



**New Mexico Horse Council**  
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**JUNE / JULY 2012**

*“After we top the palisades the trail humps out to the west and then slides back on itself into a steep-sided dry crease, turns west again, and descends evenly back to the creek. It is in the crease where the buckskin humps me up into the air and steps out from under me. It is a trick he manages when he can, and he is the kind of animal that looks for an inconvenient day; just mischievous, not mean-spirited. He’ll nicker and nuzzle my chest when I grain him tomorrow morning. He catches me preoccupied – catches me, in fact, staring at my new right boot, my weight shifted up on his right shoulder – and drops off the trail, kicks over his head, and fades to his left. When I stop rolling I have plenty of time to stare at my new boots.” Where Rivers Change Direction, Mark Spragg, Riverhead Books, 1999.*

**Calendar**

***Mission Statement:*** *To act on behalf of the New Mexico equine community through education and promotion of activities benefiting all equine interests.*

**June 4: State Fair Commission Meeting, 10:00 AM, Expo, Albuquerque.**

**June 4: NMHC Board Meeting, virtual – reports submitted and collated.**

**June 24 – 26: American Horse Council Annual Meeting and National Issues Forum; Coalition of State Horse Councils semi-annual meeting; Washington, D.C.**

**July 9, NMHC Board Meeting, 6:30 PM, 66 Diner, 1405 Central Ave. NE, Albuquerque (west of University, east of I-25, north side of Central). Board meetings are open.**

**August 6, NMHC Board Meeting, 6:30 PM.** Other NMHC Board meeting dates are September 10 and October 1.

**November 2-4:** Fall meeting of the Coalition of State Horse Councils, Denver, Colorado.

**November 10:** NMHC Annual Meeting and Awards, including Horse Person of the Year.

*Vesicular Stomatitis Outbreak..... 3*  
*ACORC..... 3-4*  
*A Long Hot Summer ..... 4*  
*NMSF Commission, Expo, Fair..... 4-5*  
*River Plan..... 5*  
*Valles Caldera Draft ..... 5*  
*Bike/Ped/Equestrian ..... 5-6*  
*NM Centennial, Pony Express..... 6*  
*Foundation Scholarship Winner(s)..... 6*  
*Those Pesky Roundabouts ..... 7*  
*NMHC Membership Reminder ..... 7*  
*AHC, CSHC Meetings ..... 7-8*  
*DOL Withdraws Proposed Rules..... 8*  
*License Tags for Horses in LA?..... 8-9*  
*Miniature Horses as Service Animals..... 9*  
*Stephen Colbert and Dressage ..... 9*  
*Horse and Grizzly..... 9*

**Survey Results**

Last month, the NMHC Board of Directors voted to try to reach a consensus position among our membership on the troubling issue of horse slaughter. We sent a letter to all 2012 and lifetime members outlining the current situation, particularly as it concerned the economy, cost of euthanasia and disposal, increased cost of maintaining a horse, and the subsequent increase in the number of unwanted horses. And, of course, acknowledging that everyone finds the thought of horse slaughter repugnant. The letter included a postage paid card asking members to select one of two options and left space for comments. The options:

- 1. As a member of the New Mexico Horse Council, I support the availability of humane**

*What’s Inside*

*NMHC Member Survey on Horse Slaughter.. 1-2*  
*NMERA, UHC ..... 2*  
*Any Publicity Good Publicity? ..... 2-3*



**equine slaughter as an option to deal with the current unwanted equine issue.**

**2. As a member of the New Mexico Horse Council, I am opposed to equine slaughter in any circumstance.**

The rate of return was very high, with over **93% voting for Option 1**, less than **7% for Option 2**. Many added comments. Samples:

- “Option 1, we desperately need U.S. facilities.”
- “Option 1, we need to stop shipping horses to Mexico.”
- “Option 1, but part of the problem is indiscriminate breeding.”
- “Option 1, Starvation and malnutrition is worse.”
- “Option 1, Mexico is horrible, but it isn’t kind to turn them loose to starve.”
- “Option 1, with emphasis on humane.”
- “Option 1, regrettable but necessary.”
- “Option 1, but would like to vote again as more information becomes available. What is NMHC doing to help unwanted horses with funds and education?”
- Option 1, but could Temple Grandin design the facility to ensure humane treatment?
- “Option 2, equine slaughter is subject to animal abuse. Better to find an economically viable way to euthanize horses.
- “Option 2, think about it – using ‘humane’ and ‘slaughter’ in the same sentence? It doesn’t work! We have no enforcement in NM....taxation and legislation will make breeders responsible.
- “Option 2, next it will be dog and cat meat which are legal elsewhere.”

On the NMHC website you can find an excellent article that appeared in the Stockmen’s Magazine, titled “What IS Humane”. Thanks to Caren Cowan for permission to post. It was put together by the NM Cattle Growers and the NM Farm Bureau, with AHC statistics and other information from Jason Turner. Good overviews may also be obtained from the American Veterinary Medical Association at the following link:

[http://www.avma.org/issues/animal\\_welfare/unwanted\\_horses\\_faq\\_pf.asp](http://www.avma.org/issues/animal_welfare/unwanted_horses_faq_pf.asp)

And the US Government General Accounting Office report *Horse Welfare: Action Needed to*



*Address Unintended Consequences from Cessation of Domestic Slaughter*  
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11228.pdf>

**New Mexico Equine Rescue Alliance,  
Unwanted Horse Coalition**

In March, six licensed New Mexico equine rescues met in Albuquerque and formed the **New Mexico Equine Rescue Alliance (NMERA)**, a coalition formed to work together to save as many neglected or abused equines as possible. The Alliance will serve as a liaison between the rescues and law enforcement or other government agencies. Other goals are raising public awareness about horse welfare, and promoting all equine rescues in the state.

Rescues operating in New Mexico, by law, must be licensed by the state; the regulatory authority is the New Mexico Livestock Board. Approved rescues are listed on the livestock board website, ([www.nmlbonline.com](http://www.nmlbonline.com))

Nationally, the **Unwanted Horse Coalition**, an alliance of equine organizations that have joined together under the American Horse Council, strives to “reduce the number of unwanted horses and to improve their welfare through education and the efforts of organizations committed to the health, safety, and responsible disposition of horses.”

[www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org](http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org) lists eighteen free publications to download (brochures, reports and other information) provided by its member organizations or created by UHC. Their newest publication, How to Start and Run a Rescue, costs \$20, but all proceeds are donated to Operation Gelding.

**Any Publicity is Good Publicity  
(or perhaps not)**

Horse owners, professionals, and those who just like horses have been getting tough breaks in the media this spring. In a three month period between March 24 and June 24, I counted the following forty negative stories, editorials, TV features and one cartoon.

**Horse Racing:** twelve stories, nine discussing problems (“Death and Disarray at American Racetracks”), one simply reporting public input to the NM Racing Commission, and one





positive (“NM Racing Commission limits use of drugs in horse racing, imposes tougher penalties.”)

**Horse Neglect and Abuse:** Fifteen stories, editorials and features, most following the video of dying horses taken at the Southwest Livestock Auction.

**Horse Slaughter:** Seven stories, editorials and features and one editorial cartoon. A very few showed both sides of the issue. Low point: “It’s distasteful to think about the possibility of little Susie’s birthday pony being turned into taco meat right here in New Mexico.”

**Unwanted horses:** Five stories.

**Horse Rescues:** One story: “Rescue Ranch holding 50% more horses.”

**Vesicular Stomatitis Outbreak:** Three stories.

There were **three positive articles** featuring horses and horse people:

- “Calmer Corraling”, gentle taming of mustangs.
- “Riding Tall”, the NM Dressage Association’s community outreach event.
- “NMSU Students in Horse Program Explore State’s Horse Industry.”

On the other hand, a glossy supplement to the Albuquerque Journal celebrating the history of agriculture in New Mexico had not one single mention of horses, although there were multiple stories about other livestock and crops. There was, however, a photo of a man on a horse, rump turned to the photographer, looking at a herd of cattle.

**Vesicular Stomatitis Outbreak  
Office of the State Veterinarian  
New Mexico Livestock Board**

An NM Livestock Board directive dated June 20, 2012 is in effect until further notice or until New Mexico is declared free of Vesicular Stomatitis, a foreign animal disease (FAD) which is required to be reported both nationally and internationally. Livestock movement is curtailed as follows:

1. Livestock cannot be removed from a VS quarantined premise.
2. All livestock traveling in NM must have in possession a brand inspection or I-H.

3. Out of state livestock must have a health certificate issued in the previous 30 days.
4. Livestock entering a public event in NM must present either a health certificate issued within **five** days or be examined by a designated official at the event.
5. Livestock entering a public event where livestock from other states is present must have a health certificate (CVI) issued within the past five days **and** be examined at the grounds prior to entry into the event.
6. Livestock entering public auctions must receive a health certificate prior to sale.

Further information dated July 6: The state veterinarian reiterates that, due to the virulence of the current strain of VS and the large number of cases, it is extremely important that event organizers work with veterinarians to ensure that infected animals are not allowed onto public grounds or into public events. There have been cases of horses arriving with visible lesions; these have been turned back prior to entry, and follow up testing and quarantine was done at their residence. **An infected animal at a public event will result in quarantine of all attendees.**

Check the New Mexico Livestock Board web site, [www.nmlbonline.com](http://www.nmlbonline.com), for up to date information.

**ACORC  
Bernalillo County Animal Care Ordinance  
Review Committee**

When Bernalillo County Commissioners passed the revised Animal Control Ordinance in April 2011, over the vigorous opposition of livestock owners, they promised to create immediately a committee to review and revise the ordinance. Livestock owners would be represented, and the provisions that referred to “animals” rather than differentiating between livestock and companion animals would be clarified. Also, care and maintenance of pets, and care of livestock, would be clearly separated. NMHC was well represented at the hearings and meetings, but our offer to represent livestock owners on the committee was never accepted.

The committee began meeting, we believe, in July 2011 and a “livestock subcommittee” was appointed in January 2012. We are told the





committee's work is nearing completion, with the final meetings scheduled in July before the proposed revised ordinance is presented to the Commissioners. Then, perhaps publish for public comment? At the June 20 meeting, members had not yet begun to consider the livestock paragraphs.

In public comment, NMHC presented a letter stating that "horses did not evolve in barns" and suggesting the shelter requirements be consistent for livestock kept on any size parcels instead of shifting requirements at the "magic" ¾ acre enclosure size. However, other members of the public at the meeting stated that all horses required three-sided, roofed shelters because "we have made them pets". Yet another pointed out that the county covers several different weather zones, and the South Valley climate is not the same as East Mountain conditions.

(Regarding the three sided shelter, one horse owner uses only two sided, roofed shelters for safety reasons, because it is too easy for a horse or horses to get trapped in a three sided shelter and be injured by the trapper horse. "These *American Icons* do chase, bite, strike or kick each other occasionally – or us! – regardless of their upbringing, breeding, age or training. I personally resent those folks who have no first hand experience with horses, or limited exposure to horses, that regulate, legislate, and write letters to the editor about how to run the horse industry.")

The next meeting is scheduled for July 11, from 4:30 to 6:45, in the first floor conference room at 111 Union Square SE. The final meeting of the committee, after which the revisions will be presented to the County Commissioners, is scheduled for July 25. [www.bernco.gov](http://www.bernco.gov)

### **A Long, Hot Summer**

The summer of 2011 featured fire, smoke and closed recreation areas in large parts of New Mexico. 2012 also has fires, restricted trails and extreme heat. [www.nmfireinfo.com](http://www.nmfireinfo.com) is updated daily and is a good source to check before you ride. Three counties have closed their river bosque areas, but may reopen when the July "monsoon" rains dampen the area.

NMHC was one of many groups participating in the Border Food Safety and Defense Center

meetings, working with counties to produce federally mandated agricultural emergency plans. Center Co-director Billy Dictson says when multiple fires erupt, the NM Livestock Board, which is legislatively charged with the responsibility to work with other responders to mitigate the damage, is stretched. At that point, response becomes more and more a local issue. In some counties, horse groups are very active in moving horses from affected areas. In fact, Dictson says New Mexico is a model in terms of response.

In "Horses and Heat", [www.TheHorse.com](http://www.TheHorse.com) offers these tips: Horses can live outdoors 24/7 during the summer months *if* they have fresh water, and plenty of it, and shade. (But even with shade, some horses prefer to stand or stretch out in the sun.) Enough water sources must be provided that one horse cannot block others; water troughs and buckets must be cleaned and refilled as often as necessary. When observed in this study, horses preferred tree shade to shelters, but shelters are useful if there are no trees. Free choice access to mineral salt blocks is also essential. Mesh fly sheets with UV protection work well to shield horses from the sun's rays as well as biting insects, without making the horse any hotter. Fly masks are also recommended, "because flies are so annoying in the summertime that horses' eyes tear constantly; without masks, horses that like to roll can end up with corneal ulcers." And, "as long as there isn't lightning or a real downpour, horses are happy staying out in the rain."

### **NM State Fair Commission Expo New Mexico 2012 New Mexico State Fair**

The State Fair Commission has apparently decided on quarterly meetings; one was held June 4, following one on March 5. The next one is planned for "after the State Fair". And no public input is allowed.

At the June 4 meeting, updates and changes in the 2012 State Fair were presented to Commissioners, along with a construction report from the Downs at Albuquerque and a financial report for Expo (it is doing better). Details were given of a plan to control storm water drainage, as the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) has deemed the Expo grounds a CAFO, Concentrated Animal





Feeding Operation, due to the population of livestock on the grounds during the Fair, race meets and shows and events. The property is required to have “zero discharge” of water polluted by animal waste and manure into the municipal sewer system. General Manager Dan Mourning outlined the plan staff had produced.

(Note: since that meeting, the EPA has rejected the plan as inadequate.)

Regarding the shortened State Fair dates, Mourning described the change in parking (it will be free), park and ride (they are working on it) and new events (Jousting is planned).

Commissioner Ruth Bitsui announced that the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual International Indian Finals Rodeo would be held at Tingley Coliseum during the Fair on September 14, 15 and 16. [www.iifrodeo.com](http://www.iifrodeo.com) has details for this event, traditional rodeo with a beautiful family component.

Horse show schedule (All September dates)

- 4-9 Hunter/Jumper (yes, before the Fair).
- 12 Minis
- 12 NMSF Preview night
- 13 Fair opens
- 13-14 Carriage Driving, Mule & Donkey
- 14 Draft Pull
- 15-16 Arabian, Half-Arabian, Morgan, Saddlebred, Hackney Pony
- 17 Appaloosa, Paint
- 18 Pinto, Buckskin
- 19 All Breed
- 20 4-H, Horses for Heroes
- 21-23 Quarter Horse

**Secretary’s Middle Rio Grande Conservation Initiative Committee**

In January, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar met with local community leaders in New Mexico to discuss “strengthening existing partnership efforts” in the Middle Rio Grande region (the 180 mile stretch of the Rio Grande between Cochiti and Elephant Butte Reservoirs). This connects back to the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, including the AGO listening sessions we attended in 2010. Oscar Simpson spoke at a recent NMHC Board meeting, telling horse people to get involved with the Recreation Subcommittee, one of three (along with Conservation and Education).



Several NMHC members, and some other horse people, attended subcommittee meetings, and Simpson was appointed as co-chair of the Recreation subcommittee along with Kelly Gossett.

Fast forward to June 12, when the hard working committees actually published their draft plan ([www.middleriogrande.com](http://www.middleriogrande.com)) and invited comment. NMHC asked that a photo of horses and riders be added to the other recreation photos in the relevant section, which showed hikers, children, kayaks, birdwatchers and others. Other NMHC comments requested that equestrians be added to lists of users, and offered details on multiple use trails. Dave Simon (former NM Parks director and a good friend to NMHC) responded instantly with “get us photos!” They needed to be high-resolution, not the snapshots we all have, but former NM Senator Steve Komadina was able to provide horse and rider pictures.

The entire “stash” of documents may be viewed at [www.mrgesa.com](http://www.mrgesa.com) . Secretary Salazar will be in Albuquerque to discuss the final Plan on Wednesday, July 11, at the National Hispanic Cultural Center, 1701 4<sup>th</sup> St. SW.

**Valles Caldera**

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

The Draft for Valles Caldera has been published on their website, [www.vallescaldera.gov/](http://www.vallescaldera.gov/) , listing six alternatives for future management of the area: 1, 2, 3A, 3B, 4A and 4B.

**Alternative 2 is the only one that continues any equestrian use.**

Comments on the EA are due before **August 14, 2012**. They may be mailed to the Valles Caldera Trust, P.O. Box 359, Jemez Springs, NM 87025, or emailed: [stewardship@vallescaldera.gov](mailto:stewardship@vallescaldera.gov) .

Please take a moment and help keep the equestrian accommodations in the Preserve.

**Bicycle Pedestrian Equestrian Committee Changes Direction**

“Multi-modal transportation” (other than cars) was formerly cultivated in New Mexico with the formation and meetings of the BPE. (Most states have bicycle/pedestrian committees; at the order of the (then) Highway Commission and (then)





Governor Bruce King, our committee had an equestrian component. Committee members represented the state transportation department and “user groups” such as bicyclists, pedestrians and equestrians.

Quarterly meetings were held in different Commission districts to provide networking opportunities for transportation department personnel and citizens. I had the honor to represent the equestrian community for many years, attempting to contact horse groups in the various areas ahead of the meeting so their concerns (which do not quite match those of the other major users) are presented. My term ended in November 2011, and the equestrian replacement was Rusty Rodke of Peruvian Paso Enchantment in Santa Fe.

Enter a new administration, and changes in the NMDOT. . The BPE committee chair (one of the civilian members) was told not to hold the scheduled February 2012 meeting. Now, the State Transportation Commission has reconsidered the enabling document CP 66. They heard testimony from two invited representatives of the “bicycling and equestrian community” (both were bicyclists) and have now decided that the BPE will be totally comprised of NMDOT staff. The “new, improved BPE” was scheduled on the Policy Agenda of the State Transportation Commission meeting in Las Vegas on June 21.

The BPE is still listed on the NM Department of Transportation website ([www.dot.state.nm.us](http://www.dot.state.nm.us)) along with several of the brochures we created, such as “Equestrian Awareness”. The Acting BPE Programs Coordinator is now Jessica Griffin: [Jessica.Griffin@state.nm.us](mailto:Jessica.Griffin@state.nm.us) .

### **New Mexico Celebrates Birthday 100 Years of Statehood**

Many events are listed on the official state Centennial website, [www.nmcentennial.org](http://www.nmcentennial.org). One took place toward the end of May: More than 100 riders participated in a 14-day long **Pony Express Commemorative Ride**, covering the 365 miles between Hobbs and Santa Fe. The riders had their saddle bags filled with U.S. mail on the trek, and First Gentleman Chuck Franco (spouse of Governor Susana Martinez) , along with sixteen other riders on the final leg, rode down



Washington Avenue in Santa Fe to hand over the mail to Postmaster Yasmin Montano. The ceremony included a reading of the Pony Express Proclamation. Although the Pony Express actually operated for less than two years in the period from 1860 – 1862, the tradition is firmly ensconced in western history.

Consult the Centennial website for events occurring throughout the state during 2012. Another featuring horses will be the **Santa Fe Summer Festival: Frontier Days and Horses of the West**, which will be held August 4-5 at El Rancho de las Golondrinas.

### **New Mexico Horse Council Foundation 2012 Scholarship (s)**

Lightning can strike twice. Even though the NMHC Foundation Board resolved several years ago never to award more than one \$500 scholarship at a time, two candidates this year were uniquely qualified. The Board has not one, not two, but three tiebreakers to use in that instance. Finally, they collectively threw up their hands and decided not to penalize one of these fine young women just because she was born in the same year as the other one. Winners:

**Serina Lee Pack**, graduating from Cliff High School and planning to attend Western New Mexico University in Silver City; and

**Julianna Wilbanks**, a graduate of Moriarty High School going on to New Mexico State University in Las Cruces.

Since last year’s winner was from Albuquerque, it is interesting that neither Cliff nor Moriarty is a large urban center.

Another state horse council, which awards multiple large scholarships annually, tracked its winners some years later to find that a large percentage were no longer involved with horses. However, when this was discussed at the CSHC meeting, others pointed out that they might come back to horses later in life, when time and finances permitted. Looking at the two top NMHC Foundation applications in 2012, it seems unlikely that either one will ever escape intensive involvement with horses. Congratulations Serina and Julianna!

Now on to rebuilding the scholarship account.





## Roundabouts

Martha Buddecke ([mbuddecke@msn.com](mailto:mbuddecke@msn.com)) is fighting a roundabout planned for the intersection of Rio Grande Boulevard and Candelaria Road in northwest Albuquerque. Although the neighborhood association supports it as a “traffic calming” (traffic slowing down) measure, the right of way is insufficient to allow long vehicles (such as four horse trailers) to stay in the roadway while trying to negotiate the circle. As horse owners found on Raymac SW, trailers need to bump up over the curb to negotiate the roundabout. Buddecke has alerted local horsemen to appear at hearings; please email her to find how to offer your input. Many trailers use Rio Grande as a route from Corrales to I-40. Eldon Reyer, NMHC lifetime member living in Lamy, says he has seen so many horse trailers damaged bumping over curbs in roundabouts (and has gotten stuck in one himself) that he has marked an area map to avoid them, often traveling far out of his way.

## NMHC Membership

It’s been a tough year for membership in several state horse councils, with some reporting a third fewer renewals. At the Coalition of State Horse Councils in Washington last month, it appeared that those Councils with a dedicated funding source, which allowed them to pursue memberships citing benefits from other projects, were able to maintain or increase their numbers. Others, with little funding, declined. NMHC is down, but that is perhaps due to a lack of follow up.

Would you all check and see if you have paid your 2012 dues? It is not too late! Dianna Andrews and Dr. Leonard Blach joined as lifetime individual members earlier this year, but please join me in welcoming two more lifetime individual members, Paula Howe and Peggy Vensel. They aren’t precisely “new” because they have supported the horse council for many, many years. We do need all of you.

Is it time to revisit the excess personal liability insurance? More and more Councils are offering it as a non-optional membership benefit. It would increase dues about \$20 per year (lifetime members would have to pay too) but there is an opt-out provision if you receive that same

insurance through another organization. One Council describes it as “protecting you from the dirty deeds your horse does”.

## AHC National Issues Forum Coalition of State Horse Councils Meeting Van Ness Award

The meetings began with a reception Sunday, June 24, sponsored by the Coalition of State Horse Councils. Monday was reserved for Committee meetings (AHC standing committees – Animal Welfare, Horse Shows, Health and Regulatory, Racing Advisory and Recreation and the Coalition of State Horse Councils). The Breed Roundtable, in its second year, and the Unwanted Horse Coalition meetings frustrated people who could not be in two places at once. The day ended with a reception sponsored by Pfizer Animal Health.

The CSHC met all day Monday and had a very full agenda. In 2012, at the request of delegates, formal presentations were dropped in favor of discussion on the continuing evolution of the CSHC and refining its aims. Buster Black, Georgia, was thanked for his term as Chairman of this committee, overseeing its challenging transition from the State Horse Councils Advisory Committee to the Coalition of State Horse Councils and creation of a website and a newsletter.

Chair: Madelyn Millard, Kentucky  
Vice-Chair: Jean Ligon, Michigan  
Secretary: Valerie Cole, NM Horse Council  
Financial Liaison: Glen Eaton, Minnesota  
Parliamentarian: Lee Sackett, Wisconsin

The Fall meeting of the Coalition of State Horse Councils will be held in Denver, Colorado, November 2-4. It’s an open meeting and close!

“Reinvigorating The Horse Industry” was the theme of the General Session on Tuesday. A more complete report will appear in the next newsletter, as I figure out my notes. But it featured presentations on Equine Marketing Initiatives, Advocacy in the Electronic Age, Utilizing Social Media, and a very good panel discussion moderated by Ben Pendergrass, AHC Legislative Director, with members of Congressional and Committee staffs.





An awards luncheon was also held Tuesday, sponsored by Populus (remember, they thought they were going to design the “world class equestrian center” planned by former NM governor Bill Richardson?) Todd Gralla has, however, current and future projects in New Mexico, including the Curry County Events Center that was the site of the first NM Horse Council/NMSU Equine Summit in March 2011.

The Van Ness Award (given annually to a person who has shown leadership and service to the horse community in his or her state) was given to **Madelyn Millard** of Kentucky. AHC President Jay Hickey said they had never had such a large number of nominations, all of which were excellent. Millard, as President of the Kentucky Horse Council, “made her state council effective and critical to the industry’s health and involved at both the state and national level”. During her tenure, she saw to development of programs in horse welfare, equine professional education, youth support and recognition, trails protection, and legislative involvement”. Such programs include gelding and euthanasia clinics, a disaster relief fund, and programs helping unwanted horses. But a very large accomplishment was educating the public and elected officials that Kentucky was not just “big racing” but embraced many other horse activities. Kentucky Horse Council hosted a recent meeting of the State Horse Councils Advisory Committee (Madelyn made a wonderful bus tour guide) and has been vice-chair of the Coalition of State Horse Councils until her elevation to the Chair’s position at this meeting.

### **US Department of Labor Withdraws Proposed Child Labor Rules on Farms**

The Obama administration has withdrawn a child labor rule proposed by the Department of Labor applicable to agriculture. The proposed rule would have severely limited the ability of young people to work on farms and ranches.

“We are pleased the administration responded to the concerns of the agricultural community and decided against changing the current rules for young people working on farms and ranches. This was a poorly conceived rule, and they did the right thing by withdrawing it,” said President Jay Hickey of the **American Horse Council**. The

rules were broadly enough written that children under sixteen might have been prevented from herding cattle on horseback or haltering a horse in a confined space.

In addition to alerting state horse councils, the AHC worked with a broad coalition of agricultural organizations to convince the government that the rules were ill-considered, would prevent young people from becoming involved in agriculture, and would negatively impact family farms and ranches. In New Mexico, agriculture groups, 4-H clubs, horse clubs, the NMHC and many others offered comments; others wrote Congressional representatives.

Said AHC legislative director Ben Pendergrass, “The administration listened and withdrew the rule. This is a good example of the way the system should work.”

The DOL will not propose any new regulations on this issue, but will “work with rural stakeholders to develop an educational program to reduce accidents to young workers and promote safer agricultural practices.”

### **A License Tag for Your Horse?**

Cindy Schonholtz of the Animal Welfare Council sent mail to members of the Coalition of State Horse Councils, asking for information on any state that required horses to be licensed. She had heard that Los Angeles County, which has had such an ordinance on the books for years, was preparing to enforce it. Section 53.15.1 of the Municipal code provides for an equine license of \$14.00 per year for each horse, pony, burro, mule, donkey or other equine 12 months or older. (California Civil Code section 3080, however, says “Livestock means any cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses, mules or other equines.”)

No state horse council was aware of any other licensing requirements. However, Jean Ligon of the Michigan Horse Council, an attorney, replied that “Michigan has no such law at this time. I hope our California friends know how unfortunate it is that horses in LA are not regarded as livestock, but put in the same category of dogs, i.e. companion animals/pets. This not only enables LA to license them like dogs, it lets them regulate horses like dogs and deprives them of the





programs and protections afforded livestock. It has ramifications well beyond paying a license fee. Regarding equine as companion animals rather than livestock is very detrimental to the equine industry if it is permitted to extend to other statutes and local ordinances.”

It now appears, however, that the horse community in Los Angeles is split on the issue, because city planners have presented the license as a way to complete a horse census, and have promised the funds will be applied to equestrian trails. City Councilman Richard Alarcón, leading the effort to enforce licensing, says “There’s an Old West attitude that comes with owning horses, and to have to license or permit your horse runs counter to that spirit. But it’s something we have to transition to.”

### **Illinois Bill Allows Miniature Horses as Service Animals**

The Illinois Senate passed legislation designating miniature horses as recognized service animals. Equids are allowed to accompany disabled students to school and other public venues currently open to service dogs. The Illinois Guide Dog Act was amended to include miniature horses.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) allows the use of trained service horses as alternatives to dogs in situations where use of an equine is appropriate. However, it does not specify miniature horses.

The Illinois bill, HB3826, is now pending in the Illinois House of Representatives.

### **Dressage the Official Summer Sport “NASCAR in a Velvet Top Hat”**

Comedy Central’s Stephen Colbert has noted that the Hanoverian mare Rafalca, partly owned by Ann Romney, has been named to the US Olympic Dressage Team. Colbert, calling Mitt Romney “your average blue collar fan of dressage”, named “competitive horse prancing” as the official Colbert Report sport of the summer. Wearing a trucker’s hat and a huge foam finger, waving a bottle of Budweiser, Colbert sang “take me to the arena...” to the tune of “take me out to the ball game”.

Jim Wolf and the US Equestrian Federation celebrated the publicity by ordering a thousand foam fingers to hand out at the selection trials at Gladstone, New Jersey. Officials posed with trucker hats, foam fingers and beers, noting that Anheuser Busch was already an Olympic sponsor. The USEF is coordinating a dressage lesson for Colbert in August, and SmartPak has offered to outfit him for the occasion. Wolf further noted that no dressage horses at Gladstone were spooked by the foam fingers.

### **Horse Takes On Grizzly Bear**

This amazing story was sent from the Spokesman-Review by an NMHC member.

Erin Bolster of Swan Mountain Outfitters was guiding eight clients on a horse ride on the Flathead National Forest between West Glacier and Hungry Horse, MT.

Her chosen mount for the summer was Tonk, an 18 hand, 10 year old Percheron/Quarter Horse crossbred too tall and spirited for beginner riders. They were seeing bears daily, but forbidden to use guns or bear spray (which affects horses).

A deer crashed through the group on the trail, actually hitting Tonk and Erin – and a grizzly bear was chasing the deer. Seven of the eight riders took off for the ranch, but Scout, carrying an 8-year-old boy on his first ride, went the other way. The bear changed targets and took off after Scout.

Tonk responded to Erin and charged after the bear, putting himself and his rider between the bear and Scout and his rider.

Then, Tonk charged the bear, hazing him away from Scout and the boy, who had just fallen off.

The bear continued to try to get around Tonk and Erin, who had to charge three times before the bear gave up and left. She put the boy on the horse with her and led Scout back to the ranch. “My hope is that he isn’t discouraged from riding.”

Bear experts tracking the grizzly estimated that it weighed over 700 pounds, and that it continued on to leave the area.

At the end of the 2011 season, Erin closed the deal to purchase Tonk . “After what he did that day, he had to be mine.”

