



Horse & Pony News

VOLUME 56 NUMBER 4

APRIL 2024

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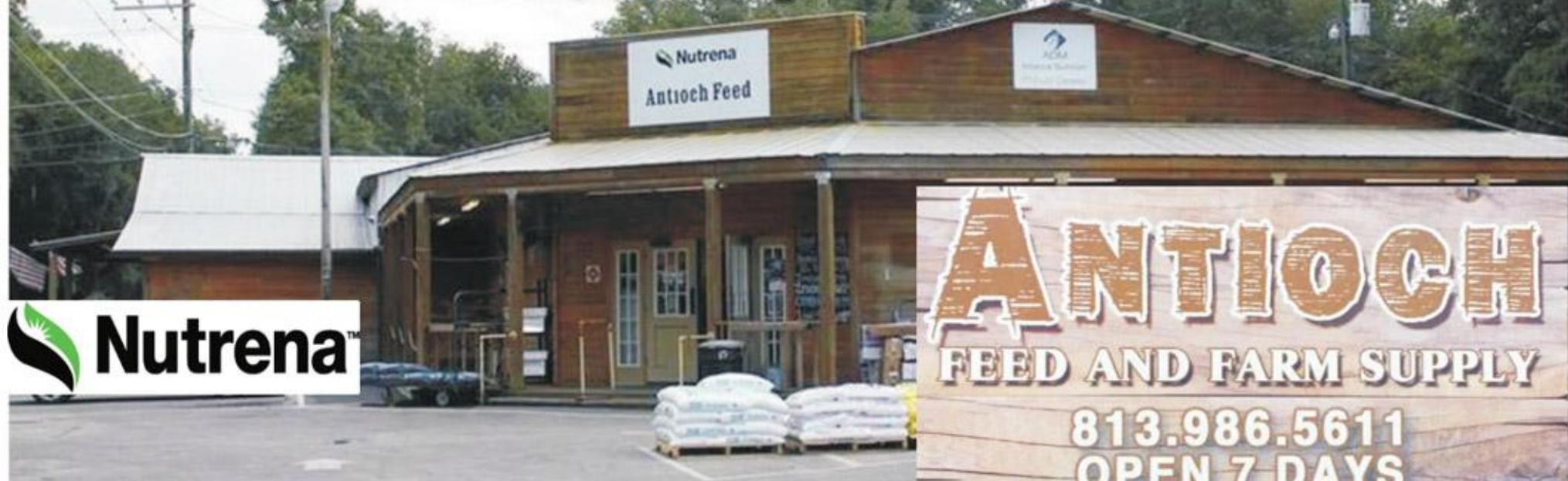


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Please see the article on page five of this issue with all the details!

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February 2024: Worst Wildfire in Texas History, with Heavy Livestock Losses

Finally reaching containment in March, Texas has suffered its worst and largest wildfire ever, devastating over 1.2 million acres in the upper Panhandle. That's Amarillo country. Eighty-five percent of Texas' cattle are in the Panhandle, outnumbering the people in many places.

Beginning on Feb. 26, it raced across the drought-stricken land at 200 acres a minute, charring already dried pasture grass damaged in the drought year of 2023. With high March winds, the huge fire became the largest wildfire in Texas history. Two people lost their lives, women in separate homes who could not get out of their houses in time.

The death toll in livestock was catastrophic, over 7350 cattle and horses lost initially but that's expected to rise as



high as 10,000 as ranchers try to track down animals that strayed far away over burned, downed fences. Unless branded, it was near impossible to prove ownership, and many of the mama cows could not nurse their calves because of burned udders. Calves that survived had to be hand-raised, or both would become victims of the blaze. Ranchers had tough

decisions to make.

Worse, the monster fire continued on and invaded its neighbor to the east, Oklahoma. It will forever be known as the Smokehouse Creek Fire, Texas' worst. It destroyed at least 30 houses in one town. It's believed to have started at a nearby power plant where an old power pole fell... taking the wires down with it.

Mystery Dog Disease Now in 14 States, Including Florida

With a name now, Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC), this new threat to our dogs is neither welcome nor fully understood. With symptoms similar to kennel cough, what's scary is this disease's apparent resistance to antibiotic treatment. Starting last summer in Oregon, there is not yet a central reporting system to track and document the disease. It's not known if it's a strange new 'kennel cough on steroids,' or an entirely new strain of a highly contagious and potentially fatal disease. For now, the advice remains to keep your dog(s) essentially in isolation—away



from other dogs... no dog walking near other canines, no visits to dog parks or boarding kennels, etc.

The University of Florida Vet School is working to determine whether this is a new pathogen or a dangerous variant of kennel cough. Symptoms include coughing, nasal and eye discharge, fever and lethargy leading to pneumonia that can quickly turn deadly. Ask your veterinarian if they're seeing any spikes in respiratory cases, and stay tuned to information on this one.

Harmful Dog Legislation Proposed in Congress

In late March, Goldie's Act (HR 1788/S 4033), was introduced in the U.S. Senate. This harmful bill:

- * Redefines "violations" of the federal Animal Welfare Act;
- * Allows for immediate seizure or euthanasia of animals suffering from "psychological harm", a term it does not define;
- * Removes distinctions between minor non-compliances such as paperwork errors and animal care violations. AWA enforcement emphasis should be on the health and welfare of animals;
- * Requires posting of images of violations on a publicly accessible database; and
- * Undermines the property rights of responsible breeders.

PLEASE ACT TODAY!

Call, email, or write to your member of Congress and U.S. Senators today. Visit AKC's Legislative Action Center legislator contact page at <https://akcgr.org/officials> and type in your address to find the names and contact information for your Member of Congress and U.S. Senators.

Respectfully Tell them:

1. Please oppose Goldie's Act. This is a "feel good" proposal that is being promoted as improving Animal Welfare Act enforcement, but will actually do the opposite by creating confusion and mistrust, and reducing emphasis on education and proper care for dogs.

2. Explain you are a constituent. Respectfully share your

experience and concerns as a dog owner/breeder/expert. For example, what criteria would an inspector use to determine "psychological harm", which is not defined?

3. Despite claims being made by AR groups, these bills do impact responsible small breeders.

4. Dog owners should not have to fear arbitrary seizure or euthanasia of their animals based on vague allegations of "psychological harm", a term that the bill is not defined.

5. Ask them to instead support additional financial resources for USDA educational and enforcement programs so they can appropriately educate licensees and enforce existing requirements.

6. If you can, let the AKC Government Relations (AKC GR) team (doglaw@akc.org) know you contacted your lawmakers and if you received any response.

Who This Applies To:

Anyone subject to USDA breeder/dealer licensing. Breeders are subject to USDA licensing if they maintain more than 4 "breeding females" (a term that is undefined but is generally considered to mean an intact female) and transfer even one of the offspring "sight unseen". "Breeding females" include any combination of cats, dogs, or other small pet mammals such as hamsters, guinea pigs, etc. For questions or more information, contact doglaw@akc.org, visit AKC's Legislative Action Center www.akcgr.org or contact 919-816-3720.

Horse & Pony News

Check our website for a new issue each month!

www.HorseAndPonyNews.com

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The Stables on Stage Coach, Inc. Grand Opening May 1

The Stables on Stage Coach, INC is a peaceful and relaxing horse boarding facility located in Central Florida. Cities within an hour drive include, but are not limited to; Floral City, Brooksville, Spring Hill, Bushnell, Webster, Sumterville, Leesburg, Ocala, Dade City, Zephyrhills, Wesley Chapel and Tampa.

This lovely, privately-owned 20 acre horse farm is fully fenced and cross-fenced with 7 individual pastures, each containing automatic waterers. Full board is offered, with your choice of large, lush pasture grass group turn-out, or private pasture turn-out. Availability on a first-come, first-serve basis, in addition to your choice of stall with sizes ranging between 12x18 to 12x12. Stalls contain the STALL-SAVERS stall mat system, also utilized by many large racetracks across the country including Tampa Bay Downs. STALL-SAVERS mats allow urine to drain through promoting a higher level of cleanliness and air quality for your horse as they will never stand in urine or breathe its fumes. Great for those horses suffering from COPD. Stalls have a front door and rear door/window combination, fans, automatic waterers and a Himalayan salt lick. Barn is 3 years old with a center-aisle layout and automatic insect control. Two wash stations available on property.

The lighted riding arena is 170' x 370' with sand and clay footing, regularly groomed. Separate small barn storage for feed and hay. Pasture cleanliness is maintained by utilizing the Tow 'N Collect for manure removal.

Care for your horse includes Nutrena grain and T & A hay fed twice daily with turnout schedule of your choice, am or pm. Trailer parking is available for a small additional fee, and a gate opener is provided to the private entrance with a \$50 refundable deposit. Property is minutes away from two equine-friendly trailheads within the Withlacoochee Forest, specifically the Tillis Hill Recreation Area and the Holder Mine Campground.

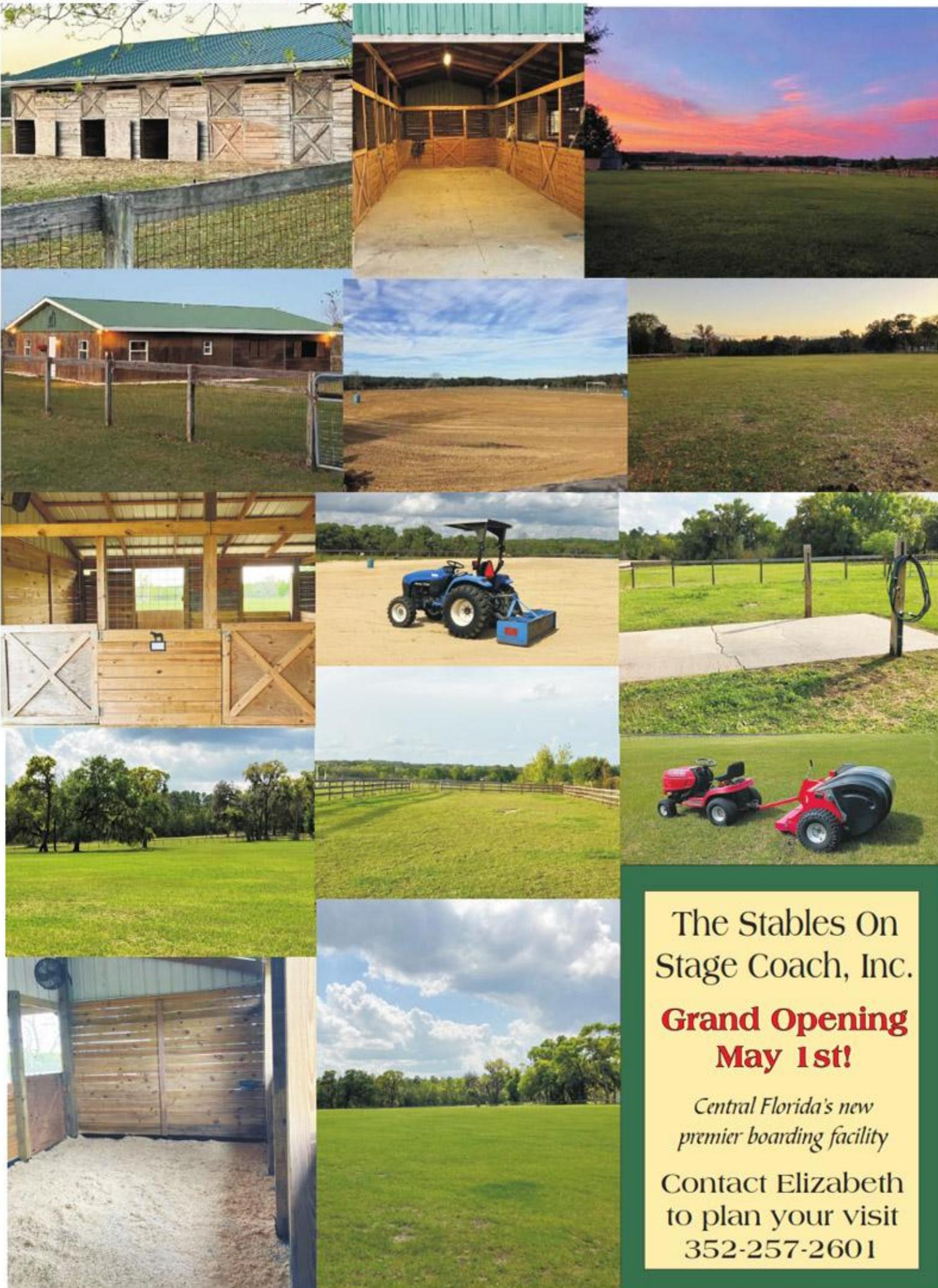
For the boarder, amenities include an A/C tack room, A/C workout room with gym equipment, washer and dryer, bathroom with shower, break room area with kitchenette including small fridge, microwave and sink.

Boarder shall provide proof of negative Coggins, vaccines and a continual deworming schedule. Not accepting studs at this time.

All riding disciplines welcomed. Trainers can make an appointment to use the arena for lessons. Small ring fee and proof of liability insurance required.

To make an appointment to see this little hidden gem of a horse boarding facility, call Elizabeth @ 352-257-2601 for availability and pricing. It just might be what you and your horse are looking for!

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Texas A&M Researchers Find Links Between Human, Canine Brain Tumor Detection Markers

By Courtney Price, VMBS Communications

Sharing detection markers means that treatment research has potential benefits for both species.

Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences (VMBS), Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital researchers have discovered that meningiomas — the most common type of brain tumor in humans and dogs — are extremely similar genetically.

These newly discovered similarities will allow doctors to use a classification system that identifies aggressive tumors in both humans and dogs, while also opening the door for new and exciting collaborations between human and animal medicine.

Until now, the lack of reliable and viable experimental models has been a barrier to understanding the biology of and developing effective treatments for these brain tumors.

"The discovery that naturally occurring canine tumors closely resemble their human counterparts opens numerous avenues for exploring the biology of these challenging tumors," said Dr. Akash Patel, an associate professor of neurosurgery at Baylor College of Medicine and principal investigator at the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute (Duncan NRI) at Texas Children's Hospital. "It also provides opportunities for developing and studying novel treatments applicable to both humans and dogs."

The study, published in the scientific journal *Acta Neuropathologica*, was led by Patel; Dr. Jonathan Levine, a VMBS professor and head of the Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences (VSCS); and Dr. Tiemo Klisch, assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine and principal investigator at Duncan NRI. VSCS assistant professor Dr. Beth Boudreau was a key collaborator.

For the project, the team analyzed 62 canine meningiomas from 27 dog breeds and discovered that the

tumors shared remarkable similarities to the same kinds of tumors when they occur in humans. This is the largest study to date of the gene expression profiles of canine meningiomas.

Watching The Signs

The new discovery was made possible by building on recent work conducted by Patel's team, as well as previous work by Levine and Boudreau that explored gliomas, another type of brain tumor.

In 2019, Patel and others at Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital found that they could classify meningiomas in humans into three biologically distinct subtypes — MenG A, B, and C — by analyzing their RNA. The new classification system can predict patient outcomes with greater accuracy than the standard tissue sample analysis.

"Because RNA shows how a tumor's genes activate, it allows researchers to accurately predict how a tumor will behave — whether it will be aggressive or if it's going to respond to certain therapies," Levine said.

In 2020, Levine, Boudreau, and colleagues at the VMBS and the Jackson Laboratory for Genetic Medicine found genetic similarities between gliomas — the second most common type of brain tumors — in humans and dogs. Armed with a new way of detecting aggressive tumors and the knowledge that dogs and humans share some brain tumor traits, Patel reached out to Levine about applying the findings to study meningiomas.

"We ended up agreeing to provide Patel with canine tumor samples we had worked years and years to archive, to see if he could isolate the RNA, which is not always easy to do," Levine said. "He was able to produce this very robust dataset that showed a similar pattern structure to human tumors. Our team also provided Dr. Patel with key clinical outcome data, including responses to certain treatments."

Moving To Clinical Trials

Now that the researchers have established a connection between tumors across the two species, they can begin



preparations for clinical trials, which can take several years to plan and fund.

"We're really interested in creating wins for both human and animal medicine," Levine said. "For example, we hope to give dog owners access to therapy that's not available anywhere else in the world through clinical trials. At the same time, that information will also inform the

next step of human trials."

Incidentally, a separate group of researchers from the University of California, Davis, conducted a similar study with matching conclusions about meningiomas in dogs and people and published their work in the same journal. The two research groups look forward to collaborating in the future to develop tumor treatments for both species.

"I think there is a terrific opportunity for the teams at Baylor, Texas A&M, Texas Children's, and University of California to collaborate to create a clinical trial," Levine said.

"If we do one trial, we'd be able to enroll patients a lot more quickly, which would make it easier to get larger datasets, resulting in stronger findings. So, we have a lot of interest in doing a collaborative trial," he explained. "We really see the team out in California as potential partners."

For now, the next step is looking through the data from both studies to see if there are clues that will lead to new therapies.

"One of the benefits of this project is that we already have all this genetic data that we can use to decide what might make a good treatment," Levine said. "Part one has set us up very well to work on part two."

This article reprinted courtesy of Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences. For more information about the Texas A&M School of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences, please visit our website at vetmed.tamu.edu or join us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

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Legend Family Fun Day In Sumter County

Forty family members and friends gathered at Legend Farms in Sumter County to celebrate 40 years of fellowship. Opening ceremonies began at 10 AM. The announcer was Rose Marie Martin, the invocation was delivered by Gary MacIntosh followed by the National anthem. The pledge of allegiance was lead by Michael Specht. Special Olympics Athlete Oath was recited by Melissa MacIntosh. Special guests were Leonard and Glenna Kemp. Leonard is Area 5 and Special Olympics Florida Sports Coordinator.

The stars of the day were six members of the Sumter Special Olympics Equestrian Team and four of their six horses. Each member exhibited their equestrian abilities.

Athletes include

Melissa MacIntosh has been with the team since 2009. She has ridden Barrel Racing, Pole Bending, Equitation and Trail courses. She has also done Showmanship at Halter and Leadline Trail Course. She was 2023 Sumter Athlete of the Year.

Michael Specht has been a member since 2013. He was

the 2019 Sumter Athlete of the Year. Michaels' disciplines include Equitation, Trail Course, Showmanship at Halter and Leadline Trail Course.

Susan Shere, Mariah Harris, Colin Potts and Julie London are all first year athletes. Colin and Julie are cart drivers. Susan and Mariah have done cart driving but have moved to Mounted Equitation and Trail.

The show included Western Equitation, Arena Rail work, Western Trail Course which included eight obstacles, Parade Cart Driving, Cart Driving Course, Showmanship at Halter and Leadline Trail Course.

The athletes were judged by well known local horsewoman Mary Lou Raulerson who owns In The Tradirion Arabians in Sumterville. She has gifted Legend Farms two beautiful horses for our program.

For more information about Legend Farm and Sumter Special Olympics Equestrian Team contact Rose Marie Martin at 727-423-6586. For special Olympics Florida contact Leonard Kemp at 863-397-9775.

See photos on opposite page!

The Story of Florida's Newest Equine Retirement Home- Sunset Meadows

If you own a horse, you know they are part of the family. They are a loved member nearly as much as you might love your spouse, child or parent. Some days you have lots of fun together, and some days, well some days it's really challenging. But that's what being a family is about. You know where they like to be rubbed or scratched, what they like to do for play and fun as well as things they don't like, and even what their favorite snacks are. Makes no difference if were talking people or horses, that's just being part of a family.

In my family, it was my daughter Brandi who fell in love with horses. Since she was 8 years old horses have been in her life. She started in 4H in the Horses for Handicapped program and attended summer horse camp at the University of Florida. She loved to compete in the dressage arena. Eventually we rescued an off the track Thoroughbred named Trevor. I say rescued because we found him in a dark 12x12 stall at a local stable. Luckily, we had a little piece of property that allowed Trevor to get out and graze. It was good seeing him outside in the sun and on the grass. We travelled with Trevor to shows all across Florida as well as into Louisiana and Georgia. Unfortunately, like all of us, Trevor started to show his age

and could no longer compete, and Brandi still wanted to show, so a new Blue Roan Quarter Horse named Skillet was in her future.

We only had space and time for one horse. So, what do we do with Trevor? Our choices were back to some 12x12 stall somewhere for the rest of his life, find a nice place for him to retire, or put him down. Well, that last option wasn't really an option as he still had plenty of life in him, just not show life. No way we were putting him back into the environment we rescued him from, so finding some place for him to retire was the answer.

We found a place with open green pastures and other horses for Trevor to run, graze and play with. Horses are natural herd animals and he was in with a herd. I'm sure he was going to miss me giving him the mints I picked up from every store and restaurant I visited, but watching him run



play and frolic, we knew he was happy. Sadly, Trevor passed away quietly on that farm some years later, but we knew his last years were being spent the way a horse is supposed to spend them, grazing on green grass and not locked up in solitary confinement in some stall somewhere.

Brandi continued to ride and show Skillet, and after graduating college, decided to go West and work at a high end guest ranch outside of Saratoga, Wyoming. She was living every horse loving girls dream, taking guests and riding on the open range and into Medicine Bow National Forest in the Sierra Madre Range. It was here that Brandi met her future husband, Tyler.

Once married, Brandi and Tyler lived in both his home state of Minnesota and back in Wyoming where they first met. Eventually they decided to move to Florida and open a business. Considering Brandi's love of horses and remembering everything

she went through with Trevor, it was decided Brandi and Tyler would open a retirement farm for horses and Sunset Meadows Equine Retirement Farm LLC was born.

They settled in the little town of Webster, Florida which sits South of Ocala and North of Brooksville in what many people consider the heart of Florida's horse country. They purchased a piece of property with ten acres to start their business. Thinking back to Trevor, he would have loved this spot as it has thick lush pasture, plenty of water and shade, brand new no climb fence and owners that know the needs of a retired horse. Yes, this would work perfectly for an equine retirement farm.

If your loved one can no longer compete or do whatever it is you do with them, you are faced with the same options we were: Euthanasia, spend their remaining years in a 12x12 stall, or grazing on green pastures for the rest of their life at an equine retirement farm. If you choose the latter, we would love for you to consider Sunset Meadows Equine Retirement Farm LLC. For details and more information contact Brandi Odden at 727-743-8720 or bsclafani3229@gmail.com

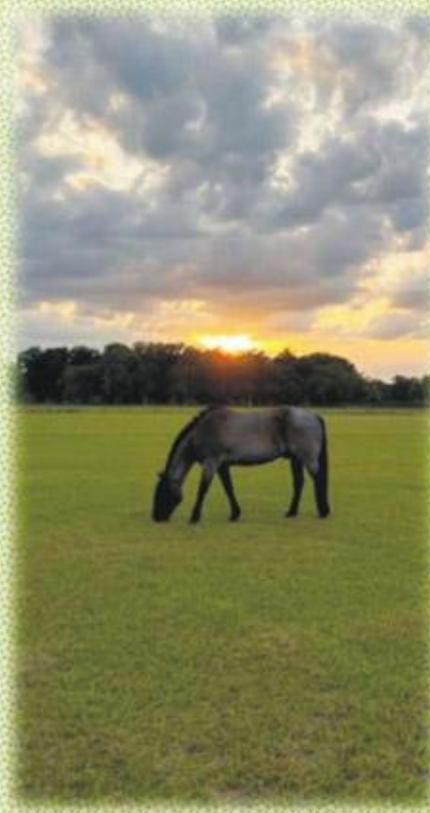
Scenes from the Legend Family Fun Day!

See article on opposite page!



Sunset Meadows

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727-743-8720
Webster, Florida

Fast Times at Agility High

By Christy Gammage, Practice Makes Pawfect

Dog Agility is a timed sport. The fastest 'clean' run wins (where clean = no faults). Some classes are scored with time + faults, so a really fast dog with some faults could still beat a slower dog that has no faults. Bottom line: speed counts.

But this does not mean that only really fast dogs win. Much like horse racing and track runners, taking the shorter distance of the inside path can shave seconds off the overall time. A small tight turning dog can still be faster than a huge striding dog that takes w-i-d-e turns.

Some dogs have great speed when chasing a squirrel but may not run nearly so fast on an agility course. Why? Let's look at some of the reasons.

Desire, drive, enthusiasm, call it what you will; the dog must want to go fast. That desire can be trained in ... or trained out. To train for speed, you must reward the dog with something that they really like. You must provide clear and consistent direction on what gets the dog their reward. The dog needs to 'win' that reward over 80% of the time so they feel they have a good chance of winning. The dog needs to be confident that they are performing correctly.

Training the desire out of a dog is far easier. Constantly correcting them, forcing something by physically pressuring them, punishing them for doing 'it' wrong; all of these will create a dog that dislikes whatever you are trying to get them to do. If a dog is afraid of being wrong, they will be, at best, tentative and slow. Worst case, they will shut down or try to leave entirely.

Another way to train a dog to be slow is to reward them for being slow. Most of us cannot run as fast as our dogs, so a beginner may actively (or inadvertently) try to slow their dog down so they can keep up. The better solution for a

slow handler of a fast dog is to train the dog to work at a distance and do the obstacles independently. But these skills require more training and experience.

As you gain more experience training your dog in agility, you may still struggle to get your dog's full speed potential. One cause is the handler giving cues too late; not giving the dog the information soon enough to adjust their stride and path on the current obstacle to set themselves up for good approaches on subsequent obstacles. Symptoms of this are the dog consistently looking towards you (head-checking) to get information on what they are supposed to do next. Some breeds may start barking at their handler, essentially saying "hurry up and tell me what to do".

Another thing that will create a slow dog is if the handler often corrects the dog for the wrong path (example: screaming to call them away from the wrong obstacle). Similarly disheartening is if the dog is constantly brought back around or scolded for going 'off course' (to what the handler was planning but maybe not indicating). Many times, the off-course is a result of that late cue and the dog genuinely thought they were going to the correct obstacle. Now the dog is questioning: "Does my handler really know where we are going? I'd better slow down so they/I can get it right." When the dog loses confidence in the handler, the dog will be slow or just check out entirely.

How do you keep your dog's confidence? Before correcting the dog, consider the possibility that you, the handler, cued too late, or wrong, or were unclear with your



Photo courtesy of William Kleinfelder

was ignoring you. We are human, still learning ourselves, and will certainly make mistakes. But the dog doesn't have to know that. If we handle boldly and accept that we sent the dog off course, the dog just thinks that was the course they were supposed to run. While rewarding the dog, plan how you will change your handling next time to achieve the path you

wanted.

Any 'mistakes' the dog makes are just misinterpretations of what we thought we told them. Number 1 Rule for a confident dog: never tell them they are wrong. Their 'failure' is feedback on how they interpreted and implemented our cue. Ninety-nine percent of the time we are training, not competing, so being 'wrong' is not a big deal. Instead of correcting the dog, we can continue the sequence with a mental note to revisit that part of our training.

OK, you have a fast, confident dog. You also need to train and handle for an efficient dog path. This means collected tight turns and/or a path that allows the dog to stay in extension; essentially opposite skills. To train a tight wrap around a wing, start without any bar and add height slowly. Wraps require a physical effort that needs to be conditioned. You will also need to train cues to tell the dog to collect, jump and turn tightly after the jump. To train extension, practice having the dog drive ahead over 3-4 obstacles to a pre-placed reward and train a cue that means "go forward as fast as possible, taking the obstacles in front of you".

Trained cues and their timely application are all part of the communication that the dog needs to navigate the course efficiently with speed and confidence. This all leads to Better Practice.

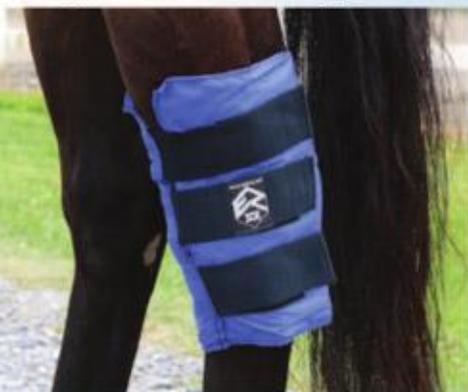
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How Do YOU Practice Trail Safety?

By the Florida Sport Horse Club

It's easy to find all kinds of advice and tips on trail safety, and people interpret it to meet their individual needs.

Safety actually starts when you decide to ride—checking your trailer and equipment each and every time. Finding a flat tire, a partially attached hitch or even an open trailer door as you're pulling out can be an unpleasant surprise. Ensuring someone knows where you're going and when you plan to return is important as well.

Here are some of our club's suggestions for reducing the riding risks that may not have been covered in other article:

1. As well as telling someone where you're going, ensure s/he has the address and phone number of your destination. Have a list of your riding areas (<https://floridasporthorseclub.files.wordpress.com/2022/02/central-florida-equestrian-areas-addresses-phones-2022.pdf>), with addresses and phone numbers, available to that person. Keep those numbers in your phone; if you have an emergency on the trail, you'll be able to call for help quickly.

2. Riding with others is always safest. But when you can't find anyone with whom to ride and go out by yourself, pick a place that's staffed. State and county parks, for example, are better than SWFWMD areas that are more remote with help far away.

3. Place emergency information in an accessible location in your trailer. If you don't return, first responders or area staff will be able to find your name, medical and vet contacts, and "In Case of Emergency (ICE) contacts, telling them who they're looking for. A form is available at <https://floridasporthorseclub.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/to-emergency-responders-equine-form.pdf>.

4. Carry a paper map as well as using a GPS/cell phone app to track your progress. Beware of some apps that drain your battery power on longer rides, leaving your phone dead—or rely on cell towers rather than satellites, leaving you stranded in remote areas. Handheld GPS devices that use satellite signals can be more reliable.



5. If you're worried about "involuntary dismounts" and disappearing horses, you can purchase a satellite-based GPS tracker that can be attached to your horse. If you do become separated, its location can be pulled up on a map. Some trackers also have a panic button which will send a message to your designated contact.

6. Never carry your phone or keys on the saddle! If your horse leaves, so do your safety tools. Place bright tags/labels on anything you carry—saddles, crops, bags, phones, etc. We have found unidentified bell boots, car keys, phones, crops, knives, and more along the trails and struggled to find the owners.



7. Carry some basics on the saddle for emergencies—cattle bags work well. A rain slicker can serve as a pillow or blanket; a knife and hoof pick are essential; gauze and vet wrap can stabilize broken bones as well as cover wounds. A lead or rope is important if you end up on foot or come across a loose horse—which has happened to us more often than we'd like. Place an ID tag on your saddle; carry your Coggins and (again) emergency information in a waterproof bag. If your horse becomes lost, the finders will be able to notify you immediately.

8. Carry personal ID in your pocket or pouch—photocopies of a driver's license and medical insurance work well. Should you become separated from your horse or are injured, it will help the first responders assist you faster.

9. Wear bright colors. You'll be more easily seen both by those using the trails as well as emergency staff.

And most importantly, maintain your riding skills. The more secure you are in the saddle, the safer you'll be!

Oh, Have Colt Creek's Trails Grown!



Colt Creek State Park held its official opening on January 20, 2007 with just a few fishing spots and one short hiking trail. But its future trails were influenced by the large number of equestrians who came out to tell the Florida Park Service what they'd like to see in the new state park at planning sessions. There is power in numbers!

The first equestrian trail opened in July 2007 and was a whopping 5 miles long—much of it directly under the power lines. The only place to park was at what is now Middle Lakes. There was no water, Rangers' Station, bathroom, or staff to be found. With a lot of help from the horse people, new trails were mapped and cleared for use—first adding 1.5 miles, and gradually expanding to the 21 miles currently available.

It was again the equestrian groups who pushed for a dedicated campground and later access to the adjoining Hampton Tract, turning Colt Creek into a favored destination of trail riders and campers alike.

And it's been through the equestrians'



respect for the park and willingness to courteously work with park staff that so much has been accomplished—trail expansions, campground water lines, bathroom and a pavilion. The old adage of catching more flies with honey than vinegar still holds true, and the horse people have generally had a reputation of helpfulness and collaboration. While some people may disagree with Florida State Parks policies and procedures, it's important to realize that the local staff must follow the guidelines set forth by Tallahassee. Trail safety, campground etiquette and courtesy toward others are critical for our continued success in enhancing equestrian amenities in the park. Let's keep our good reputation and work for the good of the park.



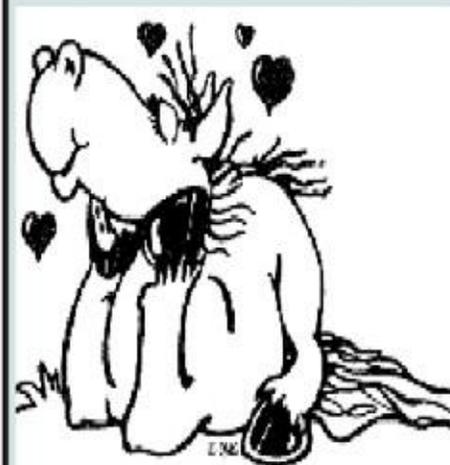
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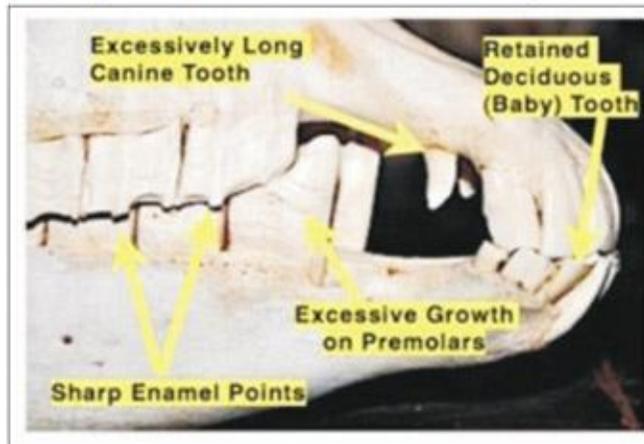


Why Advanced Equine Dentistry Recommends Equine Dental Exams Twice a Year

Horse's teeth do not grow, they erupt at a constant rate throughout the lifespan of their teeth. The teeth which are 4 1/2 to 5 inches long as a young adult, exist below the gum line with only the crown portion exposed. Over the first year, horses develop their 24 "baby teeth" and under which some of the permanent teeth will come into place. From the age of 1-5, all of the horse's permanent teeth will erupt and those that are replacing the original baby teeth will push those baby teeth out as caps. Throughout their lifetime many changes occur in the dentition of your horse and the tooth surfaces are "supposed" to be worn away evenly with proper chewing as they erupt. By the time a horse is aged, the teeth "expire" leaving only root stubs or simply no tooth at all.

So what changes that process? A whole collection of things:

1. Caps may come off unevenly or not completely (a cap or portion of a cap that remains can alter the tooth eruption of surrounding and opposing teeth)
2. Bone grow of the jaw is uneven (overjets, underjets, overbite, underbite)
3. Genetic defects allow for less than optimal dental development (horses in nature with bad tooth structure did not survive and were not bred)
4. Modern feed and feeding methods impair the appropriate "grinding" of tooth surfaces (horses teeth are



designed to chew grasses for 20 hours/day with their head down)

5. Lateral movement of the jaw is impeded by dental abnormalities and further impairs "grinding" of tooth surfaces (once you have "hooks" and "ramps" or elongated incisors, you no longer have normal chewing)
6. Broken teeth cause discomfort through sharp edges and exposed nerves and disrupt the chewing pattern as the horse tries to avoid that tooth while eating.
7. Individual teeth "expire" with aging and opposing teeth may hyper-erupt without a surface to grind against.

A comprehensive equine dental exam is not the same thing as a routine "float". While very often, sharp "points" are removed during our visit, the purpose of the exam itself is to identify misshapen teeth, structural abnormalities, retained caps or portions of caps, misaligned teeth, oral injuries, or dental infections that cannot be seen without actually opening your horse's

mouth....or somehow getting them to tell you! The points/sharp edges that are addressed during dental care are simply components of the teeth that have not ground (or worn) evenly as the teeth erupted and now press into tender mouth tissues causing lacerations and discomfort. While those "points" seem to get all the attention, they are only a small portion of what is happening during the exam.

The recommendation to have your horse's teeth examined twice a year is based on the fact that their mouth is continually changing, that they are prey animals and will naturally hide any injury/illness, that we cannot see inside their entire mouth without lighting and tools, and because they simply can't tell us what is wrong! Advance Equine Dentistry is honored to be your partner in protecting the wellness of your horses by providing comprehensive dental care!

This article reprinted courtesy of Advanced Equine Dentistry. For more info go to: <http://www.advancedequinedentist.com>

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References: (1) The Veterinary Clinics of North America Vol. 18, #2, Aug. 2002, Pg. 355-369 (2) "No Sweat" Denise Steffanus, EquineAthlete, July/Aug. 1998, pg. 25-28

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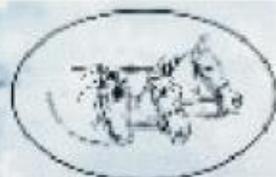


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Cross-training with Western Dressage

Let's get ready to show & grow!

By Lynn Palm

Are you passionate about becoming a true partner with your horse? I know I am, and I'm here to help you achieve that goal. Training for Western Dressage will help with any western discipline with or without cattle!

For this next series on training, you'll be your own trainer for 80 to 90 percent of the time. You will learn to find those remarkable feelings when both you and your horse come into balance, regardless of discipline. Being in the Dressage Court (arena) will help you attain that balance. We all want those feelings with a horse, regardless of what saddle you're riding or what breed of horse you swing a leg over. We all dream of moments of being in synchronization with our horses. These moments keep us hungry to learn more and achieve more difficult tasks with our horses. Remember, this Western Dressage discipline will steal your heart and create a passion for riding in harmony with your horse. Remember, dressage is simply the foundation to ride correctly, and for the horse to be confident and willing with whatever performance you choose!

I'm looking forward to the next several months, when I'll share tips and guidelines for understanding the simplicity of learning (in written format, at least) Western Dressage training from Introductory Level to Level 5. Could be the start of my new book.....!

Western Dressage Level Requirements and Advancing Your Training Starting Levels

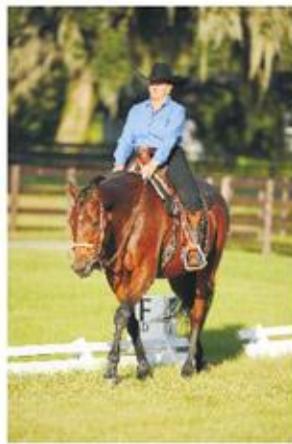
All the levels in Western Dressage are a systematic, progressive training that produce a horse that is physically strong, balanced, supple, and flexible. This equine athlete also demonstrates a calm, confident, attentive attitude and is willing to do their job — whether performance in the show ring or a safe weekend trail ride.

Tests provide an introduction to the discipline of Western Dressage wherein the horse performs only at the walk and jog. The rider should demonstrate correct basic position, use of basic aids, and understanding of the test figures. The horse should show relaxation, and harmony between horse and rider is essential. The horse accepts the aids and influence of the rider. The jog should be a natural gait within the horse's scope and should demonstrate a swinging back.

Introductory Levels: Gaits and Definitions

Working Walk — Four-beat, active, energetic walk with resolutely forward reaching steps. This horse has a confident stretch to the bit. His head and neck should swing naturally as a result of a relaxed back and shoulder/front legs alignment to the hip/hind legs. The horse's hind feet should touch the ground into or beyond the prints of the forefeet.

Free Walk — A relaxed walk with unconstrained, forward reaching steps where hind feet touch the ground clearly in front of the footprints of the forefeet. The horse must be relaxed and be allowed through a loose (no contact) of the mouth, the freedom to lower his head and



neck to stretch forward and down and out with the nose. The length of stride, rhythm, the relaxation and swing through the back of the horse is of great importance. The stretch of the horse is very important to allow the body to lengthen and stretch the top line muscles. The stretch also allows reaching of the hind limb joints to develop the strength and flexibility to compact his body for future direction and requirements and for developing collection.

Working Jog — An energetic, regular, two-beat jog. The horse must go forward with even and elastic steps. The hind legs

step actively up under the horse with obvious push from the hindquarters as demonstrated from a relaxed top line — thus a swinging back, and reaching for the bit with freedom in the shoulder movement. The horse must be in proper balance and maintain a light contact with the bit. The horse's nose must be on or slightly in front of the vertical. In Introductory and Basic Tests, the Working Jog may be ridden either posting or sitting.

Halt — At the halt the horse should stand attentive, engaged, motionless, straight and "square." Square means the horse's legs are square with the weight evenly distributed over all four legs. The neck should be raised with the poll as the highest point and the head slightly in front of the vertical. The horse should remain "on the bit" by maintaining a light and soft contact with the rider's hands. The horse may "mouth" the bit during the halt, but should be ready to move off at the slightest indications of the rider.

For the halt at the beginning and ending of a test, a horse should be immobile at least 3 seconds. In Introductory 1 Levels, a halt should be at least 4 seconds.

Court Size

20 meters X 40 meters is most popular

20 meters X 60 meters can also be used

Learn sizes of figures by doing the geometry

Learn the "math" of the Dressage Court (arena) by walking it on foot to find the distances that the figures call for in each test.

This is really a fun challenge — riding your figures to an exact size or path! Riding with accuracy will teach whether you are doing something correct, or you need to improve



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on this task. Riding with precision will always help you recognize how your horse understands your communications (aids). The goal is that no one can see you "talking" to your horse! Light and invisible aids is the aim.

First learn how to ride the rectangle arena. The long side of the arena is 40 or 60 meters in length. Then there are two short sides of 20 meters in either official arena size. Not only can either arena feel small or difficult to ride along the rail (tangent to the rail — 1 meter is 3.3 feet from the rail) you also have four corners to learn to ride! In the corners you must show that your horse is bending correctly in order to be balanced, as well as going straight after and before each corner. Start with learning this.

Training Tips: Make your own arena! It's simple and inexpensive. Set it up in your arena or pasture, but please make sure you have as level and as good a footing as possible.

I know you will not regret these arena boundaries for learning how much fun it is to ride with accuracy and precision!

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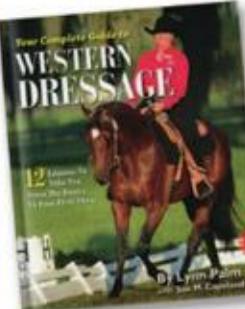
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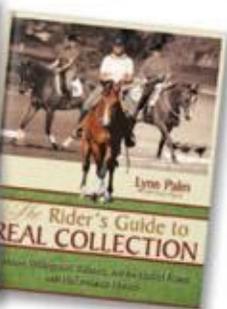
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Strangles Reported In Several Florida Counties

Strangles, a highly contagious upper respiratory disease of equids, is caused by the gram-positive hemolytic bacterium *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi*. This disease was first reported in the 13th century and can be found worldwide.

Although rare, *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi* infections have caused bacteremia and meningitis in humans and fatal pneumonia in a camel.

Positive cases of strangles in equids must be reported to the State Veterinarian's Office.

To report strangles or other reportable diseases, call (850) 410-0900 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. For after-hours reporting, call 1-800-342-5869 or email RAD@FDACS.gov.

Transmission

The organism *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi* can be transmitted via direct contact with nasal or ocular secretions or lymph node discharge from infected horses or via indirect exposure to contaminated trailers, stalls, riding equipment, buckets, halters, lead ropes, brushes, clothing, etc.

Clinical Signs

The incubation period typically ranges between two and six days but may last up to 14 days.



Classic symptoms may include fever (103 degrees F or higher), mucopurulent nasal discharge, lymphadenopathy (+/- abscessation), general malaise, pharyngitis, dysphagia, upper airway stridor and respiratory distress.

Clinical signs are often age-related, with older horses exhibiting milder symptoms of shorter duration.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi* infection is mainly accomplished by culturing nasal swabs, nasal washes, or pus aspirated from abscesses.

Nasal washes generally yield better results than nasal swabs due to sampling of a greater surface area.

PCR (polymerase chain reaction) can be used as a quick adjunct to a culture and is three times more sensitive than culture.

The most reliable diagnosis is achieved

when PCR results are confirmed with culture.

PCR can be very useful for detecting asymptomatic carriers, determining infection status prior to transport or entry into a new herd and for establishing whether treatment was successful.

Treatment

There are many different opinions regarding the appropriate treatment of horses with strangles.

Check with your veterinarian to determine which treatment is right for your horse.

Treatment often consists of rest, water, moistened food and a clean, dry stall, which is generally sufficient for most cases.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications such as flunixin meglumine or phenylbutazone can also be administered to reduce pain, swelling around abscesses, and fever.

Use of antibiotics remains controversial, but penicillin is the drug of choice.

Streptococcus equi ssp. *equi* also exhibits sensitivity to potentiated sulfonamides and oxytetracycline.

In the face of an outbreak, horses with early clinical signs may benefit from three to five days of antibiotic therapy to arrest progression of the disease. However, these horses will be highly susceptible to reinfection and should not be continually exposed to other infected horses.

Antibiotic therapy is contraindicated in horses with external lymphadenopathy because it prolongs the enlargement and rupture of abscesses. In these cases, treatment should focus on hastening the maturation of abscesses through hot-packing and application of drawing salves such as Ichthammol. In situations where abscesses do not progress, surgical drainage may be warranted.

Supportive therapy and treatment with antibiotics are indicated in horses that are systemically ill or that develop serious complications such as dysphagia, aspiration pneumonia or respiratory distress.

Prevention and Control

Vaccines for strangles include an attenuated live, intranasal *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi* product and a killed, protein-rich acid and enzyme product that can be given intramuscularly.

Neither of the strangles vaccines currently available guarantees prevention, and the attenuated live vaccines have been associated with adverse reactions.

The level of immunity induced by vaccines is lower than

that produced during recovery from strangles due to failure to stimulate mucosal antibodies.

Check with your veterinarian to determine which vaccine is right for your horse.

Establishing high standards of management practices can be an effective means of prevention.

Horses being introduced to a new herd should be isolated for a minimum of three weeks and should be monitored at least twice daily for evidence of fever spikes, nasal discharge, lymph node enlargement and dyspnea.

If possible, new additions should be screened for *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi* through PCR and culture of nasal swabs or nasal washes prior to commingling.

Biosecurity measures should be implemented and maintained to avoid indirect transmission between quarantined horses and resident horses.

Control measures during an actual outbreak include immediate quarantine of suspected and confirmed cases, restricting movement of horses on and off property until quarantine release, disease surveillance among exposed horses (observing for clinical signs, monitoring temperatures, PCR testing, etc.), implementing strict biosecurity protocols, maintaining isolation of affected horses for a minimum of 21 days after resolution of clinical signs (due to possible nasal shedding for two to three weeks), and retesting infected horses prior to quarantine release.

Regulatory Considerations

Strangles is a reportable disease in the state of Florida due to its highly contagious nature among horses and its zoonotic potential.

Quarantines may be issued on premises affected by strangles.

Although human cases are rare, it is recommended that immune-compromised individuals take precautions to avoid exposure to horses infected with *Streptococcus equi* ssp. *equi*.

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HORSE SHOWS

April 6-7: Newberry, FL, Happy Horse Happy Life Seminar, ACAEC, 352-472-6758 (see Back Cover). 4x

April 12-14: Jacksonville, FL, Florida All Breed Horse Show Series, Jacksonville Equestrian Center, 904-274-4200 (see ad pg 12). 4x

April 13-14: Newberry, FL, Spring Fling Goats, ACAEC, 352-472-6758 (see Back Cover). 4x

April 20-21: Newberry, FL, Spring Fever Dressage, ACAEC, 352-472-6758 (see Back Cover). 4x

April 27-28: Newberry, FL, Florida Color Horse Company, ACAEC, 352-472-6758 (see Back Cover). 4x

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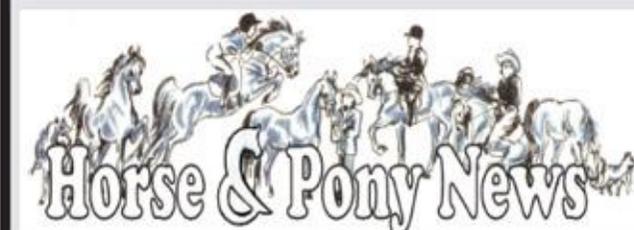
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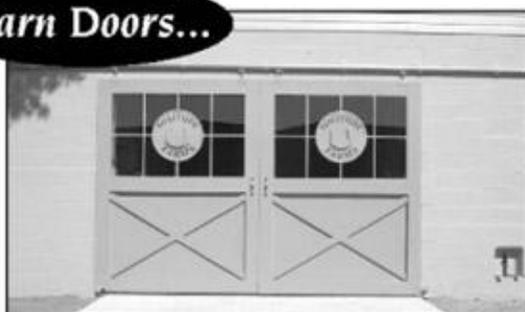
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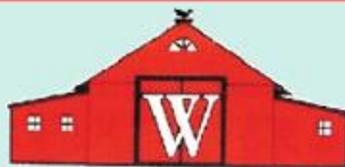
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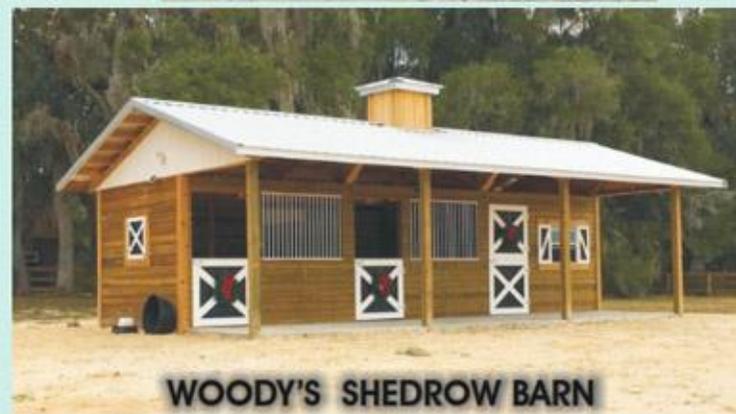
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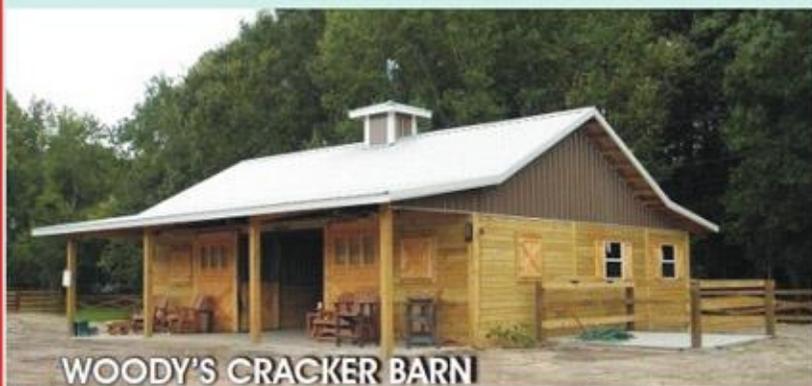
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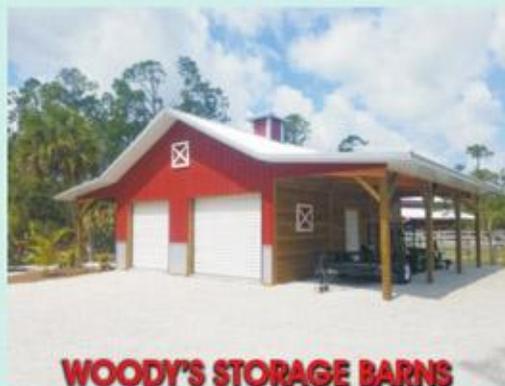
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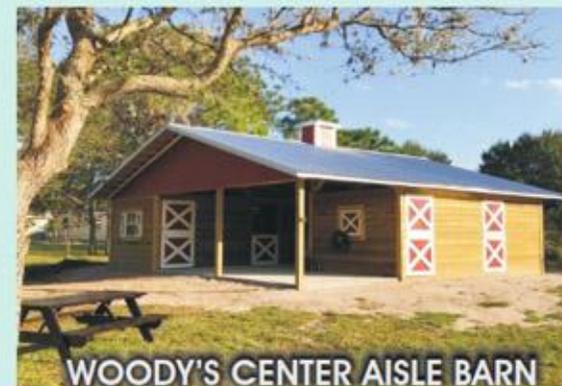
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April 20-21	Spring Fever Dressage
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May 4-5	Master Gardener Plant Sale
May 11-12	May Day Qualifier Dressage
May 18-19	Horse Shows in the Park
May 25-26	SFHS Memorial Classic
June 1-2	Summer Sizzler 1 Dressage
June 15-16	Walk Trot Canter Show
June 22-23	Southeast Spas Show
June 29-30	Open dates, plan your event
July 6-7	Open dates, plan your event
July 13-14	Summer Sizzler 2 Dressage
July 20-21	Horse Shows in the Park
July 27-28	Open dates, plan your event
August 3-4	Summer Sizzler 3 Dressage
August 24-25	Open dates, plan your event
August 31	Ride Lite Dressage
September 7-8	Walk Trot Canter Show
September 13-15	Florida Color Horse Company
September 21-22	Horse Shows in the Park



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