



# Horse & Pony News

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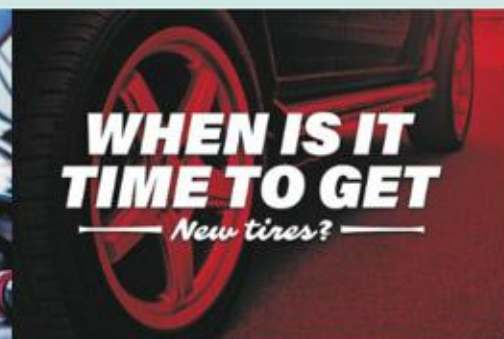
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## Horse & Pony News

Check our website for a new issue each month!  
[www.HorseAndPonyNews.com](http://www.HorseAndPonyNews.com)

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# Voice Your Opposition to Overreaching Dog Breeder Bills



By Judy Seltrecht,  
FAKC President

The Florida Association of Kennel Clubs is a federation of American Kennel Clubs in Florida devoted to the protection of all dogs and preserving pure bred dogs. We are joined by the American Kennel Club, the National Animal Interest Alliance and the Florida Veterinary Medical Association in OPPOSITION SB 1830 & HB 1481.

\* The bill presumes every female dog at six months is breedable and must be sterilized or assessed an annual license of \$ 500.00. Current Veterinary science does not recommend sterilizing dogs until maturity to avoid cancer, musculoskeletal, orthopedic and behavioral problems. Since 1988 AKC has limited registration to prevent unsuitable breeding.

\* AKC requires only unaltered dogs may be exhibited in Conformation events. Each year there are over 1624 AKC

dog events in Florida estimated to bring in over \$ 2.15 million to the local economy and tourism for a weekend dog show and over \$64 million for the National Dog Show held in December each year in Orlando. Unreasonable laws will make this go away.

\* An annual fee for unsterilized female dogs in the amount of \$ 500.00 is unreasonable. Fees, penalties, fines, misdemeanors and felonies of a third degree for an inability to afford unreasonable fees are a crime to dog owners in Florida.

\* Whistleblowers will provide for Animal Extremists Vigilantes Terrorists

\* Fourth amendment rights may be violated for Florida citizens having their home searched without cause. Family homes are not Facilities or Commercial Kennels. What will happen to their zoning or to their HOA?

\* This bill is fiscally irresponsible with excessive government expense to taxpayers.

Write to your Senators and Representatives. Say NO to SB 1830 and HB 1481.

## Proposed Florida Laws Limit Dog Owners Rights



The dog laws being proposed in Florida are designed to limit dog owners' rights and discourage people from owning dogs. They will impose unnecessary fees and fines and make some offenses misdemeanors and others a third degree felony! Your home can be inspected without cause to see if it meets the requirements for a dog breeding facility! Homes are not Facilities or Commercial Kennels, homeowners have rights!

These laws try to paint all purebred dog owners as breeders who churn out litters like puppy mills. This is not true. Many purebred dog owners show their dogs as a

hobby. They enjoy spending time with their family and dogs competing at shows. Conformation classes require dogs to be intact to show. Many dogs are shown first in conformation then when they are old enough they are spayed or neutered and compete in performance events.

### Impact on Youth and their Dog Scholarship Programs

These laws would impact our Youth who show dogs in the breed conformation ring and our 4-H and FFA exhibitors. How many families can afford to pay \$500.00 per dog per year- so their child can show their dogs?

Lawmakers are likely unaware of the extensive Scholarship programs offered to children who show dogs. The American Kennel Club, many of the Florida Kennel Clubs and the 4-H Dog Program all have extensive Scholarship programs where dog show exhibitors can apply to receive college Scholarships.

The language in bills SB 1830 & HB 1481 also proposes paying people to "turn in their neighbors" as so called 'whistleblowers.' Is this what you want happening in your neighborhood?

These laws are unnecessary and limit the rights of dog owners by imposing unnecessary fees and fines. Make your voice heard! Contact your Senators and Representatives and politely ask them to Say NO to SB 1830 and HB 1481.



## Hillsborough County 4-H Dog Scholarship Applications are OPEN until April 15!

**FIVE one thousand dollar Scholarships**  
are available to outstanding 4-H dog project members from Charlotte, Collier, DeSoto, Hardee, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota Counties.

For complete Scholarship rules contact Patty Martin  
[c\\_pmartin@verizon.net](mailto:c_pmartin@verizon.net) 941-720-4731



## The Florida Association of Kennel Clubs, Inc.

FAKC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of animals, especially pure bred dogs.

It is a "Club of Clubs", comprised of dog clubs throughout the State of Florida including those affiliated with the American Kennel Club (AKC) and independent of the AKC.

For more info go to [www.FAKC.org](http://www.FAKC.org) or contact  
Judy Seltrecht: [fakc.seltrecht.president@gmail.com](mailto:fakc.seltrecht.president@gmail.com)



# The Benefits Of Ice Therapy

By Mary Lou Lombard,  
[www.ezice.net](http://www.ezice.net)

Cold therapy has been around forever. It is the first thing that everyone tries when a sudden injury occurs. The same method applies for the horse. The first step is to relieve pain and inflammation. A cold stream or hose works but it is inefficient and very time-consuming. The easy option is to be prepared with a frozen ice wrap that can be strapped on. When treating an active problem cooling is the preferred therapy for the first 72 hours. It is the best way to keep inflammation down. Icing your horse 30 to 60 minutes at least three times a day works the best according to "Horse Journal" who ran two field trails on the best way to cool down your horse.

If you get to a problem area quickly, heat, swelling and pain can be reduced or eliminated. Ice therapy lowers the tissue temperature by moving the heat out of the tissue to an adjacent area that is cooler. This is called conduction. Cold does not go into the tissue, the heat is drawn out. An ice wrap is much easier than using a bucket of ice water to cool the hoof or leg down.

EZ ICE offers a variety of wraps that can be frozen and strapped on. Our company was the first to design the Hoof/founder



Pack, Hock Wrap, Neck Cooler, Tendon Wrap and Hoof Combo Boot.

Look for an Ice Wrap that stays cold for 30 to 60 minutes. An exception to this rule would be a Hoof Founder situation. Icing for longer periods of time helps to prevent Foundering. Make sure the wrap is adjustable and conforms well to the problem area. A Hock can be a hard to ice, EZ ICE was designed to stay up on this problem area. Direct ice should be avoided. Make sure your Ice Wrap is not too thick. Having a thin barrier between the ice and skin works the best for cooling. We use a

durable nylon that is easy to clean. The reusable wrap will last for a long time and is cheaper long term, than purchasing ice bags. There is no dripping of water from the ice cubes or mess to

clean up. Ice Cells stay colder 33 percent longer than regular ice. EZ ICE is easy to travel with. It is smart to have with you incase an emergency happens. Routine cooling after a tough work out can help to prevent inflammation.

Cold Therapy aids with arthritic joints or previous injuries and keeps swelling down after exercising. A reusable ice wrap is cost effective and saves time, make sure it is durable and has a good reputation. The bottom line is that icing your horse helps them feel better and heal faster.

Beware of Cyro Products that use extreme cold. There are side effects that can cause nerve damage and skin irritation. EZ ICE has been in business for 26 years and we have seen problems with vibrating Ice Wraps that have removed hair in the problem area. Our products have been designed and tested by Veterinarians, Horsemen and Women.

When it comes to Icing EZ ICE is a leader, it is comfortable and conforms to the area. Compare our pricing and check out our large selection of EZ ICE for Horses, Dogs and Riders.



## Hoof Combo Boot

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The Combo Boot takes care of the Hoof and Leg at the same time. Double Ice Cells at the bottom of the Boot help prevent Foundering.

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Check these locations for sale price -

Dover Saddlery, Jeffers Pet, Valley Vet, Big Dee's, Pacesetter Tack and Cheshire of Saratoga or [ezice.net](http://ezice.net)





# Protect Yourself and Your Family from Mosquito Bites And EEE

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is spread to people through the bite of an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes bite during the day and night. There is no vaccine to prevent EEE virus infection. The best way to prevent EEE is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Use insect repellent, wear long-sleeved shirts and pants, treat clothing and gear, and take steps to control mosquitoes indoors and outdoors.

Use insect repellent Use a Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents with one of the active ingredients below. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women. \* DEET \* Picaridin (known as KBR 3023 and icaridin outside the US) \* IR3535 \* Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) \* Para-menthane-diol (PMD) \* 2-undecanone Find the right insect repellent for you by using EPA's search tool.

## Tips for babies and children

\* Dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs. \* Cover strollers and baby carriers with mosquito netting. \* When using insect repellent on your child: \* Always follow



label instructions. \* Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD) on children under 3 years old. \* Do not apply insect repellent to a child's hands, eyes, mouth, cuts, or irritated skin. \* Adults: Spray insect repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.

## Tips for everyone

\* Always follow the product label instructions. \* Reapply insect repellent as directed. \* Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing. \* If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent

## Natural insect repellents

### (repellents not registered with EPA)

\* We do not know the effectiveness of non-EPA registered insect repellents, including some natural repellents. \* To protect yourself against diseases spread by mosquitoes, CDC and EPA recommend using an EPA-registered insect repellent. \* Choosing an EPA-registered repellent ensures the EPA has evaluated the product for effectiveness. \* Visit the EPA website to learn more ([www.epa.gov/insect-repellents](http://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents)).

## Wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants Treat clothing and gear

\* Use 0.5% permethrin to treat clothing and gear (such as boots, pants, socks, and tents) or buy permethrin-treated clothing and gear. \* Permethrin is an insecticide that kills or repels mosquitoes. \* Permethrin-treated clothing provides protection after multiple washings. \* Read product information to find out how long the protection will last. \* If treating items yourself, follow the product instructions. \* Do not use permethrin products directly on skin. \* Watch the video, What You Need to Know About Permethrin.

## Take steps to control mosquitoes indoors and outdoors

\* Use screens on windows and doors. Repair holes in screens to keep mosquitoes outdoors. \* Use air conditioning, if available. \* Stop mosquitoes from laying eggs in or near water. \* Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers. \* Check for water-holding containers both indoors and outdoors. For more info: [www.cdc.gov/easternencephalitis/](http://www.cdc.gov/easternencephalitis/)

# Rabies in Humans... Can it be Cured?

It's general knowledge which animals are the prime carriers of rabies-the vicious, usually fatal virus carried by warm blooded animals. In wildlife it is most prevalent in bats and raccoons; and on the domestic scene, in unvaccinated dogs. Universally, rabies is considered 99% fatal, with about 55,000 people dying from it every year around the world. Sadly, 40% are children, mostly in undeveloped countries.

Can humans who have contracted rabies be saved? Rabies is considered fatal if not diagnosed early. Survival rates go down drastically if not caught and treated right away, before symptoms set in. Treatment is long and aggressive, involving a chemically induced coma and multiple doses of antiviral drugs. It is also very expensive—running into the thousands of dollars.

On the Ichetucknee, a popular river for tubing between Lake City and Gainesville a few years ago, a large party of family and friends was enjoying their morning when an otter swam out and attacked them—biting and scratching several of the terrified group. Some of the men beat it to death with clubs and limbs. Sent to a testing lab, the otter was rabid. All of the group had to undergo the extensive medical treatment above.

Only immediate attention (less than 10 days post-exposure) has a chance for success. To date, rabies is considered almost always fatal once symptoms appear. Signs to remember: Avoid any animal on land who is

spinning around crazily or foaming at the mouth, etc. Step back quietly, don't attract attention, and call your local Animal Control.

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# Legend Farms Riders Compete In Region 3 Special Olympics Equestrian Event



The weekend of February 21st and 22nd, two Legend Farms Special Olympics Equestrians traveled to Bakas

Equestrian Center in Tampa to compete in the 2025 Region 3 Equestrian Event.

The event includes eleven disciplines. They are Western and English Trail, Trail In Hand, Western and English Showmanship, Dressage, Pole Bending, Cloverleaf Barrels, Western and English Equitation, and Drill Team.

Region 3 includes fourteen counties. Only five counties competed: Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Sarasota and Sumter. There was a total of sixty nine athletes competing. All athletes were invited to join in on the fun at the "Special Smiles" booth. They received several gifts.



**Sitting: Coach Rose Marie Martin.**

**Center: L to R Mariah Harris, Mary Lou Raulerson**

**Back: L to R Gwen Sears, Toni Tucker, Nancy Lin-Ley Harris, Michael Specht, Elaine Velten, Karen Specht**

A Mini Mushroom Bluetooth speaker, a new tooth brush, toothpaste and floss.

Legend Farms has been doing Special Olympics Equestrian in Bushnell for fifteen years and is owned by Ed and Rose Marie Martin. The Legend Farms Equestrian Program has six riders. They are Melissa Macintosh, Michael Specht, Susan Sherrer, Mariah Harris, Julie London, and Colin Potts. Melissa has been with the Sumter Equestrian Program for fourteen years. Michael has been active for twelve years. Susan, Julie, Mariah and Colin are second year riders. Michael and

Mariah were chosen to represent Sumter County in the 2025 Region 3 Competition.

This was Mariah's first year to represent Sumter in Special Olympics Florida Equestrian event. She won a fifth rosette in Western Trail and a forth rosette in Western Equitation. Mariah is the daughter of Nancy Linley-Harris of Inverness. Michael won the first place rosettes in both of his classes, Trail In Hand and Western Showmanship. He will represent Sumter at the 2025 Florida State Show in Ocala in March. Michael is the son of Paul and Karen Specht of Webster.

For more information about Special Olympics Florida, contact Leonard Kemp at 863-397-9775. Kemp is North Area 5 Sports Training and Competition Manager.

For information about the Legend Farms program, contact Rose Marie Martin at 727-423-6586.

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# Agility Volunteers Run the Ring

By Christy Gammage, Practice Makes Pawfect



As a sports competition, dog Agility relies on the participants helping out. If every job was a paid position, many people could not afford the entry fees needed for the trial to be financially viable. While some positions require some knowledge

and experience, many worker positions are great for new agility folks because they give you the best seat in the house. Let's look at who it takes to run a trial ring.

The most numerous volunteer positions are the Ring Crew. Every class needs 3-4 people in the ring to reset knocked bars and displaced tunnels, and to change the obstacles from one height to the next. At the start of the class or between jump height groupings, the Ring Crew should quickly take positions around the ring. The ideal positions are near the obstacles that will require the most adjustment, but still out of the way of the dogs and handlers. The judge may indicate where they would like Ring Crew stationed. While in the ring, a dog may get distracted and come over to check out the Ring Crew. You should turn your head away from the dog, giving them no attention. If needed, stand up and turn away. The dog will lose interest and hopefully go back to their handler to complete the course. Between each dog, the Ring Crew should reset any knocked bars or other obstacles that may have moved, ensuring each team is presented with the same course and protecting the safety of the dogs. As Ring Crew, you have 'ringside' seating and get to see the good, the bad and the ugly, right up close. Since mainly seated, it is good for tired feet.

Some challenging obstacles for the ring crew are the specialty jumps. For the panel, you must add or subtract individual panels. For the double jump, you set the back bar at regulation height and the front bar at either the regulation height or one jump height lower, depending on if it should be a square or an ascending jump. At heights greater than 4", there is usually an additional bar at an angle on the back set of jump cups, to indicate to the dog that this is a spread and not just a normal bar jump. For the triple jump, each of the 3 bars is always ascending by jump heights to the full height bar at the back. The broad jump requires a measuring device to ensure the length of the obstacle is correct to the jump height. The tire jump usually has marks for each height. Some organizations also need the A-Frame and Table heights changed according to the jump height. If the timer eyes adjust by height that is also a task for the ring crew.

Also in the ring is the Leash Runner. This person waits until the handler places or tosses their leash aside and the dog starts the course. Wait to get the leash until the dog has started the course so you do not distract them. The Leash Runner then takes the leash to the exit area and places it in a designated spot for the handler to retrieve after their run. Like the ring crew, if the dog does get distracted and comes up to you, just turn away and ignore the dog. This is

a great position for checking out everybody's gear. Seeing how things look and feel may give you ideas about what kind of equipment you want for your dog. The Leash Runner should also help when resetting jump heights. This position keeps you moving if you are the type that gets bored or stiff. The most challenging part of this job is not to get distracted and forget to go get the leash.

Outside the ring, and keeping the trial moving along, is the Gate Steward, one of the more multifaceted positions. The Gate Steward has many job requirements:

- Having the next 3-4 dogs ready to go.
- Sending the next person into the ring when the judge has indicated.
- Dealing with changes in the run-order. Valid reasons for changes are: to facilitate people working in other jump heights and running their own dog, unexpected pooping :) by the next dog, etc. Non-valid reasons are: "I don't want to be first", "I like running Fido before Fifi".
- Informing the Scribe when a dog needs to be moved in the run-order, so the correct score sheet is used and people's scores don't get mixed up.
- Indicating when the last dog of a particular jump height is going into the ring, so the ring crew knows to be ready to change jump heights.
- As Gate Steward, you must be heard by the competitors waiting for their turn, the scribe, the judge and the ring crew. Even competitors who are further down the list benefit by hearing the run-order so they can plan to be at the ring when needed. Good Gate Stewards are constantly reading out the next 4-8 dogs, turning to project their voice to the appropriate parties.

The most challenging part of this position is being loud enough to be heard and efficient at getting people into the ring; without making people feel yelled at, rushed or bullied. It takes some finesse.

Since agility is a timed event, there is a Timer. This person uses a timing control box or stopwatch and tells the scribe what the dog's run time was. When using electronic timers, the judge will program the control box with the maximum course time, any game buzzers and whether the dog's path may take them through the timers more than once. The control box should show if the electronic eyes are functioning. Once the judge and the scribe are ready, the Timer then pushes a button to give the handler a "Go" or "Ready". When the dog takes the first obstacle the time automatically starts and, as they take the last obstacle, the time ends. If everything goes to plan, it is an easy job. But there are often hiccups. The Timer must ensure that the time starts as the dog takes the first obstacle and ends when they take the last obstacle. If it does not, or if the table is the last obstacle, they must push a Start/Stop button. If the dog goes through the timer eyes unexpectedly which stops the time, the Timer must push a Restart button. The challenge of this job is to be constantly alert and react correctly and swiftly to any timing malfunctions.

The Scribe is tasked with watching the judge and writing down any faults or points they call or signal on the correct score sheet. Their job starts even before the class starts.



While the handlers are walking the course, they should check the run-order for any early changes and arrange the scribe sheets to match. In multi-ring trials, participants may mark their dog with a "C" indicating they may have a conflicting run in another ring. The Scribe usually just turn those scribe sheets horizontally in the stack as an indicator. When a handler enters the ring confirm that the sheet you are writing on is for that team (either because you hear the Gate Steward or handler announce their dog). Let the Timer know you are ready. When the run starts the scribe should be

only watching the judge, not the dog. The judge will use hand signals (often there is a cheat sheet or description of the hand signals) or their voice to call out faults and points. The scribe should write down things exactly as the judge signals/calls them. Writing down the points or faults in the order the judge calls them is important if people come back later with questions. At the end of the run, write down the time as told to you by Timer. This position takes a lot of sustained concentration. It is crucial that you do not get distracted and miss a call from the judge, making that team's run or the overall results invalid.

Ring Crew, Leash Runner, Gate Steward, Timer and Scribe are the lifeblood of the Agility Ring. Without them, trials could not be held. While these are volunteer positions, most organizations give some sort of compensation like coupons, raffle chances refreshments/lunch. If you've never done a position, there is always someone who can give you on-the-job training or let you shadow them. Don't worry about being perfect at a job. Everyone is human and makes mistakes. And just like agility, you'll get better if you practice, so Better Practice!

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# Preparing Your Rig for Summer Travel

By Fran Severn

Spring is finally here and that means your calendar is filling up with shows, clinics, and trail rides. Just like you check and repair your tack and get your horse fit for the season, you should do the same for your trailer. Preparation and attention now prevent frustration and disaster later.

Give your trailer a visual once-over. Look for any damage, rust, or corrosion. Check inside for wasp nests and signs of 'critter' habitation. Pay special attention to the condition of the flooring, including the ramp. Remove the mats and shavings and look for signs of rot and test for weakness, both in the stalls and under the frame. There's no standard way to predict how long a wooden floor will last.

Take your trailer to a shop that specializes in trailers and invest in a complete, comprehensive inspection. Go over the manufacturer's recommendations and those of the technician who has experience with many different trailers and knows their quirks.

Lubricate the bearings, hinges, and springs. Check the electrical system for shorts and signs of fraying. Mice sometimes shelter in the most unusual places and nibble away. Test all lights: running lights, brakes, turn signals, flashers, and both interior and exterior lights. Make sure the tires are properly balanced. This ensures that they wear evenly and give a more stable ride.

"No hoof, no horse," says the farrier. "No tires, no travel" is equally correct. Many of us take our tires for granted, if we think about them at all. Until we have a flat or a blowout on the road, that is.

How old are your tires? The information is right on the tire itself. There is a slew of number codes on the sides of the tires. Look



for a block that has two numbers on it. The first two numbers are the week the tire was made. The second two are the year. In this photo, the tire was manufactured in the 25th week of 2023.

Trailer tires should be replaced every 3-4 years or 10000 to 12,000 miles. Beyond that, they are subject to deterioration and dry rot. That applies to the spare tire, as well. This happens even faster if the trailer is parked on dirt. It pulls oil from the tires and accelerates rot. Park the trailer on boards or cement blocks and use tire covers to preserve them.



Most blowouts are caused by over- or under-inflated tires. Look for a block of numbers on the tire with the words 'max load' followed by a number and PSI. Learn how to read the tire pressure with a gauge and check it before every trip. That includes the spare. Invest in a rechargeable air compressor because most air machines at gas stations are rarely accurate.

Learn how to change a tire. Most shops use high-speed equipment to tighten the lug nuts. You cannot unscrew them manually. Buy a battery powered impact wrench and learn how to use it.

Instead of struggling with traditional jacks, use the "Trailer Aid" or "Trailer Quick Jack" devices. You drive the good tire up the jack and the bad tire lifts up. Be sure to position chocks on the other tires to keep the trailer from rolling.

Backing the trailer is a lesson in frustration for many drivers. Find someone to teach you how to back up. If no horse people are available, ask a landscaper, boater, contractor, or someone else who uses a small trailer regularly. A pool noodle stuck upright on the hitch, mirrors mounted on telescoping poles, or two rods that line up in the rearview mirror are sometimes helpful. Camera systems usually work better. Put a cinder block behind your rear tire when you unhook the trailer and use stakes to hold it in place. Secure a second block on the outside of the tire for a perfect line up.

Roadside assistance is vital. Companies like AAA will not deal with trailers, only the tow vehicle. Several companies provide assistance for truck and trailer rigs. USRider, TrailGuard, and Equipro Roadside are for all riders, while USRoper is exclusively for ropers. They are limited by contracts they have with local service stations and tow companies. That means you may be stranded if you are not in an area where they have contacts. In

general, they will reimburse you after the fact, but that's not much comfort in the moment.

Lastly, and most importantly. The last thing you do before climbing into the cab and starting the engine: Walk. Your. Rig. Every time. Even if you've just stopped for gas and a bathroom break. Check the tires, the doors, the chains, the hitch, and the lights. Every. Time. Taking common sense precautions help ensure your summer trailering is safe.

## Author Bio:

Fran Severn is the award-winning author of *Riders of a Certain Age: Your Guide to Loving Horses Mid-Life and Beyond*, *Creating Your Journey*, *Barn Fires: Preventing a Disaster*, and *The Riders of a Certain Age Book of Barn Hacks*. She is a regular contributor to equine publications and a speaker at equine expos. She can be contacted at [fran@ridersofacertainage.com](mailto:fran@ridersofacertainage.com). All books are available at [www.ridersofacertainage.com](http://www.ridersofacertainage.com) and [www.bookofbarnhacks.com](http://www.bookofbarnhacks.com).



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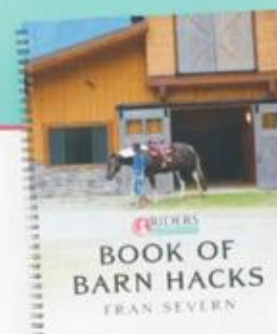
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# A Tribute to Sondra Smith

By Miriam Lauer

Sondra Smith (1937-2024) loved journalism and especially writing news articles for publication in Horse & Pony News. She began writing articles in about 1978 and continued until her death in December 2024 for a total of more than 47 years.

Sondra kept filing cabinets filled with new and old newspaper articles about everything pertaining to equestrians. When she had to change from using typewriters to computers, she sometimes struggled to get the articles out and her husband, Jack, was always there to help get them sent to Horse & Pony before the deadline. Sondra had a very outgoing personality and made friends easily. She was very helpful in promoting AHOOF (Affiliated Horse Owners of Florida, which is no longer in existence).

Sondra loved riding and lived in an equestrian community on 10 acres near Fort White. She also had a cabin on the Ichucknee River where she loved to spend time and where she wrote most of her articles. She and Jack had a large collection of kayaks and enjoyed taking friends kayaking. She shared her love of the river with friends and acquaintances, many of



Sondra and Jack Smith



## Sondra and Jack Smith's Family

By Christian Brislin

Sondra Smith had many roles throughout her life, including a gifted artist; a beauty queen; a seamstress; a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother; a tirelessly hard worker; a lifelong animal lover; an outspoken advocate for those causes she was passionate about; and, for the readers of Horse and Pony, she was Sandy Lane, the talented writer and knowledgeable horseman who informed and entertained you for many years.

But to us, her family, she was simply our Sondy — the slightly bossy, unabashedly strong willed, supremely intelligent, and infinitely beloved leader of our pack.

Sondra was born on Feb. 13, 1937 in Dansville, NY, but she spent the majority of her life in Florida, except for 10 years in Texas. Sondra fell in love with animals very early, and she had a menagerie over the years including cats (sometimes of the feral variety and at other times house cats), dogs, ducks, rabbits, squirrels, etc. But it was her first horse, Pancho, who she would forge a bond with that would last a lifetime.

Sondra spent much of her youth and early adulthood in Miami with her loving parents and younger brother. She was an impeccable match maker, introducing her brother to his future wife at a summer camp dance

when he was 16 years old. They were married just a few years later and have been ever since — 60-plus years and counting.

But it was when Sondra attended the University of Florida in the late 1950s that she met Jack, her one true love. Sondra and Jack shared many of the same outdoor interests, such as snorkeling in the clear blue waters just off the Florida Keys, water skiing, and collecting tropical fish for their salt water aquarium.

The young couple also enjoyed spending family time with Sondra's large and close knit family that lived within blocks of each other in their established Miami neighborhood. There was never a shortage of cookouts, birthdays, or holidays that brought Sondra and Jack back to Miami.

Despite their strong ties to Miami Sondra and Jack built their life in Gainesville. They bought their first ranch, which they named Jack Pine Ranch, in Gainesville in the 1960s. They raised cattle and horses while Jack began his career as an engineer.

They also discovered their version of paradise in the Ichucknee River. They bought a small cabin near the water and spent many happy weekends there with family and friends kayaking and riding their horses along the trails. Sondra also rescued orphaned baby squirrels at the cabin, rearing them to adulthood and releasing them back into the wild.





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# Sondra Smith Advocated for Horses in Florida and Texas

By Pauline Singleton

Events in Texas and in Florida in 1972 would lead to my meeting Sondra, although we didn't meet until 20 years later. It was ironic that Jack and Sondra came to Texas when they did. Had they come a little sooner, or a little later, our paths would likely not have crossed.

In the fall of 1972, Jack and Sondra purchased a nice Quarter Horse filly at the McDavid Farms dispersal sale in Brooker, Florida. They later found out that the filly was infected with swamp fever, or equine infectious anemia (EIA).

EIA is a viral disease that varies greatly in its presentation. A horse may die, or it may be chronically ill, or it may be asymptomatic. The asymptomatic horse remains infected for the rest of its life. Even if it remains healthy and lives a long time, it can spread the disease. It was only in 1970 that an accurate diagnostic test (the Coggins test) was developed.

Jack and Sondra weren't the only ones who wound up with a diseased horse. One unlucky soul bought 5 head and all 5 were infected—in fact one died shortly after he bought it.

This sad situation involved a number of people and received a good bit of publicity. Articles appeared in the Gainesville Sun. Public meetings were held. Angry people demanded action. As a result, on October 1, 1973, Florida passed some laws aimed at controlling this disease. For one thing, it would be against the law to sell any horse, pony, mule or donkey unless it had been tested for EIA within the preceding 12 months.

Meanwhile, in Texas, sometime in July 1972, three out of six of our horses became infected with EIA. I lost the best horse I've ever owned. He was stricken with the chronic form of the disease, and ultimately, I had to make the heart-breaking decision to have him destroyed. It still hurts.

Soon I heard about Florida's new EIA laws. Thank goodness! Texas, a major horse-producing state, would surely follow suite in short order—right? Wrong!

Texans are fiercely independent. Sometimes this is a blessing; sometimes it is a curse. There is a strong anti-government, anti-regulation streak, and it worked against me in this situation. I kept hoping that people more experienced than I would come forward and take up the cause of fighting this disease. But they didn't. Not for 20 years! In fact, there were people who tried to make horse people believe that EIA wasn't a problem and that all regulations should be eliminated. There was a popular magazine, *Horse of Course*, whose editor railed against the testing/quarantine or slaughter program in states like New York and Florida. *Equus* magazine opposed it. The American Quarter Horse Association refused to take a stand. This hurt. Especially since there were quite a few infected horses in my area that I knew about, and they remained in circulation. What hurt most of all was hearing people say, "I don't want to know if my horse is infected."

But a funny thing happened. After about 20 years went by, the horse industry gradually began to realize that it really isn't good to have this virus in your horses.



Sean, Jim, Sondra and Jack Smith

under the name of Sandy Lane, was a letter strongly supporting my position, and sharing some of the author's experiences in Florida. I called the publisher and asked her to contact Sandy Lane and ask if she would share her phone number with me.

That is how I came to know Sondra.

A growing number of people began to support the idea of expanded testing, and either quarantine or slaughter of infected horses. Still there was stubborn resistance. One vocal group of livestock marketers opposed the requirement of testing horses if they change ownership.

There was an influential man on the faculty of Texas A & M University who was opposed to testing, and in particular he told me that it wasn't necessary to test horses changing ownership because "Nobody would knowingly sell an infected horse without disclosing its status." I, being of a somewhat cynical disposition, did not agree with this. Nevertheless, it really took the wind out of my sails, because of who he was. He was very influential in the equestrian community. People trusted him and believed him in most things horsey. I came very close to quitting the fight. It really discouraged me to encounter resistance from this source.

I shared his comment with Sondra. She was livid. She shared with me her experience buying a horse at McDavid Farms in Brooker, Florida.

In the sale catalog, 276 lots were listed; on sale day, only 234 head were present. "When the auctioneer would come to some lot numbers, he would explain that this horse died of colic, that one from snakebite...pneumonia...a broken neck...one colt had been accidentally shot, etc." Sondra thought that it was odd that something bad had happened to so many of them. Later, "McDavid's hay man told a FQHA official they were shoving dead horses in mass graves all summer long before the sale...which explains the 'missing horses' in the catalog." They weren't from broken necks or snakebites, either!

There had been a rumor circulating that the farm had EIA present in its herd. Because of this (and to see the horses) Jack and Sondra visited the farm a week ahead of the sale. They asked Fred McDavid pointblank if there was EIA on the farm, and he said there was no truth to that rumor. Because they specifically asked about it (presumably in front of a witness) ahead of time, Jack and Sondra were among the very few who were able to successfully sue McDavid and get their money back. Most buyers were not so lucky.

On sale day, "...we were surprised to see none other than Doyle Conner, Florida's Commissioner of Agriculture, take the podium to assure the crowd that the horses were healthy, and everyone could buy with confidence. He said he went a long way back with Fred McDavid and was honored to make the opening remarks for his friend's

Eventually, in the 1990's, I began to write replies to articles and letters opposing the testing of horses. Once I wrote a letter to the editor of one of the publications that you could pick up free in any feedstore. In the next issue, there was a reply to my letter, very much opposed to the testing of horses. But in the next issue,

dispersal sale. What an endorsement! Now we could relax.

Jack and Sondra bought a nice filly and brought her home. Their veterinarian recommended that they test the filly for EIA, and they did. She was infected. So were many of the other horses that sold that weekend. Many of the buyers thought Fred McDavid was their friend, and could be trusted. He did not want to give their money back. Only the few who asked about disease ahead of the sale were able to successfully sue him. Most just lost their money.

According to Sondra, "...for Fred McDavid, it was no over. In response to several death threats, he had his house and yard encircled with 6-ft chain link fence, electrified razor wire on top, and electric gates. We didn't just hear this, we went up to Brooker and saw it for ourselves. His rambling brick house and grounds looked like a heavily guarded maximum-security prison, and McDavid and his wife moved to Europe (France, some say) for five years until the animosity died down."

Out of grief and anger came progress. Stringent regulations brought about a great decrease in the number of infected horses in Florida. For 3 years—2020, 2021, 2022—Florida reported zero cases of EIA! There was 1 positive in 2023. Each year Florida tests more than 100,000 horses. Sondra was such a passionate and articulate spokesman for the horse, that I'm sure played a role in bringing this about.

In Texas progress eluded us for more than 20 years. As I said, I came very close to giving up at one point, but several people—and Sondra was one of the main ones—urged me to carry on. Sondra shared experiences and provided encouragement. Finally, the Texas Animal Health Commission adopted important changes to their EIA regulations. But state Representative Pete Patterson opposed requiring that horses be tested if they changed ownership. He threatened to withhold funds for the TAHC if they tried to require that. Finally, we were able to get the matter brought before the Texas Legislature, and our side prevailed!

Texas still produces about half of the positive EIA test results in this country every year, but it averages about 50, which is down from an average of 500 before these regulations were passed. Progress is slow, but it is occurring. After all, we were late to the party.

This only happened because a growing group of horse owners demanded it. Sondra's help I really appreciated. After they moved back to Florida, Sondra and I continued to visit via phone, and we often exchanged war stories about those years. I shall miss her.

Rest in peace, dear friend. Rest in peace. We won that war.



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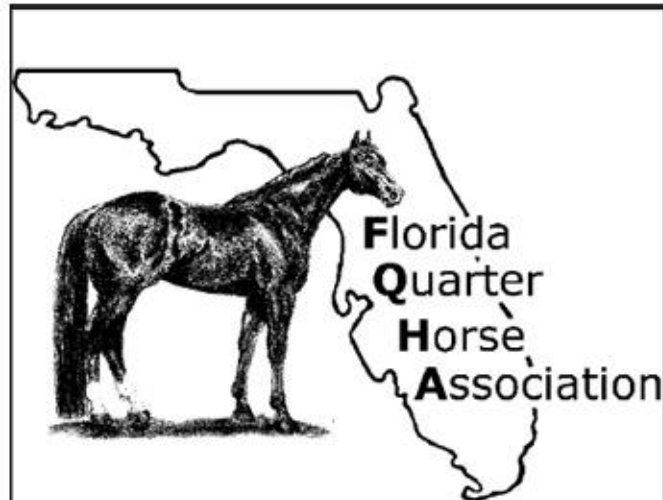
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# Western Dressage Level 5 New Requirements

By Lynn Palm

The highest Level of competition to date is Level 5. Here we will go through the New Requirements for this Level.

Full pivot right to full pivot left—Straightness; square, straight halt; immobility; 360% turn on the inside hind; response to the rider's leg; forward intention; correct bend; willing, smooth, transitions.

This is a smooth balanced turn with even steps. The horse is bending and staying straight in the direction of the turn. Fast, uneven steps or any hesitation in the turn is undesirable. If the horse loses the inside hind leg pivoting it will lose the quality of the Pivot turn. If the horse pivots on the outside hind leg, it is undesirable as this turn has a backward tendency. If the horse swings the hips out during the turn without any pivot of the hind legs, this is a poor turn as well. The poorest pivot turn happens when there are ONLY backing steps.

3 flying changes of lead on the diagonal — straightness; engagement; ground cover; quality of changes; fluency.

As in Level 4, one must have the skills to position the horse for the new lead, maintain the horse's correct body position during the lead, when you want the transition you must keep your horse straight with the slightest bend in preparation for the new lead, without changing it. The lead change is accomplished when your cue for the change of lead with maintaining your horse's body position during the change to get it with balance and fluidity and smoothness.

The tempi changes are so much fun to do! I hope you advance your horse and your skills to do this with your horse. Be patient! You must have perfect single changes both directions to build to 3 tempi changes!



Full Lope pirouette — Smooth, willing transition; suppleness; balance; fluency; forward intent; engagement; size of pirouette

As in Level 4 with the half pirouette, remember the rider has to keep the energy, small lope stride, bend and straightness as the horse is cantering each stride. Even, equal strides will give the highest score. The Pirouette usually is 7 to 8 strides in doing the Full lope pirouette.

Double Pivot — 720% turn on the inside hind; response to rider's leg; forward intention; correct bend; willing, smooth transitions

As above in doing the full Pivot, keep even steps and fluidity. If the horse has to rebalance inside hind leg by moving it up and down with this turn, it is allowed, but should stay in the same spot.

Zig zag half pass in jog — Consistent angle, bend and balance; engagement; cadence; fluency of change of bend. When done correctly, this is a very fluid and beautiful movement.

Changes in a series, every 4th stride — Straightness; accuracy; engagement; ground cover; quality of changes; fluency.

Changes in a series, every 3rd stride — Straightness; engagement; ground cover, correct count; quality of changes; fluency

As we complete the series of Levels from Introductory to Level 5, I look forward to sharing Tips from the Judge's Perspective starting next month.

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# Little Manatee River State Park Events



Don't Miss the all About Horses on April 5th! Bring your whole family for a day of equine education & fun! Just look at these photos from the 2024 All About Horses!

Located in South Hillsborough County near the Manatee county line and is divided by the Little Manatee river. Horse trails cover 12 miles of mostly shady trails that lead to water crossings on the Red Mustang trail river overlook on the Blue trail and obstacles for horse play on the Yellow trail. The Green trail leaves the 4 equestrians campsites (elec. & water) and 8 covered stalls and takes you on a loop trail to Dude lake. Deer are plentiful as are birds and other wildlife even on occasions a Manatee.

Make your plans now, winter riding is here and campsites go fast. For Reservations go to: [www.floridastateparks.org](http://www.floridastateparks.org) or call 1-800-326-3521



## All About Horses April 5th

Don't miss the April 5th All About Horses educational event to inform the public about horses!

## Moonlight Rides April & May

Moonlight Rides are scheduled for April 12, May 10. Register 6:30 to 7:30, Ride 8pm to 10 pm. \$15. per rider. RSVP 813-833-6047. Need a Horse call Born to Ride 941-812-1980.

Proof of negative coggins required and helmets for riders 16 and under.

If you need special assistance call Jordan at the park office at 813-671-5005. All profit goes to projects in the park. This event presented by the Florida State Parks, and Staff along with Friends Of Little Manatee River and other great supporters like Canoe Outpost, Wolf's Born to Ride and ACE crossings Hardware & Feed.



## ALL About Horses Saturday, April 5, 2024 9:00-2:00

Little Manatee River State Park, Wimauma

ALL ABOUT HORSES is a FREE, FUN event located in the Event Field of LMRSP west of Park entrance follow signs! The Friends of LMRSP have put together an event to educate your family about horses! Bring the whole family to this FUN, FREE event!

## Moonlight Ride Saturday, April 12

Register 6:30 to 7:30 Ride from 8pm to 10pm.  
Entry fee \$15.00 per rider RSVP (813)833-6047

Negative coggins test required & helmets for riders under 16 year old

Please go to [www.FriendsOfTheLittleManatee.org](http://www.FriendsOfTheLittleManatee.org)  
Call 813-677-9291 if you have questions.

These events are sponsored by: The Friends of the Little Manatee River State Park a 501c3 organization support group and the Florida State Parks.

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# Answer Those Outdoor Recreation Surveys!

Most of us are probably fed up with all the surveys offered, but some are critical in ensuring that equestrians continue to have access and amenities on public lands. Horse people contribute enormous amounts of money to their economies, from feed stores, access fees, local services, and more. Because we are "competing" with other user groups (hunting, hiking, biking, etc.), we must be aware of all opportunities to contribute our voices in defense of our riding areas. Recent successful examples include the new dog policy at Tillis Hill as well as equestrian inclusion in the new Creek Ranch WMA management plan. New upcoming opportunities include:

\* SCORP (Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan): The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is directed by the legislature to cooperate with state and federal agencies, private organizations, and commercial and industrial interests in the promotion of a statewide outdoor recreation plan (SCORP). The SCORP update will begin in 2025 and presents an opportunity for the equestrian community to share its special needs and desires. All public land managers should be using the SCORP to guide their agency's recreational plans, policies and infrastructure. <https://floridadep.gov/parks/ogt-0>

\* Withlacoochee State Forest Forest Plan Revision:

The WSF is in the process of updating its 10-year management plan. The equestrian community needs to be actively involved in the development of the Recreation component. As opportunities to participate arise, details will be shared.

What can we as individuals DO? First, join local horse clubs and organizations like the Florida Forever Back Country Horsemen (<http://ffbch.org>). There is power in numbers! These groups can share important updates and mobilize their members as well as speak to administrators in our defense. When you are asked to participate in a survey, do so AND share it with your riding buddies. And if you hear of a just-purchased conservation area, ask if equestrians will be included and offer to assist in developing a management plan. Speak up and ride on!—Thanks to Debbie Tyrone, FFBCH, for her information on the SCORP and Withlacoochee State Forest.



# Do You Sew for Your Horse?

By Sandy Lane

Those of us who like to sew have discovered what a handy skill that can be around the farm! Here are several tasks sewing machines can do to make horsekeeping easier... from modifying or repairing horse blankets, making light summer sheets, sturdy flat 'ropes' for tying up feed buckets— plus leadlines and dog leashes.

And you don't really need a heavy duty sewing machine, as long as the needle is strong and the presser foot will accommodate the bulky cloth underneath.

The first thing I do with a new horse blanket is replace the steel buckle(s) up front with long, soft sashes—one for each side. So much easier to close and tie (loosely) than trying to get a stiff strap through a steel buckle on a cold night with freezing fingers. And sashes are easy to make.

I wouldn't buy special material for this project unless you want to get fancy and match your farm colors. Here's a job for old jeans or khaki pants, fetched from your Goodwill box. Cut an 8-in. wide, long piece the length of the pants and fold over at least four times. Do about three long rows of stitching, turning under the last fold to lock in the raw edge.

Trim the ends and sew back and forth over them, or get fancy and turn 'em back under. Put it on your horse before stitching the sashes down, maybe needing to place them a little above the former straps (and slanting up) to be sure the blanket rides high enough on the shoulders. Be sure the sash has a good 'bite' (back far enough on the blanket to be strong), and long enough to tie really loose. (Don't tie too tight or

it'll be hard to un-do quickly the next morning.) Remember, your horse wants out of his stall pronto to run and kick up his heels.

Want to tackle a lightweight sheet for your horse? Either lay the thick, store-bought material over him or her, or let his old sheet become the pattern. Use the carpenter's rule, "Measure twice, cut once." To keep it simple, one sash in the middle will do to get started. (Two gets into different lengths, as geldings and stallions need an extra long sash that V's through the front one. And, all horses' stomachs expand when they lay down, so keep that in mind.

You can see how easy a strong, flat 'rope' is to make; no more wispy hay twine tying feed buckets up. And if you have a hard-to-catch horse when he sees you coming in the pasture, rope and halter slung over your shoulder, ditch the halter and switch to one of your homemade ropes—skinny enough to coil up and hide in your hand. Piece of carrot optional. Escape-artist horse will never know you're 'armed' until the hand stroking his neck sneaks the subtle leadline over his mane. With or without a brass snap on the end, he's caught. This works, believe me. I've had to do it for years with beloved forever-horse, Zeke. He never figured it out.

If you want to make really strong 'ropes,' lay a poly hay twine or two in the cloth before stitching it three or four rows longwise. Really handy for so many tasks. Make your super-rope three or four feet long for tying up buckets, eight feet long for leadlines, a kayak lead or a dog leash.

Happy stitching!

## Colt Creek State Park Tunes by the Lake!

Saturday, April 19 from 1pm to 4pm—listen to live music at the Blue Heron Pavilion. Bring your chairs and umbrellas to relax by the lake and unwind from the world. Hot dogs and snacks available for sale. Dancing feet are welcome!



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### TRAIL RIDES

April 5: Wimauma, Little Manatee River S.P., All About Horses, 813-677-9291 (ad pg 13). 4x  
April 12: Wimauma, Little Manatee River S.P. Moonlight Ride, 813-671-5005 (ad pg 13). 4x

### MISCELLANEOUS

April 19: Lakeland, Colt Creek State Park, Tunes by the Lake, (ad pg 14). 4x



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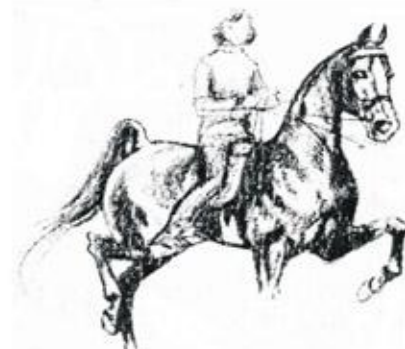
## MISCELLANEOUS

April 18th is the DEADLINE for the May 2025 issue of Horse & Pony News. Call 813-967-1931 or go to [www.HorseAndPonyNews.com](http://www.HorseAndPonyNews.com) to place your ad & to view the online edition. Email: [horsepny@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:horsepny@tampabay.rr.com).



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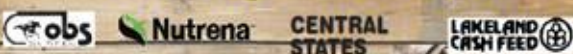
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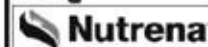


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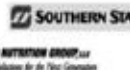
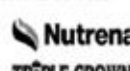
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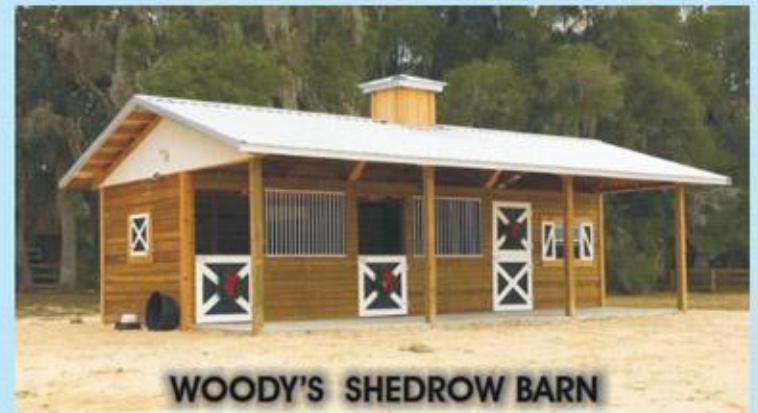
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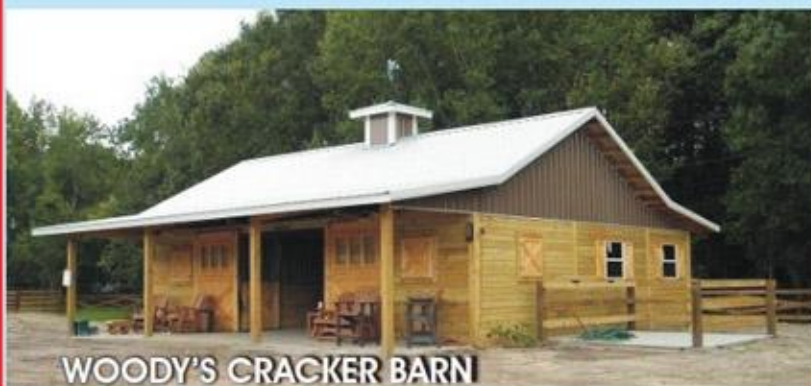
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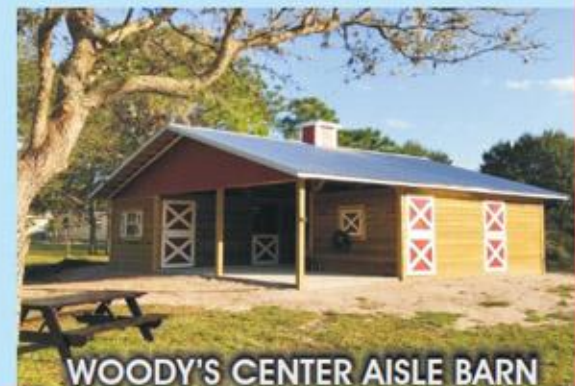
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