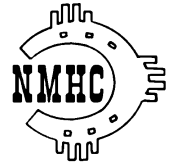


New Mexico Horse Council
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SPRING 2015

“Horses helped prove that humans could destroy each other. And then go and get more horses in order to do more damage elsewhere. Not only did horses invent war; they started the arms race. In the beginning, though, they just simplified the odds. If you had horses, you won. End of story. Horses were the ancient – and medieval – equivalent of planes and tanks, and horsemen, realizing the advantage they had, bore down on their enemies, rained down arrows and spears on them, and then raced off. This was the basic principle of both cavalry and chariotry.” *HORSE: How the Horse Has Shaped Civilization*, J. Edward Chamberlain, BlueBridge, 2006 - Chapter IV, ‘Making Trouble: Horses in War’.

Calendar

Feb. 16: NM Horse Council Board Retreat, Planning Meeting, and Election of NMHC officers.

Feb. 17: NM Horse Council Lobbying Day, Santa Fe, all day. NM Horse Council booth at AgFest, Santa Fe Convention Center, 6 – 9 PM.

NM Horse Council Board of Directors Meetings:
March 2, April 6, May 4, June 1, July 6, Aug. 13, Sept. 17 (at State Fair, 7 PM), Oct. 5, Nov. 2.

April 4: **Deadline** for scholarship applications with all attachments to the NMHC Foundation. See “Foundation” tab on NMHC website.

April 7-8: **NM Horse Council** partnering with NM State University and others to present TLAER, Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue Training, at the NM Firefighter Training Academy in Socorro.

June 14 – 17: **American Horse Council** Annual Meeting and National Issues Forum, Washington, D.C. www.horsecouncil.org

July 24-25: **NM Horse Council/NM Horse Breeders** Legislative Tour.

September 10 – 20: New Mexico State Fair Horse Shows. (Sept. 4-6, Pre-Fair Hunter Jumper Show; Sept. 9, Fun show for all New Mexico Therapy Groups who use horses.)

October 1: **Deadline** for nominations, NMHC Lifetime Achievement Award.

October 31 – November 1, Coalition of State Horse Councils Fall Meeting, Bloomington, MN. Host: Minnesota Horse Council (www.mnhorsecouncil.org) .

Fall 2016 CSHC host: Kansas Horse Council, director@KansasHorseCouncil.com)

December 19: **New Mexico Horse Council** Annual Meeting, Awards, Election of NMHC directors.



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President's Letter

New Mexico Horse Council is starting 2015 with several new directors and new energy. At a daylong retreat hosted by Dr. Steve Komadina at his Corrales home, we elected new officers (our executive Board) and set the Council's agenda for 2015. The next day several members traveled to Santa Fe for lobbying day, to introduce ourselves and our horse industry priorities to our legislators. That evening, the Horse Council booth at AgFest (sponsored by the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau) was open to invitees (legislators, their staffs, personnel from the Governor's office and others). It was a busy but fun day and evening.

We have made appointments to several standing committees to keep the membership informed about such issues as state and county legislation, zoning, NMHC membership and membership benefits, large animal rescue, Project Gelding, the State Fair Booth and the legislative tour. These are not closed committees and your help would be appreciated if you are interested. Contact any Board member, and remember information sharing goes both ways! We want to invite you also to view our website (see the calendar) and Facebook page.

Ron Morris

2015 Board of Directors:

Ron Morris (President)	Belen
lhrramorris@juno.com	
Steve Komadina (Vice-President)	Corrales
komadina@stevekomadina.com	
Jessica Smith (Secretary)	Magdalena
jasmith@nmsu.edu	
Ralph Abeyta (Treasurer)	Albuquerque
abeytasfarrier@gmail.com	

Directors-at-large:

Bon Bagley	Corrales
terantiq@yahoo.com	
Pam Bishop	Rancho de Taos
taosappraiser@mail.com	
Rusty Cook	Albuquerque
Rustycook4412@msn.com	

Kristin Darnell-Kreger	San Ysidro
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Jason Turner	Las Cruces
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More on Lobbying Day Steve Komadina

Your Horse Council directors traveled to Santa Fe (at their own expense) to represent you and remind the legislature and the Governor's Office that horses are an important part of the Land of Enchantment equation. We were well received and many showed interest in getting to know more about the horse industry and its economic impact on the State. Even more important, as we all know, are the emotional and healthy aspects of that horse/human relationship.

We generated particular interest in a future educational meeting NMHC will be putting on for legislators this summer. Our delegation also represented us in the evening at AgFest, joining the agricultural community for an evening of visiting and sampling New Mexico-grown products.

Attempts to include horses in agricultural husbandry for tax purposes seemed to be thwarted as Senator Cisneros's bill was rewritten in committee to exclude horses. The clarification of horses as livestock in bills sponsored by Representative Paul Bandy and Senator Pat Woods moved to final passage.

Thanks are due to those who helped in lobbying: Ron Morris, Ralph Abeyta, Wayne Epsteen and Steve Komadina.





(One bill that generated vigorous discussion among NMHC members was Senate Bill 483 (William Sharer), also introduced as House Bill 291 (Yvette Herrell) and, in a slightly different form, as Senate Memorial 6 (Pat Woods). The bills would create a “Federal Land Management Study Commission” to consider options for the transfer of federal lands to the state and to others. Both bills are making their way through committees; the legislative session ends March 21. Members talking to NMHC directors fall into three groups: those opposing, such as Back Country Horsemen members; those supporting, such as ranchers; and a large middle group that is willing to wait and see what happens should it pass.)

2014 NMHC Annual Meeting Elections, Awards

As usual, it was difficult to find a suitable date and place in December. Therefore, the 2014 Annual Meeting took place in January 2015. (That is undoubtedly why the **2015** Annual Meeting is already set: **Saturday, December 19**, so save the date!)

Steve and Penny Komadina again hosted the NMHC members and others at their Vista Hermosa Farms home in Corrales. Well over fifty members and guests enjoyed a dinner and a talk by newly elected (and with the recount just barely confirmed) Public Lands Commissioner Aubrey Dunn. There was also a short meeting reviewing the NMHC year, the problems, and the successes – and a peek at next year’s projects. NMHC members as always get a tremendous amount done for horses and the horse industry in the state, considering that our horse council is all-volunteer and funded with member dues and fundraisers. (Do we ever envy Kentucky Horse Council, funded in part with \$100,000/year from license plates, and North Carolina Horse Council’s six figure budget, fueled in part by a five cent checkoff on each bag of equine feed.)

Aubrey Dunn introduced himself; he and wife Robin welcomed anyone to contact them for permission to ride on their new ranch. When settled in to the Land Commissioner’s job, his

office will control 9 million acres, a huge percentage of which is involved in oil and gas leases. He will have 156 employees, but could not hire anyone permanent until the election results were certified – and they were very close. An immediate project is to audit all fees now coming in; some are decidedly out of date. He will not diminish current public access (and pointed out that federal lands, too, sometimes reduce public access). A bill to study transfer of federal lands to the state and others will be introduced in the 2015 legislative session and he will watch with interest.

Business Meeting. After housekeeping (approval of 2013 minutes, treasurer’s report, displaying the new NMHC banner), proposed lobbying activities were outlined. Member volunteer lobbyists are permitted and welcome. Bills to watch: any attempt to change the status of horses from livestock to pets, or redefine them as companion animals. The proposed two day tour this summer will engage legislators in the economics and fun of the entire horse industry. We will again have an outreach booth at AgFest and the Joint Stockmen’s Convention.

Morris congratulated Sally Mayer of **Expo New Mexico** on publishing the State Fair Horse Show schedule so early in the year. It will certainly make planning easier. We intend a larger presence in the NMHC State Fair booth as well.

Trails: Jackie Bouker reviewed various trails projects throughout the state, and Bon Bagley spoke of her efforts in helping to create the first equestrian trail in the Tent Rocks National Monument. Potential conflict is sure in the Albuquerque Bosque area, if public meetings are any indicators; paving and/or closing trails is sure to meet with opposition. Back Country Horsemen is improving safe access on a very bad trail in the Ojito wilderness.

NMHC Bylaws Revision has been in the planning stage for several years and the final draft now needs to be distributed and approved at a General Membership meeting.

Elections. The membership elects five directors to three-year terms each year; the directors then





elect their officers at the first Board meeting following the Annual Meeting. All five positions were vacant. After a contested election, the following were welcomed to the Board: **Pam Bishop, Wayne Epsteen, Mary Beth Friis, Nancy Freshour, and Jessica Smith.** There is a list of directors following the President's letter (page 2) in this newsletter, and more information on the NMHC website.

Awards. NMHC presents, each year, Certificates of Appreciation to those who have gone "above and beyond" in service to the horse people of New Mexico. However, in presenting the awards, Val Cole pointed out that we have all done that – but have not all been nominated. We are pleased to present Certificates of Appreciation to:

Bon Bagley. "Always 'putting horses forward' to the rest of the world. Just three of her 2014 projects included a Large Animal Rescue 'hands on' seminar, organizing the Caballos de Corrales Toys for Tots parade, and promoting a horse trail in Tent Rocks National Monument.

D.K. Brown. Nominated by several different people, the universal phrase about D.K. was: "if there is a kid who needs help, particularly with horses, D.K. *always* steps up."

Meddleton Equine, Inc. Dr. Mark Meddleton and Dr. Laura Howell provided facilities, expertise, and all else necessary for Project Gelding.

Ron Morris: As President of the New Mexico Horse Council, he found that his duties included everything, particularly working with the State Fair, horse clubs, horse owners, and various governmental officials.

Santa Fe County Horse Coalition: Formed to oppose changes in horsekeeping regulations, it continues to promote the 'voice of the horse' on trails, at events, and on private property through collaborations with other groups.

NMHC directors then honored Val Cole, member for over thirty years and director for several terms. Cole had indicated her desire to leave the Board of Directors at the end of 2014. They not only presented her with a beautiful horse head sculpture by Patricia Crane, but gave her husband

Randy (her major technical savior when computers whine) an engraved knife in a presentation case – to cut to the chase, no doubt.

**Horse Person of the Year
Steve Komadina**

Many think of Steve Komadina in connection with hot air balloons – his famous "After the Stork" balloon sailed over Albuquerque in numerous balloon events, showing a stork delivering a bundle of joy. Others know him as a "baby doctor" – he believes he has delivered over six thousand, although without the stork. Still practicing (but not delivering babies) and still involved with the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (but no longer as a pilot) he now spends energy on his passion, introducing children safely to the joy of horse/human relationships.

The New Mexico Horse Council first became acquainted with Steve Komadina when we wrote a letter protesting legislation he introduced while serving as a New Mexico State Senator between 2000 and 2008. As so many did then, and still do, he wondered just what the heck the New Mexico Horse Council was – but he followed up on it, attending an annual meeting. We were not quite like the other horse organizations he had been involved with, such as CHAMP (the Corrales Horse and Mule People) and the Back Country Horsemen.

He told us that we needed help with lobbying (a main activity of both the New Mexico Horse Council and the American Horse Council), became a member, and is now a lifetime member. We now have an annual "lobbying day" and have seen to it that many legislators are more than names and pictures on the government website. He has also encouraged having closer ties with other livestock groups, by encouraging continued participation with booths at AgFest and the Joint Stockmen's Convention. He promoted our 2014 fundraiser, a raffle of a western sculpture by Curtis Fort. The tall new NMHC banner is his work. He and others spent hours and days on Bylaws revision, and proposed new Bylaws are now ready to present to the NMHC membership for a vote. And he, Jason Turner and others are





finishing all the detail work on setting up a two day tour for legislators this summer, which will acquaint New Mexico’s lawmakers with all the economic, social and recreational impacts of the equine industry and culture in New Mexico, from rodeo to ranching, racing to trail riding, and all things equine in between.

He wasn’t born to a horse family, although he does apparently carry the mutant gene so many of us have. He grew up in an 800 square foot house in the northeast heights, and heard as so many of us did that there was no way at all to afford a horse – ever. When he was a young boy, he and his mother discovered “Clark’s Riding Stables” in the river bottom at Central and the Rio Grande, and his mom drove him down on Saturdays so he could watch people coming to take lessons. His dad, exasperated, told him to talk to Mister Clark to see if he could brush or clean up horses just to get experience. “You bet!” At 11, Steve got his first paying job, delivering handbills door to door, and whenever he accumulated enough money he bought a riding lesson. In 1961, Santa brought a horse (a mixed breed Tennessee Walker named Flake) and a saddle, and Steve and his father found a place where they could build a corral to keep him. Flake stayed with the family until Steve graduated from med school, then went to a good friend’s home. After a stint in the Navy, Steve has had horses ever since, along with wife Penny (who accepts, he says, that a horse is his best friend), six children, and a slew of grandchildren. They bought Vista Hermosa Farm in Corrales and trail ride from there. He pays forward by hosting meetings, facilitating events, and has provided the Gorham Boy Scout Ranch with its horses and tack.

Steve likes to participate in organized rides when he has the time; he’s gone on the Pony Express Ride, the NM Centennial Cattle Drive and (several times) the Red Rock Ride. He is looking forward to riding with Preston Bates at the N Bar Ranch this summer on the hundred mile Pathfinder Ride, and the rides on his bucket list include the Chief Joseph, John Wayne and Florida Cracker Rides.

2015 State Fair Horse Shows

It was a pleasant, stress reducing surprise to have the 2015 State Fair Horse Shows schedule distributed soon after New Year’s Day. Sally Mayer, senior manager, said that Dauane Elkins of Excel Associates in Erie, Colorado will again be managing all of the horse shows. Their website is www.excelshows.com.

While the Fair opens Thursday, Sept. 10, a Hunter/Jumper Pre-Fair horse show run by Rush Management (www.rushshows.com) will be held Sept. 4-6. And there is a Fun Show beginning at 9:00 AM Wednesday, September 9, for all New Mexico Therapy Groups who use horses. Otherwise,

Thursday, Sept. 10	Western Dressage
Friday, Sept. 11	Arabians, Morgans *
Saturday, Sept. 12	Miniature horses “A”, “R”
Sunday, Sept. 13	4-H Championship
Monday, Sept. 14	All Breed
Tuesday, Sept. 15	Palomino, Pinto, Buckskin **
Wednesday, Sept. 16	Paint, Appaloosa
Thursday, Sept. 17	Mule & Donkey
Friday, Sept. 18	(AM, Reining ***) 1 PM Draft Skills Draft Pull following Draft Skills
Saturday, Sept. 19	Quarter Horse (PM, Reining*** following end of Sat. QH schedule)
Sunday, Sept. 20	Quarter Horse

- * Will not be USEF shows.
- ** If Buckskin Show is sanctioned.
- *** Contingent on Sponsorships.

State Fair Booth

The mare Aspen and her owner Nancy Freshour were a big hit during the final weekend of the State Fair in 2014. Aspen, the black Rocky Mountain horse that is a therapy horse as well as a state champion in Competitive Trail classes,



made friends in many places while the Pet Mayor of Corrales; now she visits schools, senior centers, and the Loving Thunder Therapeutic Riding organization. Nancy met so many people and made so many horse/human connections with Aspen during the Fair that she has volunteered to head the New Mexico Horse Council State Fair Experience. As a newly elected NMHC director, she is organizing early and is already looking for volunteers to:

- Work at the NMHC booth at the State Fair (it's in front of the Horse Arena);
- Ride in the State Fair Parade as a group;
- Bring *your* very special horse to the booth and to greet the State Fair visitors;
- Promote the goals and mission of the New Mexico Horse Council.

Freshour says this is a “really fun time and an opportunity to meet the general public, educate them about the role of horses in our society, and to serve horses and the horse community. If we all volunteer a little of our time, we will all benefit immensely! See this communication between Aspen and a visitor at last year’s State Fair.”



Freshour will need more people than horses; those people are needed to distribute materials, answer questions, talk about different horse

activities...perhaps even help children make personalized buttons. Contact Nancy Freshour to volunteer: sourdoughnan@swcp.com, or telephone (505) 301-2076.

Santa Fe County Horse Coalition Scores Again

Resolution No. 2015-38, signed February 24, 2015, is ***A Resolution to Support the Equine Culture in the Final Development and Implementation of the Sustainable Land Development Code (SDLC) and that Santa Fe County promote the development of Santa Fe as a Regional and International Horse Destination.***

The Coalition has been working tirelessly in many areas to promote passage, helped by some exciting new activities in the area. The entire thing makes exciting reading, particularly the five “Be it resolved” conclusions.

- *Recognize the historic, cultural and economic importance of horses within the County;*
- *Collaborate with appropriate stakeholders, including the **Santa Fe County Horse Coalition**, to promote economic growth through horse activities;*
- *Support the development and maintenance of facilities and businesses that will enable horse-related economic growth;*
- *Protect and Preserve the equine culture in the final development and implementation of the Sustainable Land Development Code, and acknowledge the County’s support of the development of Santa Fe County as a regional and international horse destination, and*
- *Will consider the need to include equine uses and equine related businesses in future County plans and plan updates.*

Congratulations to Cat Parks, Julia Jarvis, and others really too numerous to mention. You can be proud of this resolution and the rest of the counties (and the rest of the states!) will envy you greatly. Perhaps it will spread well beyond your county’s borders.

Check out the rest of the Coalition’s projects, and join – it’s free! www.santafehorse.com .



Arabian Youth Nationals Trot Away to Oklahoma City

From a New Mexico Horse Industry Economic Data report prepared for the Governor's New Mexico Rodeo Council in Fall 2006:

"The Youth National Arabian and Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show (Youth Nationals) held at Expo New Mexico in Albuquerque, NM, from July 22-29, 2006 featured 3,212 entries and 1,169 horses representing 44 states and provinces, making it the biggest national youth show in its 14 year history. This year's event (2006) had an estimated economic impact to Albuquerque of \$8.6 million."

That was nine years ago, and chances are that the 2015 Youth Nationals this summer will be the last ones ever held in Albuquerque.

At that point (2006), Albuquerque and Expo had already lost the (adult) US National Arabian and Half-Arabian Championship Horse Show, which had formerly alternated between Louisville and New Mexico. Tulsa offered the sun, moon and stars in the form of improvements and the show was lost in spite of heroic efforts by the ad hoc group "ABQ for Arabs". With more horses and a longer run, that show generated \$20 million in economic impact.

Oklahoma City also sees the benefits of attracting a national show with its fantastic horses. Each horse brings an average of three people who need hotel rooms, food, a place to park the stretch limousines (have you seen the large horse trailers?), horse feed, bedding and any and all additional needs, even including such things as plants, trees, fountains and other decorations. Dan Mourning, Expo manager, correctly says that Expo is a state enterprise agency that is intended to be self supporting, and that the requests submitted to the state legislature for capital outlay money usually are dramatically slashed by lawmakers as a first move. And that the aging infrastructure of the Fairgrounds absorbs much of the money available for improvements. However, emails also tell a tale of missed deadlines and a general feeling of, perhaps, not being wanted. (The national Arabian Horse Association did particularly praise Alison Haxton for her work with the group over the years.)

The Albuquerque Journal editorialized that previous City administrations had diverted capital money for current city operations, so it was not available when needed for infrastructure. But, I'm told, it was *this* year that the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau cut its funding for the horse show.

I have personally worked at the following events held at Expo New Mexico: US Team Roping National Championships, Arabian US Nationals, Paint Nationals, Appaloosa Nationals, Andalusian Nationals – these shows have all gone elsewhere. They brought money, people and excitement to Albuquerque, and left little behind except a disposable, biodegradable product. Many did not feel welcomed by the facility, and one group that approached the horse council (about seven State Fair managers ago, so it is not Dan Mourning's fault!) to bring the Pony of the Americas National Show here could not even get a call returned from Expo. For aficionados, this is depressing.

2014 NFR Barrel Racing Champion Brings a Helmet to the Party

Fallon Taylor and her home-raised, home-trained mare, Flos Heiress, stirred up National Finals Rodeo fans when she came through the tunnel in Round 3 of the barrel race finals – wearing a helmet. Taylor, who had suffered severe head injuries and a broken neck after being bucked off a young horse in 2009, had been considering this for some time. After being approached by members of the AQHA Professional Horsemen group, she agreed to help to bridge the gap between helmet acceptance and support at the horse show level and the stigma of helmet use at the rodeo finals by wearing one helmet in one round of the NFR.

But... "Even though I was a living, breathing example of why you should wear a helmet when you are on a horse, the thought never crossed my mind before because it simply wasn't the cool thing to do in the sport of rodeo. I even endured pain every time I pulled my cowboy hat down to make a run because of the hat pressing on the screw holes in my head."





After fulfilling her agreement and wearing that helmet in the third round (her horse had almost fallen with her during the second round) she was so much more comfortable she realized there was no going back.

She had friends search Las Vegas for colorful helmets to match every outfit, and says she has a thousand supporters for every critic who accuses her of “diluting the cowboy way”. After all, “We are breeding our barrel-racing horses to be faster and stronger with each foal crop. It takes an incredible equine athlete to make it to the top these days...No one would race in a NASCAR race, play football or skateboard without a helmet, so why should it be shameful to wear a helmet in our sport?” (*America’s Horse, Mar/Apr 2015*)

Helmet use when riding is a choice (at least for adults, and if not mandated by competition rules). But it’s a choice with possible severe consequences that a rider – and the rider’s family – will be forced to live with. NMHC reminds its members that we own and are happy to lend the DVD or VHS version of the thirty minute helmet safety video ***Every Time, Every Ride***, produced by the Washington State 4-H Council and narrated by William Shatner.

Just arrived: an article by NMHC director Steve Komadina on the same subject: “To Wear or Not To Wear...a Helmet”. He advocates good preparation for each ride and a good relationship with your horse – and other precautions – and then deciding whether to wear a helmet. He implies that it might not be necessary...and that “there could be worse ways to die. Quality of life is paramount; quantity is secondary.”

I am more concerned with possible debilitating long term consequences. Many years ago a friend’s horse tripped and went suddenly to its knees at the walk as the group approached the trailers. She had unsnapped her helmet, and it hit the ground first and then her head hit a rock. She recovered well, according to the surgeons – but drooled for the rest of her life. And, in Hawaii for a mountain-to-beach ride, Randy and I were two of only three riders who wore helmets. Said he, “If someone thinks his brain isn’t worth



protecting, I’m inclined to agree with him.” And the third helmeted rider, a neurologist, had simply seen too many serious injuries.

NMHC’s Eldon Reyer Featured Speaker at Equestrian Medical Safety Association

Introduced as the “renowned horseman, park ranger and fire and evacuation planner”, Reyer addressed the **EMSA** meeting (held in conjunction with the **US Eventing Association Convention** in Ft. Worth, TX) in December on the topic *Equine Long Range Disaster/Emergency Evacuation*. Reyer, who retired from 34 years in the National Park Service in 1989, continued his love of horses and packing. He was instrumental in forming the Santa Fe chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of America and has served on many boards, coalitions and associations promoting horses. He (along with his wife Karen) were early lifetime members of the New Mexico Horse Council; he received the NM Horse Council “Lifetime Achievement Award” in 2009, after being honored with the Van Ness Award in 2008 from the American Horse Council.

In 2000, when a “controlled burn” became the Cerro Grande fire near and in Los Alamos, many hundred head of livestock needed to be corralled and cared for. As President of the Northern New Mexico Horsemen’s Association, Eldon led the effort to place horses and other animals at the Santa Fe Rodeo Grounds, get feed, veterinary treatment, set up care crews and facilitate returning recovered animals to their owners. Out of this grew the first “Santa Fe County Equine Evacuation and Rescue Plan”, now reworked as a four page handout and available to anyone from NMHC. Eldon says it looks as if 2015 is shaping up to be another very active fire season in New Mexico, and horse owners need to keep their trailers ready (and their horses familiarized with loading) just in case

Don’t Forget the Deadlines!

Please pay 2015 dues if you have not gotten around to that yet. And: **April 4** is the deadline for NMHC Foundation scholarship (it’s \$500) applications, and **October 1** for nominations for NMHC’s biennial Lifetime Achievement Award.

