and additional information is posted on our Website: www.wvequineassoc.org. If you are interested in attending the clinic either as a participant or an auditor/spectator please send an email to: info@wvequineassoc.org.

WVEA Lynn Palm Clinic

The West Virginia Equine Association is hosting a clinic with Lynn Palm on May 16 & 17, 2009 at the WVU Equestrian Barn in Morgantown, WV. We strongly recommend advance registration for all training participants; training slots will only be guaranteed for the first 10 riders.



An event flyer and additional information is posted on our website: www.wvequineassoc.org. If you are interested in attending the clinic either as a participant or an auditor/spectator please send an email to: info@wvequineassoc.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

“SPENCER HORSE & TACK SALE”

PLACE: SPENCER LIVESTOCK BARN – SPENCER, WV
DATE & TIME: OCTOBER 3RD AT 7:30 PM
For more info: 304-927-5105 or 304-927-4817

“ELKINS STOCKYARD HORSE & TACK SALE”

PLACE: ELKINS STOCKYARD – ELKINS, WV
DATE & TIME: OCTOBER 4TH AT 1:30 PM
For more info: Bus Conaway – 304-636-0500 or 304-636-0571

“WOOD COUNTY HORSE CLUB MEETING”

PLACE: WOOD COUNTY LIBRARY – PARKERSBURG, WV
DATE & TIME: OCTOBER 7TH AT 7:00 PM
For more info: 304-863-5224

“EASTERN PANHANDLE SADDLE CLUB MEETING”

PLACE: SHONEY'S – MARTINSBURG, WV
DATE & TIME: OCTOBER 13TH AT 7:00 PM
For more info: 304-676-6677

“WV FARRIERS ASSOC FOUNDERED HORSE CLINIC”

PLACE: GILMER COUNTY REC CENTER – GLENVILLE, WV
DATE & TIME: OCTOBER 25TH AT 9:00 AM
For more info: Anthony Nelson – 740-236-2497 or nelsonfarrier@hotmail.com

“WV EQUINE ASSOCIATION MEETING”

PLACE: CHOO CHOO'S – NEW MARTINSVILLE, WV
DATE & TIME: NOVEMBER 8TH LUNCH 12:00; MEETING 1:00 PM
For more info: info@wvequineassoc.org or www.wvequineassoc.org

Please check our Website for more events: www.wvequineassoc.org
If you would like to submit an event, send it to: riddl@l@suddenlink.net.

WVEA Corporate Sponsor



We would like to thank Southern States for their support!!

Committees

Education: Andi Kerr – cedar1@outdrs.net
Legislative: Open – info@wvequineassoc.org
Publication: Laura Riddle – riddl@l@suddenlink.net
Trails: Open – info@wvequineassoc.org
Animal Welfare: Rachael Paris – srparis2@yahoo.com
Membership: Open – info@wvequineassoc.org
Fundraising: Kim Steele – kim@snsfarms.net

Please contact the chairperson listed above if you are interested in joining a committee.

Newsletter

If you have something you would like to submit for a future newsletter, please contact: riddl@l@suddenlink.net

“There is no secret so close as that between a rider and his horse.” ~Robert Smith Surtees