

Stable Sheet



THE UNIVERSITY
OF VERMONT

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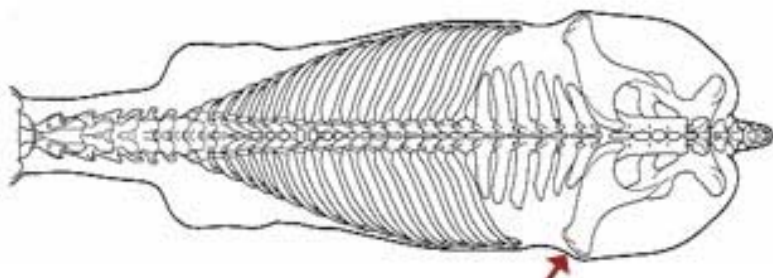
PASTURE INJURIES — SOMETIMES THINGS JUST HAPPEN

As I work with horses on a day-to-day basis, I am always astounded by the things they manage to scrape, cut, bruise, or injure themselves on. Sometimes those injuries are devastating. Here is an example: It was a typical Monday morning; I was out feeding the pasture horses their morning grain and doing a daily inspection, as the mares came up to get their food in the last pasture I noticed the boss mare, Ruby, was standing quietly by herself. Noting this as odd, I fed the rest of the mares while planning to check Ruby after. As the rest were munching their grain, I looked down and noticed for the first time the blood on the ground, large pools of blood. Suddenly much more alarmed, I grabbed a halter and headed her way. Arriving at her side, I saw a large puncture wound high on her left flank just in front of her hip. Instantly I called the vet and Karen, and then went about looking after Ruby.



Heather Palmer, a summer experience student from the University of Delaware takes a ride with Ruby.

After what seemed like an eternity (which it always does when a horse is sick or injured!) the vet arrived and determined that not only had Ruby lost large amounts of blood, she had also broken off the wing of the ilium (pelvis). However, there was no foreign body in the wound to indicate how she managed to do this in what we thought was an otherwise benign pasture. As well, while the wound was large and deep, it did not penetrate fully into her gut; had her intestines been exposed or damaged, we would have known to euthanize her right away. Ruby was sewn back up, started on pain management medication, antibiotics and had several liters of fluids to help replace what she'd lost. Miner Institute had a horse donated several years prior that had a healed broken or "dropped hip," so we



The wing of the ilium, which Ruby broke off in her accident.

See **RUBY** Continued on Page 4

EQUIDAY: EQUINE CONFERENCE AT MINER INSTITUTE

EquiDay 2010 at Miner Institute is a daylong symposium on horse topics and a mini-expo to launch the spring season in the North Country. This year it will be held Saturday, March 20. The doors will open at 9 a.m. for FREE registration and refreshments. The speaker program will start at 10 a.m. and continue until 3:30, when a door prize will be drawn. Lunch is available for purchase to benefit a local 4H club.

Horse training is a huge topic that is always of great interest, but the best place to start is with a discussion by Dr. Stephen Mackenzie, an equine studies professor at SUNY Cobleskill, on *How Horses Learn*. The author of the book *Fundamentals of Free Lungeing: An Introduction to Tackless Training*, Dr. Mackenzie will take some of the mystery out of the horse's learning process to help us clarify our role as trainer.

Dr. Betsy Greene, Vermont's Extension Equine Specialist, was recently presented with the eXtension's "Individual Achievement Award" at their national conference. An online resource, eXtension, pronounced "e" extension, is a partnership of 74 universities which provides objective, research-based information and learning opportunities. Professional educators with expertise in specific areas join together to form a community of practice, providing educational resources to the public. Dr. Greene will walk us through her community of practice, *HorseQuest*, which provides reliable and up-to-date information in equine science and management.

Spring brings to mind visions of leggy new foals running through the pasture, so full of promise! But what does it take to get there? What questions should you ask yourself before signing that stallion service con-

When: Saturday,
March 20

Where: Miner
Center Auditorium,
Miner Institute, 586
Ridge Road,
Chazy, NY

Cost: FREE!

Discussions topics
include:

- Breeding
- Managing senior horses
- How horses learn

EQUIDAY 2010



tract or bringing your mare to the stallion? Katie Ballard, Miner Institute's Director of Research, will talk about breeding considerations for mare owners.

The other end of the life spectrum is the senior horse. The life expectancy of a horse has increased dramatically over the years and with that has come the need for better understanding of how to care for our golden-aged friends. Karen Lassell, Equine Manager at Miner Institute, will share some key points in managing the older horse and have many anecdotes from the senior equine population at the farm.

Adirondack Tack of Plattsburgh, NY will put on a fashion show and describe the outfits for various disciplines. A good time to find out the latest in what's hot, what's NOT, or simply what's comfortable!

No matter the weather (EquiDay is famous for snowstorms), the show will go on. EquiDay is held in the Miner Center building of Miner Institute on Rte. 191, just west of exit 41 on I-87. For more information, visit the website: www.whminer.org, or contact Karen Lassell at 518-846-7121, ext. 120 or email lassell@whminer.com.

LAMENESS & PODIATRY ISSUES IN THE PERFORMANCE HORSE

Presented By: Vermont Farriers Association
Speaker: Dr. Tracy Turner, DVM, MS, DACVS
When: Saturday, March 13 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Where: Bristol Rescue Squad Building, 45 Monkton Road, Bristol, VT

Dr Turner is the world's leading author and researcher on the subject of navicular syndrome and heel pain in horses. Those papers have explained how it is different from or may be confused with more generalized pain and discomfort in the heel area, and is instrumental in helping vets and farriers together around the world try new procedures for chronically lame horses, avoiding a lifetime sentence of unsoundness. He feels that lameness problems continue to be the most common cause of performance issues in our equine athletes. Dr Turner utilizes a number of different diagnostic techniques and treatments to determine the best treatment plan to return the individual equine back to its desired occupation. This includes involving the horse's vet, the farrier, and perhaps referral vet care. Dr Turner is currently in private practice at Anoka Equine Veterinary Services, a leading equine referral center in the upper Midwest where his specialty is lameness, navicular disease orthopedics, podiatry and back issues. Light lunch included in fee (before March 8: VtFA members \$50, non-members \$55; after March 9: VtFA members \$60, non-members \$65). Annual Meeting and election of officers will follow the clinic. This clinic is open to everyone. For questions or further information, please contact Diane Saunders at 802-453-3750 or email dlsqrths@gmavt.net.

EQUINE REPRODUCTION WORKSHOP: APRIL 9 & 10, 2010

The UVM Morgan Horse Farm in Weybridge, Vermont, and the William H. Miner Agricultural Research Institute of Chazy, New York will again host the annual Equine Reproduction Workshop, beginning the afternoon of Friday, April 9 and continuing for a full day Saturday, April 10. The workshop will take place in Weybridge at the UVM Morgan Horse Farm. Whether you're in the breeding business and are looking for updates and a refresher course or a mare owner that's considering breeding in the future, this workshop is a great resource. Small group size combined with decades of combined experience from the leaders of the event promises that everyone comes away with exactly what they were hoping for and more.

Anatomy and physiology of mares and stallions will open the discussions. Other topics for the mare will include manipulating the mare's cycle, use of ultrasound and other diagnostics, artificial insemination, embryo transfer and managing the breeding program. For the stallion, topics include semen collection, evaluation, and handling for on-farm A.I., cooled-transport and frozen semen. The staff of the UVM Morgan Horse Farm, Miner Institute and veterinarians will guide workshop participants through hands-on participation and demonstrations of ultrasound, teasing procedures, semen collection and processing, artificial insemination and frozen semen handling. The important step of training the inexperienced stallion to the breeding phantom is also demonstrated. The registration fee of \$250 includes workshop materials and meals. Spaces are limited to 25 participants. For more information, call the UVM Morgan Horse Farm at (802) 388-2011, Monday through Friday.

19TH ANNUAL SARATOGA HORSE SYMPOSIUM

When: April 10 & 11, 2010
Where: 4H Training Center, Middleline Road, Ballston Spa, NY
Admission: \$15/Person Per Day; \$7.50 for 4H Members
Doors Open at 8:30 a.m.

Confirmed Speakers:

- ◆ Sharon Camarillo, 4 Time National Rodeo Finalist & Cowgirl Hall of Fame Inductee
- ◆ Dr. Steven Sedrish, Upstate Equine Medical Center
- ◆ Elizabeth Marks, Pasture Management

- ◆ Dr. Bill Barnes, Saratoga Equine Veterinary Services
- ◆ Dru Malavese, NYS Horse Council – Helmet Fitting and Safety
- ◆ Holly Mason, USDF Medalist, dressage trainer and author

Volunteer Opportunities & Vendor Spaces are available.

To pre-register, contact Sharon T. LaPier at (518) 885-8995 or email stl32@cornell.edu for more information.

RUBY: Continued from Page 1

knew this too wasn't an instant reason to put her down. Once she appeared to be in relatively stable condition and even starting to pick at some hay, Karen and I headed for the pasture to try and determine the cause of this odd wound.

Walking the entirety of your horse pastures is something that should be done on a regular basis year-round. Be on the lookout for sharp, protruding objects such as metal sticking out of the ground, fence or wire twisted out of shape, broken off tree branches, etc. These are all things curious horses can easily end up injuring themselves on. Also, be looking for holes that a horse could step in and twist a limb. Lastly, be aware of what plants are in your pasture or just outside the fence line, and if there is anything that could be potentially poisonous.

Horses have large amounts of time to get in trouble while in a pasture, particularly in the winter. To help keep them from pure boredom when there is no grass for grazing, feed average quality hay at least twice a day so they spend less time scavenging for odd things to eat. The purpose of the hay being average quality is so that the horses may eat more of it without taking in too many calories. Not only will this keep the horses occupied, it will also provide the necessary roughage to help them maintain body heat through fermentation in the hind-gut during the cold of winter.



Cedar tree in the horse pasture that likely caused Ruby's injury.

As Karen and I walked the pasture, we became increasingly baffled as to what could have caused Ruby's injury. Walking through the last set of trees we came upon our first, last, and only suspect- a completely branchless section of a cedar tree trunk that had fresh bark exposed and Ruby-colored hair caught in what appeared to be a cut into the tree at just the right height for her wound. Finding nothing else that looked even remotely suspicious, we concluded the only semi-probable theory was that Ruby was running through this tight set of trees (probably chasing the other mares- she reminded them often that she was the boss!) and cut the corner a little too tight, slamming her hip into the tree. This blunt-force trauma was strong enough to break her hip and create the resulting hole in her side.

Unfortunately after two long days of fighting hard, Ruby's strong will to live was overcome by the severity of her injury and she was humanely euthanized on Wednesday morning. Ultimately, horses are still large animals and capable of getting into all sorts of trouble despite our best efforts. The most we can do is keep a watchful eye out for potential threats and persevere to strike a balance between such overprotection that we never let them out of a padded stall and letting them just be horses.

— *Carrie Ostrowski, Equine Management Intern*
Ostrowski@whminer.com



HORSE BARN RENOVATION

The north end of the horse barn has been a warm place for the maintenance crew to work during the last few weeks while finishing renovations. The old barn wall siding was removed to replace some studs that had been suffering from rot around the windows. The new wall is a tongue and groove rough lumber that's been stained to match the work that was done a few years ago. The breeding area of the barn has just about completed its face-lift. Next project: interlocking rubber mats to cover the whole barn floor... Stay tuned!

ACQUIRED FLEXURAL DEFORMITIES: ODIN REVISITED

Back in the fall, I described our colt Odin's journey with flexural deformities. His heels were much closer to the ground as a reward for our intensive management intervention of stall rest, slowing rapid growth through restricted nutrition and lots and LOTS of leg wrapping for support, but they still didn't touch. At press time, he was just about to head off to surgery to have his check ligaments cut to finish fixing the problem. Now, we continue Odin's story...

What a champ our little guy was! He rode over to the clinic in Milton, VT like a pro, taking in the beautiful scenery offered up on our ferry ride across Lake Champlain. He checked into his stall and was settling in nicely when we met with the veterinarian for a pre-operative consultation. After going over all the ins and outs of what would happen, what sort of recovery we could expect and so forth, we pulled Odin out of the stall for one more look at him standing on the cement floor. "Hmmmmmmm," said Dr. Bill Valentino. (Not something one usually likes to hear when the vet's looking at your horse!) "Now I'm thinking that he's improved enough in the two weeks since we'd last seen him that maybe, just maybe, he doesn't need surgery after all."

The clinic called in our farrier, Steve Hazen, who happens to live only a few miles from the vet clinic to come in the following morning for a multi-vet and farrier workup on Odin. Declared by the staff to us as "sweetest baby ever,"



Odin, Equine Intern Carrie Ostrowski, Maya, and Equine Manager Karen Lassell.



ABOVE: Odin's feet on Feb. 9 — due for a trim, but his heels touch the ground!

BELOW: Maya's left foot on Feb. 9, three months post-op and coming along nicely.



Odin was very cooperative to get his feet trimmed and get looked at extra closely by lots of extra eyes. Verdict: No surgery!

So, Odin had himself a very productive, non-invasive field trip to Vermont. We returned to Miner with instructions for starting to add more and more hand walking for several more weeks before starting small-space turnout. Maya, Odin's older filly-foal companion, was a different story.

Maya did end up having her left front foot only showing a flexural deformity. Her case was obviously a surgical one, so a few days after Odin left VLAC, Maya checked in for check ligament surgery. The post-operative care was very important, but not difficult. She was on anti-inflammatories plus ulcer preventative medication as well as antibiotics for several days. The leg needed to be wrapped well to support the limb as well as to keep the incisions, which were tiny, covered and clean. She then has been lock-step with Odin in terms of hand walking and turnout. Thank goodness for our Pony Barn, our small indoor arena has been a savior during this frozen winter of open ground! Both foals get trimmed every four weeks to stay on top of their growth and hoof balance and we are planning a new feeding plan for the mares and foals in 2010!

— Karen Lassell,
lassell@whminer.com

TRAINING MYTHUNDERSTANDINGS: HORSE-LOGICAL COMMUNICATION STARTS WITH GROOMING

A lot of amateur trainers MythUnderstand what the training process is all about. They think that training involves dominating a horse, showing him who's boss. They approach training as though it were a battle in which one party wins and the other loses.

Good training is not about confrontation. It's about building a horse-logical communication system. As trainer, you do your talking as a non-hunting predator just walking through the herd or in the role of lead mare in your little herd of two. But you don't ignore the horse's side of the conversation.

To understand the horse's side of the conversation means learning horse-speak--how horses say things to one another. Then you use that knowledge to say things back to the horse for your own purposes. You want to communicate to the horse that you like it, that you're glad it's there, that you like to be around it. You're not going to just grab the horse and beat it into submission. In terms of horse-speak, grooming can be a powerful influence you can use to gain control and trust.

Wild horse survival requires strong herd instinct. Mutual grooming expresses camaraderie among horses and helps wild ones bond into a herd. Horses love to be groomed. Use this to your advantage to make friends with a horse when you first start working with it and to study how your horse communicates things to you.

For example, if the horse is totally relaxed and looking around and sometimes looking back at you then you got some good quality time going on. Pay attention as you groom the horse to see where it's sensitive areas are and where it really enjoys a good scratching. Horses often signal their pleasure by screwing up their upper lip or by arching or stretching their neck when you hit an itchy spot. If the horse pins its ears, swishes its tail, or threatens a kick, it's saying "back off." There are horses with very thin skin who dislike coarse brushes but if you groom them properly without sudden moves using soft brushes and a degree of pressure that agrees with them, there should be no problem.

When you are grooming, the horse will naturally want to return the favor because that's what it would do if you were another horse. If the horse starts chewing on you, do NOT slap it. If a horse tries to chew on you, you should have seen it coming if you were paying total attention to your horse. Grooming is not just moving a brush with your hand while you daydream about tomorrow. You should be thinking about now, about this horse. So if the horse wants to groom you in return, interrupt it unobtrusively. If the head starts around, and you've been paying attention and have a plan, you'll just put hand up near the neck to stop the head turning without making a big sudden attack on the horse. You interrupt the undesirable behavior without changing the horse's attitude, excitement level, or interpretation of what's going on.

The safe place by any horse is beside the front legs. If you are standing beside the front legs and have some way to control the head, you won't get kicked, bit, or trampled on if everything turns into a can of worms. So you start grooming where it is safe--at the shoul-

ders--and you just keep working both directions. Take your time and keep working slowly to the back and find all the places. Keep making your safe bubble bigger and bigger. And by the time you and the horse speak the same language, the entire horse will be available to you and things will rarely if ever fall apart.

If, when you turned it loose, you saw that this horse did lots of kicking, you would never go to the back of the animal without taking the lead rope with you. That way, you can swing the horse's hind-quarters away from you by pulling the head toward you if the horse tries to kick.

Actions and body language are the only things that make up horse-speak. Save your vocalizing for later. If you use vocal commands at the horse, you will leave out the horse-speak, and if you leave out the horse-speak you will be very frustrated with why the horse won't listen to you. If you always apply a methodical and directional pressure to create a shape that the horse feels and understands, then put a word or signal along with that methodical pressure, the horse may notice it or may not. However, over a period of time, the horse will begin to notice it and pick it up as having a meaning that it feels at that moment. But it is unenforceable.

If you want to talk to yourself, or hum, or sing to yourself while grooming, however, it is fine. Anything that will keep your rhythm and relaxation will keep the horse's rhythm and relaxation.

There are times when you go into someone's barn and all the horses in there will be in a depressed state because they don't like where they are and they don't like what goes on and they don't like anybody. The horses won't make any fuss, they'll just be mopey and down. Horses that have a happy thing going on are going to communicate with you as soon as you go through. One may stick its head out and tell you that you have no business going by without coming over to visit. One might try to get you into a game of duck and bite. But they are all going to be active. They will be doing anything they want. If you go into a barn and the horses get up immediately, you know that the horses are definitely afraid of the people. When you watch people around horses you will find out very quickly whether or not they understand horse-speak and have the knack for "nice-ing" the horses into submission. That is the skill that a lot of people don't understand.

Really good training is boring to watch. When it starts getting exciting and looking like a rodeo then you know that somebody is out of control or scared or angry. Good training should have about the same activity level as paint drying.

— Ron Meredith, President, Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre

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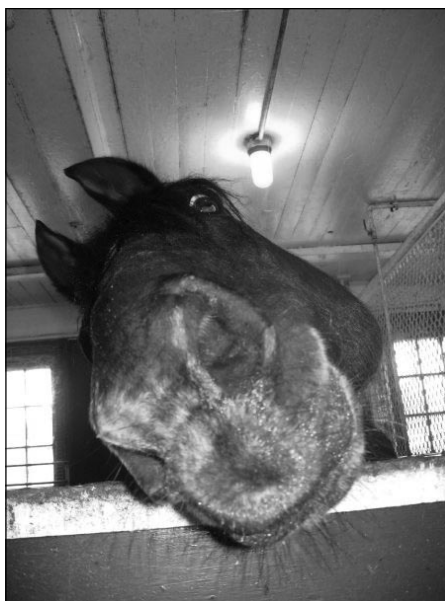
Instructor and trainer Ron Meredith has refined his "horse logical" methods for communicating with equines over 30 years as president of Meredith Manor International Equestrian Centre (800 679-2603; <http://www.meredithmanor.edu>), an ACCET-accredited equestrian educational institution.

HORSE HOOF ANATOMY LAB AT MINER INSTITUTE: APRIL 16 & 17, 2010

Allie Hayes of Horse Science in Boxford, MA will bring her expertise and models of equine legs and hooves for two separate events to be held this spring at the Miner Center building at the corner of Miner Farm Road and Ridge Road in Chazy, NY. Please contact Karen Lassell for more information at 518-846-7121, ext. 120 or lassell@whminer.com

Friday, April 16, 2010 will be a day-long seminar for farriers, hoof trimmers, and veterinarians. Allie will offer a combination of lecture and lab with hands-on time featuring models that she has prepared of actual equine limbs that have been cut at various angles to get a true view of what's going on in the foot. This will cover in-depth anatomy of the lower limb as well as some common pathologies, such as laminitis. The day will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 3 p.m., with lunch included. The registration fee is \$50, but if you register before April 10, the fee is discounted at \$40.

Saturday, April 17 will be a morning lecture and lab for horse owners and enthusiasts again with a combination of a slide show and hands-on with the models. The main topic of discussion will be hoof balance from the outside as well as the inside of the foot. The event



Rocky's smiling face is still missed in the horse barn.

will start at 9 a.m. and finish at noon. Morning refreshments are included in the registration fee of \$10.

A stallion that stood for many years at Miner, Tedwin Titlist or "Rocky," struggled for many years with one foot that was on a slow downhill slide. When the decision was made to put him down last spring, Rocky's owners generously allowed us to send his front legs to Allie to be turned into a great teaching tool. After months in the freeze dryer, the limbs have been cut in such a way as to allow a very detailed look at exactly what was going on in the foot and give us a view that even the best x-rays couldn't show us.



Horse hoof teaching tool which will be used at the April workshop.

Return this portion with payment.

Please make checks payable to: Miner Institute. Mail to: PO Box 90, Chazy, NY 12921

Name: _____ email: _____

Address: _____

Phone : _____

Please check the appropriate items:

April 16th Clinic before 4/10/2010 \$40

April 16th Clinic after 4/11/2010 \$50

April 17th Clinic \$10



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FEATURED MINER MORGAN: HD EAGLE BAY



“Scout” is as cute as can be and loaded with character! By Stonehelm Talisman and out of UVM Valkyrie, this 5 year old gelding’s training is well underway. He’s 14.2 hands, very solidly built and unmistakably Morgan! Scout walks, trots, and canters nicely under saddle and really enjoys the trails. While he’s perfectly comfortable with the English saddle, we think he’ll shine as a western pleasure mount. \$4000.

ABOVE AND LEFT: HD Eagle Bay

www.whminer.org

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