

DELAWARE EQUINE NEWS

Vol. 10 No. 4

www.delawareequinecouncil.org or .com

August 2011



AT WICKED R WESTERN PRODUCTIONS . . .

BULL RIDERS AND BARREL RACERS

RAISE FUNDS FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST SPINAL MUSCULAR ATROPHY

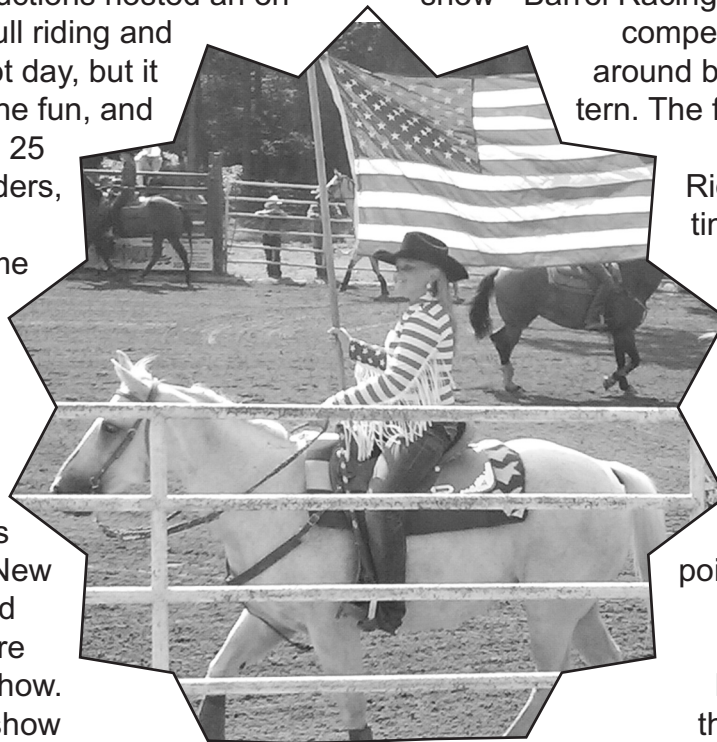
On Saturday, July 9th, Wicked R Western Productions hosted an entertaining afternoon of bull riding and barrel racing. It was a hot day, but it did not take away from the fun, and the competition between 25 or so professional bull riders, and ten or so barrel racers...all donating their time to a good cause — the fight against spinal muscular atrophy.

The bull riding began promptly at 4 pm, with ten or so bull riders for the first round. Bull riders from all over Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and our own state of Delaware came to put on a good show. They came despite the show going on in Cowtown, NJ, where most bull riders meet to compete against the best of the best in the northeast.

After round one, the crowd was treated to a show - Barrel Racing, a sport in which women compete on their horses, racing around barrels in a cloverleaf pattern. The fastest woman at the end

was Wicked R's Peyton Ridgely on Durango, with a time of 16.0 seconds. Second went to Jennifer Ridgely, riding Tank, with a score of 16.4.

Third went to Taylor Rossier riding Wrangler. The winning bull riders of the day: first place with a total of 84 points, was Will Bukie, from PA; second place with a total of 82 points, Randy Ridgely, of Wyoming, DE; third went to Justin Carter, of St. Cloud, FL.



Peyton Ridgely, from Wyoming, DE, on Dude in the opening ceremony at the Bull Blast and Barrel Race held on July 9 at Wicked R.



Spectators wait as bull riders line up to compete in the July 9 event that benefited the Spinal Muscular Atrophy Foundation.

About spinal muscular atrophy . . .

The term "spinal muscular atrophy" (SMA) refers to a group of inherited diseases that cause progressive muscle degeneration and weakness, eventually leading to death. Most frequently, those who get the diseases have inherited the gene from both parents. Around four out of every 100,000 people are affected. In its most severe forms, SMA begins in early infancy with children who are born with very little muscle tone, weak muscles, and feeding and breathing problems. It can also start in adulthood when it is usually milder. Although it gets progressively worse, and there is, so far, no cure, treatment for SMA can help and is vital.

Information from www.PubMedHealth.com

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Happy summer everyone! I hope you are braving the heat well. In this month's newsletter, we bring information to you on teaching your horse the "Relaxing Cue" from Tara Jones plus an article on horse behavior along with information on the American Horse Council.



Our letter of concern comes from DE Equine Council board member Ken Horeis who provides information on who to contact when a horse is deceased. Our condolences to Ken and his wife, Molly, who recently lost their beautiful filly, Furst Take.

On the cover, we have pictures from the Bull Blast and Barrel Race, held on July 9, at Wicked R Western Productions. This was a fundraiser for the Spinal Muscular Atrophy Foundation. It was a hot day, but folks enjoyed watching the professional bull riders give their time for a great cause.

I hope the weather gets cooler soon, and I wish all those showing this season the best of luck. We, at the Delaware Equine Council, are always looking for new members to join our organization. If you have friends interested in horses, even if they do not own one, DEC is a wonderful way to volunteer and get involved.

We are also looking for a chairperson for the 2012 Scholarship Awards Banquet to be held on March 10 next year. Please contact either

Stan Vonasek (stan22146@hotmail.com) or Pam Nebel (pnebel@aol.com) if you are interested.

We continually look for new contributors for newsletter articles, so be sure to contact me at the email address listed below if you have an article you wish to publish in our newsletter.

A reminder to DEC members — If you have any events coming up that you would like to list on our calendar of events and website...please send your information to me at aprilmurray@gmail.com.

Thanks everyone....and stay cool!

April Murray, DEC Acting Secretary and Editor

~ Welcome New Member ~

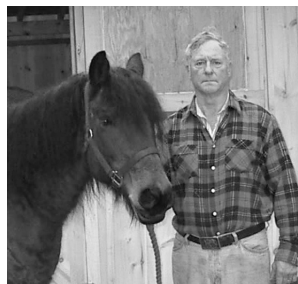
Youth Member - Grace Poe, Bridgeville, DE

HELPING HORSE PROGRAM IS A PHONE CALL AWAY

Sussex County 302-856-6361
 Kent County 302-698-3006
 New Castle County 302-998-2282

President's Message

HOT! HOT! HOT! It's mighty hot out there to be showing, trail riding or whatever you please to be doing with your critters!



It sure would help to get some much needed rain for the hay, as supplies may be quite lean this year.

Fighting flies and cracked hooves is no fun either, but keep in mind it's all part of the "enjoyment" of having these wonderful animals.

Have fun.....it soon will be fall with cooler weather and no bugs!

Stan Vonasek, President, DEC

2010 Delaware Equine Council Officers:

President, Stan Vonasek 302-684-3966
 stan22146@hotmail.com
 Vice President, Peggy Koster 302-629-5233
 Acting Secretary, April Murray aprilmurray@gmail.com
 Treasurer, Kim Schwartz 302-492-8502
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 wilsonsauction@aol.com

LETTER OF CONCERN

Recently I had the unfortunate, but necessary, experience of having to have a horse euthanized. I called Mr. Frank Kohout to pick up the horse following the euthanization.

He informed me of a program, administered by the Conservation District, that helps with the cost of disposing of the animal. As long as the animal in question is not a race horse, Mr. Kohout will pick up the horse/pony, and the owner writes a check to the Conservation District for \$25.00. They, in turn, pay Mr. Kohout to dispose of the animal. Your biggest expense is having your vet come to euthanize the animal.

This program is not available to owners of race horses, only to the pleasure horse market.

For more information on this program contact your county Conservation District office.

Kenneth Horeis, Delaware Equine Council Member and Board Member.

Make A Smart Move . . . Join the AMERICAN HORSE COUNCIL

The Future is in your hands, Take the Reins!

What is the American Horse Council? As the national trade association representing the horse industry in Washington, D.C., the American Horse Council works daily to represent your equine interests and opportunities. Organized in 1969, AHC has been promoting and protecting your industry by communicating with Congress, federal agencies, the media and the industry itself on behalf of the horse related interests each and every day. Basically, AHC works on Federal legislation and health and regulatory issues so you can enjoy your equines and equine activities to the best of your ability.

Access to Legislative, Political, and Regulatory Advisers

Through your AHC membership, you have access to our dedicated and knowledgeable staff to answer your federal legislative and regulatory questions.

Invaluable Coalition and Networking Opportunities

AHC works daily with other organizations that have similar interests in agriculture, sport, recreation, and wagering to ensure that the horse industry's voice and efforts are even more powerful. In addition, membership with AHC offers many opportunities to meet and build direct relationships with the Members of Congress, federal agencies, and staff.

Critical Information

AHC keeps you up to date with electronic Washington updates that report immediately on Congressional action affecting the industry. With certain membership levels you will receive quarterly AHC news, the bi-monthly Tax Bulletin and have access to archived articles via the Members Only page on the AHC website.

Industry Publications

AHC has many useful publications available with certain membership levels or for purchase. Our publications provide the necessary information for members of the horse industry to become informed, educated, and productive on taxes, lobbying, welfare and economics.

Valuable Discounts.

All members will be eligible for savings through AHC's Advantage Plan, which offers significant saving on products and services from John Deere, UPS, Sherwin Williams Paint, Toshiba, Office Depot, Equestrian Travel Advantage and Moxie Equestrian. Discounts from Avis and Hertz are also available to all AHC members.

"In a rapidly changing environment of new laws, regulations, challenges, and restrictions the AHC is dedicated to making your horse world the best it can be."

For more information on the American Horse Council, please visit their website at www.horsecouncil.org. We remind our readers that by becoming a Delaware Equine Council member, you automatically become an American Horse Council member, which allows you to reap the benefits offered by AHC. We encourage all our readers to go to our website, www.delawareequinecouncil.com or www.delawareequinecouncil.org, to obtain more information on membership.



Collecting Proof of Purchase Seals from Southern States

DEC continues to be part of the Southern States SHOW Program, making money for our organization by collecting the proof of purchase seals found on the eligible bags of Triple Crown, Southern States, and Legends horse feeds. In the past ten years we have made over \$3000 by clipping and returning the seals to Southern States. This money has been used to print brochures, buy give-a-ways and help us promote the equine industry.

Please help us by saving your Southern States Proof of Purchase Seals..... Bring them to a meeting or give them to one of our Board members, or mail them to DEC, P.O. Box 158, Harrington, DE 19952. If you have any questions, or if you would like to help with this program, call Peggy Koster 302-629-5233

Did you know . . .

Delaware Equine Council is a member of the **American Horse Council**? Do you know that this entitles YOU to discounts on things like farm insurance and farm products? *Talk to an officer or board member if you have any questions!*

~ Equine Calendar ~

August

- August 9th** Delaware Electric Co-op Day, Dover Building, Delaware State Fairgrounds, Harrington
- August 11th-14th** DPHC Summer Spectacular and Paint O Rama, Delaware State Show Grounds, Harrington, DE- Contact Heather (302) 233-5137
- August 15th** Delaware Equine Council monthly meeting, 7pm, Harrington Public Library, 110 E. Center St., Harrington. Members are encouraged to bring a friend.
- August 20th** 6 pm, Mounted Shooting, 1st State Shooters, Levers Arena, DE Details: 302-349-4082; Directions: 302-222-0879
- August 27th** 10 am Auction Tack/hay/horses, consignment, Wicked R ,Wyoming, contact Randy 302-359-7114

September

- September 13th** 11 am. Frank Chick's Yearling/Mixed Harness Horse Sale, Harrington Raceway. For information or consignments: 302-270-0088; 302-398-4630; fcsale@chick-saddlery.com
- September 17th** 5 pm, Game Show, Laurel Saddle Friends, rain date Sept 18th 1pm, Gail 302-841-2063
- September 17th** 6 pm, Mounted Shooting, 1st State Shooters, Levers Arena, Greenwood, DE Details: 302-349-4082; Directions: 302-222-0879
- September 18th** 10 am, Mounted Shooting, 1st State Shooters, Levers Arena, Greenwood, DE Details: 302-349-4082; Directions: 302-222-0879
- September 19th** Delaware Equine Council monthly meeting, 7pm, Harrington Public Library, 110 E. Center St., Harrington. Welcome . . . Spread the word . . bring a friend.
- September 24th** 10 am Auction Tack/hay/horses, consignment, Wicked R ,Wyoming, contact Randy 302-359-7114

October

- October 9th** 11 am Halloween Costume Parade; 12 Noon Game Show, Laurel Saddle Friends, Gail 302-841-2063
- October 20th-23rd** Horsemanship Clinic, KathleenLindley.com, IdylwildFarm.com, Federalsburg, MD. idylwild@dmv.com. 420-754-9141
- October 21st & 22nd** 2nd DPHC Fall Fling & Futurity, Delaware State Fairgrounds, Harrington, Heather 302-233-5137
- October 23rd** 12 Noon Game Show; Year End Awards to follow show. Laurel Saddle Friends, Gail 302-841-2063

We welcome submissions from our members.

Magazine Recycle Program

Drop off locations:

- Rainbow's End Tack, C-Line Stables, Hudson's Farm Supply, Bunny Junction, Milford Southern States and Chick's.
- Magazines should be clean and less than one year old.
- Your help is always needed and appreciated!

For info, call 302-629-5233

The Delaware Equine Council is on FACEBOOK!

Follow us on FACEBOOK for up-to-date news — Go to www.facebook.com/delawareequinecouncil and click on the "LIKE" button.

Delaware Equine Council members and friends are invited to submit material for review and possible inclusion in the newsletter. Please send your materials to April Murray aprlmurray@gmail.com

Thank you!

Thanks to Steve Shirey of Site One for hosting our Webpage ...www.delawareequinecouncil.com or .org.

Delaware Equine Council Committees

Do you support the mission of the Delaware Equine Council?

If so, become involved with a committee. The committee chairs are as follows:

- Stan Vonasek Helping Horse, Barn Tours, Scholarships**
- Peggy Koster Trails Committee and Membership**
- Pam Nebel Perks/Sales/Shirts**
- Paula Barto Directory and Magazine Recycle**
- April Murray Newsletter**
- Wayne Nebel Public Relations**
- Open Scholarship Awards Banquet/Fundraiser**

The Cue to Relax!

By Tara Jones, *Pieceful Solutions Riding and Training*

As the weather gets warmer, we find that the show season has snuck up on us faster than we may have been ready for. We have been on a few rides, begun to condition our horses, and are getting the dust off of our show boots while our show clothes head off to the dry cleaner for the annual clean and press. We begin to seek out shows in our area, and mark them on our calendars in preparation for that lovely sunny day when we arrive at the show grounds to essentially “show them our stuff.” To our dismay, we hop out of the truck unload our horse and find that our horse is a giant bundle of nerves. We are slowly becoming unraveled as we wonder if we are really ready for all this excitement. We suddenly want to load the horse back up and head for the hills. However, would you feel that way if you had a cue to tell your horse to relax while you get him accustomed to the grounds and you both could find twenty minutes to relax and chill out before you begin? Here’s an easy exercise to get your horse calm and thinking of you no matter where you are.

I call this exercise the head down cue. It is a reminder to tell your horse to listen and pay attention and funnel all the nervous energy in a different direction. You will want to begin this exercise in a controlled environment first. You will always begin at home in your own arena because each time you change environment you will lose about 30% of the training. Not to worry the more you practice in different areas the more quickly you will gain that training back. It is of utmost importance however that you have this cue 100% first before you move on to another area, otherwise you will only begin with 70% and then to lose another 30% means you are really batting 1000 to start with.

Outfit your horse in the bridle you normally ride with. Begin this exercise on the ground preferably where the horse cannot eat grass. Otherwise they will be cheating, and you will not be teaching you will be tormenting. Hold the bridle as close to the bit as possible. If you are on the left side of the horse hold the bridle with the left hand and position the right hand holding the reins which should be positioned over the horse’s neck. The right hand has nothing to do with the cue. It strictly keeps the reins from falling over the horse’s head. You will be adding upward pressure. This is something that is unnatural for the horse so the horse’s first instinct will be to raise the head in response to the pressure on the bit. You are looking for the head to drop. Even if it’s a fraction of an inch as soon as your horse makes a gesture towards a downward direction immediately release all rein pressure. Pick up the rein again and repeat. You will keep asking for the head to drop until the horse’s nose is literally in the dirt. The last six inches of this exercise are the hardest. Do not get discouraged. Your release of pressure is what tells the horse that what they just did was correct.

A quick note to keep in mind as you practice and teach this exercise is that the only part of the horse you are

teaching is the head. You are not worrying about where the feet are moving to. If your horse begins to walk, walk with them while adding the upward pressure for the head to drop. The horse will soon figure out that you are not talking to the feet and they are doing extra work that is not necessary.



As you get to the point where the horse’s head is lower, you will have to ask more frequently. Be sure to release the rein each time the horse attempts to drop the head. If the horse raises its head or turns its head to the side then hold the pressure until the head goes down. Otherwise you will be releasing for other behaviors and the horse will become confused. Keep in mind what you are looking for and do not release until you get it. Sometimes the horse will begin to throw the head around to avoid the contact with the bit. Just keep your knuckles pushing gently into the cheek of the horse. This will act as a blocker so that the head does not accidentally hit you. Be sure as well to keep your own head to the side so if the horse were to throw the head up in protest that they do not injure your face.

The next question often asked is how hard do I pull? Well the answer to that is if you were on a trail ride and you came to the edge of a cliff and the next step your horse took would mean the difference between life and death how hard would you pull? That is the answer. You are looking to teach your horse to accept the contact on the bit and despite what they may want to be doing instead you are making a pact that you will keep the pressure until they think of you and respond to that pressure. You will want to teach this cue on both sides. The cue is not finished until you can stand by your horse’s head pick up the rein and ask for the head to drop. When you can count to 14 with the head down in the dirt and you do not have to pick up the rein to remind the horse to put the head down on both sides of the horse then you are ready to teach this cue under saddle.

The reason why this cue works and is so effective is because the horse is always calmer when the head is below their chest. The horse’s heart rate will naturally drop and they will become more relaxed. Now you know that when you are in a situation where you need an instant reaction and need your horse to relax on command you now have a magic button to push and you will have a horse who is thinking of you.

Do this exercise in different environments to practice getting your horse’s attention more quickly. It will also give

you more confidence to know that you can control your horse's emotions and keep them focused on you. Next article we will talk about how this transmits to the saddle and makes riding with the correct head elevation easier to obtain.



May all the puzzling aspects of your riding find a "Pieceful Solution".
 For more information on clinics, lessons, and training contact Tara at tarajonestraining.com

Upcoming meeting dates for the Delaware Equine Council: Mondays, August 15 and September 19, 2011, Harrington Public Library, Harrington, DE • 7 p.m



Additional Ads May Be Purchased

Must be submitted to Editor by 10th of the month, as a photo-ready copy with check made out to DEC.

Send to April Murray, 2465 McKee Road, Dover, DE 19904, 302-735-8540 email: aprlmurray@gmail.com

Rates are as follows:

Full page	\$175	Half page	\$85
Quarter page	\$65	All ads will be in	black & white

The above advertising prices are for members only. Non-members add a 20% premium.

Spotlight Member Ann Hobbs

Our spotlight member of the month is Ann Hobbs. Ann owns Buddy, a horse who is very dear to her and who is now placed in a good home. She originally sent us information on Buddy looking for a good home. Now he has one!

Ann bought Buddy in 2001 from a horse dealer. He was used previously as a trail horse in North Carolina. He has adapted extremely well to the loss of his eye. It was surgically removed in about 2005 due to uveitis. He is capable of all light riding and has never spooked yet.

Ann says that although Buddy now has a home, she doesn't mind if people are interested, just in case he needs a back up home.

Ann runs a small riding program called Happy View Farm. She offers riding lessons near Bethany Beach, as well as trail rides and beach rides. If you want more information on Buddy or her riding program, please email Ann: hobbsnoon@hotmail.com.



Above — Buddy and a rider on the beach.

At right — Buddy is at home!



The Importance of Understanding Horse Behavior

The following article was submitted by Carissa Wickens, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Equine Extension Specialist and ToriAnne Davies, Extension Scholars Intern

Taking time to observe and understand horse behavior is extremely important to the horse's well-being and to our daily human-horse interactions. Through a better understanding of the horse's nature, we can learn how to work safely and effectively with horses. Through a more thorough understanding of how the horse evolved, we will have an enhanced understanding of how to manage the horses in our care.

Evolution of the Horse

Over many years, horses have developed a survival mechanism, which is the basis behind much of their behavior. This means of survival, referred to as a strong flight response, was adapted in order to flee from predators when necessary. Domesticated horses have maintained their innate reactions to unknown or fearful stimuli. When faced with a potential threat, the horse will instinctively run. By becoming careful observers of horse behavior, many of us are able to recognize when a horse is in a hyper alert state and ready to flee (e.g. flared nostrils, whites of the eyes visible, rigid body posture). When a horse cannot escape a fearful situation, it may rely on its fight response and resort to kicking and/or biting as a means of defense.

Horses possess many traits that made them suitable candidates for domestication. Horses could be managed on a variety of forages and grains which allowed them to adapt to many different locations. Their easy going disposition and trainability, ability to reproduce successfully in captivity, and their hierarchical social structure allowed humans to use the horse for work and pleasure.

Feeding or Ingestive Behavior

The horse's anatomic structure was designed for continuous grazing on a variety of plant species. The horse is equipped with a small stomach and is therefore best suited to consume small meals over the course of the day. Their lack of ability to vomit can cause serious digestive problems if too much feed material, especially grain, is consumed in a short period of time. Providing horses with adequate forage is a good thing, and many of us try to optimize the use of pasture on our farms to help reduce costs associated with purchasing hay. However, special management strategies need to be implemented to accommodate the grazing behavior of horses. Domesticated horses confined to pastures or small lots will tend to overgraze certain areas of their enclosure. These short grass areas (lawns) are desirable to horses because of their fairly high nutrient quality, but if allowed to be grazed too short can cause damage to the pasture. Additional areas of the pasture may consist of roughs. These roughs are characterized by the presence of taller, more mature plants and are usually the sites for defecation and urination. As a result of these distinct feeding and defecation areas, it is wise to mow and harrow pastures as needed to better utilize the available forage. Careful monitoring of pastures is necessary to ensure optimal horse health.

It isn't always possible or feasible to keep horses on pasture 24/7. When horses need to be confined to a stall, it

is best to avoid large grain meals high in soluble carbohydrates. Instead, we should provide small, continuous amounts of food intake and try our best to base the diet primarily on forage. Hay and grain rations can be divided into smaller, more frequent feedings. When we follow these guidelines, we are taking steps towards minimizing digestive complications such as colic and gastric ulcers.

Water intake is also important. Horses may only visit the water bucket or trough a few times a day or more frequently depending on exercise, diet, and climate conditions. As a general rule, clean, fresh water should be available at all times.

The Significance of Body Language

In order to better understand a horse's disposition, it is important to closely monitor its behavior and daily activity level. Observing changes in the horse's posture, head and tail carriage, facial expressions, and positioning of the legs and ears can provide vital clues to how the horse is feeling and behaving. For example, take notice whether the eyes are wide, the ears are pinned back or pricked forward and alert? Is the horse's tail clamped tight with nervousness or wringing with frustration, or is it relaxed or simply swishing rhythmically when the horse changes leads? These are all important features that provide insight into the mental condition of the equine and they should be taken in context with the horse's immediate surroundings or circumstances. Sudden changes in the horse's overall appearance and demeanor may indicate a physical problem and having this information available to share with the horse's veterinarian or trainer can be extremely helpful.

Staying with the Group

Feral horses (free-ranging horses that were once domesticated) organize themselves into small, relatively stable herds. These small herds typically consisted of a stallion, several mares and their offspring. Within these feral herds, some of the horses would form strong bonds with one another and also formed hierarchies in which certain horses rank higher over others in the group. Vigilance behavior is an important category of behavior observed in all horses. This occurs when one member of the group surveys the horizon for danger. When one horse becomes alerted to a predator, the others in the group adapt an alert state, triggering an escape response among all of the horses in the group. A good example of this behavior in our domesticated horses is when one horse on a group trail ride spooks at something in its path, and almost immediately the rest of the horses begin to spook even though they may not know what it is they are spooking at.

Some of the difficulties encountered in incorporating the horse's social structure into their management include trying to handle horses that become anxious when separated from herd mates and introducing new horses to existing and established social groups. Particularly with regards to introducing newcomers to the herd, these introductions should be made gradually. Following an observed quarantine period to assure the new horse will not expose resident

ing and established social groups. Particularly with regards to introducing newcomers to the herd, these introductions should be made gradually. Following an observed quarantine period to assure the new horse will not expose resident horses to disease; you can begin allowing the horses to become acquainted by housing them in adjacent paddocks. Newly mixed groups of horses should be monitored regularly in the event intervention is necessary to avoid injuries or to prevent inadequate access to resources among a subordinate horse. Allowing sufficient space between feeders or hay piles will help minimize aggressive behavior within the group.

Avoiding All Work and No Play

Supplying horses with adequate exercise and opportunities to engage in play behavior is also a very important part of their management. The level of exercise each horse receives will depend on their body condition, weight, age, level of training and intended use. Providing enough exercise can be challenging due to work schedules, family commitments and weather conditions. However, providing the horse with some controlled exercise in the form of riding, driving, or ground work will keep the horse healthy and maintain its responsiveness to handling and training. When a horse can demonstrate play behavior, we can more easily assume that the horse is experiencing good welfare. Play behavior is especially important in young horses, such as object play (e.g. with a ball) and play fighting. These behaviors equip juvenile horses with necessary skills and useful information about their surroundings. All horses, both young and adult, are exhibiting locomotive play when they sprint across the pasture. Offering horses regular turnout in a field or paddock gives them the opportunity to engage in this be-

havior. In addition, turnout with other horses gives each horse a chance to socialize. Even in situations where group turnout is not possible, turning horses out in adjacent paddocks provides them with fence line contact and affords them some level of tactile communication.

The Horse's Curiosity

Horses by nature are curious creatures. Their interest in exploring their surroundings is called investigative behavior. This trait can be helpful in teaching a horse to perform a new task, such as trailer loading. On the other hand, this curiosity can also get horses into trouble if they are left unattended near novel or dangerous objects or allowed access to places that should be off limits, e.g. the feed room. Making sure barn aisles and pastures are free from obstructions and foreign objects will help prevent disasters from happening.

Take Home Message: Tips for Incorporating Behavior into Horse Management

When designing the layout of your horse's environment, keep in mind that sharp corners and areas where horses can become trapped by a dominate herd mate should be avoided. Provide adequate feed for the horse and base the diet on forage as much as possible. Grouping horses according to age and maintaining the social organization (herd dynamics) on your farm will help reduce conflicts among herd mates. Become an observer of horse behavior. This will improve your ability to anticipate and react appropriately to certain situations that arise when working around horses. Moreover, it will provide you with a better sense of what behaviors are normal for the horses you work with, making it much easier to detect abnormal behavior and potential health and/or training issues.
