



New Mexico Horse Council
P.O. Box 10206, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87184



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Summer 2014
The Year of the Horse

"If bygone days were more gracious, generous and courteous, it must be because everyone knew horses. Horses make you a better person. They require of humans the virtues of patience, deference and humility. Once you step into a horse's stall, it's all about the horse. Everything you do, you do for his comfort and safety." From Saying Farewell to an Equine Companion, Winthrop Quigley, published July 29, 2014 in the Albuquerque Journal. Reprinted with permission from the author and the newspaper.

Calendar

Fun events with horses in September:

- 10-21: New Mexico State Fair.** Celebrate our state's agricultural heritage (which includes horses!) www.exponm.com
- 27: Celebration of the Horse at Harvest Festival 2014.** Top Form Arena, Jones Road, Corrales. "Multiple presentations from all aspects of equine activity, including horse packing, driving, dressage, blacksmithing, therapeutic riding, horse rescue, horse ownership, mustang makeovers, veterinary medicine. www.CHAMPnm.com
- 28: Ditch Pony Promenade.** Named because many participants ride to the event (held at the TopForm Arena) along the ditches, this nationally famous show is **FREE** for exhibitors with great prizes and few rules. (But all riding or driving must wear boots and ASTM-SEI certified helmets while mounted or in a cart.) It's for children under 18, except for a few classes where adults are permitted or required (accompanying a child driving, or competing in "Moldie Oldie Leadline"). Bring water for your horse, take home your manure, and leave the dogs at home. Premiums available at **Dan's Boots & Saddles**, 6903 4th. Street NW, Albuquerque, 345-2220.



September 8 & October 6: NMHC Board of Directors, meeting via Skype and telephone.

October 1: Nominations due for 2014 NMHC Horse Person of the Year. Send to the address or email above. Plaque will be given at the 2014 NMHC Annual Meeting.

October 31- November 2: Fall Meeting of the Coalition of State Horse Councils, to be hosted by the Horsemen's Council of Illinois. Site is the Pere Marquette State Park and Conference Center in Grafton, IL, "at the confluence of the Great Rivers of Illinois". Contact Dr. Sheree King, sking@siu.edu for further information, a registration form, and an agenda. All are welcome at this meeting.

NMHC Annual Meeting and Elections: Date, Time and Location to be announced.

Table of Contents

NM Horse Council News 2-3
NM Livestock Board News 3-4
NM State Fair News 4-6
NM State University News..... 6
Land Use & Zoning Updates..... 6-7
American Horse Council News 7-9
Rodeo Caucus News 9
Climate Change and Horsekeeping 9
Horses 'Talk' 10
BLM issues estray notice for Placitas horses.... 10
How Ireland is Managing Unwanted Horses ... 10
EquiLottery 10
Zebra long-haul travelers 10



AMERICAN HORSE COUNCIL



We need people to help spread the word about the “wonderful world of horses” at the NMHC booth during the State Fair. You should also “sell” the Horse Council and what it does for the horse community. The Fair runs Sept. 10-21 and more helpers are needed. Unfortunately, you will need to pay your way in – but there are, after all, discount Fair tickets at Walgreen’s, and it sure is fun. The “horse in residence” will have its own attendant, who might need a break from time to time, and certainly will need more voices. Plan to be there around 10:00 AM and stay till midafternoon or so. Carpooling is great, and the more the merrier; one can go look at the flowers or chickens while the other spreads the love of horses message. Email NMHC President Ron Morris (lhrramorris@juno.com) to sign up. Ron is super at returning messages on his smartphone.

One of my favorite moments was watching Blair Darnell handle a class of kindergarteners, sitting and listening to her and looking at the Chincoteague pony in the stall “Where are his hands?” one child asked urgently. “A lady told me this horse had fourteen hands! I don’t see any of them!” Those at the booth will be thrilled how often they meet young people who have never had the opportunity to touch a horse.



The **NMHC Trail Ride** tentatively planned for October 25 has been postponed. We simply don’t have time to plan and present it well. The insurance purchased for the ride is valid through next August, so look for a reschedule when weather, the terrain and footing, and everyone’s schedule permits.



New Mexico Horse Person of the Year nominations are due **October 1**. Mail to PO Box 10206, Albuquerque, NM 87184 or email to nmhc@swcp.com. These persons are ineligible, having won in previous years either our **Horse Person Of The Year** or (in alternate years) **The Lifetime Achievement Award**: From the earliest, winners are **Karen Reyer, Melanie Scholer, Elsie Shollenbarger, Suzanne Norton Jones, Blair Darnell, Val Cole, Carolyn Bader, Richard Hensleigh, Eldon Reyer, John Collins, Dr. Leonard**



Blach, Sallie Pennybacker, Rusty Cook, and Ruth Dismuke-Blakely. The nominee should be an adult resident of New Mexico, but neither the nominee nor the nominator need be members. We want to have a recipient who fits right into the above list, and has done truly special things for horse people, the horse community, and horses.



Please welcome the following new or renewing NMHC Members: (note: Commercial and Club members are listed on the NMHC website with all contact information but we do not share contacts for individual members). We would not exist without your support.

Individual:

- Kitty Ree Allen** of Casper, Wyoming;
- Nancy Bonadeo** of Los Alamos;
- Julie Luna** of Albuquerque;
- Julia Jarvis** of Santa Fe;
- Janene Waymark** of Grants.

Club or Organization

Back Country Horsemen of NM, Lower Rio Grande Chapter. P. O. Box 445, Radium Springs, NM 88054. 575-521-4561, contact **Barry Feinsod**, bdfainsod@gmail.com.

Commercial

Nightflight Miniature Horses, 15 Kennedy Drive, Los Lunas, NM 87031. 505-865-8366. Contact **Colleen Kennedy**, wkennedy101@comcast.net.

Pegasus Farm, 2410 Venetian Way, Albuquerque, NM 87105. 610-7020. Contact **Wendy Buckels**, www.pegasusspeechtherapy.com.

Village Mercantile, 3675 Corrales Road, Corrales, NM 87048. 505-897-9328. Contact **Drew Burr**, aburr@thevillagemercantile.com, www.thevillagemercantile.com.



Horse “Rescued” from quicksand in Rio Grande in training for First Responders: This training, thought to be the first offered in New Mexico, was initiated by Bon Bagley, CHAMP (Corrales Horse and Mule People) and the New Mexico Horse Council. **Code 3 Associates** of





Longmont, CO, specializing in animal disaster response and training, offered the sessions for members of the Corrales, Sandoval County, and Rio Rancho fire departments. Local instructors included Bagley, Harry Touloumis, Dr. Mark Meddleton (all NMHC members), Pat DuBois and Fire Chief Anthony Martinez.

Sessions not held at riverside took place at the TopForm Arena in Corrales, and included best practices for extricating horses from barbed wire fences, ditches, swimming pools and other predicaments. (We all know that horses are magnets for trouble.) The event was extensively covered by local news outlets, with several TV and newspaper stories. Horses for hands on practice were Caesar, Bon Bagley's Morgan riding and driving horse (who was in the quicksand), two draft horses owned by Harry Touloumis, and a Gypsy Vanner owned by the Kellys. Caesar also modeled the rescue harness purchased by the sponsoring organizations.



NMHC Board meetings are open, but: we are meeting face to face only quarterly, with gas and mileage, distance and time being what they are. The August meeting was face to face, and the others are by Skype and telephone. For the call in info for September 8 and October 6, contact Dr. Jason Turner: jturner@ad.nmsu.edu.

Sadly, **John and Cat Parks** have purchased a ranch in Texas and will be moving a large part of their operations to the new place. They are both NMHC directors (John is VP) and were instrumental in activating the **Santa Fe County Horse Coalition** and creating the **NM Horse Council Partners Alliance**. Cat, at least, will be retaining her New Mexico residence and remaining a director. We will need new directors in 2015, though, so start thinking about it: terms end for Bon Bagley, John Collins, Charles Graham, Erlene Seybold-Smythe and me. I'm sure Bon will re-up, and sure I will be leaving the Board with a full and unconditional pardon.



Look for the NMHC ad (page 25) in the [New Mexico Stockman](#) August issue, the issue that emphasizes the horse industry, with a Curtis Fort



sculpture on the cover. We may also take a booth at the Joint Stockmen's convention the first weekend in December.

New Mexico Livestock Board

West Nile Virus. The first 2014 case of West Nile virus in an equine was confirmed in a horse in Albuquerque's South Valley. The unvaccinated horse has since been euthanized. "Mosquito populations are increasing with the recent rains, and we should expect West Nile activity throughout the state", said **Dr. Paul Ettestad**, public health veterinarian for the NM Department of Health. There have been no confirmed cases in humans so far, but the peak for new cases should be August and September. "West Nile virus remains an important disease in unvaccinated horses," says NM State Veterinarian **Dr. Ellen Mary Wilson**, who recommended annual WNV vaccination of horses, conscientious mosquito control, and use of repellent.

About those mosquitoes, use birth control by removing their water sources. A puddle in an old tire will produce thousands. Whip up your water as you fill the horse trough, and empty and refill pet water dishes often. Larvae need quiet water to hatch. Don't, as one owner told me, deprive your pets of water to keep mosquito numbers down – just freshen it. And if you have a large stock tank of still water (we collect roof runoff, for instance) use "Mosquito Dunks", which kill the larvae but nothing else. And why is there a West Nile vaccine for horses and not one for people?

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO VACCINATE! There is good immunity in 14-21 days, partial immunity before that (which may lessen the severity of the disease). After that, for heaven's sake get the annual booster.

Vesicular Stomatitis. The NMLB "Situation Report" dated August 13 says that 62 new equine cases and two bovine cases have been confirmed in Colorado, and eleven new equine and one bovine case in Texas. To date this year, confirmed **VSV** – vesicular stomatitis virus – premises have been identified in Colorado – 133





premises – and Texas – 53 premises. If hauling your horses, check requirements for entering and leaving NM and other states.

Fair and Exhibitor Guide. The NMLB website, www.nmlbonline.com, has the requirements for both in-state and out of state horses and other livestock prior to their showing at Fairs, Shows and Exhibitions. Check for any current changes.

New State Veterinarian. Dr. Ellen Mary Wilson has accepted the position of NM State Veterinarian, starting on August 4, 2014. “Dr. Wilson comes to New Mexico with a wealth of both practicing and regulatory veterinarian knowledge and experience”, says the NMLB press release. She received her DVM from Ross University. Clinical research includes an appointment at the Primate Research Institute in Alamogordo, positions with the National Institutes of Health and the FDA in Bethesda, and most recently as Chief of Animal Health at the California Department of Food and Agriculture. She has also managed a family farm in Alabama with cattle, horses and goats, and run a mixed animal veterinary practice. Welcome!



The **Horse Racing Act (HRA)** passed in New Mexico in 1933, permitting horse racing and pari-mutuel gambling. In 1935, Governor Clyde Tingley teamed with Oscar Mahlon Love Sr., then president of the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, Frank Shufflebarger (contractor) and other community leaders to create an annual show patterned on territorial fairs held in the Albuquerque area as far back as 1881. The first State Fair opened at its present site, then far east of the City of Albuquerque, in 1938. Mahlon Love, Oscar’s four year old son, showed a Hereford bull at that first Fair, having difficulty getting it to participate in the parade of champions at the rodeo grandstand. Love, who served on the State Fair Commission from 1991 to 1995, stated in 1999 that **“The New Mexico State Fair is one of the few fairs that is what it was designed to be in the first place – an exposition of livestock, produce, and the rural way of life. Women still**



bring pickles, canned goods and quilting to the Fair. Sheep-shearing is still on exhibit there.”

Okay, we’re set with horse racing and livestock - it’s time for **rodeo!** New Mexico cowgirl **Fern Sawyer** helped introduce the Fair’s first championship rodeo in 1941 with an exhibition of fancy riding and rope tricks. She became one of the most colorful State Fair Commissioners, serving from 1963 to 1974.

★ ★ State Fair Rodeo 2014 ★ ★

NMHC member and contractor for Expo NM Wayne Epsteen attended the NMHC Board meeting on August 4 to distribute advertising sheets acquainting directors with the exciting rodeo events. See the Expo website for concerts....but this year we will see PRCA (Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association) sanctioned rodeos on Friday, Sept. 12; Saturday, Sept. 13; Wednesday, Sept. 17; Thursday, Sept. 18 and Friday, Sept. 19. At 2 PM Sunday, see PRCA/Xtreme Bulls. Beginning at 8:00 AM on Sunday, September 14, two PRCA championship rodeo camps will be held for all abilities, ages 8 and over. For more information, see www.prorodeo.com/youthrodeo.aspx.

But wait, there’s more! Also on Sunday, September 14, beginning at 4:00 PM, enjoy the **Gran Jaripeo Mexican Extravaganza !** Mexican rodeo events, singers, dancers....

On September 20, see the State Fair’s first ever **Cinch Shoot-Out** in Tingley Coliseum, beginning at 7:00 PM. Called **“Rodeo’s All Star Game”**, it will showcase champion teams from several different rodeos, competing in traditional events head to head.

Wayne Epsteen and Expo Operations Manager have been traveling through the state to many rodeos with data sheets, with the result that ticket sales are booming. Get yours soon!

★ ★ State Fair Parade 2014 ★ ★

Celebration on Route 66 is the theme of the 2014 parade, and details are available on the Expo website. There is a \$25.00 registration fee;





parade will leave the SE corner of the Fairgrounds (Louisiana & Central) beginning at 8:45 and traveling approximately two miles east on Central before disbanding. Each entrant will be given a one day admission to the Fair.

State Fair Horse Arena 2014

The Horse Show Schedule originally posted on the Expo website, www.Exponm.com, has remained unchanged for several months.

9/10, Wednesday	Horses Helping People 6PM Trainer Challenge
9/11, Thursday	All Breed
9/12, Friday	4-H State Championship
9/13 & 14	AQHA Quarter Horses
9/15, Monday	Paint and Appaloosa
9/16, Tuesday	Pinto and Palomino
9/17, Wednesday	Miniature Horses
9/18, Thursday	1 PM Mules and Donkeys 3:30 PM Draft Horse 7:00 PM Draft Horse Pull
9/20 & 9/21	USEF Arabians Saddlebreds, Morgans Hackney Ponies

Horse show potential exhibitors and spectators, please check and keep checking. As of the deadline for this newsletter (Thursday, August 14) with the exception of the All Breed show, no premiums, judges or show schedules had been posted to the Expo website.

However, the **New Mexico Horse Council** plans its traditional outreach booth, tent, tables and horse-in-residence in front of the Horse Arena as we have for more years that I can count. It's the first chance many fair visitors (especially children) have to see, touch, and find out about a horse! We very much need new "young stock" to experience the wonder of horses. We'll have things for kids to do (think buttons, ropes, cowboy yoyos – I had never heard of them either – and horses are being booked though President Ron Morris – lhrramorris@juno.com. Other horse groups can bring literature and share. We even intend to have the former Pet Mayor of Corrales, Aspen, for the whole the final weekend if her film duties permit. She's planning on it!

★ ★ State Fair Facts 2014 ★ ★

Hours: open at 10:00 every day, September 10 – 21. Sunday through Thursday, close at 9PM; Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 PM.

Admission Prices: \$10 for adults age 12-64; \$7 for seniors 65 and up; \$7 also for youth 6-11, and children under five are free.

Enchantment Day Pass: The New Mexico Rail Runner has partnered with the NM State Fair and ABQ RIDE on the first ever presale ticket. Beginning Friday, August 15, the pass will be on sale at all NM Walgreen's stores and will get you discounted admission to the Fair and one free round trip ABQ RIDE bus ride from the Downtown ABQ Rail Runner station to the Fair and back, Sept. 10-21.

General Parking (also known as a "hunting license") will be free throughout the run of the Fair; some "preferred" paid parking will be available at Gate 1 off Central Avenue.

New Mexico State Fair Commission Meeting

August 5. Due in part to a request by President Ron Morris that NMHC directors attend the Commission meeting on August 5 and, if desired, offer public comment, five Board members were present. Others from the horse community also asked to speak. The **Manager's report** painted quite the rosy picture of Fair preparations. Some ongoing (but not very visible) repairs to infrastructure have been completed, and the entire grounds have been spruced up. But what about horses?

Manager Mourning reported that the **Downs at Albuquerque** has already begun live racing at the Fairgrounds track, with attendance, purses and horse numbers up due to the opening of the new casino. There are some new and exciting choices in the **rodeo events**, with ticket sales spectacularly increased because Ken Salazar of Expo and Wayne Epstein, contractor, have been distributing promotional materials and visiting rodeos throughout the state. **Parade** entries are running ahead of last year. Mourning also announced that **Excel Associates** of Erie,





Colorado, had been contracted to manage the NM State Fair Horse Shows (although there is no listing yet on the Excel website).

NMHC directors and prospective horse show exhibitors have been sadly disappointed with the lack of horse show information on the Expo website. President Ron Morris tried to help staff with applications for show approvals in May, for instance. However, as of today and with one exception, this year's show premiums, schedules, judges and approvals were not posted on the website. During public comment, various NMHC members and other horse owners pointed out to Commissioners that:

- Although many breed show approvals are pending and will surely be granted, exhibitors remain uncertain. Many plan their show calendars with an eye to earning points and qualifying for their breed national shows.
- Some exhibitor premium checks for the 2013 State Fair had not been received.
- Two shows (hunter-jumper prior to the beginning of the Fair, and Arabians, Saddlebreds, Morgans, and Hackney Ponies on the final weekend) are governed by US Equestrian Federation guidelines. The hunter jumper show is approved; the national Arabian association has not yet received a request for approval.
- Horse show premium books from yesteryear were shown to Commissioners. Formerly, they were mailed directly following the July 4 holiday, complete with all approvals, schedules, prize and award information, show rules, and lists of judges and officials.

Next NMSF Commission meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 6. Agenda should be posted on the www.exponm.com website 72 hours prior to the meeting.

New Mexico State University

Teff. As drought continues, NMSU research indicates that teff forage can be a premium alternative that requires less water and is heat resistant. Alternating alfalfa and teff during

growing seasons can help when irrigation water is scarce.

Teff forage was introduced from Ethiopia ten years ago. In its country of origin and in parts of the US, its grain is used for human consumption and the forage for hay production. The grain is comparable to wheat but is gluten free. Leonard Lauriault, superintendent of the NMSU Agricultural Science Center at Tucumcari, said that teff could yield the same as alfalfa in the second half of the growing season with half the water.

He also said that teff seems to be preferred by horses because of its fine-stemmed nature and high quality, which is similar to timothy hay.

Drought-tolerant alfalfa. Robert Flynn and Ian Ray, alfalfa experts at New Mexico State University, have been researching a new drought-tolerant alfalfa variety. They have named it the NuMex Bill Melton variety, honoring the professor who had an alfalfa breeding program in the late 1970's and began developing varieties with greater drought tolerance. It was released in 2009, well reviewed, and holds out promise of production in climates where "production was not possible before". They stress that the variety is not genetically modified, but took twelve years to develop using traditional methods, and was specifically designed to meet the needs of New Mexico growers. After further monitoring this year, it should be commercially available soon.

Land Use and Zoning Updates

Bernalillo County: Permissive Uses, Proposed Changes: After learning that a long list of changes affecting community farms, farmers markets and greenhouses included a statement that "any building, pen or corral where livestock is located must be at least 20 feet from any existing dwelling unit and from any property line", NMHC members who reside in the county had several meetings with zoning officials to learn the "why" of the changes. From one County Commissioner (who did not complain) we heard "my neighbor put his horse pen at the farthest end of his property from *his* house,





which sited it right under *my* kitchen window”. The smallest acreages allowing livestock were the source of nine-tenths of the problems.

The final revision removed any attempt to define a pen, barn or corral, kept the 20 foot distance from property lines, as well as a dwelling unit, for the smallest properties (a half acre or less). Otherwise, all of us who have the property line fence as one side of our paddock or corral (because that’s where our fence is) are okay, if our neighbor’s house is not right at the line.

Taos County. State Senator Carlos Cisneros is circulating a bill draft meant to address skyrocketing property taxes tied to lost agricultural status on Taos County lands. To address the difficulty of keeping lands in production during periods of extreme drought, it would allow owners to “rest” their lands without losing the status. And to answer the protests of horse owners, it would **define keeping horses as agricultural use**, and remove any minimum acreage for land to be defined as agricultural. The assessor had relied on a 1999 court decision that found horses were recreational and not livestock; however, owners pointed out that horses were taxed as livestock. Cisneros states that he will continue to acquaint statewide organizations with the bill, which would shift the tax burden to residential and commercial properties, and then introduce it into the 2015 legislative session.



American Horse Council News

www.horsecouncil.org

August 13. The US Department of Agriculture, after receiving a request from Saudi Arabia to be declared “free of African Horse Sickness” (which would mean that horses imported from Saudi Arabia would no longer be subject to a sixty day quarantine due to the long incubation period of the disease) has studied and evaluated information provided by the country and other sources. They have concluded that AHS is not present in that country and the likelihood of introducing the disease through imports of horses from that county is low.

However, African Horse Sickness has a long incubation period, is highly contagious, and has up to a 95% mortality rate in a “naïve population” such as horses, donkeys and mules in the U.S. The American Horse Council maintains that the potential benefits are not sufficient to offset the potential adverse consequences, including the extremely high mortality rate, the costs of caring for the sick horses, euthanization, and carcass disposal; and the imposition of interstate and international controls and travel restrictions on equine movement. The American Horse Council has also noted that most of the U.S.’s trading partners, and particularly the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), did not recognize Saudi Arabia as free of African Horse Sickness.



August 1. The Veterinary Mobility Act, supported by the American Horse Council, has now been passed by both houses and signed by President Obama. This makes it legal for veterinarians to “provide the care necessary to horses away from their licensed place of practice”.

Previously, the DEA (federal Drug Enforcement Agency) held that veterinarians transporting, administering, or dispensing any controlled substances while away from their premises were in violation of the Controlled Substance Act (CSA). The new language reads “a registrant who is a veterinarian shall not be required to have a separate registration in order to transport and dispense controlled substances....” as long as the site of transporting and dispensing is located in a state where the veterinarian is licensed.



July 10. Congressman Chris Stewart (R-Utah) introduced HR 5058, the **Wild Horse Oversight Act**. It would amend the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act to allow states and Indian Tribes to assume the management and protection of wild horses and burros. If requested, the legislature or governor of a state, or the governing body of a tribe, could assume all management and protection functions of the wild





horses and burros within their borders. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.



June 19. Congresswoman Cynthia Lummis (R-WY) and Tim Walz (D-MN) introduced the **National Forest Service Trail Stewardship Act of 2014** (HR 4886). The American Horse Council, the Back Country Horsemen of America, and the Wilderness Society were significantly involved in the creation of the bill.

A June, 2013 study by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) found that the Forest Service trail maintenance backlog exceeds half a billion dollars and is causing access and safety issues for equestrians and all trail users in National Forests. Only one fourth of the 158,000 miles of trails meets agency standards.

This Act would direct the Forest Service to develop a strategy to more effectively utilize volunteers to assist in trail maintenance. It would also allow outfitters and guides (who are vitally concerned with safe and useful trails) to repair and maintain them in lieu of permit fees. It would also address liability issues.

The New Mexico Horse Council Board of Directors supports this bill and has so informed our congressional representatives.



June 22-25: American Horse Council National Issues Forum, Washington, D.C. "Where Have All The Horses Gone?" drew the largest attendance in years, probably due to the importance of the topic, according to AHC President Jay Hickey.

Beginning with a Sunday evening reception sponsored by the State Horse Councils, **Monday** featured meetings by all the AHC advisory committees: Animal Welfare, Health and Regulatory, Horse Show, Racing, and Recreation. The Unwanted Horse Coalition also met, and the delegates from the State Horse Councils also gathered for a full day meeting of the **Coalition of State Horse Councils**.



Several individual state reports generated a good discussion on how councils are funded, how they achieve goals, universal difficulty in attracting younger members, and the evolving relationship between the Coalition and the American Horse Council. Designated CSHC Delegates attended the other Committee meetings and reported back to the Council. New officers were elected and the Fall meeting (October 31-November 2, hosted by the Horsemen's Council of Illinois) was discussed. Susan Harding of the Equine Land Conservation Resource described the "loss of habitat" in the form of declining numbers of farms and acres of agricultural land, and trail closures. And AHC staff members Jay Hickey, Ben Pendergrass, and R. J. Layher gave a review of current legislative and regulatory activity, with fact sheets for delegates to leave at Congressional offices. Border security, Race Horse depreciation, the Veterinary Mobility Act, and the Recreational Trails Program are all actively lobbied by AHC. But the P.A.S.T. Act of 2013 (Prevent All Soring Tactics) was very thoroughly covered. HR 1518/S 1406 strengthens the Horse Protection Act of 1970 and is very narrowly written to affect only the "Big Lick" horses in the Tennessee Walking Horse, Racking Horse, and Spotted Saddle Horse industry. It prohibits horses in these three breeds from being shown, exhibited, or sold at auction with (1) any 'action device' or (2) a weighted shoe, pad, wedge, hoof band or other device or material' if it is constructed to artificially alter the gait of such a horse and is not strictly protective or therapeutic. Hickey says that the AHC, along with all major breed registries and horse show organizations, supports the bill – and it now has over 300 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and 57 in the Senate. (All members of the New Mexico Congressional Delegation with the exception of Steven Pearce have signed on.)

Tuesday's National Issues Forum began with an overview by keynote speaker Tim Capps, director of the Equine Industry Program at the University of Louisville. Representatives of several segments of the industry (racing, showing, and others) then explained how the dramatic fall-off





in registered horses affected them. The increased costs of horse ownership have driven many potential owners into other recreational areas, and some innovative programs such as the AHC "Time to Ride" hope to bring them back. The **Van Ness Award luncheon** honored Paul Briney of Illinois for long and distinguished service, and Tuesday evening's **Congressional Reception** in the Dirksen Senate Office Building provided excellent opportunities to network.

Wednesday was set aside for Congressional visits. I had told staff of each of the New Mexico congressional members that I would just drop a packet of current material off, but would not need a formal appointment. (Due to security regulations, material actually mailed takes four to six weeks to arrive.) In fact, staff members did make time, as did Congressman Ben Ray Lujan. Returning to the hotel prior to going to the airport, I encountered a two hour taxi strike (protesting the Uber shared ride services). All visible taxis were circling Capitol Hill in a double line nose to tail, with "out of service" signs up and horns honking. Luckily, it was just a mile back to the hotel from Capitol Hill and then a six block walk with luggage to Union Station and the Metro to the airport.

More news from Washington: U.S. House representatives create Rodeo Caucus

Representatives Rick Crawford (R-AR) and Jim Costa (D-CA) have created a Congressional Rodeo Caucus which will address issues facing the rodeo industry and help to "facilitate a constructive dialogue in the U.S. House of Representatives". "Rodeos are a true American tradition enjoyed by people throughout our country. They are both a window into our past and a snapshot of our current culture," said Rep. Costa. "As such, I am honored to be Co-Chair of the Congressional Rodeo Caucus. I look forward to working with my colleague Rep. Crawford in providing a platform on which issues pertaining to the rodeo industry can be openly discussed."

"I am honored to be a Co-Chair of the Congressional Rodeo Caucus with my friend and colleague on the Agriculture Committee Jim



Costa," said Crawford. "I have spent the last three and a half years getting to know Jim and have found we have a shared interest and dedication to the rodeo industry and to issues surrounding animal welfare. For generations, rodeo has been a part of the fabric of our American culture. Ensuring that they have a voice in Washington was important to us. We will be working on their behalf in ways that will preserve this important part of our history and will ensure that many more generations to come will be able to enjoy one of America's greatest pastimes."

Climate Change and Horse Keeping

At a conference on horses and land management in Sydney, Australia, presenter Dr. Gary Muscatello, a microbiologist in the University of Sydney Veterinary Science Department, spoke on the link between climate change and infectious disease risk for horses. Worldwide, he said, when there are new disease outbreaks, changing weather patterns influence disease transmission and the emergence of new diseases. Warmer temperatures enable disease-carrying organisms to extend their ranges and have a longer breeding season. Animals already stressed by hotter temperatures, less water, and less food are more susceptible to diseases, particularly new diseases, moving into the areas. Two examples: Lyme disease in humans previously did not occur in Canada, but now does, because the birds and ticks that carry the disease have extended their range northward. And the Mare Reproductive Loss Syndrome that caused huge losses in Kentucky in 2001 was associated with a large infestation of eastern tent caterpillars, associated with drought conditions.

In the next ten to fifty years we will have many extreme weather events, with insects and pathogens spread far and wide. Floods and droughts will have huge impacts on agriculture in general with less availability of hay and grain, and increased costs.

Dr. Muscatello said we must future-proof our environment. Eliminate bare spots in pastures. Reduce mosquito and other insect habitat. Use water conservation and biosecurity measures.





Horses 'Talk' To Each Other With Their Ears and Eyes, Study Shows

August 5, Current Biology: Scientists know that humans and other primates can convey much information with a glance or tilt of the head – but what about animals with eyes on the sides of their heads, like deer and horses? In order to test information transfer via ears and eyes, scientists placed two buckets of feed in front of a wall with a life-sized photograph of a horse's head. The head faced either left or right. 24 horses, released one at a time, randomly selected either bucket for dinner if the ears and eyes of the photograph were covered. But if the ears and eyes in the photo were visible, the horse most often picked the bucket that the pictured horse was facing. Therefore, they concluded that creatures with faces shaped differently from primates can convey social signals. (None of this will surprise people who know horses.)

BLM Issues Impound Notice

On July 28, the Bureau of Land Management issued an Impound Notice regarding stray livestock on public lands in the Placitas area. The BLM says the horses, which are the property of the State of New Mexico, have severely degraded the public land on which they roam, destroying property and causing safety concerns. The agency has contacted some 16 local and national horse advocacy groups in an effort to find quality homes for these horses prior to their being gathered and sent to public auction. These groups are networking and the number of people trying to assist the effort has grown substantially. For further information, contact Chip Kimball of the BLM at 505-761-8734.

How Ireland Manages Unwanted Horses

July 31, TheHorse.com, from a study published in the *Irish Veterinary Journal*. Citing media statements that have spotlighted Ireland, which is a "country identified with horses", as incapable of managing its unwanted horse problem, researchers began collecting data in 2005 to establish trends and clarify numbers. Desmond Leadon of the Irish Equine Centre in Johnstown,

Naas, Ireland, concludes that the country is managing its excess population "responsibly" while still maintaining its renowned equine industry. The worldwide economic downturn clearly identified horses as a luxury for people who might otherwise have invested in them.

"There was indeed a serious situation, but people responded very responsibly through reduced production and (considering) slaughter", he said. "Of course, there were individual cases of abuse and neglect, but that happens in any country" and was not more common in Ireland. Currently, authorities and welfare organizations are finding relatively few abandoned horses. Meanwhile, production is down about 40%, and slaughter rates continue to rise. The number of horses slaughtered or rendered in knackeries (the latter option for nonhuman consumption) has tripled between 2010 and 2012.

Even so, 87% of Irish Thoroughbred yearlings are exported to all major racing countries, and this industry employs 20,000 people and contributes €1 billion (about \$1.34 billion) per year to the economy. So, says Leadon, "we are managing the situation very well."

EquiLottery

Since its initial public launch on July 9, this new lottery game based on the results of live horse races has drawn interest from over 24 states and provinces across five continents. President and CEO Brad Cummings will give a presentation at the **New Mexico Racing Commission** meeting to be held on August 21 at 10:30 AM, NMRC offices.

Zebra Travelers

June 6, Earthweek: GPS tracking of eight plains zebras revealed that the striped relatives of the horse make a seasonal migration of more than three hundred miles. This means that the species undertakes the longest territorial migration anywhere in Africa.

The southern Africa zebra trek generally takes the species in quite a straight line six to twelve miles further from their starting point than the blue wildebeest, previously thought to be the greatest land-based migrators on the continent.

