

THE BITTERROOT VALLEY COWBOY DRESSAGE CLUB



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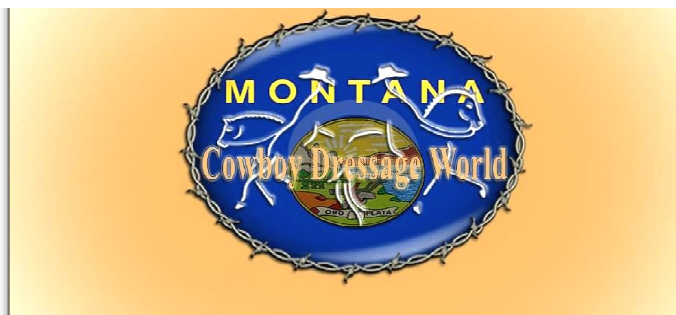
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The Bitterroot Valley Cowboy Dressage Club

888 S. Burnt Fork Rd.
Stevensville, MT 59870
(406) 239-9668

happyhoovesmt@yahoo.com



The Culture of Cowboy Dressage

One of the things that continues to impress folks who are brand new to Cowboy Dressage and the Gatherings is the culture they encounter at these events. We hear over and over again, "I've never experienced anything like this!"

Every equine discipline has its unique feel. A barrel race isn't going to feel anything like a dressage show and an open horse show feels much different than a regional breed show. Cowboy Dressage has its own very different feel and environment and the one thing that each person new to Cowboy Dressage will tell you after their first event is that it is universally welcoming.

There is a feeling of calmness, ease and quiet at a Cowboy Dressage Gathering. It feels like family, even if you are brand new because everybody is so anxious to warmly welcome you into the family. From the Gathering secretaries to the grounds men to each and every participant you find smiling helpful faces.

Is it an act? Horse people, especially horse show people, aren't generally known for being overly friendly. Are all these people just putting on a friendly face? Not in the least. Cowboy Dressage is built on the premise of kindness. Kindness to horses. Kindness to each other. Softness and lightness and joy suffuse the environment at a Cowboy Dressage Gathering.

Besides the happy and welcoming environment created by the people, newcomers will also be surprised that there isn't a "look" to a Gathering. You will find all manner of horses, people, tack, and attire. Each person feels free to embrace whatever "Cowboy" means to them. Never has such an eclectic bunch ever mingled in one arena! You'll see some of the more common western show attires from folks coming from the Western Pleasure world. You'll see youth riders in their favorite (and probably only ;)) button up shirt. You'll see wild rags, bolo ties, neckerchiefs, bow ties, or regular ties. You'll

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(The Culture of Cowboy Dressage, continued from page 1)

see reining saddles, trail saddles, show saddles, roping saddles and barrel saddles. You'll see snaffles, bosals, two handed western bits and spades. You'll see jeans, riding skirts, chaps, chinks and armitas. As long as it's "cowboy", it'll fly!

Because Cowboy Dressage welcomes one and all there is no "look" that you can point your finger to and say, that looks like a Cowboy Dressage rider or horse; with one very distinct exception.

Each and every person looks happy, excited to be there and excitedly nervous, but not overly pressured. This is a low key environment from the regional shows to our "Final Gathering". The horses are happy and quiet and obedient. The warm up pen is a friendly gathering of friends riding together. The judges are warm and welcoming and encouraging. Please, thank you and you're welcome ring out in the arena. If you make a mistake during your test, you can stop and the judge will help you find your spot so you can start over. At the last Gathering, I was complimenting a lady on her nice soft ride. She had also lost her way during her test, had to go back and start over from the last letter missed. She was flustered and upset about it and I told her (and so did the judge) that it just didn't matter. She came up to me later with her 2nd place ribbon, absolutely thrilled. She couldn't believe she could mess up, restart her test, and still score second in the class. When soft feel and partnership and gaits are more important than individual maneuvers, you bet you can!

Another distinct difference is that many of these horses that come to do Cowboy Dressage have another job that they do. Their other job may be as show horses in another discipline, but most of them are also trail horses, lesson horses, ranch horses or pleasure horses. It makes for happier horses overall. You don't see horses at Cowboy Dressage Gatherings that pull back, rear, buck, kick, or act out. In general, the worst behavior problems we deal with in Cowboy Dressage is separating buddy horses, but because in Cowboy Dressage we are all about the horse, this simply isn't an issue. Every rider is allowed a horse or two if needed to accompany a nervous horse into the arena. The environment is kept quiet and peaceful for the horses and for the people.

As a veterinarian, horse shows can be a very busy environment to be a part of. I'll admit to keeping my presence as quiet as possible at open shows when I am there to show my own horse. I can't tell you how many times I've almost been late to enter my own class because somebody's horse threw a tantrum in the trailer/stall/cross ties and needs to be sutured up so they don't miss their class. The end of the show was always a busy time as well, as folks struggled to load unwilling horses and called on me and my drugs to help them.

Of course, horses are horses and anything can happen at any time, but the quiet, calm environment that we create for horse and rider at Cowboy Dressage Gatherings, means these incidents are exceedingly rare.

The Cowboy Dressage culture is one of "come one, come all". We want you to be a part of the revolution taking place in horsemanship. There is room for everybody interested in softness, partnership, and harmony. Even if you

never plan to show, there is a group of people out there waiting for someone just like you to come and join the ride. So, saddle up! C'mon, we've got places to go, horses to ride, and people to meet! ~

Jenni Grimmertt DVM gives lessons, teaches clinics, and is a Cowboy Dressage Resource out of Idaho.



Horse and Rider Spotlight



Christie Anderson and Rod Freeman

In May, I was reading an e-mail newsletter from our local tack shop and noticed an ad for a Cowboy Dressage "playday" being held at the Sleeping Willow Ranch, here in the beautiful Bitterroot Valley, Montana. Cowboy Dressage was known to me, but I had never seen Eitan until I did my homework on line. Once I watched his videos and studied Cowboy Dressage World, I knew I was going to the play day and I invited my husband and girlfriend to join me.

Rod was a bit skeptical, thinking CD was going to be too "fussy" for him, as he is a Montana cowboy. What a surprise! By the end of the day, Rod was hooked and so was I. Our horses performed well, considering we got confused at times following the geometry of the court. Jenni Grimmet is a great coach, she really helped us and her enthusiasm for the discipline is contagious.

Our three horses are Spanish. Lola is a 14 year old Andalusian mare, her half brother, Solano, also 14, is Azteca (half quarter horse), They have been raised using the principles of Ray Hunt and the Dorance brothers. Salinas is our 7 year old Azteca mare and she is coming along nicely too.

Although I have been riding off and on since I was a kid, I did not own my first horse until my 50th birthday. I started my two colts when I was 52 and here we are today, still learning and refining as we go. We have never shown, but attend horsemanship clinics and do some ranch sorting and trail riding.

My husband, Rod, grew up on a ranch here in Montana; he has been riding since he was two! However, natural horsemanship was new to him. He was introduced to the concept through my horses and a Buck Brannaman clinic in 2010. Rod is now 71 and I am 65. Goes to show....it's never too late to learn new things!

We purchased the 5 pound CD manual, set up our CD dressage court in our arena at home, including the challenge court. Hope to work our way through the various challenge tests. We would love to attend a gathering(s) sometime. However, it appears they are quite a distance from us. With that in mind we hope we can get a group interested here in Montana.

Soft feel, collection, cadence, and harmony is what we aspire to, we feel Cowboy Dressage will help us meet our goals and introduce us to more like minded people. It is fun that's for sure! ~

Exercise of the Quarter

by Eitan Beth-Halachmy with
Jennifer C. Chisholm-Høibråten

Teaching the Horse to Move Forward and Stop

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

Whether it is a matter of breaking in, mounting or doing the first work under saddle, I always begin a horse's early lessons in a round pen or confined area never out in the open. I do not go out of the safety area until I am sure my horse understands the concepts: go forward, stop and stand still. These concepts are your most basic tools and building blocks upon which all ensuing training, in one form or another will be based. Furthermore, in these early days, you are going to find that the walls/rails of your training area are as important a training aid as your seat, legs and hands. We start our series with the first work under saddle, under the assumption that the horse has been correctly handled and has completed initial groundwork training.

EARLY LESSONS: TACK AND TRAINING GEAR

When choosing tack, I am very consistent with what I use in the beginning stages. My ground work is done in a halter or side pull. A lunging cavesson is also an option. The age of the green horse is not the determining factor in the tack I use. It is the amount of education and training that the horse has determines the tack. An older horse that has not been trained or that has had little training will still start in a halter or side pull the same as a young horse. I will use a side pull or halter with an "o" ring snaffle under it. The rein will remain attached to the side pull or halter. The horse is allowed to just carry the bit in his mouth and get used to it. Once the horse has learned to stop, turn right and turn left, I will move out of the side pull or halter and attach the rein to the snaffle. I always, and I mean always, use a



Fig. 1 O ring snaffle, rein stops, and running martingale

running martingale with a snaffle bit. (see fig. 1) Please understand that when used properly a running martingale is not to create or make a head set on a horse. The running martingale when used as a head set device is being misused. In my training program it is used primarily as a safety device. I also use it to assist with quicker communication between my hands and the bit.

The proper fit of the running martingale will help to explain how and why I use it. First of all, you do not want to set the running martingale to hold down the head to interfere with lateral movement of the horse's head and neck. When set properly the top right and left rings of the running martingale should reach just under the horse's jowls or

throat latch when the horse's head is in a normal or relaxed position. You should also have rein stops on each rein when using a martingale. (These are small rubber stops on the rein that prevent the martingale rings from catching on the rein buckles or snaps.)

One of the first indications that a horse is going to bolt or run is a lifting or throwing up of the head. A running martingale will give you just enough leverage on the rein to help control the horse when he wants to throw his head up and then attempt to run or bolt. Do not confuse a running martingale with a tie down device. They are two totally different pieces of equipment used for two different purposes.

The running martingale will also help make the message from my hands to the bit through the rein much quicker. It does this by the slight additional weight of the martingale leather and rings. The little extra weight helps give a quicker signal to the horse that I have given him slack in the rein. The quick release of the rein is aided by the slight weight of the martingale rings and leather.

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(Teaching the Horse to Move Forward and Stop, continued from page 4)

MOUNTING

From previous lessons your horse should understand that he is to stand still when being mounted. When mounting a green horse, I always turn my horse's head and bring it around to the side I am mounting from. (see fig. 2) This way, if he unexpectedly bolts or moves off, he will have to move in a circle around me and; hopefully, not off into the horizon. I will stand in the stirrup and not swing my leg over until the horse is quiet and still. When he is calm and comfortable I then swing my other leg across and sit in the saddle. I do not put my other foot in the off side stirrup until I am sure the horse is settled and comfortable. Before mounting remember always to check your girth and walk the horse in a few circles to make sure he is comfortable with your adjustment.

IMPORTANCE OF FORWARD MOTION

Ok, now you are on your horse, and from earlier ground work you have taught him to: move forward, stop, back, turn right, turn left and stand quietly. You are now ready to go somewhere. To do that you must teach your horse to move forward while under saddle. From the very first ride I teach the horse to move

forward freely. Forward motion is the foundation of movement and self- carriage. It is a must for teaching and maintaining impulsion, balance and collection and is used in more advanced training such as: shortening and lengthening of stride, and later, passage and piaffe.

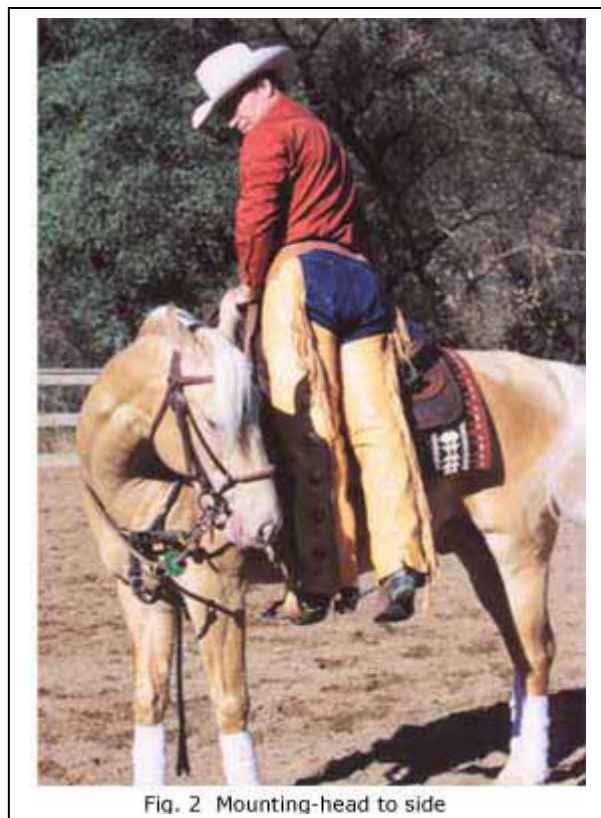


Fig. 2 Mounting-head to side

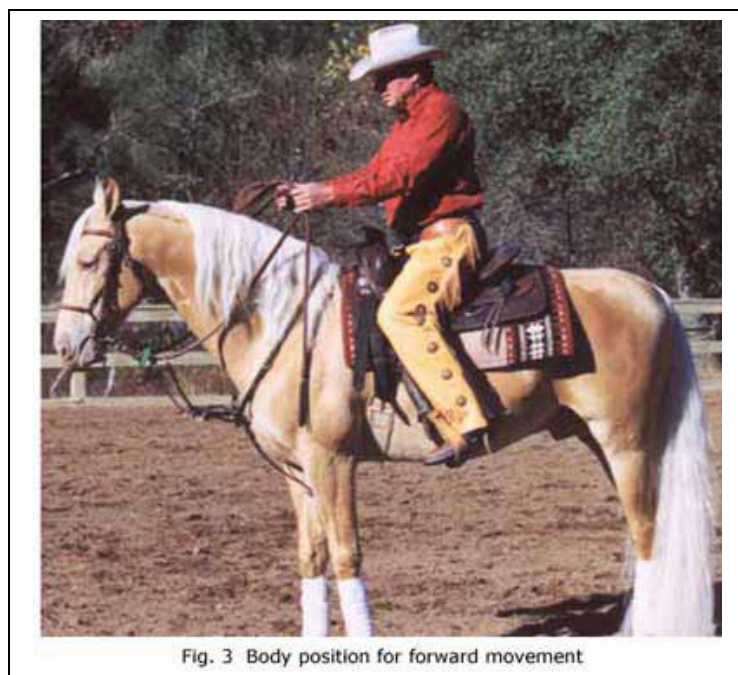


Fig. 3 Body position for forward movement

To begin with, I encourage the horse to walk off without any restraint. I then tilt my shoulders slightly forward and bring my lower leg back a bit behind the girth area. (see fig. 3) With this body position I have tilted my pelvis into a forward position. My hands are in front of the withers and I will gently move them in a forward motion: as I do this, I gently bump the horse's rib cage with my legs. In the early lessons I will exaggerate my movements, placement of legs and body position. As the horse progresses, I will eventually fine tune my position and movements until they are barely detectable to the human eye but very much understood by the horse.

Some horses are slow to move and will meander along with little ambition. Often, I will use a kissing or clucking noise to help them move along. If needed, I will use the end of my rein or a dressage whip on the hindquarters to encourage him to move forward with a

little more enthusiasm. I do not leave my legs on a horse and continually cue him to move forward. This will cause him to eventually become dead-sided. I teach my horses to move forward with my seat and save my legs for cueing specific movements such as moving the rib cage and haunches.

Remember, free movement is the raw material for future forward motion.

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(Teaching the Horse to Move Forward and Stop, continued from page 5)

LET YOUR HORSE SEE THE LOGIC IN YOUR LESSONS

As you train your young horse, try to school him so the training makes sense. For example, reiners and cow horses are often trained on actual cattle or moving objects to sharpen their stops, turns and lateral work. The training is effective because the horse does the movements naturally in working the cow or moving objects and it all makes sense to him. They are not just drilled by leg, seat and hands for reasons not understood by the horse. If it makes sense to the horse, he will be happy and eager for the next lesson, hence building a strong work ethic. I try to use the same training principles and give the horse a reason he can understand to do what I ask. As another example, when I am first training the horse to stop, I use the fence to teach the horse to stop without having to haul on the reins or his mouth. It is also a means of teaching him the cues for the stop by changing my body position just before the fence to a stop or quit riding position. Eventually, he associates my body position with the stop and not the fence. When that happens I stop him a few strides from the fence and add further strides from the fence as he progresses. Soon, there is no need for the fence at all. The horse is now listening to my body and seat. Horses need a job to do. If your training ties in with a job they are doing, they will quickly understand the meaning of their lessons.

A LESSON IN STOPPING

I will walk you through a STOP LESSON. First off, I try to use a rail and a corner like you would find in an arena. I always start at the walk and find success at that gait before I move to the trot or lope. I change my body to the forward position that I described earlier and ask the horse to walk off. I keep him straight by the use of my legs, seat and hands. I often find the outside rail can assist me in keeping a green horse straight. You want to keep the neck, shoulders and rib cage centered between your hands and legs. This way, the haunches will be less likely to drift. Ride right to the corner ahead of you, using the fence to stop the horse. At this point I am still in a "Go Forward" body position, encouraging the horse to go forward freely by feeding him the rein and gently bumping my legs on his rib cage. As I approach the fence corner, I do change the position of my seat, legs and hands. I bring my shoulders back to a twelve o'clock position, my legs come forward and hang right under my hips and my hands will lift to take the slack out of the reins.

When I see or feel that the horse is going to stop because there is a wall or fence blocking his forward motion, I change my seat once again to the stop or halt position. I do this by slightly moving my shoulders back and bringing my legs forward in front of the girth (again this rotates my pelvis). I lift my hands to again take any slack out of the reins. Before the horse actually stops at the fence, I "stop riding" and my body language is that of a very neutral rider. (see fig. 4) The horse learns in a practical way both to stop and the cues for the stop through the combination of the natural barrier in the form of the fence in conjunction with my cues to him as a rider. It makes logical sense to him; and he then learns that when I cue him in this way, I wish him to stop. When you use a wall and the cues described above, you are teaching your horse to stop from body signals, not by

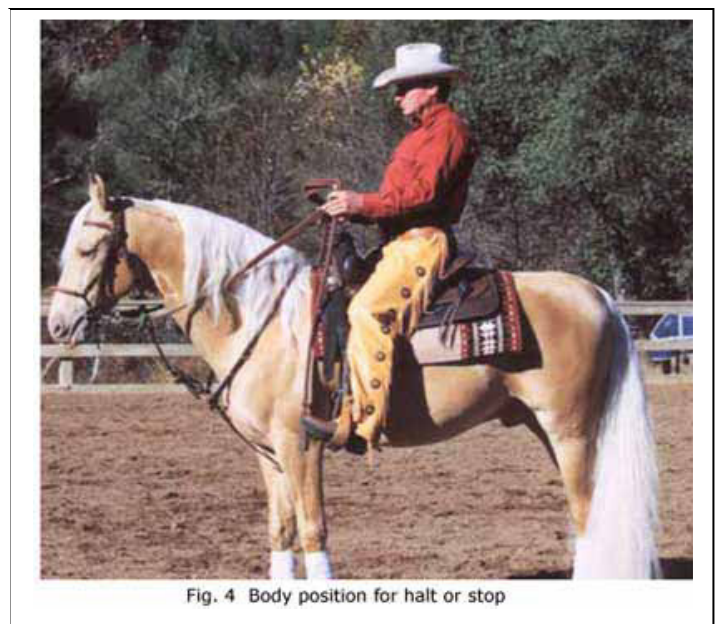


Fig. 4 Body position for halt or stop

pulling on his mouth. As he learns to read your seat, hands and legs; he will stop further from the wall each time. In time, you will be able to stop him a foot, two feet, three, five feet and, so forth, from the wall. Eventually there will be no wall at all. You may not realize it but you are laying the early foundation for self-carriage and the half halt which is an important part of more advanced training.

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SELF-CARRIAGE

I want to take just a moment and talk about Self-Carriage. It is the heart and soul of Cowboy Dressage. To me Self-Carriage is what canvas or clay is to an artist. It is where the "magic" begins. With self-carriage you can begin to mold or shape the horse into form followed by function. A Cowboy Dressage Horse is created with self-carriage on light contact. The carriage is encouraged by the rider's seat and the rounding of the horse's back, not by heavy contact with the horse's mouth through the rider's hands. Remember, you always ride the rear end of the horse - the hindquarters are the motor. You don't want your horse moving in "two pieces" - he should move as an integrated whole; and the quarters work purposely forward, well beneath the horse, such that he is "tracking up well" from behind. If he is moving forward well and correctly, you will be able to feel this through your seat, a kind of rounded energy beneath you.

A good western horse must have self-carriage. It is what the old California Vaquero ultimately strived for. They say you could recognize the carriage of a finished bridle horse a mile away. Like the western horse, a good dressage horse must also have self-carriage. Because a western horse is ridden on lighter contact it is quite obvious when carriage is self-maintained as opposed to a dressage horse, who is all too often ridden with more contact. Because of this, it is not always easy to tell who is doing the "holding up", the rider or the horse. I believe the principles of self-carriage between Cowboy Dressage and Dressage are the same, but the application and follow through may be visually different.

I would conclude with this reminder: the key to all effective horse training is patience. Take one step at a time and try as hard as you can to be consistent with your body cues. A horse has an incredible memory. He is like an elephant; he will never forget what happens to him. Remember that when giving him a lesson. Set him up to succeed and not to fail. Choose lessons you know he is ready for and when he is ready ask only for a little more. Build him up, bit by bit, in small increments. Know when to quit and, during a lesson, to give him the occasional pause and simply stop and relax. Relaxation is a reward for both horse and rider, and it is an important component in learning.

In future articles, I will discuss self-carriage further and the three parts of the horse's body that I address when training. That part in front of the saddle (head, neck and shoulders), the part under the saddle (the rib cage) and the part behind the saddle (the hip or haunches). Learning how to control and communicate with each part, learning the why, how and when will open exciting doors for you and your horse---doors that will establish the foundation for better understanding and the practice of elevated horsemanship.

Set yourselves up to succeed

In each article, I will remind you of the importance of "patience", "consistency" and "rewards." You, as a rider, must understand the concept of your lesson before you can ask your horse to understand it. Think your exercises through thoroughly. If you are having trouble getting it right, and both you and your horse feel frustration, stop the exercise and move on to something that you can accomplish. You can come back to the harder lesson later. Always set yourself and your horse up to succeed. One of the biggest mistakes I see horse trainers make is that they ask from a horse things he is not prepared to do.... the horse is thus set up to fail and, all too often, is disciplined or drilled in the attempt to get it right. If you and your horse get a given exercise right once or twice, quit right there and reward your horse. Do not drill or over train. Drilling and over training may perfect what you are trying to train but will take the spirit and dampen the work ethic of the horse. An enthusiastic trainer is good, but one who knows when to quit "training" on a horse is wise.

If you make the partnership between you and your horse your priority, the training time you both share will be rewarding and successful.

Some words of wisdom I will share with you.....the best horsemen are not always the most talented but they are always the most patient.~

What's new at The Wings Program, Inc.

The Wings Programs is settling into our new home in Corvallis, but there has been a lot of work to do to make it safe for our rescue and program horses.

Every fence wire was either loose or down, so needed to be stretched and attached to the posts. I am becoming a real pro at using the wire stretcher. A few posts are rotten and were shorn up with T-posts installed next to them. A few new wood posts needed



Wings Program Inc.

The Wings Programs Inc. is a 501c3 Non-Profit corporation dedicated to various equine programs including Equine rescue and Equine Assisted Therapy programs. The Wings Programs provides assistance to both horses and horse owners in need. Horses in our care receive rehabilitation for physical and emotional problems, training as necessary to be able to transition into a new permanent home. Some of our horses are sanctuary horses, meaning they are not available for adoption for various reasons. These horses participate in Equine Assisted Programs including Life Skills, Equine Assisted Growth and Learning and Veterans programs.

to be installed. Three gates hung between paddocks to facilitate movement between them.

Weeds, weeds and more weeds have been wacked, hacked and mown down. And there are still more areas to do. A push lawnmower was donated and another volunteer sharpened the blade for us. Our two weed wackers, one electric and one gas have both gotten a work out.

Spotlight Volunteer

We could not do any of this without our volunteers, and we need more. For now we have our trusty Kaitlyn McKee who comes two days a week and I have come to rely on more and more. Kaitlyn works two hours each day for LayzD Equine at minimum wage and donates the rest of her hours to The Wings Programs. Kaitlyn came to Montana from Hawaii to learn about horses. I think I can accommodate her in that endeavor! She trades her volunteer hours for horsemanship lessons from me and practices with the rescue horses. This is one of those win-win situations. The horses get attention and some training refreshers and she gets horses to work with. Kaitlyn has been spending most of her time with Lola, our Arabian/QH mare and even rides her on trails with me. Lola is becoming an accomplished trail horse and will be available for adoption in the spring.

Current Needs

Grass hay! We currently have seven horses and need to purchase additional grass hay. Unfortunately, one of the fields we have purchased in past years only produced half of the harvest it usually does. We would love a hay donation, but are willing to pay a reasonable price for straight grass in small bales.

Some of our horses are allergic to alfalfa so it is best if we do not have any alfalfa in the bales to insure it is not fed to them in error. Partial donation by the way of reduced sale price will receive tax donation receipt for the market value of the hay, so even if you can't donate hay, if you are willing to sell it to us at a reduced price you will still receive a tax receipt!

We would like to thank Sleeping Willow Ranch for their commitment to donate one ton of hay.

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(What's new at The Wings Program, Inc. continued from page 8)

Fundraising

Dr. Gina Bjorkman or Balanced Wellness Chiropractic in Hamilton is still working or putting together a Pint Night at Higher Ground. If you know the owner or any of the employees, please put in a good word for us when you are there.

Our partner commercial corporation, LayzD Equine Services LLC, is now offering boarding at our facility. Large paddock/pasture (and I use the word pasture loosely as there is limited grass) areas are \$180 per month, feeding hay 2x day (approx 20 lbs total). Stalls are available when weather or storms require shelter for an



Dance's afternoon nap

additional amount. Sapphire Arena next door is open to the public and you can easily walk your horse over for riding when you choose. We have a round pen and outdoor arena available for your use. Easy in and out for large trailers, and trailer parking at no additional fee. All profits from boarding will go back to The Wings Programs.

More from LayzD Equine Services LLC.

Dance needs so many nutritional supplement that LayzD has become an Uckele distributor to help defray the cost of his feed. By purchasing Uckele at distributor pricing, we can lower his expenses some. This helps you also. LayzD will sell you Uckele nutritional supplements for horses and dogs at 10-20% below list catalog price. If you have wanted to try Uckele superior nutritional products this is your chance. If you put your product order on the same shipping as other clients and don't mind a short wait, you also get free shipping. Catalogs are available at our Corvallis location and I also have them in the van. If you follow LayzD on Facebook, other sales and special pricing is posted there.

Update on Sundance

The Danceman is still among the walking but does struggle with various issues exacerbated by the shooting injury. Good news is I have managed to get him off Bute completely and moved on to herbal and Uckele supplement for both healing and pain management. Not so good news is a metabolic condition he had some mild symptoms of has exploded full force due to the stress and trauma. He now is on another drug to control this.

A jury trial has been requested by the defense and trial date set for early January. I will update more about this in the next newsletter.

For now, thank you for reading and following our progress. Thank you for your donations which can be mailed to 208 Rusty Spur Way, Corvallis, 59828 or thru Go Fund Me. Thank you for loving and caring for your own horses. Enjoy your equine family member and kiss them every day. I do!

The Wings Programs Inc is a 501c3 non profit organization providing both Equine Rescue/Rehab/Rehome and Equine Assisted Therapy programs to those in need. Wings does not have a website yet but can be found on FB at <https://www.facebook.com/The-Wings-Programs-Inc-922426254453825/timeline/?ref=bookmarks>.

The Game Plan

In each newsletter, we will briefly discuss an aspect of managing small acreages (generally 20-40 acres or less). These articles will focus mainly on western/southwestern Montana, and central/northern Idaho. I am of the opinion that a healthy piece of land is better able to produce healthy livestock. This certainly holds true for horses. While physically healthy horses *can* come from dry lots or other high input systems, raising and supporting horses on healthy pastures is by far the most economical and sensible way to go (and better for horse sanity); so each of these brief discussions will address some aspect of attaining and/or maintaining healthy land. The topics will not be covered in depth, they are starting points to get us thinking. No outfit is the same, and no cookie cutter approach will work everywhere (or anywhere necessarily). I encourage folks to contact their County Extension Office Agent for questions specific to your ground and location.

Let's start this newsletter by looking at the big picture, the game plan. All of us have to sit down and really ask ourselves a few basic questions:

- ***What do I want?***
- ***What do I have?***
- ***How do I get there?***

What do I want? Be realistic, and think 5 years down the road. Think “big-picture”, not exactly how many horses or goats you want. For example, are you looking to make a profit from livestock on a small acreage? Do you just want a couple of horses for the grandkids to ride? Do you want to focus on hay production? Do you want aesthetically pleasing natural land with wildlife values? We have to be honest with ourselves. Goals we set should be realistic, but hey, there is no rule against dreaming big.

What do I have? What can your land produce currently? Plain and simple. Don't kid yourself, and don't think “Well, if I did this...” or “If I did that, then maybe...” No. What do you have right now? A good way to think about this is to get an aerial (or satellite) picture of your land. Such maps or pictures used to be quite expensive, but now cost only the paper and toner to print them (and an internet connection). What I suggest is getting such a picture and literally draw and write on it - describing exactly what you have going on, on your ground today. Draw fences, water facilities, corrals, hay pastures and production, if you know, etc. The more you put down, the more you'll have a bird's-eye view of what you have, and likely where you need to know more.

How do I get there? Here's the harder part. Still think big picture. By knowing basically what you want, and what you currently have, you will see discrepancies. Think of the “want/have” questions as 2 sides of a scale. More than likely, one side is currently heavier. Maybe you will need more hay than you currently produce. Maybe you currently produce more than enough hay, but better shelter and watering facilities are needed. Maybe the current fencing needs to be re-thought. Don't limit your options, and don't get mired in minutia, we will discuss finer points (the minutia) in newsletters to come. Remember, this is essentially the overall game plan, not the play-by-play.

Thanks~

Small Pasture Management

Max Thompson has worked as a rangeland ecologist and assisted land managers make data-driven decisions since 2004. His work typically includes the collection and analysis of ecological data for site assessment, classification, and restoration or rehabilitation - all based upon clients' management goals. This usually involves the quantification of vegetative cover, an evaluation of current and historical agricultural practices, an assessment of site hydrology and soil conditions, and site evaluation in terms of wildlife habitat. Max has worked as a rangeland ecologist throughout Idaho, the Central Valley of California, Alberta Canada, the Black Hills of South Dakota, Northern Utah, and across the entire State of Montana.

The Importance of Balanced Minerals in the Equine Diet

This is the first of a series of short articles on minerals and equine nutrition which can be very complicated. To help it be easy to understand I will address one mineral or substance in each article.

THE MAJOR MINERALS

The term “major” minerals does not mean they are more important. It refers to minerals that are present in the body, and required in the diet, in gram amounts, rather than milligrams (mg).

It is important to emphasize here, and for all minerals, that recommended intakes do not operate in a vacuum. In other words, high intakes of competing minerals or other factors influencing how well the horse can retain any mineral he absorbs are very important.

The major minerals are measured in grams and include Sodium, Calcium, Phosphorus, Magnesium, Potassium, Chloride and Lysine. Let's start with sodium.

Equine Nutrition

Debora Lay is an avid student of Equine Nutrition and metabolic conditions.

She has completed numerous American Association of Veterinarian approved courses including: Nutrition as Therapy, Equine Cushings and Insulin Resistance, Nutrition for Pregnancy and Growth. She may be contacted at LazyD@live.com.

SODIUM

Equine diets are naturally very low in sodium, containing no more than 0.1% overall in most cases and considerably less if the horse is eating primarily forage which often runs in the neighborhood of 0.02%.

This would provide 0.2 grams of sodium per kilogram of diet, compared to recommended optimal intake of 1.6 to 1.8 grams per kilogram. This figure assumes a mixed diet of grain and hay. Actual loss studies which have come up with a figure of 0.02 grams of sodium per kilogram of bodyweight, so

* a 500 kg (1100 lb) horse would need 10 grams of sodium

* Since the sodium level of diets composed predominantly of forage is so low, the horse's intake from that source (forage) can be ignored.

* When it comes to sodium, you are much better off providing a little too much than a little too little.

As long as the horse has access to water (which should be a given), extra sodium is very easily excreted in the urine. Insufficient sodium inevitably leads to some dehydration. The brain reads sodium levels in the cerebrospinal fluid. The cerebrospinal fluid, in turn, is a filtrate of blood. Blood levels of sodium will be maintained by “stealing” sodium from the extracellular fluid. This leads to the decrease in skin elasticity that is a familiar sign of mild to moderate dehydration (see Fluid Balance section). The rule of thumb is that as little as 2 to 3% dehydration can lead to a 10% drop in performance.

* 10 grams of sodium is only the maintenance requirement. (25 grams of salt as salt is only 40% sodium) It does not include sweat losses.

* The sodium requirements of horses in moderate to heavy work are estimated to be twice as high,

* This does not take into account even higher rates of sweat production in extremely warm weather.

Most people provide salt as a free choice block, which is fine as long as the horse actually consumes enough of it.

Let's do the math:

A 500 kg (1100 pound) horse at maintenance – no exercise, no sweating

* needs 10 grams of sodium which is 25 grams of salt

or

* Approximately 1 oz per day.

That means a 2 pound salt lick should be gone in 32 days, or about a month if only one horse uses it.~

News and Events

Colorado

September 19, 2015 9am-5pm

Cowboy Dressage Fun Show and Old-Tyme Social: Cowboy Dressage Fun Show and BBQ Lunch

Castlewood Equestrian Ctr, 5525 E. Hwy. 86 Franktown, CO

\$20.00 Office fee, \$20.00 per class

Soft Feel Colorado: 303-552-1931

Outdoor arena/Indoor arena in case of inclement weather.

October 22-25, 2015

2 day Cowboy Dressage Clinic and Show

Specific venue TBA

Leslie Sutherland and cowboydressageworldofcolorado@gmail.com /303-366-8558

Idaho

September 18-20th, 2015 9am-4pm

Introduction to Vaquero and Challenge Court. 3 great instructors: Mitch Hoover, JoLinn Hoover, and Dee Myers. Get the rest of the story...Learn specific techniques to develop basic skills for communication enhancement that will help you excel in this rewarding discipline. Combine your horsemanship skills with obstacle execution to guarantee smooth Challenge Court Competition. Learn the real deal about Vaquero style—what it means to you and your horse...and your life!

Golden Sunset Ranch: Caldwell, ID

Riders: \$275; Auditors: \$25/Day; Playday: Judged tests at \$15/test

Contact Dee Myers at 541-519-2036 or <http://www.goldensunsetranch.com/2015-schedule.html>

Oregon

October 2-4th, 2015

Eastern Slope Cowboy Dressage Clinic/Practice: 3 days of Cowboy Dressage Clinic and Playday. Beginners, Intermediate, and Advanced. This is going to be the full meal deal. Starting with a Friday new rider/review day, Saturday for return riders and advancement; finishing off Sunday with a morning of judged practice and Sunday afternoon with a schooling show. What a way to set your sights for the CD finals in Nov. or to make your CD plan for 2016!

Eastern Slope Ranch: 42268 Rouen Road, Baker City, OR 97814

www.goldensunsetranch.com

Classifieds



Trotting Horse Therapeutic Riding is looking for an experienced PATH instructor to join our program. Please contact Cyndi Meyer at 406-370-8477 or trottinghorsetables@gmail.com