SCCHA Newsletter May2022

From: Santa Cruz County Horsemen's Association (sccha@wildapricot.org)

To: lindsayao@yahoo.com

Date: Friday, May 6, 2022, 08:23 AM PDT

President's message:

Oh, lovely May. Flowers are blooming in the field, the horses have shed out, camping weather is here, the obstacles have been repaired and spruced up, and the calendar is full of horsey events. What more could we want?

You've seen those cute helmets with cowboy hat brims? Western hell-hats. They're pretty pricey to buy—about $200. Well, we're going to make our own at the next membership meeting on May 17. Bring a helmet, western hat that you want to cut up, and whatever decorative headband you want. A belt, for instance. We will supply decorative tape to attach them and a few embellishments. Let's get creative!

Dig day at San Vicente Redwoods is May 14. SCCHA is cosponsoring this equestrian dig day with the Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Stewards and Monterey Bay Equestrians. This is our chance to tuneup and build new trails for new adventures. You'll be well fueled with breakfast, lunch and post-work refreshments. For sign ups, see the link below.

This event is followed by an Obstacle Fun Day on June 4 at the Showgrounds. SCCHA members are invited to try obstacles in a fun, non-competitive setting. Ride or lead your horse. Choose your own level and get written feedback. Click below to get the schedule and FAQs for the event. The second Obstacle Fun Day will be July 2, so put it on the calendar now.

It's a privilege to have such a wonderful equestrian facility and club. Thank you all for your participation and contributions to our equestrian life.

Happy trails,

—Robin Musitelli

☑ Important Dates:

5/14: San Vicente Dig Day

5/17: Membership Mtg

6/4: Obstacle Fun Days

7/2: Obstacle Fun Days

7/9: Fireworks Endurance

(Keep reading for more info)

Robin and Noble

Please visit https://sccha.wildapricot.org/event-4736127 to sign up for Dig Day!

Click here to register for Obstacle Fun Day series

https://sccha.wildapricot.org/event-4545544

Don’t forget to check the SCCHA website: https://sccha.wildapricot.org/

and our FB page: https://www.facebook.com/people/Santa-Cruz-County-Horsemens/100057818433171/

One Helluva HellHat Party!

Bring your helmet, your cowboy hat, and your imagination.

We're making HellHats! These hybrid hard hats with a western brim are easy and fun to make. And they're "one helluva hat."

Here's what you need to bring:

- Riding Helmet
- Western Hat (to cut for brim)
- Scissors
- Embellishments
  (flowers, feathers, conchos, bows, horsehair tassels, etc.)
- Something for a hat band
  (an old Western belt, a fancy ribbon, a colorful scarf, or you can use fancy duct tape that we will provide)

Tuesday,
May 17
7 p.m.
SCCHA Clubhouse

There's still time to sign up for Dig Days!

Saturday, May 14th
9am - 3pm
San Vicente Redwoods

Dig Days are a great way to tune up and build new trails right here in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Volunteers are provided breakfast and coffee in the morning, lunch and post-work refreshments, plus a raffle. Led by a professional SCMTS Trail Crew staff, all experience levels are welcome. For more info check the SCCHA website events page: https://sccha.wildapricot.org/event-4736127

FITNESS TRAINING FOR RIDERS

Nationally certified personal trainer Ashley LaMorte is offering to schedule a series of "Bootcamp Sessions" at the Showgrounds!

She would love to be a part of getting the members of SCCHA to a stronger riding performance. She will instruct an outdoor bodyweight boot camp once to twice a week on a regular basis at the Showgrounds. Dates and times would be scheduled according to the availability of participants. Since we are all at different fitness levels, She will schedule an initial fitness assessment test this month in May (currently targeting May 7th).

The "Bootcamp" sessions will be directed towards rider fitness and will include strength training, core, balance, flexibility, and some agility / cardio. Each session is 50 mins and never repeats itself. We will begin with a warm up, move into the training session, and end with a cool down and stretch.

A large group would be wonderful, but a MINIMUM of 5 members is required to keep the sessions going.

TO SIGN UP, PLEASE CONTACT KAREN BISH AT kbish@kanddbish.me or 408-440-7203

Feel free to reach out directly to Ashley with any questions or concerns: Ashley LaMorte, Owner / Trainer, AFAA certified www.lamortelift.com (408) 209 9695.

Training Rates: Fitness Assessment: $15, Drop in: $25, Monthly: $120.

This bootcamp is for YOU!

Obstacle Fun Days: JUNE 4 & JULY 2

What could be more fun? You and your horse teamed up to complete 8 obstacles together . . .

- In whatever order you choose, at whatever level of challenge at each obstacle that you feel best suits you and your horse.
- In hand and/or under saddle (doing both is recommended = double the Fun!)
- Choose morning or afternoon go times.
- And, to top it off, when finished you'll get score sheets that will include helpful comments, from each obstacle, from each of our fabulous judges!

SCCHA Obstacle Fun Days are modeled on Equine Trail Sport's (ETS) recognized competitions.In fact, they will be holding one of their competitive events at the showgroundson July 30 & 31.

We're betting you'll have such a good time with your horse at our Fun Days that you'll want to have a go at a real competition!

And so close to home, why not? Here's link to their site for more info:

https://www.equinetrailsports.com/events/

Here are a few ETS rules that we will be adhering to at the Fun Days. Judging criteria and scoring includes things like:

- Soft use of the reins,
- Subtle, refined cues,
- A good attitude of the equine.

As you can see, the emphasis in this sport is quality of partnership as opposed to getting through the obstacle at any cost to the horse. The atmosphere tends to be relaxed with positive encouragement recognized and rewarded.

Basic rules include:

- For the mounted division, equines must wear some form of headgear with reins on each side of the neck and some type of saddle.
- Martingales and tie downs are not permitted.
- For the in-hand division, if a lead rope with a chain is used, the chain cannot be touching the horse's face.

There is no specified time limit at the obstacles. That is at the judge's discretion. Of course we do have a time schedule to adhere to. It's fine for your horse to regard an obstacle for a moment but prolonged hesitation would be reflected in your score.

So, get a bit of practice in backing, maybe get good with a tarp and moving the hind and the fore. Come on out to the Showgrounds and enjoy all of the field obstacles while you work on your good horsemanship.

Make camping reservations for June 4 and July 2 so you'll be all set for a fun weekend with obstacles, friends, and all of the beautiful trails we have right out the gate.

See you there!

~ Bonnie Stoehn

Bonnie and her partner competing at an equine trail sports event.

Volunteers have been busy at SCCHA!

The Covered Wagon is back, while other obstacles like the Z-maze, Push Me, and Narrow Trench have been tidied up after a winter of growing weeds. Lots of mowing too, so come on down and check it out!

Warwick Schiller:
Listening to Your Horse

This article is from the July 2020 Horse Deals magazine.

A FEW YEARS AGO my wife bought a new reining horse named Sherlock and he was an amazing athlete, but had some odd behaviours that I wanted to unravel. The way I approach problem horses is to go back to the very beginning of the training and retrain them from the start, ensuring each step along the way is good before adding anything more. At the time I thought I had this horse training figured out, but this horse had a level of shut down that I had not encountered before. Very, very obedient, but tense in a frozen sort of way. His tenseness did not result in explosive behaviour, but really going inside himself.

He led me to look at things outside the lens at which I viewed training and looked into different ways of working with horses. Clicker training was one of the things I started using to give him a different perspective on being asked to do things. But it was still training. It was still me asking for something, and expecting some sort of outcome. Then I read some articles about some of the little facial expressions and head movements horses do that tell us how they feel about what is happening. It turns out that even the tiniest things mean something.

Soon after I was doing a clinic in Texas. In the morning group was a nine-year-old Mustang who has random bolting issues under saddle. During the groundwork portion of the clinic, he started to block out his owner with his head when she went to walk down beside him and ask him to step over behind. Normally I would have suggested she just slip her hand under his jaw and move his head back in front of him before walking down his side, but I wanted to experiment. I took the lead rope from her and went to walk down beside him. He turned his head and blocked me. Instead of doing anything I stopped and stepped back when he did it. I then stood still and waited for him to process the fact that he had just said something to a human and they listened instead of corrected. Initially, it took him a little while to process.

I tried again with the same result and this went on for some 15 to 20 minutes and eventually, he didn't block me out when I went down that side. I could then disengage his hind end, walk back to the front, and then back down the side with no worries. He seemed to be fine now, so I handed him back to his owner and said: "let him stand there for a while, don't ask for anything." I was helping someone else in the clinic about 15 minutes later when I heard a gasp from all the spectators, I turned around and he had buckled at the knees and dropped to his belly and was fast asleep, snoring little dust clouds in the sand. He then had a roll, got up, shook, and buckled at the knees and went back to sleep. I asked his owner if that was normal behaviour for him and she said she'd had him for six years and had only seen him lay down once, and on that occasion as soon as he saw her he jumped straight up.

He slept for one and a half hours until it was time for the afternoon group to come in, we woke him up and he went back to his stall. The next day when the morning group entered the arena, his owner asked what I thought she should do. I suggested she stand with him and see what happens. After 15 minutes he lay down and went to sleep, sleeping for four hours until lunchtime. He slept while horses cantered past him, and he slept through the blaring loudspeakers.

Upon returning from that clinic, I looked at scientific research into sleeping habits of horses and learned that although horses can sleep standing, they need to lay down for about 30 minutes per day to get the deep restorative REM sleep they need. If they don't get that sleep they can be nervous, and that nervousness can cause all sorts of things. Including bolting. It has been over three years since that clinic, and that horse has not bolted since.

The group at the Texas clinic where the Mustang laid down, not bothered by passing riders, and fell fast asleep.

Listening to Your Horse (continued)

For me, it was a watershed moment, the first time I had solved an issue with a horse where I didn't train the horse but listened to the horse. Over the past few years, I have really made that listening a big part of what I do. It's not easy personally, as you really have to change your judgements of every situation, and you also have to be able to lose your expectations. It also makes you be more present, and even from that, I have seen a huge change in horses that I work with.

We all know that horses, when taken away from their herd, don't oftentimes feel safe, but it's interesting to dwell on what makes them feel safe in the herd. It's not the physicality of the herd, as horses don't fight off predators, they run from them. What I believe is what makes them feel safe is the group awareness of the herd. The more horses, the more "lookouts" they have. This is where being aware of those little signals horses give us a double benefit. I think when we notice those subtle signals, we tell them they are being listened to, but also I think a larger benefit is we are relating to them how aware we are, and that awareness gives them the same sense of safety as the herd, and that causes relaxation.

I recently got to work with some Barb stallions in Morocco, and they were all distracted, unsettled, pushy and all were a little bit nippy. When I worked with each of them, I turned them loose in a round pen as I didn't want to be close to them because they had some bad habits that could place me in danger. All of them ran to the fence whinnying at the other studs back in the barn, so I worked on attracting their attention with a flag. I didn't drive them, nor move their feet, just got their attention. As soon as their attention moved to me, even something as small as an ear flick, fl would take the energy out of the flag and put it down.

All of them soon became very relaxed and settled, and came up and engaged with me without the distractedness, pushiness and the nippiness they had previously shown. Some of them I could walk around and they would follow me like a well-behaved horse on a lead, a far cry from the way their handlers bought them into the round pen.

It was another watershed moment. In the past, a change like that would have involved me putting a fair bit of pressure on them, moving them around and then letting them rest facing me. I did nothing really but tell them how aware I was of where their thoughts were, and the change was amazing. I would really encourage you to look more into this subject, and listen to your horse more, the benefits will really surprise you.

One of the stallions in Morocco. Half an hour earlier he was quite interested in being pushy, biting and striking.

For more informaton, visit
https://www.facebook.com/Warwickschillerfanpage

Fireworks!

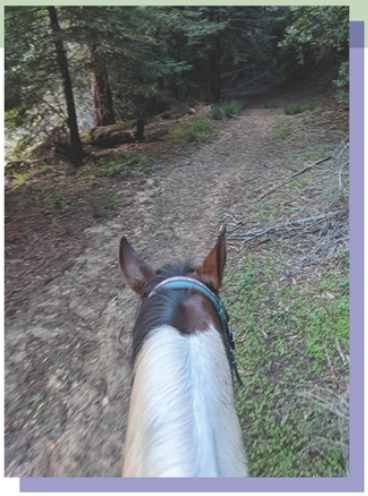
July 9th

Be a part of SCCHA's Signature Ride: VOLUNTEER!

The Fireworks planning team is forging ahead to make another geat ride on July 9th. They are looking for a variety of volunteers, with a special emphasis on folks who would like to pilot the rescue trailers. These are people that are very comfortable driving a rig, have a rig they are willing to use for the ride, and can be around from 10 a.m. until the last person comes off the trail, usually 4:30 or 5:00 p.m.

If you can help, please email: kate@matthewsconsulting.com to discuss the various ways you can take part in this exciting event.

Forest Connection by Rachel Kelman



As dusk settles around us, a grey dove spreading her feathers to fill the nest, my horse and I turn for home. The only sounds are his hoofbeats on the dirt and duff and the soft puff of his breath.

A sudden burst of movement and wingbeats as a dove explodes from a tree on our right elicits an ear flick and shoulder twitch from my steady mount. We draw strength and calm from each other, the warmth of our connection radiating through the bareback pad and our bodies.

I gather the reins and shift my weight slightly forward and Flare surges into a canter, then a gallop. The trees flash by as I lean over his neck, my hands resting lightly on his mane. Our hearts pound together as we fly up the trail, chasing the last of the light.

Sides heaving, we slow at the top of the ridge, listening to the crows call and answer in the crisp evening air. More doves burst from the trees along the path as we amble homewards in the darkening forest, but we pay them no mind. We are two souls, entwined in shared exhilaration and joy, content in each other's company.

We who
choose to **surround ourselves**
with lives even more
temporary than our own

live within a
fragile
circle,
easily and
often breached.

Unable to accept its awful gaps,
we would live no other way.

We
cherish **memory**
as the only certain **immortality,**
never fully understanding
the necessary plan.

~Irving Townsend

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Western States Mounted Officers Assn
POST Control Number 1118-23800-21
is pleased to present the 24th Annual Memorial

★ *Trail Trials* ★

June 11, 2022
Rusty Spur Ranch, Clovis, CA

Classes include sworn police mounted units, civilian riders, youth, and teams (a mix of participants). The trophy goes home to the headquarters of sworn personnel, but all horse and riders will be challenged by an obstacle course of sensory obstacles. Great prizes to third place.

Do you have what it takes to get the best of a Federal Cowboy? Come find out!

For more info: www.wsmoa.com or contact WSMOA: 408/482-7759 or westernstatesmounted@gmail.com

LOCAL NONPROFIT
is looking for a new home in Santa Cruz County!

Divine Equine Assisted Therapy Center would love either open space where they can build the infrastructure they need OR if you are an existing ranch, they are looking for stalls or room for 6+ horses, turnout and an arena. Other amenities such as office space, hay barn, tack room…would be great! If you have something that seems like a fit, please reach out to Kristy@Divine Equine Therapy.org.

COAST ROAD STABLES
Boarding Available. Choice of large paddocks with cover and storage. Several arenas and turnout areas, wash racks, trailer parking. Reliable cleaning and feeding available. Adjacent to Wilder Ranch State Park. Message Ben 831-247-0543 or Amy 707-477-4720.

TRAIL RIDER'S DREAM: ~ 4.5 miles above UCSC bordering Wilder Ranch. Over 100 acres providing hours of trail riding PLUS, our access to Wilder may be the best in the area.Small, full-service stable that rarely has openings. We provide:

- 12'x12' matted stall w/ a 12'x24' paddock.
- AM and PM feeding.We feed Alfalfa, and an Alfalfa-grass mix. We can accommodate most diets
- Daily cleaning and shavings
- Large turnouts (for an additional fee)
- A heated and well-appointed tack room.
- 3 matted & lighted washing/tacking stalls. Farriers & Vets love it.
- An arena w/ mirrors and lights.

Our Caretaker is communicative and conscientious, and can accommodate individual feed needs: grain, meds, etc.The Owner lives on-site, adding security, supervision and extra horse love. We charge $550/month. Come see us! Please call 714-272-4618 or 831-426-7692 to inquire. Happy trails!

Buck Brannaman Clinic

Due to an abundance of caution, Buck Brannaman has decided to cancel his upcoming clinic at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds.

ISO PASTURE SPACE
for a 9 year old Arabian gelding, who is ridden often. He is extremely herd savvy, has been raised in pasture his whole life. Shod up front, bare behind can be bare all around if needed. I am a very experienced horsewoman who simply wants her horse to live a natural lifestyle in a pasture with a herd. Message me at 408-858-3704 or kirstin-morris@comcast.net

Spring has sprung and so have our slithering legless friends!

Last year at the end of April we returned to the Showgrounds after a ride through the redwoods. It was a beautiful, warm day. We tied our horses to the trailer to let them chill a bit, and decided to have a short visit with Trish before we loaded up for the drive home.

The gal I had been riding with told me there was a huge snake right under my front tire, so I just thought we would extend our visit, hoping the snake would find somewhere to go. Then I thought: what if he slithers on over to introduce himself to the horses. I walked to the truck to assess the situation. He was smack under my tire. If he wasn't going to move then I couldn't move my truck. We found a few twigs and a pinecone thinking we could convince him to slither on. We did convince him to move, but he moved up, right into the engine compartment. Now what??????

See how the snake wrangler and grounds caretaker saved the day!!! I was brave enough to take the photos from a safe distance.

Patsy Johnston, SCCHA Board Director

Trading Post

Lance Camper. Squire Lite 9'10" for full size truck. Hardly used! Have all maintenance receipts. Onan generator, only used 44hrs. Electric jacks. Roof resealed 2019. Full refrigerator, serviced 2019. Microwave and gas stove/oven. Large pantry and clothes closet. Replaced vents and blinds 2019. JD Power Blu Book, $11,800.00. Asking $10,000 or Best Offer. Carolyn Tucker, 408.612.6846 cell.

RockyMountain Mare: 8 year old, 15 hands, gaited, trailers, ties, loves creeks, registered w famous Sire Snowman, Something Red as Dam, from Kentucky. Owner has had surgery and can't ride. Need forever home, up to date on all shots, can share vet check report, sound w excellent barefeet, text Sean for videos and pictures 831-535-8070.

Felton: 800 SF 2/1 cottage w/ corral/shelter option. Super easy access,10 min to Santa Cruz, 2 min to Felton. Meadow view, oaks, madrone, fruit surrounding, yet house gets plenty of light. 2 large decks, full kitchen, electric range, refrigerator, full-size shower/tub, w/d hookups. Tile floors throughout, numerous windows, gas heater. Responsible for minimal upkeep for approx 1/2 acre fenced. Room for garden; horse corral/shelter avail at add. cost. Avail. 4/15. Dog(s) ok with refs. 2nd house on 6 acres, distanced from main house. Quiet, non-smoking. Rent: $2,800. Sec/cleaning dep: $2,800. Water/garbage included in rent. Tenant pays PG&E/propane. Contact Jeannette: 831.818-8013 or 335-8133, jennamoretti18@gmail.com.

Looking for a reliable ride. My best ride ever just had to retire, and my 32 year old backup ride died, so I need a horse. I am barely 5 feet tall so I like a small horse. Most my horses have been Arab or part...I'm a trail rider now (age has developed me from a 3-day eventer to a trail trials contender). I have a trainer (my husband does not know why I'm not trained by now...) My horses live on acreage at home, and I have an arena. I have two horses the newcomer can herd with. At my age I do not want to be bucked off, so I would like a reliable mount, at least 9 years old. Thanks, Nannettebenedict@gmail.com 831.234.3832 for text(I don't answer calls I don't know).

Grade gelding for sale. Approx. 11 years old. Has been ridden English and western. Some working equitation and private lessons. In pasture since August. $4,500 or best offer. Serious inquiries only. 831.818.6735, ask for Kim.

Upcoming Events 2022

5/14	San Vicente Redwoods Dig Day	carrie.thompson@landtrustsantacruz.org
5/17	Membership Meeting/HellHat Party!	info@sccha.com
6/4, 7/2	Fun Obstacle Playday Series	sccha.wildapricot.org/event-4545544
7/9	Fireworks Endurance Ride	kate@matthewsconsulting.com

For more details, see SCCHA FB and website.

SCCHA News Submissions:
DEADLINE is the last Tuesday of eachmonth for the following month's issue.

Stories and Articles
Members, please share your horse interests and experiences with us!
Articles from other publications accepted with reprint permissions. Email copy to editor in these formats; doc, docx, pdf

Images:
jpg, png formats, 72 dpi minimum

Trading Post Ads:
Must be non-commercial and horse-related. Free to members; $10 for non-members. Include item, price, name, and contact info. Renew by email each month ad is to be run.

Business Ads:
Must be "camera ready." Email images and/or copy to editor. Ads must be paid in advance to SCCHA. Send payment to: SCCHA, 1251 Graham Hill Rd, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Business Ad Rates:

Business card	$20/mo	$50/3 months
1/4 page	$40/mo	$400/year
1/2 page	$80/mo	$800/year

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Thank You to our Board and all our Volunteers!

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