



New Mexico Horse Council
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NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2012; JANUARY 2013

"I didn't have any more trouble for a week. Then, one evening when we were hitting it off for home in a light buggy, one of our local dandies pulled up beside us with a spanking outfit and started to pass. My cuss of a horse immediately saw red and would have raced if I hadn't held him down to let the other fellow get around. He didn't like it a bit, and I too sort of hated to hold him back. As the buggy passed us, he ceased being insulted and became mad. The first thing he did was to stop dead, after which he lifted his heels over the single tree and trace in preparation to letting go with both feet on his target, which was the dashboard. The best I could do in the face of his attack was to crawl out the buggy at the rear just as he kicked a hole in the dashboard and ripped the back cushion of the seat into shreds. If I had remained in my original position I would have been killed. The horse then gracefully pulled his legs back in the shafts, after which he turned around to survey the damage. A mischievous gleam was in his eyes, but I didn't do or say anything as I crawled back on the seat. In a minute we were on our way as if nothing had happened. Yes, that horse was unique. But he went the way of all horse trading horses. I traded him for a filly who became windbroke after any extra effort." Mister, You Got Yourself a Horse, Tales of Old Time Horse Trading collected by the Nebraska Federal Writer's Project, 1935-1939, edited by Roger Welsch and published by the University of Nebraska Press, 1987.

Calendar

November 4-6, Coalition of State Horse Councils
Semi-Annual Meeting, Denver, Colorado.

November 10: NM Horse Council Annual Meeting, Awards, Election of Directors.

December 6-8, Joint Stockmen's Convention.
NMHC Booth.

December 15: NMHC Board of Directors
Planning Retreat, Las Cruces.

☞ Happy New Year! ☞

January 14: NMHC Board of Directors online meeting, 6:30 PM.

January 15 – March 16: NM Legislative Session.
www.nmlegis.gov

February 4: NMHC Board of Directors online meeting, 6:30 PM.

February 19: AgFest, Santa Fe Convention Center. NMHC Booth. 6-9 PM.

March 4: NMHC Board of Directors face to face meeting, Santa Fe, 6:30 PM. Legislative visits by NMHC members during the day.

March 23: NM State University/NM Horse Council Equine Summit: "Focus on Equine Welfare in New Mexico". Las Cruces.

April 1: NMHC Board of Directors online meeting, 6:30 PM.

May 6: NMHC Board of Directors online meeting, 6:30 PM.

June 10: NMHC Board of Directors face to face meeting, 6:30 PM, location TBA.

June 15 – 19: American Horse Council Issues Forum and Annual Meeting, Washington, DC. Coalition of State Horse Councils June 15; AHC June 16-19.

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

Table of Contents

President's Corner.....2
NMHC Annual Meeting, Awards, Elections..... 2-3
Coalition of State Horse Councils..... 3-4
Meet your NMHC 2013 Directors..... 4-5
Caballos on Parade 5-6
Legislative/Lobbying 6
New Mexico Racing Commission 6-7
State Fair Commission/Expo 7
Outreach 7-8
USDA Horse Census..... 8
2013 Sustainable Trails Conference..... 8-9
"Unwanted Horse" Updates 9
Members Rock!.....9



The President's Corner by Rusty Cook

Happy New Year! Your New Mexico Horse Council has a full Board of Directors for the first time in several years. Look for a brief introduction to each Board member in this newsletter. At our planning retreat in Las Cruces on December 15 we developed an outline of committees and tasks for 2013. There's a lot of work to be done, so if you'd like to donate a little time we can find a job for you.

The Committee structure has been reorganized, with a Board member as Chair of each of the five new committees. Public Policy and Legislative Affairs; Education and Information; Industry Support and Fundraising; Equine Shows, Trails and Facilities; and Member Services and Programs all have subcommittees working on specific projects.

The Board will meet face to face each quarter, and between those meetings there will be electronic communications between members. All NMHC members are welcome at the quarterly meetings March 4 in Santa Fe, June 10 (location TBA), September 9 in Albuquerque, and the Annual Meeting November 9.

If you haven't joined NMHC or renewed your membership for 2013, now is the time. There's a membership form in this newsletter that you can send in, and we are working hard to have a fillable form available on our website, including electronic payment, by the time you receive this. The website has undergone some restructuring, and we have a new Facebook page. We hope these improvements will make it easier for you to communicate with us and to find the information you are looking for. We look forward to hearing about the fun you are having with your horses, as well as any concerns you might have.

New Mexico Horse Council Annual Meeting Elections, Awards, Raffle Winner

The 2012 Annual Meeting was held at Ropers Restaurant in Albuquerque on November 10.

Minutes of the previous meeting, a treasurer's report, and a membership report were given, and then Rusty Cook reviewed the NMHC year. The results of the membership survey on humane horse slaughter were surprising – well over 90% in favor, as an option because, commented most, other outcomes were even worse for unwanted horses. Cook also discussed horse rescues, the ongoing NMHC Operation Gelding, the State Fair booth, Recreational Trails funding and the revised Bernalillo County Animal Ordinance, up for a final vote November 27. Jackie Bouker gave the overall trails report. Then it was on to the fun:

Elections. Rusty Cook, Kristin Darnell-Kreger and Jason Turner were re-elected, and Steve Komadina and Oscar Simpson were elected as new directors, to three year terms.

Certificates of Appreciation.

- **Jackie Bouker.** Trails, trails, trails. It's all about trails. Trails preservation meetings, mapping, advocacy, committees and above all riding the trails to keep them open for all equestrians.
- **Caren Cowan.** In New Mexico, horses are livestock. You have helped the Council by promoting our inclusion in the Joint Stockmen's Convention and by publishing articles in the NM Stockman magazine.
- **Dr. Dave Fly.** As State Veterinarian, you and the Livestock Board ensure that our state's animals are free of disease; we also appreciate your extensive support of "Operation Gelding".
- **Dick Hensleigh.** For longtime support of NMHC plans and projects, multiple terms on the Board, and participation for over 20 years.
- **Winona Kennedy.** For commitment to NMHC projects, particularly the State Fair booth, and for serving two terms on the NMHC Board of Directors.
- **Steve Komadina.** For your promotion of horses, the horse industry and trails in New Mexico; this year, for helping to ensure the retention of RTP funding for 2013.
- **John David Kreger.** As an artist specializing in animal portraits, for donating a portrait of their horse or dog to the winner of the NMHC fundraising raffle.





- **Kristin Darnell Kreger.** For your service on the NMHC Board, your successful fundraising projects, and the organization and promotion of NMHC's "Operation Gelding".
- **Sally Mayer.** For your intent to improve all horse shows at Expo New Mexico and particularly to restore the State Fair Horse Shows to their former status.
- **Karri Sauve.** With the magazine Hoofprints and your other projects, you promote unity and "hold the horse community together".
- **Dolly Wallace.** For your insistence on, and work towards, improving New Mexico horse shows, particularly those at the State Fair.

Receiving the **Horse Person of the Year** award (a plaque and a beautifully decorated cake) was **Rusty Cook** for her extensive service to the Council, to the horse industry in New Mexico and elsewhere, and to our horses.

The winning raffle ticket (a portrait of your horse or dog by artist **John David Kreger**, with a beautiful custom frame donated by **Ranch Frames & Things**), belonged to Marie-Louise Hadden of El Rito, who had bought a "whole raft" of tickets. She and her family had lost three horses in the Las Conchas fire. Friends had given her a portrait of them, so she will commission a portrait of her dog, Bailey, lost to cancer just before that fire. (Note: It's already done!)

Coalition of State Horse Councils Meeting Denver, Colorado, Nov. 2-4, 2012

Val Cole, NM delegate
Elsie Shollenbarger, NM alternate

The Coalition has made many advances since its transformation from the State Horse Councils Advisory Committee. It is "*A group of state horse councils that have banded together to provide grassroots support and education to state horse councils, encourage and grow participation in state horse councils, and provide national issues support to the American Horse Council*". Delegates, alternates and others meet twice per year, in June during the American Horse Council National Issues Forum and in November, at a meeting hosted by a state horse council. In 2012, the Colorado Horse Council generously hosted

this meeting. The CSHC is a standing committee of the American Horse Council, and all Councils paying annual dues to the AHC are eligible for membership.

The theme chosen by CoHoCo was "Putting the Pieces Together", a natural continuation of the timeline created by the Advisory Committee three years ago after a major reorganization. Fourteen Councils attended, representing AZ, CO, IL, KY, KS, MD, MI, MN, NC, NJ (this delegate was still without power on her farm due to hurricane Sandy, and was very happy about hot water and hot meals), NM, PA, TX and WI. Delegates were bombarded with information, and Friday afternoon featured "Strategic Planning" by Wayne Hipsley. The Friday evening program was the hugely popular "Evening With Temple Grandin", who gave an extensive presentation on horses, other livestock, and current issues; she also answered individual questions for hours. On Saturday, delegates heard:

- "Equine Welfare, Separating Facts from Emotion" – Cindy Schonholtz, Animal Welfare Council;
- "The Unwanted Horse: Questions to Teach our Youth" – Jill Montgomery, JRAM Enterprises;
- Equine Liability Case Studies: Guidelines on Horse Safety" – Wayne Hipsley;
- "Building a Better Future For the Horse Industry" –Sue Wallis, International Equine Business Association (horse processing);
- "Equestrian Volunteers: The Backbone of Events and the Industry" – the Colorado State University Equine Stewardship Program;
- "Small Business and Grass Roots, Growing the US Horse Industry" – Colleen Pace, American Association of Riding Schools;
- "Equine Rehabilitation: The Holistic Horse Sector" – Tracy Vroom;
- "Marketing For The Horse Industry" – Christy Landwehr, CEO, Certified Horsemanship Association. Her message: email is out; if you don't use Facebook, Twitter and the other new methods, your members will disappear.
- "Horse Power" – Kyle Fenner. How to make surveys work for you: the success story that built the Colorado Horse Park.





At dinner, we had a round table discussion, and Sunday was the CSHC business meeting, preceded by presentations from BCH (Back Country Horsemen) and ACTHA (American Competitive Trail Horse Association). The CSHC defines itself as a “purpose driven organization” and, to translate purposes into action, they have a long list of tasks. Some of the more immediate ones involve improving the website, expanding the newsletter and seeking sponsors. The next meeting will be June 15/16 in Washington, DC; North Carolina will host the Fall 2013 meeting and has already distributed and collected a survey to drive the agenda. In 2014 the November meeting will be held in Illinois, 2015 Maryland, and 2016 Kansas.

NMHC 2013 Board of Directors

The Council has always desired to represent horse owners in all the regions of New Mexico, and with recent elections and appointments, we believe we are on the way to achieving that goal. Future plans include setting up districts which will reflect the USDA horse census.

Rusty Cook, Albuquerque, President (2015). Just re-elected as President of the New Mexico Horse Council, Rusty has raised and shown horses since 1973 and competes as an amateur. A retired high school teacher, she became a United States Equestrian Federation Steward in 2001, a Dressage Technical Delegate in 2008, and an FEI (Fédération Equestre Internationale) Steward in 2012. She works at many horse shows all over the country every year. She has held office and chaired committees in several equestrian organizations at the local and regional level and is on the national Board of the Arabian Horse Association. She and her husband breed, ride and show Arabians.

Jason Turner, Las Cruces, Vice-President (2015). Jason is the Extension Horse Specialist at New Mexico State University. His family has ties to the Quarter Horse racing industry, and he has taught equine science and horsemanship classes in several states. He has also conducted clinics and horse owner workshops in the US and several European countries. He has organized two collaborative equine summits with the Horse Council and Cooperative Extension Service and the third is now in the planning stages.



Val Cole, Albuquerque, Secretary (2014). Born with the “horse lover mutant gene” to a bewildered suburban family, she didn’t ride or own a horse until her college years. Since moving to Albuquerque in 1968, has always had one or two horses along with the husband, kids and pets. Rode in hunter classes; hunted many years with Juan Tomas Hounds, serving as whipper-in and Honorary Secretary. Worked as paddock master or announcer at local, state and national horse shows and fairs until retiring in 2011; now trail rides.

Charles Graham, Albuquerque, Treasurer (2014). Cattle ranch born and raised; his family owned many different ranches in AZ and NM, and father produced registered western breed horses. US Marine Corps veteran; retired from his own business. Has a lifetime of raising and training AQHA and APHA horses; involved in team roping and PRCA. Now Executive Director of New Mexico Horse Rescue at Walkin N Circles Ranch in Edgewood.

Paul Bandy, Aztec, Director (2014). Paul has ranched in San Juan County for over thirty years, starting and training his own ranch horses. Daughter Mary Beth also lives on the ranch, starting colts and training reining and cutting horses. Bandy has served several terms and is currently a member of the New Mexico House of Representatives.

Patricia Barlow-Irick, Blanco, Director (2013). Patricia and her husband, Joh Irick, work as a team to help privatize America’s mustangs (<http://www.MustangCamp.org>). As lead trainer, Patricia has gentled over 300 horses. She is the author of “How 2 Train a (fill in the blank)” and trains people to train wild horses and zebras. She holds a Ph.D. in Biology from UNM and is administrator of the NM Horse Friends facebook page.

John Collins, Albuquerque, Director (2014). John and wife DJ own Cherry Tree farm, where they board horses and host Dressage clinics and other events. He is the past president of the NM Dressage Association and an active competitor at the state level. He is recently retired from the Veterans Affairs Hospital and from the US Army after careers spanning over thirty years. Goal: to unify the horse community through NM Horse Council.

Kristin Darnell-Kreger, San Ysidro, Director (2015). Born into a professional horse family, successfully showed in AQHA youth. After ten years of art studies in Italy, returned to various horse disciplines





in North Carolina. Married to artist David Kreger and owner of one retired TB race horse and one QH mare. She will continue with classical art training while studying working with horses at liberty, and will begin bitless riding in 2013.

Dora Florez, Carlsbad, Director (2013). Works in New Mexico's Oil and Gas industry for Holly Frontier's Navajo Refinery in Artesia. Member of American Paint Horse Association and the Ride America Program. Moderator for New Mexico Horseback Trail Riders Group on FaceBook and active trail wrangler for Eddy County Horseback Trail Riders.

Dacodah Herkenhoff, San Acacia, Director (2013). Born and currently resides (4th generation) on a farm and ranch originally homesteaded around 1880. Traveled to South America to learn humane South American training and shoeing from mentor Kenneth Knowlton. Returned to design and build a bed and breakfast and trail riding facility over a six year span. Currently operates a trail riding facility with 35 horses, also breaks, trains, shoes, instructs, facilitates equine therapy, offers clinics for owners and their horses. Goal: "create a confident rider with a transformed horse, resulting in equine enchantment". www.acaciaridingadventures.com.

Steve Komadina, Corrales. Director (2015). A native New Mexican, he has had horses since he was fourteen years old. Raised in the Northeast Heights of Albuquerque, his horse needed to be boarded elsewhere, and daily trips were part of the high school routine. Even while on active duty in the US Navy, Steve had a horse. Through the years he has driven teams, ridden multiple day trail rides, gathered cattle and explored a lot of the outback of New Mexico. He is a physician and served 8 years as a NM State Senator. He owns Vista Hermosa Farm, a large boarding and training facility in Corrales. His current *remuda* includes 14 equines, from Drafts, to mules, to gaited horses and POA's. The human/horse relationship is his priority when dealing with his herd.

Ron Morris, Belen, Director (2013). Ron has been working with horses and mules for over thirty years, managing horse boarding and rental stables, as ranch foreman for a commercial cattle operation in the Gila National Forest, and is currently owner and trainer at Little Hills Ranch, a quarter and paint horse breeding and training facility. He has bred, raised, and/or trained and instructed horses and riders, who received awards at all levels of local and national competition. He has been actively involved

in the NM Quarter Horse Association, the NM Palomino Exhibitors Association, and the NM Paint Horse Club over the past 30 years, is a national director of the American Paint Horse Association, and holds a judge's card for the American Buckskin Horse Registry. Says Ron, "you don't want to know how many horses we have – but they eat better than we do."

Kayce Patterson, Carrizozo (Director, 2013). Kayce lives on a ranch west of Carrizozo. Grew up in New Mexico, showing as a youth in 4-H, Palomino, Buckskin and Quarter Horse shows. Currently raises Quarter Horses for ranch work and shows in Stock Horse events when time allows. Coaches the local FFA horse judging team and a NMQHYA team that will compete at the QH youth world show again in 2013. Left classroom teaching this year to be an instructional literacy coach for an educational cooperative in Ruidoso.

Erlene Seybold-Smythe, Espanola (Director, 2014). Third generation of her family at Roy-El Morgan Farm, founded by grandparents Roy and Elberta Honstein. She is a multi-titled regional, national and world champion (as are several of her students and horses). Her official title is trainer/instructor/manager at Roy-El, but she states she will have time and enthusiasm to bring the NM Horse Council into the electronic age, beginning with a Facebook page.

Oscar Simpson, Albuquerque (Director, 2015). Oscar has a bad case of flu; we'll catch up with him in the next newsletter. We know he is heavily involved with the Back Country Horsemen.

Christmas de Caballos 2012 by Melanie Scholer

Santa is a cagey one – you never know when or how he'll turn up. You just have to believe....And turn up he did, dressed in plush red and white, in Corrales on November 18th for the annual Christmas de Caballos parade. A production of CHAMP, the Corrales Horse and Mule People, Christmas de Caballos is an "equines only" event. Participation is limited to horses and other equines, horse drawn vehicles, and their riders, drivers and passengers. Okay, there is ONE ATV allowed to haul off the droppings, a necessary departure from the rule given that over 200 horses showed up to support the Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Foundation and celebrate this year's Grand Marshals, the men, women and





families of the Horses for Heroes program in Santa Fe.

Riders, drivers and equines assembled on the east side of Corrales Road across from the Wagner Corn Maze and proceeded south to the Top Form Arena at the Corrales Recreation Center. The sunny, cool weather was not terribly Christmas like (there is a drought in progress) so Santa came to town on the top of Eric Roybal's stagecoach. Kirk Brown and Ralph Abeyta carried the Grand Marshals in horse drawn wagons, and "Wild Horse" Harry Touloumis with a farm wagon led the parade and ferried all the toys safely. Marine Corps representatives needed a U-Haul to carry the toys back to Santa's workshop – the 2011 SUV simply was not large enough.

Help with parade logistics came from the horse community throughout the state, the Sandoval County Sheriff's office, New Mexico Search and Rescue, and volunteers from the International Balloon Fiesta. And oh yes, those four Marines. Santa is a cagey one all right – see, sometimes, on really special occasions, he wears a white cap and dress blues, with a scarlet 'blood stripe' down each pants leg.

(In further news from the Village of Corrales, both the immediate past Pet Mayor, Aspen [a Rocky Mountain mare owned by Nancy Freshour] and the current Mayor, Elektra [a quarter horse mare owned by Kathryn Sikorski] were parade participants. And, we are happy to say, both are NMHC members – Nancy Freshour is an individual, and Kathryn and Mike Sikorski as commercial members *Horse Helpers and Consultants*.)

Legislative/Lobbying

We are only a few days away from the beginning of the 2013 "long" or sixty day New Mexico legislative session (in alternate years, NM holds thirty day sessions, which concentrate on budget issues and the "governor's call".) The 2013 session begins at noon on January 15; February 14 is the final day to introduce legislation; and the session ends at noon on March 16. The legislative website, www.nmlegis.gov, improves yearly. And this year, the Horse Council has a



reactivated legislative/lobbying committee, chaired by Steve Komadina, assisted by Paul Bandy.

New Mexico Racing Commission Outlook for 2013 by Vince Mares, Executive Director

In 2012 the New Mexico Racing Commission identified areas within our industry that needed to be addressed: a uniform penalty system for trainers and owners who drugged their horses, and an aggressive yet comprehensive approach on testing protocols for horses running on New Mexico tracks. In 2012, the Commission adopted the Association of Racing Commissioners International (ARCI) uniform penalty system. These guidelines allow for consistency in sanctions handed down by the NM Racing Commission against trainers and owners, and we will continue to use them in 2013.

In order to achieve more comprehensive testing, we contracted temporarily with UC Davis. We received confirmation on drugs we had not previously seen, along with results on Clenbuterol and therapeutic drugs. By February, we will have completed review of an RFP (request for proposal) to accredited testing laboratories seeking a contract with the NM Racing Commission. We expect to award the contract in late February or early March.

We anticipate a more aggressive yet ethical approach to identifying cheaters in our industry. We have presented our concerns to the Legislative Finance Committee, and have requested more funding to: (1) allow the Commission to test more horses overall; (2) do more "out of competition" testing, up to forty days prior to racing; and (3) perform necropsies on horses that die while racing. We also hope that increased funding will allow us to hire more investigators, from the current staff of two up to a total of six. We also intend to update our licensee database to allow better tracking of the state's 6,000 plus licensees.

Other plans will result in a more user-friendly website, allowing information sharing to identify problems and concerns within the industry. We





will maintain transparency, and allow the public to contact the Commission and let the Commission share information with the racing community. Our main focus will be to enhance the integrity of New Mexico Horse Racing, and to maintain a safe environment for the jockeys and horses. Cheaters are not welcome in New Mexico. www.nmrc.state.nm.us.

(Note: on the legislative website, under “prefiled legislation”, two bills are relevant. SB 23, Steven Neville, changes the commission membership. And SB 72, Mary Kay Papen, is titled “Racehorse Testing Standards”.)

**State Fair Commission/State Fair
by Rusty Cook and Val Cole**

2013 dates have been announced: twelve consecutive days beginning Wednesday, September 11 and ending Sunday, September 22.

State Fair Commissioners met January 7, 2013, for the first time since June 4, 2012. (The timing of the January meeting is determined by state statute.) Rusty Cook and Val Cole attended for NMHC; no other horse group representatives were present.

The Commission re-elected Larry Kennedy as Chair for 2013, and elected Matt Rush as Secretary-Treasurer, replacing Twister Smith. Chuck Brown was welcomed as a new Commissioner, replacing Ruth Bitsui.

We met Chief Financial Officer Bill Nordin, who told us he was streamlining the accounting procedures (as well as a mandated connection with the new State computer software system, SHARE), and that future paybacks and other disbursements would be timely and accurate.

The Commissioners were given a status report on the storm water drainage system changes and upgrades mandated by the EPA. They also heard about the construction at the Downs and the completed, soon to be released annual audit.

Expo General Manager Dan Mourning gave a planning report for the 2013 Fair; he is enthusiastic about changes and progress. Commissioner Twister Smith remains chair of the livestock/rodeo committee and is working with

the PRCA and others to make NMSF a “stop” on the route between Pendleton and Omaha. Mourning wants to expand the “livestock end” of the Fair and make it better. Arena footing has been replaced, including the Dairy Barn, where almost thirty 55-gallon drums of rocks and rubble were removed.

After the meeting adjourned, Cook and Cole spoke with Sally Mayer, Senior Manager in charge of horse shows. She has solicited input from all the groups and hopes to have the schedule finished soon. She is “thinking outside the box” while trying to fit seventeen days into twelve. Mayer also wants to keep the NMHC presence in front of the Horse Arena, and expand to include other groups. She encouraged addition of more dynamic demonstrations as well as our current “display equines”. She wants spectators to be better informed – perhaps greeted and given a schedule.

The next Commission meeting is tentatively planned for March 2013, following the legislative session.

(Note: listed as “prefiled legislation” on the website www.nmlegis.gov is SB 31, Tim Keller, “State Fair as State Agency”. Among other provisions, it suggests quarterly meetings of the State Fair Commission, with public input as an agenda item.)

**Outreach
by Val Cole and John Collins**

In addition to the long overdue appearance of the Horse Council on Facebook and Twitter, we have again reserved a table at the Joint Stockmen’s Convention held early in December. This is a chance to interact and form closer ties with other livestock groups – and individuals. We had many more visitors (and new members) with questions in 2012 than previously. Surely it wasn’t our location (in the room with the registration and silent auction) or the candy canes!

Everything closed down for the luncheon featuring cowboy poet Baxter Black and the awards and recognitions. The Cattle Growers allowed us to present a special award (a plaque) to Dr. Jason Turner during the luncheon:





**Dr. Jason Turner
In Recognition
of his leadership and continuing service
to the New Mexico Horse Council**

Jason Turner has been instrumental in outreach from the horse community to the public during the annual New Mexico State Fair. He has increased diversity within the Board of Directors with better communications, and promoted the unique collaboration between New Mexico State University and the New Mexico Horse Council through two Equine Summits. Jason has helped to advance connection with larger groups with similar interests through participation in the New Mexico Joint Stockmen's Convention, and has facilitated placement of articles about horses in the New Mexico Stockman magazine. His contribution to the unity of the horse community in the state has been outstanding. He continues to give unselfishly of his time to further the mission of the Horse Council to act on behalf of the New Mexico equine community through education and promotion of activities benefiting all equine interests.

Also, for the first time, the Board has agreed to purchase a booth at AgFest as part of the forging of a closer relationship with the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau (www.nmflb.org)

The event will be held February 19 at the Santa Fe Convention Center, with this purpose: "to meet and educate the general public; to promote agriculture products, organizations and companies; to create agricultural awareness and discuss issues which benefit New Mexico's rural economy and economic base". It's in the middle of the legislative session by design. Several NMHC directors have ideas on making ours a "must visit" booth to both gather and share information. And draw for a very nice prize.

**USDA Agriculture Census
American Horse Council Washington Update**

FEBRUARY 4, 2013 is the deadline to return forms. The USDA is preparing to conduct its 2012

Census of Agriculture, as it does every five years; the previous one was taken in 2007. Please participate! For census purposes, a farm is ***"any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products, such as horses, were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year"***. (Not the number of animals, as before.) Clarified Ben Pendergrass of AHC, "no, they are not interested in your two horses in the back yard, even if you sell one for \$1000. But, if you raise hay to sell on your farm and incidentally have a few horses for pleasure riding that would count. It's better to over report (if you feel you are involved in the agricultural economy) and let the USDA sort it out."

If you participated in 2007, you will receive the form. Otherwise, go to the census website <http://www.agcensus.usda.gov> and register; you will then be mailed a form.

(Note: Last month, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack told Iowa farm leaders that "agriculture is becoming less and less relevant". He said he is becoming frustrated with their internal squabbles and they need to pick their political fights and noted that 50% of rural counties have lost population in the last four years, and poverty rates are higher than in metropolitan areas. Farmers answered that they needed to protect their industry against unfair policies, such as the proposed Labor Department rule intended to keep children away from unsafe practices. Vilsack insists farmers must spend time and resources growing agriculture and marketing the lifestyle.) So fill out the form if you can!

**2013 Sustainable Trails Conference
Oscar Simpson**

The Professional Trailbuilders Association (<http://www.trailbuilders.org>) will be hosting the only national conference dedicated exclusively to trail design, construction and maintenance in Albuquerque, February 10-17.. More than 300 trails planners at all levels, local, state and federal are invited to attend, plus more than 60 builders and contractors, and the public. As we all know, trails planners often either leave equestrians out or don't know how to plan properly for multiple use involving horses. (Bud Wills, State Trail Chair





of the Pennsylvania Equine Council, told the CSHC meeting (reported on page 3-4) that they are rebuilding many trails in the state, not because of damage from improper use, but because they were not properly designed initially.) This is the equestrian's chance to educate these planners, and I have been asked to give two presentations: On Tuesday, Feb. 12 at 4:30, "Equestrian Trails: A Good Ride" and on Wednesday at 10:45, "Equestrian Trails, a Washington, D.C. Perspective". The conference is based in the Hotel Albuquerque near Old Town, but there will be many field workshops.

(Note: reading the program definitions, I think NMHC could make a case for a horse as a "mobility device powered by biomass" – Val.)

"Unwanted Horse" Updates

- Secretary Witte's informal "stakeholders group" continues to meet and discuss issues and education of horse owners and potential owners.
- Myles Culbertson, who recently left his position as Executive Director of the NM Livestock Board, wrote this in the December 8 New Mexico Stockman magazine: "...In fiscal 2012, the agency investigated 122 animal cruelty cases, up 27% from the previous year. This problem does not stem from the livestock production segment....The cases we investigate almost invariably involve people with little or no direct connection with agriculture; for example, people who thought they wanted horses and who had no understanding of the care requirements and costs.....The scenes are harsh and sometimes heartbreaking. The Livestock Board must be the ones dealing with these cases because we better understand what we are looking at than people or agencies unfamiliar with livestock....."
- Rick de los Santos, owner of Valley Meat in Roswell, tried to convert his processing plant for horse slaughter, applying for USDA inspection in late 2011. After the first inspection, he retrofitted his plant as requested. Now, in a complaint filed in US District Court, he alleges that the Humane Society of the United States, Front Range



Rescue, and Animal Protection of New Mexico conspired to influence the public so that the USDA application was never processed. The lawsuit is pending.

- The third New Mexico Equine Industry Summit will be a one day event held in Las Cruces on March 23, to "Focus on Equine Welfare in New Mexico". The coordinator has a list of organizations who attended previous summits; the event will be by invitation.

NMHC Members Rock!

Congratulations to our members who have been in the news lately – in a good way!

A beautiful photo feature of Rancho Corazon, owned by Guy and Sharon McElvain and Guy's mother **Betty McElvain** (NMHC lifetime member), appeared in the December 17 Chronicle of the Horse. Story and photos were by **Evalyn Bemis** (NMHC member) of Santa Fe. In the next week's Chronicle, a gorgeous photo of **Juan Tomas Hounds** (NMHC member), staff and others hunting on Diamond Tail Ranch appeared. The **Back Country Horsemen of New Mexico, Pecos chapter**, (NMHC members) have the very best volunteers, and now have a letter from President Obama to validate that.

The annual "Spirit of New Mexico Awards" were created by the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce and the Albuquerque Journal in 2009. The recipients are groups or individuals who have done remarkable work to improve the lives of New Mexicans. One of the seven honorees at the December 4 luncheon was **Charles Graham and the Walkin 'N Circles Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation Ranch**. "If not for the efforts of this ranch, dozens of abandoned or unwanted horses would have been shipped to a Mexican slaughterhouse. Since its founding, the ranch has rescued more than 320 horses, of which 250 have been adopted."

DON'T FORGET TO JOIN NMHC!





NEW MEXICO HORSE COUNCIL

P.O. Box 10206, Albuquerque, NM 87184

www.nmhorsecouncil.org 505-345-8959 nmhc@swcp.com

Dues Invoice 2013

Name _____

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City, State, Zip _____

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Club or Commercial Contact _____

Website address _____

Note: Individual contact information is not shared with anyone. Commercial and Club information is published in the newsletter and also on the website. If listed, we will provide a link to your club or commercial website.

Club, Organization Dues: \$30.00 per calendar year _____

Commercial Dues: \$30.00 per calendar year _____

Individual Dues: \$20.00 per calendar year _____

Lifetime Individual: one-time, \$200.00 _____

Donation (any amount welcome): _____

Total Enclosed: _____

NEWSLETTERS: **We send by email** (if you prefer regular mail please check here _____)

As time and finances permit, NMHC projects can include:

Operation Gelding	Membership growth	Trails and Land Use	Lobbying
Newsletter	Emporium	Trail Ride	Zoning
Board of Directors	Outreach tables	Annual Meeting	Awards
NMHC Foundation	State Fair Booth	Expo NM Meetings	AHC Contact

If you would like to help with any of these, or have other ideas for projects, contact us!

Send To: New Mexico Horse Council
Membership
P.O. Box 10206
Albuquerque, NM 87184-0206

NMHC federal tax status: 501-C-4. NMHC is a state horse council member of the American Horse Council and of the Coalition of State Horse Councils.

