

HIGH COUNTRY WORKING EQUITATION

www.highcountryworkingequitation.com



2019 HCWE Kick-Off Party at Plane View Farm was a Success

Lauren Gueswel graciously hosted the 2019 HCWE Kick-off party at Plane View Farm on January 26, 2019. It was a fun social event, with lots of good food, beverages, a raffle, and a demonstration of Working Equitation. There were nearly 70 attendees and many of them were new to the sport of Working Equitation. The party provided the perfect opportunity for members to reconnect and meet new folks as guests mingled and socialized with like-minded equestrians.

President, Chris Stanko, discussed the sport of Working Equitation, reviewing the four phases (trials): Working Dressage, Ease of Handling with obstacles, Speed with obstacles and, Cattle handling (which is new to our club this year). Chris also reviewed the different levels of competition with the help of Lauren Gueswel and her handsome horse Uno. Lauren and Uno demonstrated some of the required movements for the different levels, starting with the Introductory Level and advancing to Intermediate B Level.

WHAT'S INSIDE!!

2019 HCWE
Kick Off Party
Page 1

New Member Spotlight
Michele Beehner
Page 4

Board Opening
Page 6

Membership
Page 7

Sponsorship/Donations
Page 7

Show Preparation
Page 7

CO Horse Rescue
Volunteer Day
Page 10

CO Horse Rescue Spotlight
Page 14

Enhance Your Partnership with
Your Horse
Page 15

Chipotle Fundraiser
Page 16

Upcoming Events
Page 17

Folks walked the obstacle course and instructors were on hand to provide an explanation of how to approach and ride the obstacles or simply answer questions about the sport.

One of the goals for the board of HCWE this year is to increase membership. Membership Chair, Jo Bottorff, discussed the advantages of becoming a member and the different options for signing -up.

Board member, Barbara Harris, raffled off many items, which were donated to the club. Thank you to all of the members who purchased raffle tickets. The total amount of money collected was \$679! A big thank you goes out to Barbara for soliciting these items and to the following sponsors for their generosity:

- Gunbarrel Liquors – two cases of wine
- Hooked by Kati – two hand-painted wine glasses with HCWE logo
- DP’s Sweet Life – desserts
- Barbara Harris – One BEMER rental, wine gift basket items, Noble Outfitters gift bag, slowfeeder, Dressage cones, horse treats
- Allison Mazurkiewicz – Two clinic spots and one private lesson

The kick-off party seemed to generate a lot of enthusiasm, camaraderie, and excitement amongst the guests and many new members signed up! We are looking forward to seeing many of you throughout the year. Thank you for coming!



Chris Stanko discussing the sport of WE



Lauren Gueswel and Uno doing the WE demonstration





Guests enjoying the WE demonstration



Guests checking out the bull obstacle



Lauren Gueswel talking to guests



Chris Stanko answering questions about the gate obstacle



Jo Bottorff with her raffle prize – HCWE wine glasses, donated by Hooked by Kati



HCWE cookies donated by DP's Sweet Life



**Steve Kurtz helping with membership.
Barbara Harris selling tickets at the raffle
table.**



Sabina Gilbert's smiley face!

New Member Spotlight – Michele Beehner

How did you first learn about Working Equitation and what attracted you to the sport?

I first learned about the existence of WE about five years ago, when I was still working as a natural hoof care practitioner, from two other hoof care practitioners that were already learning about and practicing the sport. I was attracted at first to how WE gave purpose to riding in an arena. As I learned more about the sport, I also was impressed by how the different levels of competition are structured to build the horse up gradually, through a well thought out progression of difficulty, that ultimately leads to a well-balanced horse that is light on the forehand and can perform beautiful flying lead changes. As a horsemanship instructor specializing in building confidence for horses and riders out on the trail, I love how WE provides an environment filled with obstacles mirroring those found out “on the job.”

Prior to Working Equitation what other riding disciplines were you, or are you still, interested in?

I have done some endurance riding, which I love and plan to do more of. I got to try vaulting a few times, about ten years ago, when my daughter was on the Mile High Vaulting team, which was lots of fun. My favorite equine “discipline” though is camping with my horses and husband in National Forests and exploring the mountains on horseback.

What are some of your goals with Working Equitation (e.g. showing, improve your dressage, fun for you and/or your horse)?

I joined HCWE because I wanted to be a part of a community of like-minded horse people. I love getting to meet and learn with other people and their horse partners. My goals with WE are to gain experience with showing (on a low-key level!), and to gain experiential knowledge of the natural progression involved in developing a horse to the higher levels of collection required for elegant flying lead changes. Most importantly, though, my goal is to have fun and learn lots!

What are some of your earliest memories of working with horses and riding?

My first horse show ever was a 4-H lead line class in Rice Lake, Wisconsin. I was five years old and my babysitter led me on her Palomino horse, Amigo, while I just sat there in my little western outfit with my cowgirl hat and boots. I came in eighth place (clearly, I must have needed to work on my seat even then!) but they accidentally gave me the seventh-place trophy (I still have it!). When I was ten, we moved to the Adirondack Mountains in Upstate New York, and I finally got a horse of my own. I have been exploring mountain trails on horseback ever since. As a teenager, I would ride my Appaloosa mare, Delilah, to my babysitting jobs, and then ride her home in the dark. I also worked as a trail guide at a local riding stable during the summer. I would ride Delilah to work, which was about a twenty-minute ride through the woods, across a creek, and over a small mountain. I would lead trail rides on her all day, and then ride her home again at the end of the day.

Tell us about your horse (e.g. breed, age, personality, training, how long you've had a partnership).

I have three mares (An Arab, a Mustang, and a Quarter Horse) in my little herd currently. My QH mare, Hesper (registered name: Dandydol Wolf), is my superstar that I am learning the sport of WE with. She has a bright, eager to learn disposition, and loves to run and play. My husband bought her for me when she was a three-year-old from Nate Bowers, who had gotten her as a weanling at an auction in Utah. Her sire, Spanish Wolf, has a wonderful disposition that Nate loves (he bought three of his fillies at that auction). Her start involved Nate hopping on her, bareback in a halter, and following cows around. Once I got her, I worked on completing the four levels in the Parelli program (I have only my Level Four Finesse audition left to complete!), which, when done properly, is simply a progressive step-by-step way to put a solid foundation on a horse, preparing it well for any form of specialization. Hesper is now seven, and in the four years I have had her she has been on many camping trips all over Colorado and Wyoming, and she has explored many trails with me.

Tell us something about yourself that most people might not know.

Haha! Here it goes...When I was seven, I had a hamster named Sniffles, whom I trained to complete a complex obstacle course that involved tunnels, exercise wheels, ladders, bridges made from books, and even a flight of stairs where she had to differentiate the top step (it had a lip on it) from the rest of the steps and know that was the step she would walk across to the other side to then begin her descent back down the stairs. When she had 18 babies (we didn't know my sister's hamster, Tito, was a boy!), I trained the babies to do the obstacle course as well, all in a line, following each other nose-to-butt, before selling them for 75 cents apiece to a local pet store.



Michele on her mare, Hesper, standing on a rock pedestal up at Heil Valley Ranch – one of her favorite close-by places to trail ride.



Michele on her mare, Soleil, who passed away five years ago.

Board Position Opening

Have you been looking for ways to get more involved with HCWE and learn more about the sport of Working Equitation? Well here's your opportunity. Join an awesome team of people dedicated to growing this sport in Colorado, make new friends, gain new knowledge, and contribute to your club.

No experience? No worries – few of us had any experience as board members when we started either. Your ideas and energy are an important contribution to the board and we'd love to have you. The board meets monthly and each of us serves on a committee that highlights our various skills.

We'd love to have you join us. For more information, please contact Chris Stanko at 970-846-6129 or email 1chstanko@gmail.com

Membership

As of March 30, 2019, HCWE has seventy-two members and nineteen are NEW members! A big welcome to the new members!!

If you haven't renewed your membership, please go to:

<https://www.highcountryworkingequitation.com/membership.html> for the membership and liability forms.

There are two ways you can remit your membership payment:

- Email the completed membership/liability forms to Jo at bottorff7578@hotmail.com and pay via PayPal to HCWE.board@highcountryworkingequitation.com or
- Mail the forms and a check made out to HCWE to: Jo Bottorff, 13084 Harmony PKWY, Westminster, CO 880234.

Sponsorships/Donations

HCWE has a fun year planned with lots of varied activities for our growing membership. Shows, clinics, social events, parties, and other activities cost money to put on! In order to keep costs to participants down for activities we are asking for help from our members to recruit sponsors. Please check out our Sponsorship Program at: www.highcountryworkingequitation.com. Sponsorships and donations are tax deductible!

So far this year, we have the following sponsors/donors: Sheri Prucka – Wasatch Luisitanos, Cameo Global, Scott Murdoch's Trailer Sales, Orion Networks, Martin Baldwin and David McNicolas, Gunbarrel Liquors, Hooked by Kati, DP's Sweet Life, Saddle Up, Colorado Tack, Latigo Lariat, Barbara Harris, and Allison Mazurkiewicz.

Show Preparation

Even for the most seasoned among us horse showing can be stressful; to those who are new to showing, fear can be a real barrier to having a positive experience. A lot of the fear and stress can be significantly reduced with some knowledge and preparation.

Three Weeks Ahead

- ❖ Submit your show entry form and check.
- ❖ Schedule your veterinary exam for a health certificate (if required).
- ❖ Make sure your Coggin's test and vaccinations (if required) are current.

Several Days Ahead

- ❖ Organize your show attire. Stock pins, bolos, hairnets, boots, breeches, chaps, socks, and sunglasses; make a list and check it twice!
- ❖ Deep clean your tack. It will need a touch-up the day of the show but if it's had a thorough cleaning it will only require a light going over with a damp sponge.
- ❖ Put together a copy of your horse's Coggin's, health certificate, brand inspection (for distances greater than 75 miles) and any other required show information in a folder.
- ❖ Trim bridle path, fetlocks – any areas you want to tidy up on your horse.
- ❖ Check your trailer – interior and signal lights, tires and floorboards. Make sure there are no cracks in hinges or trailer hitch.

Pack the Night Before – For You

Temperatures can range from the low 50s in morning to the mid-90s by the afternoon.

- ❖ Pack your show clothes!!
- ❖ Have hats, gloves and cold weather/rain gear.
- ❖ Sunscreen and a brimmed hat for when it gets hot later in the day.
- ❖ Consider a pair of coveralls or other protective clothing to help you stay clean. You will be busy warming up and caring for your horse AND you'll get dirty – sometimes there is little time to change in between trials.
- ❖ If possible, bring an extra show shirt. Light-colored shirts get dirty!
- ❖ Helmet and/or hat – required for the show, helmets recommended in the warm-up arena.
- ❖ A cooler with snacks and lots of water.
- ❖ Your dressage test.
- ❖ A folding chair for relaxing between trials – this is a good time to review your dressage test and memorize your Ease of Handling course.

Pack the Night Before – For Your Horse

Working Equitation shows are often all day affairs so be prepared.

- ❖ Buckets – for water and feed.
- ❖ If possible bring your own water. Show days are long, often hot and some horses are picky about water that tastes unfamiliar.
- ❖ Muck bucket and fork.
- ❖ Hay net.

- ❖ Feed – lots of hay, grain, supplements, electrolytes (especially for those really hot show days).
- ❖ Lunge line.
- ❖ Rags – for cleaning tack, dirty horses, and dusty boots.
- ❖ A gentle liniment spray. Working Equitation is hard work for your horse!

Deciding whether to bathe or braid (optional) your horse the night before or the morning of the show is an individual decision. Some horses will stay relatively clean with a stable sheet – others can look like Pigpen in a matter of hours. However, long before the day of the show, get a sense of how long bathing and braiding will take and plan accordingly.

The Day of the Show

Once you have your ride time count backwards from there to determine what time you need to leave for the show with your horse. Counting backwards:

- ❖ Be prepared to ride early if entries scheduled ahead of you scratch or don't show up. (5-30 minutes).
- ❖ Warm-up time. You'll need enough time to calm your horse's nerves (and yours). This takes a little practice – you want enough time so your horse isn't flying around the dressage arena but not so much that he can't stay awake for the ride. (20-45 minutes)
- ❖ Grooming, tacking up and getting dressed. (20-40 minutes)
- ❖ Picking up show packet with show number and Ease of Handling/Speed course. (10 minutes)
- ❖ Parking and unloading your horse. (15 minutes)
- ❖ Drive time (varies).
- ❖ Loading your horse. (5-30 minutes)
- ❖ Hitching up the trailer – if possible do it the night before. (15 minutes)

You'll get more efficient with practice but plan on a couple of hours plus drive time before you're scheduled to ride. There's nothing like being pushed for time to bring out the nerves.

Once you get home from the show, take a day to relax and then sit down and update your list. Be sure to include items you wish you had and eliminate items you didn't need. Use this list to help you make your own personalized checklist to use for each show.

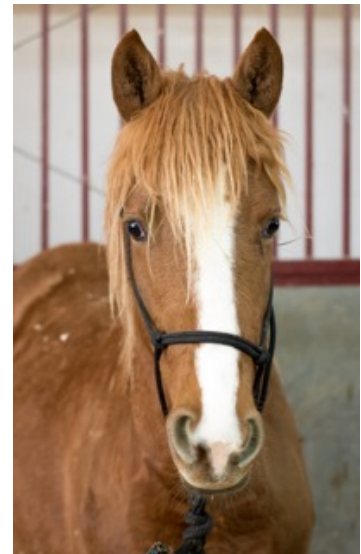
If you plan ahead, are well prepared, and come with a positive attitude and a smile, you'll find that showing is a fun and exciting adventure for you and your horse. If you keep in mind that it's a wonderful learning experience and a great way to meet like-minded equestrians showing can be an exhilarating experience.

Colorado Horse Rescue Volunteer Day – HCWE Cares!



It was a brisk morning on Thursday, March 21st, when six HCWE members volunteered our time to the Colorado Horse Rescue. We started the day with a brief presentation by CHR Program manager, Sharon Gilbert, about all the things that CHR does for the horse community in CO. A tour of the facility followed where we learned about the facility's history & future plans, and how many of the horse ended up at CHR.

After the tour, we got down to sorting through 2 months of donated tack, equipment, and supplies. The pile consisted of saddles, bridles, blankets, training tack, grooming supplies, leg wraps, hoof boots, and more.



All items needed to be assessed for safety & usefulness, then cleaned, measured, and

labeled. Once everything was sorted & cleaned, the equipment was divided into items that CHR can use in its program, and items that can be sold in their tack thrift store.

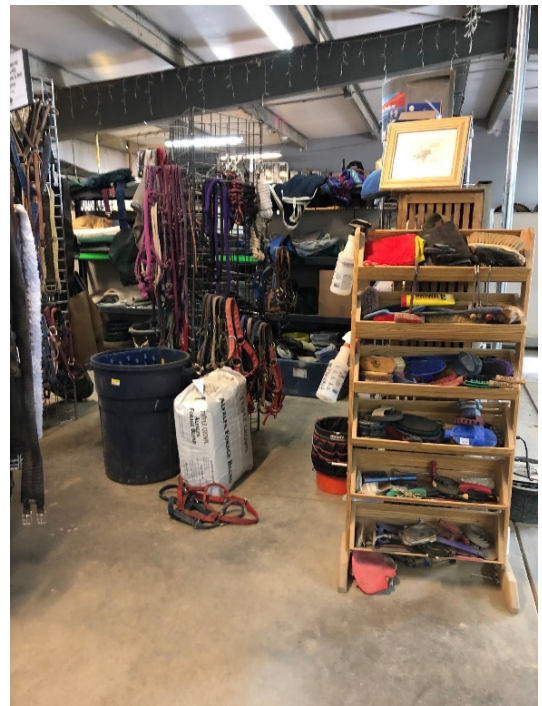
It is said that many hands make light work, and that statement couldn't have been truer than with this group. We completed the task much faster than anticipated and had time to go grab lunch at a local diner. Being able to connect with other members of the HCWE family (outside of the show ring) was truly a rewarding experience.





For those that were not aware, CHR has an amazing little used tack store. The store is great for folks that are just starting out and don't have a giant budget to buy everything brand new. The store is also a great place for people looking for a great bargain. We saw beautiful, brand new bridles with the tags still on them, trail boots in new/near new condition, blankets, saddle pads & more, all for pennies on the dollar. If you need tack, go check out the thrift store at CHR. You'll get a great deal, and you'll help horses in need!

If you missed out on this opportunity to Volunteer, don't fret. We are looking into another volunteer opportunity in late summer/fall. The next opportunity will be on a Sunday, in hopes that more people will be able to join in. Stay tuned!





We hope you can join us for our next HCWE Cares Day. It's a wonderful way to make new friends! Many thanks to our volunteers for making our first HCWE Care Day a success!



Pictured from left to right: Leslie Martien, Barbara Harris, Michele Beehner, Maureen Beavin, Silja Knoll, and Jo Bottorff.

Colorado Horse Rescue Spotlight

Our Spring CHR spotlight horse is McDuff. Surrendered by a private owner, McDuff spent many years out to pasture with little handling. He arrived at CHR with a mellow head on his shoulders, and a benign sarcoid on his face. Our vet has since removed this blemish, and McDuff is proving to be a sound and sane partner in training. He likely served as a pack horse before spending time out to pasture. Since his arrival, he has been learning as much as he can! Today, you will find that McDuff is a willing partner who carries his rider and seeks the next step in his education. This adorable, charming gelding will only continue to improve the longer he stays. Schedule an appointment to come out and see him today – www.chr.org.

HEALTH/BEHAVIORAL INFORMATION: Easy keeper; recommended maximum weight load (rider plus tack) = 200 pounds

AGE: ~16

BREED: Appaloosa

GENDER: Gelding

HEIGHT: 14.1 hh

RIDER EXPERIENCE: Advanced

RIDING LIMITATIONS: None

ADOPTION FEE: \$800



Enhancing Your Partnership with Your Horse

Our partnership with our horses is something we value a great deal. We spend hours working with them, training them, and nurturing our relationship with them. They are our partners in a wide variety of equine activities; perhaps one of the reasons we enjoy the sport of Working Equitation is the way it enhances that partnership. It is a physically and intellectually challenging sport and we enjoy seeing how engaged our horses become as they work with us to meet those challenges.

But many of us have also experienced the ways in which our horses try to take over instead of waiting for our guidance. We unwittingly train this when we allow our horses to walk off as soon as we've mounted or transition upward or downward in anticipation of our request. Often, we don't even realize we're allowing them to do this because often, precise responses don't matter in our everyday riding.

However, in Working Equitation, precise responses DO matter. There are some simple exercises you can work on at home to test and improve the precision in your riding.

Immobility

Often overlooked, and deceptively challenging, immobility is required in the Dressage and Ease of Handling trials. It is required at the halt when saluting the judge, before backing the horse, in the Bell Corridor, when picking up the jug and for several other obstacles. The horse is expected to remain immobile even when the rider has to lean out of the saddle to reach an obstacle.

So, the next time you mount up, test your ability to have your horse stand quietly. How long can she do it? Five seconds? Ten? Work on adding a few seconds of immobility each time you mount. Try standing immobile in front of the gate, over a pole, or near any object that normally causes your horse to fidget.

Once you can get your horse to stand quietly, try leaning out of the saddle. Reach forward as though you were about to ring the bell or lean to the side as though to pick up the jug. One of the reasons horses move when their riders lean is that they are off-balance. And often they are off-balance because they haven't reached immobility before we lean out of the saddle. Practice taking a deep breath and letting it out before moving in the saddle. This will help both you and your horse to relax and gain you several extra points.

Mobility

Our horses have the ability to move in five directions: forward, backward, left, right and (hopefully not) up. We are used asking our horses to change direction at the walk, trot and canter and backing them up. Our horses also have the ability to move their hind end and front end independently. This is one of the skills that needs to be developed and refined in a Working Equitation horse.

The Gate, Rounding Posts, and Sidepass Rail are examples of obstacles where moving the forehand and hindquarters independently are an essential skill. The ultimate goal is to make the movements look fluid but achieving this will take many hours of practice.

As with immobility, start small. And depending on your horse's level of training, start without working on a particular obstacle. Can you ask your horse to move his hindquarters over one step? Is it easier to the left? Will your horse move her forehand over one step? Is it easier to the right? Can you move over one step and stop? Once this becomes easy for you and your horse slowly begin to ask for additional steps and then incorporate those steps with an obstacle. Or, lacking obstacles, practice sidling up to a fence, a tree, a building – use whatever is available to you. After all, this is a working sport and who knows what we might encounter in the field!

Practice, practice, practice and don't be afraid to ask for help. This wonderful sport will test your and your horse's skills and it will do wonders for your partnership.

Have Some Chipotle and Support HCWE



ONE FOR THE TEAM

Show your team spirit by joining us for a fundraiser to support High Country Working Equitation. Come in to the Chipotle at **1100 Ken Pratt Blvd. Suite B** in Longmont on **Saturday, May 11th** between **5:00pm** and **9:00pm**. Bring in this flyer, show it on your smartphone or tell the cashier you're supporting the cause to make sure that 33% of the proceeds will be donated to High Country Working Equitation.

 **CHIPOTLE**
MEXICAN GRILL

Online orders will not be included in the fundraiser total. To ensure your purchase is counted in the fundraiser, be sure to order and pay in-restaurant. Gift card purchases during fundraisers do not count towards total donated sales, but purchases made with an existing gift card will count.

Upcoming Events

April

10-14 Tarrin Warren Clinic at Circle Star

Contact Chris 970-846-6129

13 Push, Pull, Drag, and Twirl Clinic w/ Allison Mazurkiewicz

Contact Allison 970-556-1950

20 WE Schooling Show

28 Dress Rehearsal at Circle Star w/Chris & Kitty

Contact Chris at 970-846-6129

28 Cavaletti and Ground Pole Clinic w/ Allison Mazurkiewicz

Contact Allison at 970-556-1950

May

4-5 B-rated Shows w/ Judge Doreen Atkinson

Watch HCWE website for info! www.highcountryworkingequitation.com

11 WE Clinic at Silver Whip Acres w/ Allison Mazurkiewicz

Contact Allison at 970-556-1950

12 WE Play Day at Plane View Farm

Contact Lauren at planeview@mesanetworks.net

19 Push, Pull, Drag, and Twirl Clinic w/ Allison Mazurkiewicz

Contact Allison at 970-556-1950

31 Cattle Work for WE Clinic at Circle Star

Contact Kitty at 720-335-4147