



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jan. 19
Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival
Empty Saddle Club

Feb. 21
PVPHA general meeting
Empty Saddle Club

Feb. 23-24
Wylene Wilson clinic
Contact: Kelly Yates
Ernie Howlett Park

Events listed here are not necessarily sponsored or endorsed by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Horsemen's Association. If you would like an event included, send the information to pvpha2010@gmail.com.

See 'The Horse' at the San Diego Museum of National History

by **ERIN RYAN**
RECORDING
SECRETARY

In Balboa Park, at the Museum of Natural History down in the basement, there currently is an exhibit called "The Horse." It is a walk-through where the participant starts at a beginning with the evolution of the horse, a subject that alone could fill many pages. It will be enough to know at this point that horses started off as a much smaller, multi-toed version of their modern form.



CONTRIBUTED

PVPHA Recording Secretary Erin Ryan poses next to the skeleton of an early horse.

Once out into the open, flight was the way to keep alive. Those horses with longer legs could run faster, living longer to pass on their genes to the next generation, eventually the horse became taller as a species. Their middle toe became bigger and eventually became the only toe for the modern horse, what is now referred to a hoof.

The following text was copied from the panels on display in the exhibit:

The sound is unmistakable: the thundering hooves of a running horse. Horses have been racing
See 'The Horse,' Page 4.

As grass evolved and started to spread over the Earth, horses decided to use all of this untapped energy.



DAVID PAUL OHMER / FLICKR

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NO PVPHA GENERAL MEETING UNTIL FEBRUARY

No January general meeting

by **NICOLE MOORADIAN**
DISPATCH EDITOR

Instead of hosting a January meeting, the Palos Verdes Peninsula Horsemen's Association invites its membership to attend the annual Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival on Jan. 19 at the Empty Saddle Club. See Page 3 for more details. U

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NEWS BRIEFS

Wylene Wilson to hold clinic

Extreme Mustang Makeover competitor Wylene Wilson will hold a clinic at Ernie Howlett Park in February.

The two-day clinic is scheduled for Feb. 23-24, from 9 a.m. until dark with a lunch break at around noon.

The cost is \$250 to participate both days; \$140 to participate one day; and \$25 per day to audit.

According to her website, Wilson aims to make riders more confident with their horses.

For more information or to reserve a space, contact Kelly Yates at 310-704-7226 or jerseyj2@cox.net.

Do you have something important or special to announce? Submit a news brief to the Dispatch! News briefs are generally about 100 words. To submit a news brief, email pvpha2010@gmail.com. U

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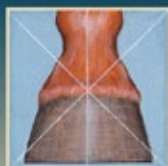
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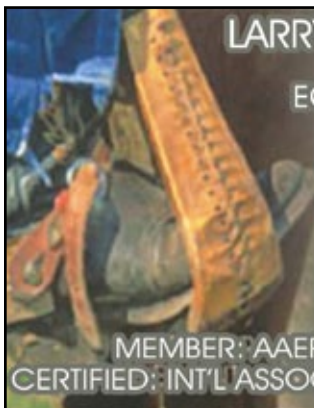
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: DON'T MISS POETRY, MUSIC FESTIVAL

by CHARLENE O'NEIL
PRESIDENT

Happy 2013! May your equines be all you hoped for and your trails safe and dry (soon, we hope).

We have our famous Annual Cowboy Poetry Festival on the third Saturday of January—the 19th. Pam Turner has graciously again agreed to the organizing and Patrick Bolan is our sound man. Many exciting participants are performing. A chili and cornbread dinner created by the PVPHA Board will be the precursor to the premier event. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m., followed by music and poetry at 7 p.m.

After that, get ready for February! Remember the movie *Wild Horse, Wild Ride*? Well, we'll be screening this film, which is about the Extreme Mustang Makeover challenge, at the Feb. 21 general meeting. Wylene Wilson, one of the participants, will conduct a clinic that Saturday and Sunday.

See you Jan. 19 at the Empty Saddle Club! As a reminder, the Club has requested that people leave their dogs at home. U

Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival



CONTRIBUTED

Left: Musicians perform at the 2011 Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival. Right: Erin Ryan serves brownies and ice cream to an attendee of the 2011 event.

Annual event celebrates sounds of the Old West

by PAM TURNER
SPECIAL TO THE DISPATCH

C'mon down to the Empty Saddle Club for an evening of classic entertainment, cowboy style on Jan. 19!

We've got poets, musicians, chili, cornbread and a whole load of fun! The chili feast starts at 6 p.m. to warm up your insides. At 7 p.m., warm up your outsides in the clubhouse as you listen to poetry, music, comedy and whatever else just happens to ride on in with our performers this year.

The event will feature the poems of longtime poets Wanda Smith and Janis Lukstein, while Kathy Stowe will entertain with her usual comedic musical stylings and poetry.

PVPHA president Charlene O'Neil and Bruce Harnishfeger will be sharing their latest poems, and Steve Deming and the California Cowboys will amaze and entertain.

The Crosstown Cowboys—nominees of the Academy of Western Artists—are returning to share their original and traditional western music. *That Old Prairie Moon*—the group's second album, released in January 2012—has received worldwide airplay and acclaim.

This is only part of our line-up of performers—you'll just have to join

us to see who else will be there to share their special poems or songs!

*The West is dead my friend
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And what they sow
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THE HORSE: San Diego exhibit examines history of the domesticated equine

Continued from Page 1.

across the landscape for more than 50 million years—much longer than our own species has existed. But once horses and humans encountered each other, our two species became powerfully linked.

Humans domesticated horses some 6,000 years ago, and over time, we have created more than 200 breeds, from the powerful Clydesdale to the graceful Arabian. As we have shaped horses to suit our needs on the battlefields, farms and elsewhere, these animals have shaped human history. They have also captured our imagination and hearts. Millions of people rely on horses as their spirited, dedicated, much adored companions.

How did the relationship between horses and people begin? No one knows precisely, but prehistoric evidence from Western Europe tells part of the story. Wild horses roamed the Ice Age landscape of Europe tens of thousands of years ago. By around 40,000 years ago, our own species began settling in the region as well.

In Ice Age Europe, people were predators and horses were prey. Early hunting weapons and horse remains found in the area show that long before humans rode horses or used them as beast of burden, they hunted these animals for food. Ancient images carved in bone or painted deep inside caves suggest horses also played an important role in rituals of prehistoric people, as they would in many cultures for centuries to come.

The shadowy walls of Chauvet Cave in southern France are adorned with some of the world's oldest paintings, dating back some 33,000 years. In one underground chamber, horses, woolly rhinoceroses and wild cattle seem to stampede around a curve in the rock, as if fleeing a predator.

The four horses in that painting look almost alike, but

they actually show different behaviors. One has its ears flattened, a sign of aggression; another horse has its ears perked, as if calm and attentive. A scene like this is unusual in a real herd, where horses take cues from each other and act as a group. Perhaps the artist meant to show the moods of a single horse at different moments in time.

Today, very few horses are found in the wild—the great majority live among people. We feed and shelter horses, put them to work and control their breeding. Horses have been domesticated for a very long time—perhaps more than 5,000 years.

Prehistoric remains show that at the end of the Ice Age some 10,000 years ago, wild horses died out in the Americas and dwindled in Western Europe for reasons that are not clear. But they thrived on the slopes of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, where short grasses and shrubs grow on vast, dry stretches of land. Most scholars believe it was here that people domesticated the horse, forming a bond that has endured to the present day.

There is a model of a village in northern Kazakhstan that supported as many as 200 people, dating approximately 5,000 years ago. More than 50 houses stood there, and fenced areas may have served as corrals. The people who lived here grew no crops. Ninety percent of the bones they left behind are horse bones, showing they mainly ate horse meat. A large settlement like this would have been difficult to feed on hunting alone. Archaeologists think it likely that the people of this village raised domestic horses for food.

What is the difference between “breaking” versus “gentling?” One way to train horses is through brute force and intimidation; however, some trainers instead appeal to a horse's natural instinct to follow a leader. For example, instead of beating a horse until it is afraid to disobey, a trainer might chase it away. Horses don't like being isolated from the herd, so the animal returns, seeking permission to end its banishment. From then on it accepts the human trainer as head leader and follows instructions.

An example of training is illustrated with the Leaping Lipizzaners. Lipizzaner horses perform incredible acrobatic displays, but even these highly stylized movements are based on instinctive behavior. Trainers start with a movement like kicking an attacking animal and gradually train the horse to do it in a different way, until it resembles ballet.

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Grooming: Horses spend a lot of time scratching each other's back with their teeth. This grooming strengthens social bonds, reduces tension and increases trust. Similar grooming can help a human gain a horse's trust as well. Research shows that brushing the neck and back can lower a horse's heart rate by 11-14 percent—a sign of relaxation.

Family Ties: The need to avoid being alone is a powerful instinct for horses. In the wild, horses evolved in constant danger from predators such as wolves and mountain lions. They seek safety in numbers by living in herds. Young horses, or foals, always travel with their mothers in a family group guarded by a male horse, the lead stallion. Even young males, who must fight other stallions for the right to lead a family, often band together with other bachelor stallions.

Buddy System: Horses often pair off and form close partnerships with other members of their herd. But if they can't find a horse to partner with, they sometimes befriend another animal like a goat or house cat. This instinct also helps them bond with humans.

Follow the leader: Horses live in well-structured groups with clear followers and leaders. Without human training, horses will line up behind a lead mare according

to their rank, usually with a stallion guarding the rear.

Body Language: Dominance relationships are very important among horses. In fact, a faster horse will sometimes lose a race to a slower horse that expresses dominance through its body language. For people, the key to working with horses is to make it clear who is in charge. If you act unsure, the horse may ignore your commands.

Who's the Boss? Horses have a strong instinct to form groups in which some horses lead and others follow. A typical family group consists of one male, several females and their offspring. The male stallion fights off predators and rival stallions, but the leader of day-to-day activities is usually a female. This lead mare decides where the group should go and punishes misbehavior. Every horse knows whether it is dominant or submissive to every other horse. If a new horse joins the group, it quickly sorts out where it stands.

Under Control: By controlling the movement of horses with ropes and fences, humans can establish their dominance. Eventually, the horse will submit to being led around by a thin rope or no rope at all, even though the horse is the stronger animal. One reason this works is

Continued on the next page.

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Continued from the previous page.

that horses instinctively submit to a more dominant individuals that controls their movements.

Warfare: For more than 3,000 years, a warrior on horseback or horse-drawn chariot was the ultimate weapon. Time after time, from Asia to Europe to the Americas, the use of horses in war has changed the balance of power between civilizations. When people with horses clashed with those without, horses provided a huge advantage. When both sides had horses, battles relied on the strength and strategy of the mounted horsemen, or cavalry. Horses continued to define military tactics well into the 1900s, until they finally became outmoded by machine guns, tanks, airplanes and other modern weapons.

Riding into Battle: Horses were probably first used to pull chariots in battle starting around 1500 BC, but it wasn't until 900 BC that warriors themselves commonly fought on horseback. Among the first mounted archers and fighters were the Scythians, a group of nomadic Asian warriors who often raided the ancient Greeks.

For Greeks who had never before seen a person on horseback, the first sight of these riders racing toward them while firing volleys of arrows must have been truly terrifying. Some modern scholars wonder if early sightings of strangers on horseback might have inspired the Greek myths about legendary half-man, half-horse beings called centaurs.

Women Warriors: Fighting on foot against horses couldn't have been easy. The Greek soldier shown on an ancient Greek vase from 450 BC struggles against an Amazon warrior on horseback. Stories of these legend-

ary women warriors might have been inspired by Scythian raiders, who frequently attacked the Greeks on horseback. Recent archaeological discoveries indicate that some Scythian warriors were indeed female. As a side note, urns depict warriors wearing pants with Persian patterns on them. Historically, trousers were invented for riding horses and were then adapted to other purposes.

The Trojan Horse: According to ancient Greek myth, soldiers from Greece laid siege to the city of Troy for 10 years, but could not conquer it. Finally, the Greeks pretended to give up. They departed, leaving behind a large wooden horse as a gift. The Trojans brought the horse inside their city walls and celebrated victory. That night, however, Greek soldiers hidden inside the giant horse crept out and unlocked the gates. The rest of the Greek army rushed in and destroyed the entire city.

The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$17 for adults. On the fourth floor there is a display on horse photography along with a continuously playing movie on herd behavior. For those non-horse interested family members that may be dragged along, the building holds many allures! There is a chocolate exhibit in the same building that ends in a shop selling many varieties of chocolate. It is always best to call before going to make sure what you want to see is still there. The museum's number is 619-232-3821.

Next month: Read more about horses' role in war and in the Americas. **U**

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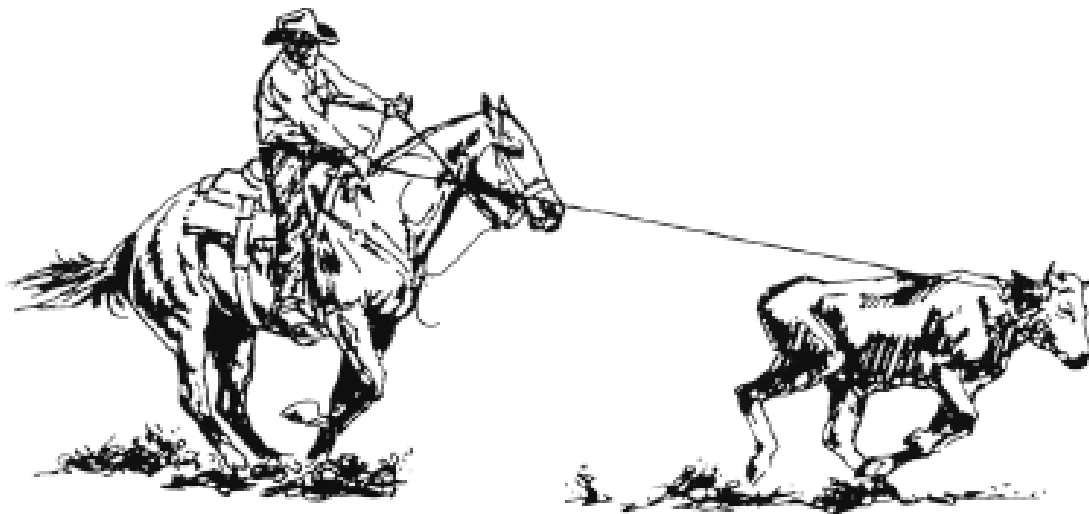
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Dispatch edited by Nicole Mooradian.

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