

# *The Sound Advocate*



**Volume 3, Issue 1, 2020**

# Sound Advocate

Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.

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## FOSH Mission Statement

To promote all "sound," naturally gaited horses, with a specific emphasis on Tennessee Walking Horses. (In this context, sound means not "sored".)

Importance is placed on education in regards to the humane care for the emotional, mental and physical wellbeing, training, and treatment of all gaited horses.

FOSH will only support flat shod or barefoot horses and will never endorse any event that uses stacks and/or chains as action devices, or any mechanical, chemical, or artificial means to modify the natural gaits of the horse.

To these ends, FOSH focuses on three areas for gaited horses:

- 1) educating people about sound horse training principles;
- 2) supporting sound shows, events and activities;
- 3) working to end soring.

*FOSH is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. Your donation to support the FOSH mission is needed to advance the goals set forth by FOSH in conjunction with its formal mission statement.*



## Publication Guidelines

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FOSH accepts unsolicited submissions, but reserves the right to edit any and all submissions for content, style and space constraints. FOSH further reserves the right to refuse advertising for any reason.

At no time shall the publisher's liability exceed the total cost of the revenue from advertising in the issue involved in any dispute.

All show suspensions and show results are printed as they are received from the reporting agencies. FOSH does not guarantee their accuracy.

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Readers are urged and cautioned to use due diligence and to thoroughly research, including asking for references, before following through with any transaction.

FOSH does not endorse any trainer, educator, clinician, style of natural training, tack, or horse equipment to the exclusion or preference of any other. Each horse is an individual and may respond differently to particular methods.

Articles published by FOSH reflect the views and opinions of the writers and do not reflect, necessarily, those of FOSH.

## Publication Information

**Subscribers:** The Sound Advocate is a benefit of membership. To ensure that you receive your issues, be sure that your e-mail address is current. To change an e-mail address, contact dunhamanita@gmail.com.

**Submission of Articles, Calendar Dates, News and Photos:** Send to tbippen1957@yahoo.com. Photos may not be embedded in text and must be submitted as jpeg format, minimum of 300 dpi. The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the preceding month when the issue is to be released. Submissions will not be accepted after the deadline, but may be carried over to another issue. Submissions will not be returned to the submitter.

## Member's Advertising Rates

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Ads will be accepted in pdf, tif or jpeg formats. Text and photos must be e-mailed separately by the 10th of the month when the issue is released. Photos must be 300 dpi. Camera-ready ads are emailed at 300 dpi. Materials should be emailed to editor@fosh.info.

All advertisements must be paid in advance by check, money order, or credit card. Payments should be made out to FOSH and mailed to:

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St. Louis, MO 63117

More FOSH information can be found online. Find us at [www.fosh.info](http://www.fosh.info).

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter.



**On the cover:** Just because it's winter doesn't mean the riding has to stop. Here Bill Roy and Woodhills TS Trooper enjoy a snowy ride. Photo by Sue Roy.

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# From the President...



Hello FOSH Friends,

Welcome to your best gaited horse resource for the 2020s! We have worked hard these past few months to revamp *The Sound Advocate*, and we hope you like it. Not only are we moving to a quarterly publication, we are also publishing in the online magazine format available with Issuu. We hope you enjoy turning the pages as we share the latest news. For those that do not care for the turning page format, a pdf will still be available on the FOSH website.

This year started with the sad news that our dear friend and former DQP Coordinator, Nya Bates, passed in January. The outpouring of grief and appreciation for her kindness and talents at developing riders and horses was nationwide. We know you appreciated her dedicated and cheerful approach when inspecting horses at FOSH shows and getting to know her talented way with horses. Nya will be missed by all of us.

I also want to introduce our new Editor, Stephanie Ruff. She shares her background and editorial experience on page 6. When we received Stephanie's resume, we were impressed. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Stephanie to discuss or submit an article or to share photos of you and your gaited horses.

This is also the issue where we announce the winners of our 2019 competitions: Virtual Dressage, Distance Riding, Working Equitation and the FOSH Annual Gaited Horse Dressage show in October. We will provide follow up articles about their great accomplishments throughout the year as you consider trying a new discipline with your trusty steed.

We also have an update on the PAST Act in this issue, and we hope you check out the nonsponsoring Senators on page 8. Please reach out and ask your Senator to co-sponsor S. 1007 if he or she is on the list. Even better, let us know if you want pre-addressed, stamped postcards, and we will provide those to you without charge. We ask that you be willing to distribute at least 25 postcards to all your friends and relatives for sending to your Senator(s). Just send me an email: [tbippen1957@yahoo.com](mailto:tbippen1957@yahoo.com).

As always, we welcome your stories, articles, questions and photos of you enjoying your time with your gaited horse. Spring is around the corner so keep your cell phone camera at the ready for those memorable and interesting times with your horse. And, of course, always wear your helmet!

*For the Horse,*

*Teresa*

*Teresa Bippen  
FOSH President  
[Tbippen1957@yahoo.com](mailto:Tbippen1957@yahoo.com)*

From the Editor...

# Please Allow Me to Introduce Myself



Hello and welcome to the first quarterly issue of *The Sound Advocate*. First off, my name is Stephanie Ruff, and I'm the new editor. I'm pleased to be working with FOSH to bring you news from them and educational pieces from around the horse world. This is your publication, and I'm open to ideas and suggestions you have for stories or topics. Feel free to email me at [editor@fosh.info](mailto:editor@fosh.info).

If you allow me a moment, I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself and my background.

I've been in the equine industry in one way or another for upwards

of 30 years. I've lived in various parts of the country and been involved in many different breeds and disciplines. Currently I live in the small town of Homosassa, Fla. (on the west coast) and ride dressage (and do a lot of trail riding) on my Half-Arabian and purebred Arabian. I am also the managing editor of *Arabian Horse Life*, the membership magazine of the Arabian Horse Association.

Beyond that, I have written hundreds of articles for a wide variety of magazines. I also am the author of two children's books - *Goats With Coats* and *Antics in the Attic* - under my previously married name of Corum.

I admit I am no expert in gaited horses, although I do have experience with them from my college days at the University of Kentucky. I look forward to getting reacquainted with them, as well as getting to know the members of FOSH.

*Regards,*

*Stephanie*

*Stephanie J. Ruff*  
*Editor*  
*[editor@fosh.info](mailto:editor@fosh.info)*

# Advocacy Update



## Your Help Needed on the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act

We are on a positive path for passage of the PAST Act in the Senate in 2020. As of early January, we reached a majority of Senators (52) cosponsoring the PAST Act. We now have Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Brian Schatz (D-HI) on board.

How can you help? If you reside in a state with Senators that have not committed to the PAST Act (see next page) it's easy to contact them. Call (202) 224-3121 and ask for your Senator's office. You will not be speaking with your Senator, but a legislative aide will take your message. You can use the following dialogue:

"I am a constituent and am asking Senator 'XXXXX' to cosponsor the PAST Act, which is a bipartisan bill that is very important to me. It is S. 1007, and it passed the House with an overwhelming majority in 2019.

The Bill will close the loopholes in the Horse Protection Act and stop the soring of Tennessee Walking Horses."

Don't hesitate to follow up with a letter to your Senator, and Senators also have online forms that you can complete with your message.

What else can you do? If you are willing to take another step, a published Letter to the Editor in your local newspaper will help. Senate staffers keep a close eye whenever their bosses' names appear in their state newspapers. Your published letter in a newspaper will put other animal lovers on notice and let your Senator know this is a serious issue for you. If you are unsure about writing a letter, please reach out to Teresa Bippen at [tbippen1957@yahoo.com](mailto:tbippen1957@yahoo.com), and she will assist you with this initiative.

Thank you for your help, and remember THE PAST ACT IN 2020!

*As of the end of January, the following Senators have not committed to the PAST Act. If you reside in one of these states, please consider contacting him/her.*

## **ALABAMA**

Shelby, Richard C. [R-AL]

## **ALASKA**

Murkowski, Lisa [R-AK]  
Sullivan, Dan [R-AK]

## **ARKANSAS**

Boozman, John [R-AR]  
Cotton, Tom [R-AR]

## **COLORADO**

Gardner, Cory [R-CO]

## **FLORIDA**

Rubio, Marco [R-FL]  
Scott, Rick [R-FL]

## **GEORGIA**

Isakson, Johnny [R-GA]  
Perdue, David [R-GA]

## **IDAHO**

Risch, James E. [R-ID]

## **INDIANA**

Braun, Mike [R-IN]  
Young, Todd [R-IN]

## **IOWA**

Ernst, Joni [R-IA]  
Grassley, Chuck [R-IA]

## **KANSAS**

Roberts, Pat [R-KS]

## **KENTUCKY**

McConnell, Mitch [R-KY]  
Paul, Rand [R-KY]

## **LOUISIANA**

Cassidy, Bill [R-LA]

## **MISSISSIPPI**

Hyde-Smith, Cindy [R-MS]  
Wicker, Roger [R-MS]

## **MISSOURI**

Blunt, Roy [R-MO]  
Hawley, Josh [R-MO]

## **MONTANA**

Tester, Jon [D-MT]

## **NEBRASKA**

Fischer, Deb [R-NE]  
Sasse, Ben [R-NE]

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

Burr, Richard [R-NC]  
Tillis, Thom [R-NC]

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

Cramer, Kevin [R-ND]  
Hoeven, John [R-ND]

## **OHIO**

Portman, Rob [R-OH]

## **OKLAHOMA**

Inhofe, James M. [R-OK]  
Lankford, James [R-OK]

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

Graham, Lindsey [R-SC]  
Scott, Tim [R-SC]

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

Rounds, Mike [R-SD]  
Thune, John [R-SD]

## **TENNESSEE**

Alexander, Lamar [R-TN]  
Blackburn, Marsha [R-TN]

## **TEXAS**

Cornyn, John [R-TX]  
Cruz, Ted [R-TX]

## **UTAH**

Lee, Mike [R-UT]  
Romney, Mitt [R-UT]

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

Capito, Shelley Moore [R-WV]  
Manchin, Joe, [D-WV]

## **WISCONSIN**

Johnson, Ron [R-WI]

## **WYOMING**

Barrasso, John [R-WY]  
Enzi, Michael B. [R-WY]



# Equus Film Festival

FOSH was proud to have an exhibit at the annual Equus Film Festival in Lexington, Ky. in December. In addition to the exhibit table to provide information on sound, gaited horses and the cruelty of soring, it also sponsored the appearance of Carl Bledsoe as a speaker. Carl was a former big lick trainer and has provided information to members of Congress about the world of big lick abuse. Carl is now a sound horse trainer in northern Georgia. In addition to Carl, FOSH supporter and volunteer, Jo Ellen Hayden also was a panel speaker. Jo Ellen has become a PAST Act expert and has visited the D.C. offices of numerous Senators to urge them to cosponsor the PAST Act. Jo Ellen, a Kentucky resident, will be visiting D.C. again to continue her campaign in the Senate to stop soring.



***Clockwise from top left: Jo Ellen Hayden and Carl Bledsoe spoke on the FOSH panel to educate on soring and the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST Act); Tammy and Carl Bledsoe man the FOSH exhibit table; Candace Wade (Moderator), Hannah Tuxell and Jo Ellen Hayden on a panel to discuss the PAST Act.***

# Horse Soring

## Fact Sheet

“Soring” is the use of painful training techniques to create a flashy unnatural gait in horses. Tactics include applying caustic agents (diesel fuel, hand cleaner, etc.) to the front legs and then wrapping the legs overnight. The flesh is sore when the wraps come off, and ankle chains are used to bang on this area during training. Also used are injections of irritants above the hoof, tacks under the band holding a huge weighted (“stacked” or “padded”) shoe in place, and trimming the hoof into the quick and/or green nailing.

*These training methods cause the horse to attempt to avoid the pain by picking up his front feet faster and higher and shifting his weight back onto his hind legs in a crouching stance.*

***This grotesque gait is called the Big Lick.***



### WHO IS DOING THIS—ISN'T IT ILLEGAL?

Soring was made illegal in 1970 by the Horse Protection Act, but the shoes and chains are not illegal—**YET**. Soring itself still goes on. Penalties are nearly non-existent, and enforcement is so lax that it persists in about 200 trainers impacting over 10,000 horses. Inspectors are directly employed by show managers, creating a clear conflict of interest. Dye and short-acting topical anesthetic creams are used to mask pain and scarring during inspections. The overwhelming majority of sored horses are Tennessee Walking Horses, but two other breeds, the Racking Horse and the Spotted Saddle Horse, are also impacted.



*Shoes, stacks, bands and chains on a Big Lick Tennessee Walking Horse. The horse's hair has been dyed to try to hide the scars from soring chemicals.*

### WHAT IS BEING DONE?

After years of education and lobbying by animal welfare groups, the bipartisan **Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) legislation was passed in July 2019 with an overwhelming majority in the U.S. House of Representatives.** The PAST Act would finally eradicate soring by eliminating the use of large stacked shoes and ankle chains in the show ring and by eliminating the industry's self-policing scheme, replacing it with licensed USDA inspectors. It would also increase penalties for those who break the law. **U.S. Senate leadership refuses to bring it to the floor for a vote, despite half of the Senate having signed on as cosponsors.** With many other senators (including previous cosponsors) expected to support the bill, there are clearly enough votes for passage. But the bill cannot progress unless Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) brings it to the Senate floor for a vote.

### HOW WOULD THE PAST ACT PREVENT SORING IF NOTHING ELSE HAS?

The PAST Act would close loopholes in the Horse Protection Act. Because the U.S. Department of Agriculture has allowed the industry to police

itself, those who hurt horses face minimal repercussions, get deferred disqualifications, and are typically allowed to continue carrying out the abuses that got them disqualified in the first place. PAST would replace the self-policing system with third party, independent inspectors who are trained, licensed and assigned by the USDA. The bill would also ban the devices integral to soring (the stacks and chains) and would strengthen penalties for soring.



Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.

## WHY IS SENATOR MCCONNELL AGAINST PAST?

Sen. McConnell is a long-time supporter of the Big Lick industry. He and Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) are co-sponsoring competing legislation introduced by Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and supported by those engaged in horse soring, which would allow the industry to continue policing itself with no accountability. This sham alternative bill would actually make the problem worse by further weakening the USDA's already limited authority and handing off more power to the perpetrators. It would do nothing to end the use of chains, heavy stacked shoes and other soring devices, or to establish meaningful penalties. Sen. McConnell has not yet realized that supporting the Big Lick is bad politics.



*Open lesions and scarring are the results of soring.*

## WHAT GROUPS ENDORSE THE PAST ACT?

Every major veterinary, equine, animal welfare and law enforcement organization in the U.S. has endorsed this bill (AVMA, AAEP, American Horse Council, ASPCA, USEF, National Sheriffs Association, Humane Society Legislative Fund, Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, and over 100 more.) The PAST Act is the right answer.

## ARE ALL TENNESSEE WALKING HORSES SUBJECTED TO THIS AWFUL TORTURE?

Absolutely not. There are many owners and trainers that never use soring to enhance the performance of their horses. Known as "flat shod" horses, these animals have natural movement and are enjoyed by tens of thousands of riders across the country. In fact, the majority of Walking Horses are flat shod. It is only a small minority of trainers who resort to the shameful practice of soring and stacked shoes—they sometimes call them "padded" shoes to try to make them sound more like a therapeutic shoe than a torture device. The entire Tennessee Walking Horse community is brought down by the actions of a few bad actors.

## IS IT REALLY AS BAD AS PEOPLE SAY IT IS? GIVE ME OFFICIAL NUMBERS

The latest USDA statement, as reported in the Walking Horse Report published May 21, 2018, said that "the vast majority of Horse Industry Organizations (HIOs) that inspect padded horses did not detect any HPA noncompliance when USDA was not present at a show." USDA went on to say: "It is highly unlikely that exhibitors only present noncompliant horses for inspection when USDA is present at a horse show....USDA remain(s) very concerned about HIOs, especially those inspecting padded horses, whose rate of noncompliance is zero when USDA is not present..." Latest statistics for October 2017 to March 2018, reported in the same article, are: When USDA is not present, 3.48% fail inspection. When USDA is present, 8.17% fail, and many are not even presented for inspection (withdrawn from the show before being inspected). The reported numbers are also skewed because the totals include flat shod Tennessee Walking Horses, who are not sored but are inspected. This makes the percentage of sored horses look smaller than it is.

**Last published statistics when USDA itself did inspections at the 2015 championships ("the Celebration"):  
an appalling 40.28% of "padded" horses were disqualified.**

## HOW CAN I HELP?

If you live in Kentucky, contact Sens. McConnell and Paul and tell them their alternative bill is not what you want. You want the PAST Act, S. 1007. If you live anywhere else in the United States, look up your senators and urge them to cosponsor and work to pass the PAST Act. Let's make this the year soring ends, as Congress intended nearly a half century ago.

### About Friends Of Sound Horses (FOSH)

FOSH is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that welcomes owners of all gaited horses. We support the gaited horse in all equine disciplines, including dressage, distance competitions, English and Western pleasure, and many other styles of riding. FOSH offers judges training and licensing and sponsors numerous shows. FOSH is a national leader in promoting, supporting and protecting gaited horses. To that end, FOSH is known for its work to end soring of Tennessee Walking Horses through its activism, outreach, and 60 years archive of soring articles, [www.stopsoring.com](http://www.stopsoring.com).



Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.

# In Memoriam

## **FOSH Mourns Loss of Nya Bates**

*By Teresa Bippen*

*Sound gaited horse fans and FOSH supporters were saddened to hear of the passing of Nya Bates in January. Nya's vocal and tireless voice against the abuse of soring will be with us for many years. As a firsthand witness to soring at horse shows decades ago, Nya was a faithful supporter of FOSH for many years. She had an amazing memory for horses, their winnings and their owners which was a tremendous help to FOSH Board members and followers when attempting to undertake research for various anti-soring projects. When Bob Blackwell, the FOSH HIO Coordinator, passed away, she wholeheartedly jumped in and added her years of knowledge and experience to performing this very important task of inspecting horses for soundness at horse shows.*

*Although I could go on for pages about Nya's kindness and many talents, our former Board member, Desirai Schild, recently wrote a published article about Nya that says it best:*

(Reprinted with permission.)

This column is dedicated to Nya Bates, an Idaho horsewoman who changed the lives of people and

horses from California to Tennessee and from Florida to New England, as well as offering vital teachings to literally hundreds of horses and humans in the Gem State.



**Nya Bates (left) accepts the Sound Horse Warrior Award from Teresa Bippen.**

Nya lived near Kuna, but traveled all over the country giving clinics and private lessons for gaited horse lovers. She judged numerous shows and held countless clinics all over Southern Idaho as well as conducting trainings near her home, at the annual Idaho Horse Expo in Boise and all across the country.

She traveled internationally for Friends of Sound Horses, FOSH, and

helped lead the charge against the heinous practice of soring horses for the show ring. Meanwhile, she conducted very carefully orchestrated breeding and rescue programs that paired fabulous horses with their perfect people. Then, she was always available to answer any questions and freely offer advice. Money mattered little to her in comparison to assuring a happy horse-owner relationship.

She bred only the best bloodlines, but was no snob about any horse's lineage. A \$20,000 horse was treated the same as one saved from slaughter at the auction. After a few training sessions, few people could tell which came from where.

Nya stressed the importance of understanding the horse and..if unsure..giving the animal the benefit of the doubt. She urged every horse owner who crossed her path to learn more, read more, ride more and trust the horse more.

She was diagnosed with cancer a few years ago and given only weeks to live. Her determination and dedication to improving horses and their owners prevented her from giving in to the dreaded disease. Instead, she redoubled her efforts on the horses' behaviors and was riding and teaching almost until almost her last day, which was January 7.

Nya's vast equine expertise and disarming honesty attracted a wide variety of students. One of my favorite

memories is sitting down to dinner at her home with a Baptist from St. Anthony, a Mormon from Rexburg, Nya, a Messianic Christian, and myself, a Bahai. The best of individual beliefs melded seamlessly as we bowed our heads and thanked the Almighty for the opportunity to share our love and Nya's endless knowledge of horses. That binding ingredient was the common denominator that brought all sorts of folks to her.

I hope we will carry on her compassionate teachings about horse-human relationships. All who knew her truly were the better for it...as were their horses. I'm confident Nya is riding across the Rainbow Bridge on her beloved stallion, Larry, who went ahead to mark the path.

Nya, we will miss you terribly, but your priceless teachings will go on benefiting all who were fortunate enough to meet you. Prayers and thanks to her family for sharing her with us all these years.

The world lost a great horsewoman today. She was a Breeder, Trainer, Instructor, Clinician, DQP Inspector, and Mentor. She devoted her life to the well being of Tennessee Walking Horses.



**You will be missed, Nya Bates.**



# *In Memoriam*

*Registered Name: Cee Dee Sadie's  
Hobo - "Iceman" or "Ice"*

*Foaled: April 25, 2002 - Laid to Rest:  
April 5, 2019*

*Owned and loved forever by: Sharon  
Turkovich*

A horse to remember, yes indeed,  
Ice truly was that and so much  
more; uncharacteristically beautiful,  
kind and a willing, talented partner  
until the end.

We go into horsemanship for the



love, fun, thrills, companionship and lessons that speak directly to our hearts. We give to them, take from them and somewhere in the middle we find our humble human balance.

Ice came to me at a time when life was challenging and I had faced the loss of my four year old TWH, Piper, who had to be euthanized due to wobbler syndrome. I felt at that time I could never open my heart to another horse, and my dream was over.

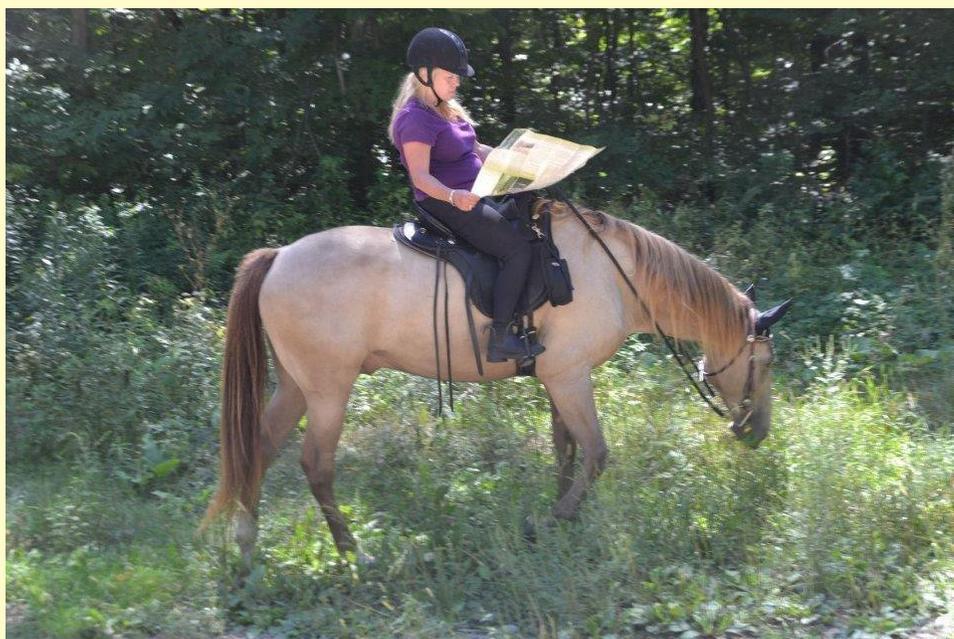
Then came Ice. His kind, amber eyes filled my heart with such joy and love I often felt our relationship was magical, and my blessings far beyond anything I could have imagined. Together we shared many adventures and memories that still flood my heart and cause my

tears to flow. I still hear his gentle nicker of welcome and the way he wrapped his head around me and licked my hand, clothes, hair, anything he could reach. He was known by many for his unique champagne color, charismatic nature and obedient, kind ways even during the many trying times in his final two years as he suffered with injuries and disease. During a vet visit to diagnose lameness with nerve blocking, the vet stated, "Ice is the only horse I would ever stand behind, with no sedation, to poke around with needles and not be afraid."

On April 5, 2019 I said goodbye to my beloved partner and through the tears that filled my eyes and slipped down my cheeks, I still found a way to smile. Ice is no longer in pain. He fought a valiant fight, but there was nothing more that could be done except to let him pass gently with love. That decision kicks us in the gut, tears open our heart, but fills us with the knowledge that it is best for

them; it is no longer about us. I will treasure your memory, Ice. There will never be another like you for me. I am truly blessed to have shared my heart and soul with yours. Until we meet again, my pretty boy.

xo



*"To live in this world you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go." -*

*Mary Oliver, Blackwater Woods  
Sharon Turkovich,  
Zephyr, Ontario*

# GETTING TO KNOW...

## THE MISSOURI FOX TROTTER

*Courtesy of The Missouri Fox Trotting Horse Breed Association.*

### **History of the Breed**

More than a century ago, the settlers and pioneers of the Ozarks needed a sure-footed, easy-traveling horse that could perform the varied and often grueling work their way of life demanded. Those requirements included plowing fields, hauling logs and working cattle in rugged, rocky Ozarks terrain. And when the day was done, that same horse had to serve as the family's stylish buggy and riding horse.

As people migrated west from the hills and plantations of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, they brought with them their finest possessions, including their best saddle stock.

These breeds were largely Arabian, Morgan, and plantation horses from the Deep South. Later, American Saddlebred, Tennessee Walking Horse and Standardbred blood was added to the stock, resulting in a horse with a more pleasing appearance and disposition. This versatile animal, able to travel great distances at a comfortable, ground-covering gait (five to eight miles an hour), made the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse a favorite of the country doctor, sheriff, assessor and stock raiser.

Today, the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse is described as every person's pleasure horse because of its gentle disposition and its comfortable ride. The breed is in demand for use in pleasure, show, versatility, trail riding, cross-country and endurance. Ninety percent of registered Missouri Fox Trotters are owned by people who use them for trail and pleasure riding as well as competition and endurance riding. The Missouri Fox Trotter is also used by hunters and National Forestry Service rangers for its endurance and surefootedness in rugged terrain; ranchers for its versatility and intelligence; and on Hollywood movie sets because of its gentle nature. And last, but certainly not least, the Missouri Fox Trotter is an acclaimed show horse, exhibiting great beauty and style in the ring.

In 2002, the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse was honored by being named the official state horse of Missouri.

### **Gaits of the Breed**

Although the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse is capable of doing many different gaits, there are three distinct gaits that are considered standard for the breed.

#### **The Flat Foot Walk**

A true flat foot walk is a four-beat gait in which each foot is picked up and set down in an even cadence.



***Rick Harrison, of the History Channel's Pawn Stars fame, is also the proud owner of a Missouri Fox Trotter named Black Jack. Here they are taking a lesson from dressage instructor Jessie Bonneau. Photo courtesy of Jessie Bonneau.***

The rear end movement should be smooth and close to the ground without any snap or pop. With each stride, the back foot should reach forward and slide in as it is set down, over striding the track of the front foot. The head shakes in time with its rear feet and should be smooth.

### The Fox Trot

The fox trot is a broken diagonal gait with a distinctive rhythm that is created by the horse moving its front foot a split second before its opposite rear foot. The fox trot is a smooth gait because the horse is in contact with the ground at all times.

A horse that is fox trotting correctly will never have more than two feet off the ground at any given time. On both the front and back ends, the horse will set one foot down as it picks the other foot up and for a moment both feet will be touching the ground.

The exceptional rhythm of the fox trotting horse begins at the tip of the nose with the characteristic head shake and continues back through the ripple of the tail. The diagonal nature of the gait is also what makes the Missouri Fox Trotter extremely sure-footed.

### The Canter

The canter is a broken, three-beat gait, and should be performed with collection. In the canter, the feet strike the ground in this sequence: (1) the outside rear foot, (2) the inside rear and outside front, simultaneously, and (3) the inside front. This produces the three-beat cadence.

The Missouri Fox Trotting Horse can perform an athletic lope or a collected rocking chair canter.



*For more information, contact the Missouri Fox Trotting Horse Breed Association (MFTHBA).  
[www.mfthba.com](http://www.mfthba.com)  
( 417 ) 683-2468  
[foxtrot@mfthba.com](mailto:foxtrot@mfthba.com)*

# Whitesell Wisdom



By Larry Whitesell

## GETTING A HORSE TO DO IT VS PREPARING THE HORSE

This concept applies to everything you teach your horse, but I am discussing gait here. I see hundreds of horses each year at our clinics and training facility. Almost all of the gaited horses have had training that tries to make them gait.

The main method used is to drive the horse with leg into a holding hand (which are conflicting aids). When you use these contrasting aids (brakes and accelerator both on), the horse becomes tense and behavior issues, like heavy in the bridle, buddy sour and spooking, start showing up. If the horse is tense physically there will be emotional stress, and if there is emotional stress there will be physical tension.

These horses are not prepared to offer gait physically or emotionally. A horse that has been taught the aids, balance, softness and strengthened the correct muscles will offer gait on a loose or relaxed rein. These concepts have been skipped in the training of most horses.

We have so many gaited horses that come to us, and the rider has been unable to get the horse to gait, or the horse was taught by force to gait and the new owner doesn't have the skill to force the gait. When we stop trying to make these horses gait and work on balance, softness and teach the horse to energetically go forward with lightness, they all start gaiting.

If you were teaching a horse to canter, you could kick and spur and make the horse go faster until he breaks into canter. Problem is, he is so out of balance that you don't have good speed or direction control. The canter is rough and hard to ride. If you spend time teaching the horse how to PREPARE for a canter depart, then very soft aids get the horse to go to a comfortable, smooth canter. Most gaited horses are run into the bridle when trying to get gait. The problem is, they will learn to run through the hand if you don't use strong equipment. This most often leads to a pacey horse or hard trot.

These horses are doomed to being



ridden with constant pressure in the mouth when they go up to gait. They will never get a release. They will travel high-headed and hollow-backed, and this creates anxiety. Why would a horse want to gait if it involves being held in the mouth and going in an uncomfortable posture?



Teaching the horse to round his back and bring his hind legs under his center of balance creates relaxation for the horse. If he learned this balance and we developed his strength to maintain it, then gaiting would be something the horse would want to do. Therefore, they would offer gait on a relaxed or loose rein. The horse would gait for anyone. Many gaited horses go with stiff hind legs so they pronate their hind feet, which puts them on the forehand, which is a major cause of pacing. The horse has to be taught to step under his center and take weight on the hind leg, helping with the horse's relaxation and creating a true gait. He will have a softer trot if he trots or a cleaner gait if he is bred to gait.



We have started several hundred gaited horses. When we teach them what they need to know to be comfortable with a rider, they gait from the first ride. If we get horses that don't gait, we never work on gait. We PREPARE the horses to be ridden correctly, and they all offer gait on a relaxed rein.

***Three levels of training, from early training gaiting on a soft rein (top) to gaiting on a soft rein with the head down (middle) to advanced posture gaiting on a relaxed rein (bottom).***

Do you use the horse's mouth to get gait or does he know how to gait? Ask your horse to gait and then

loosen the reins. Does he continue to gait or does he fall out of gait? If a trotting horse can trot or canter on a loose rein, then why can't a gaited horse gait on a loose rein? Why does he have to be held constantly in the mouth? It would take some preparation to make his life better.

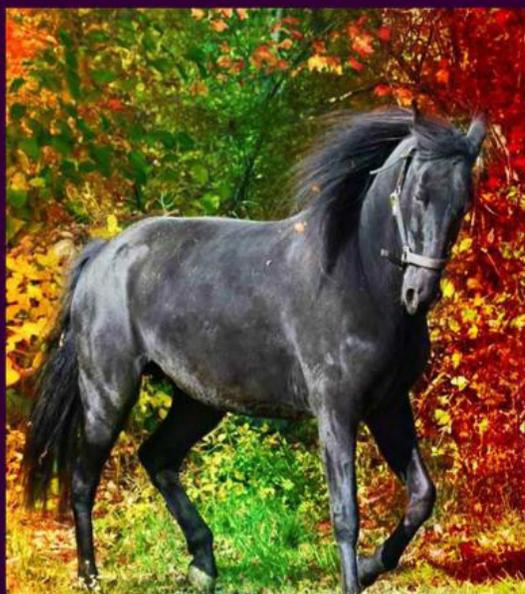
Gaited horses are genetically bred to gait. You don't have to teach them. You have to prepare them so they can volunteer gait, but we must also develop the muscles to gait with the weight of a rider. Like any horse, they must understand the aids and be taught balance. Most of the gaited horses I see that have trouble are out of balance. Because they are being forced to gait, they have developed resistant muscles.

As a trail rider, I think safety is more important than gait. If I work on what the horse needs to know to be a safe ride, it always results in better

gait. I see horses every week where gait was the focus of training, and the horses aren't happy trail horses. The things that make a horse comfortable also bring out gait. If the horse is out of balance, high-headed, inverted in the back, and hind legs strung out and stiff, the horse is not comfortable.

Gait is like everything we teach. We never ask a horse to do something we haven't prepared him for. If the horse is prepared mentally and physically, he will already know the answer when you ask the question.

*Larry Whitesell has been a renowned gaited horseman since 1980, He was very successful in the show ring, winning regional, national and grand national championships. In 2002 he was trainer of the year. He has held judges cards in several gaited breeds. Learn more at [www.whitesellgaitedhorsemanship.com](http://www.whitesellgaitedhorsemanship.com).*



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Gait, Inc is a 501c3 all gaited breed rescue. Rescue done right with a focus on training & adopter support. Volunteer run and funded by generous donations! We adopt to qualified homes in the Mid-Atlantic & So. California regions. GAIT, Inc. 14515 Chrisman Hill Dr. Boyds, MD 20841 (240)-720-4545

# Gaits Wide Open

A special thank you to Friends of Sound Horses and judge Alece Ellis

Congratulations to our show Overall High Point: Jennifer Wallace & Beaucoups Blue

Open High Point (2 scores combined) Julie Druga Lamberton & Seabreeze Savaje Vaquero

Adult Amateur High Point (combined scores) Susan Jaeger & Smokin' Blu Genes

Reserve High Point (combined scores) Marion Milner & Magnolia

Youth High Point (combined scores) Audrey Stiegler & Calif de Color Sin Par

Reserve High Point (combined scores) Madison Christiano & Touché

## Adult Amateur Division

1st	Marion Milner & Magnolia.	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait B
2nd	MaryAnn Heverly & El Pastor del Juncal	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait B
3rd	Michelle Christiano & Seabreeze's Intrepido	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait B
1st	Marion Milner & Magnolia.	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait D
2nd	Michelle Christiano & Seabreeze's Intrepido	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait D
3rd	MaryAnn Heverly & El Pastor del Juncal	AA	FOSH/IJA	2Gait D
1st	Marion Milner & Magnolia.	AA	FOSH/IJA	Intro 1
2nd	Jenn Wallace & Beaucoups Dangerous Ruby	AA	FOSH/IJA	Intro 1
1st	Marion Milner & Magnolia.	AA	FOSH/IJA	Intro 4
1st	Jenn Wallace & Beaucoups Blue	AA	FOSH/IJA	Training 1
2nd	Lynne Ross & Grace After Midnight	AA	FOSH/IJA	Training 1
1st	Lynn Ross & Grace After Midnight	AA	FOSH/IJA	Training 3
2nd	Susan Jaeger & Smokin' Blu Genes	AA	FOSH/IJA	Training 3
1st	Susan Jaeger & Smokin' Blu Genes	AA	FOSH/IJA	1st Level Test 3

## Open Division

1st	Julie Druga Lamberton & Chance	Open	FOSH/IJA	2Gait B
1st	Julie Druga Lamberton & Chance	Open	FOSH/IJA	2Gait D
1st	Julie Lamberton & Seabreeze Savaje Vaquero	Open	FOSH/IJA	1st Level Test 1
1st	Julie Lamberton & Seabreeze Savaje Vaquero	Open	FOSH/IJA	1st Level Test 3

## Youth Division

1st	Audrey Stiegler & Calif de Color Sin Par	Youth	FOSH/IJA	2Gait B
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We are pleased to report that the number of entries almost doubled over those from 2018. The judge, Alece Ellis, noted that improvements were seen in competitors that returned from 2018, confirming the benefit of good dressage work.

Start planning for this year now! FOSH/NAWD will be hosting the Third Annual FOSH/NAWD GAITS WIDE OPEN VIRTUAL NATIONAL DRESSAGE SHOW October 1-31, 2020.

# *Dressage*

## *A Path to a Better Trail Horse*

By Susan Jaeger

It's a beautiful day in central Alberta. Fresh snow sparkles in the brilliant sunshine, and it's a crisp -5 C. I'm riding Levi through the woods and ponying a frisky colt alongside. Four of my dogs are running in front, occasionally darting into the trees after a squirrel. I can hear my beagle baying on a rabbit scent.

We're moving out in a smooth running walk, cantering up a few small hills. Levi has soft contact with his snaffle. He's relaxed and confident. I'm playing "our song" on my cell phone, and he falls easily into the rhythm. Half a mile from home, I offer him the reins, and he stretches into a free walk. As we round the last corner, with the barn in sight, I know that I've just had the perfect ride.

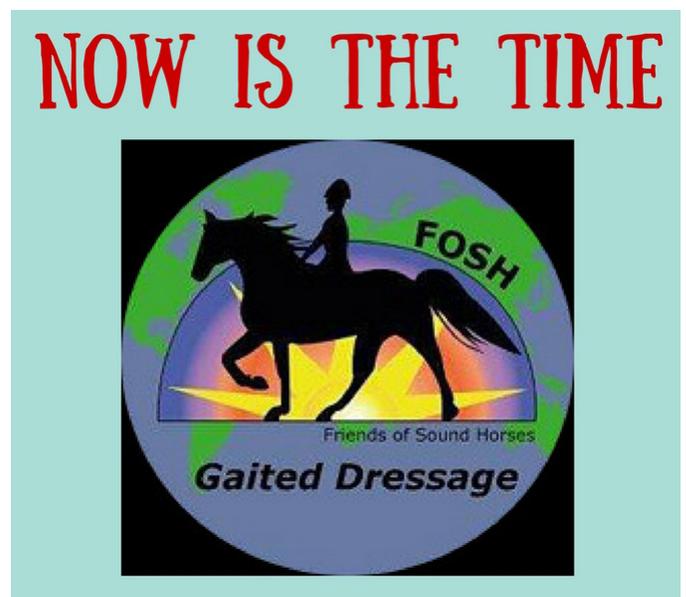
It wasn't always like this. Three years ago I was ready to sell my horse. He was becoming increasingly difficult on the trail, looking for any excuse to spook, refusing to slow down on the way home, rearing and spinning as I tried to restrain him. I was getting scared, and riding wasn't fun anymore.

I was actually scrolling through Kijiji ads looking for another horse when I saw a clinic being offered at a local

dressage stable. It was with Philippe Karl School of LeGERETE. Any Horse. Any Breed. Any Discipline. Auditing was only \$10 a day and included lunch and snacks. I had nothing to lose.

What an eye opener! This method of training is based on French Classical Dressage and has a totally different philosophy than the traditional German style I had learned when I was younger. Emphasis is on light contact, forward and relaxed movement, and never any over-bending or "framing" of the horse that creates so much tension and resistance.

I was so impressed by the changes I saw in the horses at that clinic that I arranged to haul in for some private



lessons. I had to let go of my controlling style of riding and learn a new way to connect with my horse. For years Levi had been trying to tell me something, and he was becoming increasingly frustrated, but I wasn't listening.

The change in both of us is astounding, and I'm thrilled with our progress and the possibilities my talented gelding has to offer.

I didn't need a new horse. I just had to change the way I was riding the one I already had!

Levi is a TWH/Singlefooter cross and is not eligible for registration in Canada. He also cannot participate in any of the TWH Achievement awards so I was thrilled to learn that FOSH would recognize him officially as a gaited horse. I entered my newly named Smokin' Blu Genes in their dressage program.

In 2018 I took Levi to "The Canadian," a TWH event that offered some open classes. His dressage scores were submitted to FOSH, and we had High Score for our Freestyle. In 2019 I took advantage of the Gaits Wide



***Smokin' Blu Genes, aka "Levi" showing off his championship cooler.***

Open virtual show sponsored by FOSH with the NAWD. This is a wonderful opportunity to have your progress evaluated by dedicated and knowledgeable judges. The comments are always helpful and encouraging.

Dressage is not a goal attainable by only a few elite horses and riders. It is a way of training that gives you the tools to bring out the best your horse has to offer and keeps him sound and happy in the process. It truly is for Any Horse, Any Breed, Any Discipline. Give it a try. Your horse will thank you!

# Thanks for the Facebook Shout Outs!

***This came in from Kris Blacklock. (Photos right)***

"Unexpected surprise! Sincere and heartfelt appreciation to Friends of Sound Horses (FOSH) for the 'Lessons in Lightness' book received today and the Championship ribbons bestowed upon my gaited Working Equitation partner Gambler's Jackpot. The book



holds very special memories, lifelong lessons and exercises in softness. I was fortunate to have cliniced with Mark (Russell) years ago and have recently cliniced with Jillian Kreinbring. Thank you very much for your most generous support of gaited equines."

***Andrea Kolasinski Marcinkus sent us this note and photo (left) of her horse Valentine.***

"Hi FOSH! Valentine and I are the Confederation of Working Equitation Reserve Champions for 2019. (We are also the Working Equitation United Gaited Champions, but those ribbons have not yet arrived.) Thank you so much for the award and everything you do for our gaited friends."

# FOSH Members Win with Missouri Horse Shows Associations

With Tennessee Walking Horses as the most recent breed added to the Missouri Horse Shows Association (MHSA) several years ago, FOSH members have enjoyed the coradery when competing at the same shows as MHSA trotting horse members. FOSH members' smiles were wide at the Missouri Horse Shows Association Celebration of Champions Awards Luncheon held February 8 in Columbia, Mo.

Missouri FOSH members applauded Peyton Rose's second year to receive the MHSA High Point Show Horse & Pony Horse award with the Tennessee Walking Horse gelding, Mac's Poker Face. The pair kept on going with first place for Pleasure Two Gait, Trail Pleasure Two Gait, Country Pleasure Two Gait and OGB Open Pleasure Two Gait. Darryl and Gina Vehige were delighted to pick up a first place ribbon for their gelding, Hot Off the Press, in Spotted Saddle Horse Open Pleasure Two Gait.

The Awards Celebration was opened by long time FOSH member, Lucy Rangel, who is the MHSA President Elect. FOSH appreciates that MHSA has provided podium time at all their annual awards banquets for FOSH President, Teresa Bippen, to speak to the audience about the Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act. She



**Left: MHSA President-Elect Lucy Rangel, 2019 High Point winner Peyton Rose and MHSA President Stacy Wright.**

**Below: Darryl Vehige collecting ribbons for his 2019 winning rides on Hot Off The Press.**



discusses the breeds impacted, Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses and Racking Horses (the breed, not the gait) and the changes (no stacks and chains) implemented with passage of the PAST Act. Bippen provided preaddressed postcards for Missourians to send to Senators Roy Blunt and Josh Hawley encouraging them to cosponsor the PAST Act.

*About MHSA: MHSA is 60+ years old and is one of the most successful, multi-discipline equestrian organizations in existence today with divisions for Dressage, Hunter-Jumper, Eventing, Equitation, and American Saddlebreds. The Show Horse & Pony division includes Arabian, National Show, Morgan, Tennessee Walking and Open Gaited Breed horses along with Ponies. Pointed shows take place in Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Oklahoma and other Midwest states.*

# 2019 Distance Champions

## **Limited Distance - High Mileage Lightweight and tied for Overall High Mileage**

Pa Pa's Alabama Express

Owned and ridden by Patty Lucas.

## **Limited Distance - Reserve High Mileage Lightweight**

Playboy's Desert Reign

Owned and ridden by Debra Freiberg.

## **High Mileage and tied for Overall High Mileage**

Dancers Southern Princess

Owned by Bobbie Jo Lieberman.

Ridden by Audrey Hager and Annette Phillips.

**3000 Mile Award** (Miles prior to entry into FOSH Gaited Distance do not count toward this award.)

Mocha Jack

Owned and ridden by Becky Lange.

Mocha Jack received the 1000 mile award in 2014; the 2000 Mile Award in 2015; and the 3000 mile award in 2019.

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## 2019 Traditional (Live) Dressage Champions

### **Intro Division**

Champion - Northfork Cotton Trim

Owned and ridden by Lori Dyberg, Wetaskiwin, Alberta Canada.

Reserve Champion - Northfork Cheerful Chipper

Owned and ridden by Blair Dyberg, Wetaskiwin, Alberta Canada.

# The Future of Gait Research

Ann Staiger (photo right), Visiting Assistant Professor at Auburn University, had been working on a study exploring the genetics of gait in horses at Cornell University. She is currently in the process of rolling out a new genetics of gait study, Three-Dimensional Equine Gait Analysis using Computer Vision and Deep Learning/or Genomic Mapping. Working with Dr. Yin Bao, Assistant Professor of in Biosystems Engineering, the plan is to develop a 3D motion analysis system and software to precisely define each horse's gait biomechanics. The hope is that they could also use the system to improve lameness detection in gaited horses, see how/if gait changes as the hors-

es age from foal to mature adult, see how rider biomechanics impact the horse and vice versa, and eventually expand to compare gaits across species.



Per Staiger's request, FOSH has voiced support for the proposed research project. In its capacity as a non-profit, FOSH serves as a primary stakeholder group. They have a vested interest in the results and recommendations the proposed research

will produce. If results are favorable, they are well-positioned to share any recommendations with the organization's membership. Updates to this project will be presented as they become available.



*Gift of Freedom owned and ridden by Jennifer Klitzke of St. Frances Minn.*

# Murdoch Minute

## No. 114: Look Between the Ears

By Wendy Murdoch

*Reprinted with permission.  
www.murdochmethod.com*

Use this Murdoch Minute to improve your circles and turns. When you align your head with your pelvis and turn as one, your horse will hear a clear turn signal that will require much less use of the reins.

### **Turning Issues**

Do you have trouble turning your horse? Feel like he is ignoring you? Look where you are going only to have your horse go straight ahead? Riders are commonly told to look where they want to go when riding a turn. This instruction is true to a point, but overlooking your turn (looking too far ahead) can create just as many problems with turning as not looking where you are going.

The next time you ride notice what happens when you ride circles and turns. Do you look down? How far ahead do you look? How much do you need to use your reins? Do you know if your horse's head is turned in the direction of the turn? Or is he looking to the outside of the circle? Perhaps you are unaware of where

his head is in relation to the turn. This may be part of your difficulty.

### **What not to do**

Pretty much everyone acknowledges that looking down is not a good idea when riding circles and turns, although it is very common to observe riders doing this. Looking down causes the rider to tip forward, puts more weight on the horse's forehead and can make a horse stop in front of a jump. Looking down often occurs when you concentrate on what you are feeling.

The opposite, overlooking, disconnects the rider's head, neck and eyes from the rest of her body. The horse in that instance is going to follow the seat, which hasn't turned, rather than the rider's eyes, which are looking well past the line of travel. (The line of travel is the line you would ride if it were traced out in front of you like a chalk line on the ground.)

### **The "Goldilocks" Principle**

As with most things, in the end we want the middle. I think of this as the "Goldilocks Principle": "This is too much, this is too little, this is just

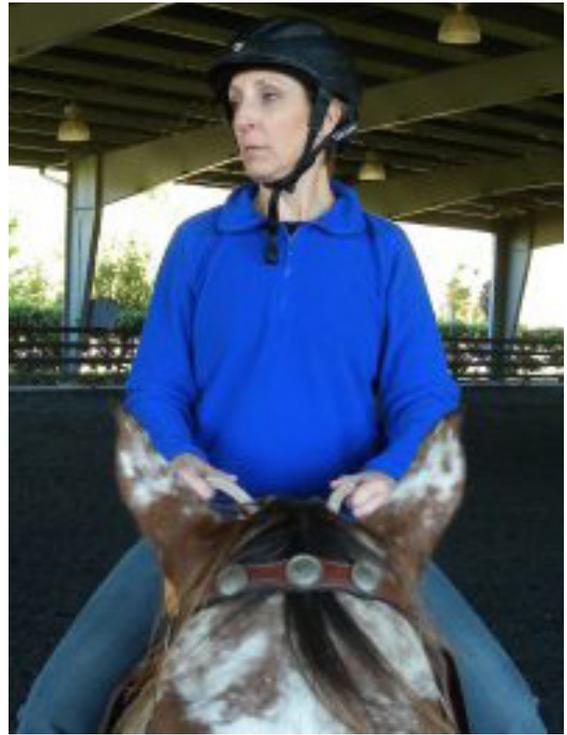
right!" "Just right" is when your head is in line with your body on the turn. You can still use your peripheral vision to see where you are going, but you can also see what your horse is doing and ensure that he too is looking on the line of travel.

If your horse is looking in the opposite direction of travel he will be stiffening his spine instead of bending on the circle. I think of the horse's nose like a fork in a pot of cooked spaghetti – the whole body needs to follow the head! If the head is cocked to the outside or pulled too much to the inside his body will be stiff like uncooked spaghetti and not flow around the turn.

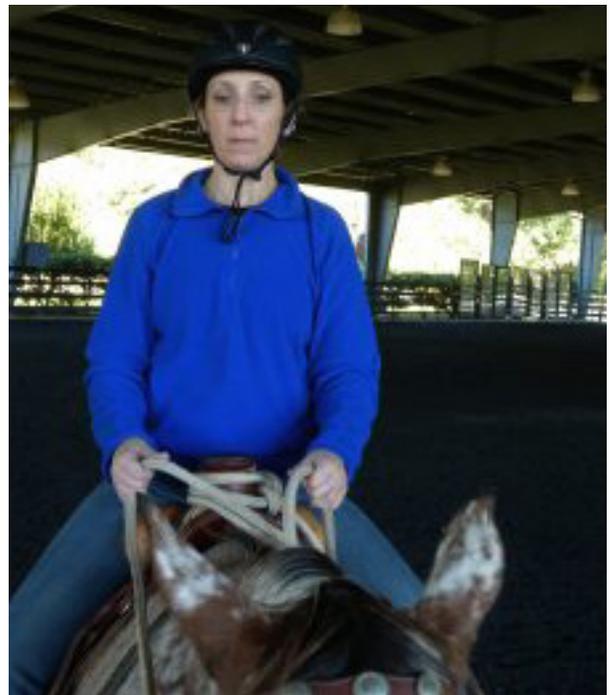
### **Mounted**

To solve your overlooking problem keep your nose in line with your horse's ears. You can experiment by lining up with either the inside or outside ear. Each is slightly different so find out which works best for you. Keep your nose lined up as you ride circles and turns to ensure that your horse is looking where you intend to go. Allow yourself to see the line of travel in front of you using your peripheral vision so that you can see your horse's head and where you are going at the same time. Make sure you initiate your turns from your seat and not just your head. Allow your torso to turn as one rather than overturning your neck and then having to use the reins to make your horse turn.

And remember to enjoy the ride!



**Photo 1.** Mary has turned her head, neck and eyes too far ahead of her. Notice that the zipper on her shirt is straight ahead indicating that she has only turned her head. Her horse hears her seat say "go straight ahead" and therefore will not turn unless she pulls on the reins.



**Photo 2.** The rider has aligned her head with the rest of her body, which is not turning to the right. She has lined her nose up with his right ear for a right turn. She can see that he is not looking in the direction of travel and therefore can use the right rein to bring his head on the line of the circle.

## Core Vaccinations

*Courtesy of the AAEP.*

The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) recommends core vaccinations for every horse. What is considered a core vaccine? The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) defines core vaccinations as those “that protect from diseases that are endemic to a region, those with potential public health significance, required by law, virulent/highly infectious, and/or those posing a risk of severe disease. Core vaccines have clearly demonstrated efficacy and safety, and thus exhibit a high enough level of patient benefit and low enough level of risk to justify their use in the majority of patients.”

The following equine vaccines meet these criteria and are identified as ‘core’ in these guidelines.

**Eastern/Western Equine Encephalomyelitis** - Commonly known as Sleeping Sickness or Triple E, Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis is a virus that also damages the central nervous system in the horse and whose primary vectors are mosquitoes. Songbirds along the Northeastern coast, are common reservoirs. EEE is more common than Western Encephalomyelitis in the United States; the first documented outbreak being in 1951 in Louisiana.

Affected horses die within three days of contracting either Encephalomyelitis. Horses are highly susceptible in wooded, rural areas where mosquitoes are populous and feeding. EEE present in horses does not require them to be quarantined, and they cannot transmit the disease to other horses. It is important to also take action to protect yourself from mosquitoes, as humans have been known to contract EEE as well, although it is not common.

**Rabies** – Rabies is a deadly virus which is passed through the saliva of animals infected with the disease, which is most commonly found in wildlife. According to the AAEP, an average of only 30 to 60 horses contract rabies in the United States each year. Symptoms include lethargy, eating and drinking less, and becoming depressed. Once these clinical signs are present, the mammal typically dies three to five days after becoming infected.

**Tetanus** – Tetanus, commonly called Lockjaw, is the infection of an anaerobic bacteria (*Clostridium Tetani*) going into the bloodstream and tensing the muscles of the horse and spreading throughout the rest of the body. It can be contracted through open wounds (lacerations, puncture wounds, or incisions) and commonly seen in horses who have been in contact with rusty nails in their stall and turnout area. It can



also be passed through the feces of an infected animal. The most common symptom to look for is muscle tenseness, such as a prolapse of the horse's haw (protective eyelid), muscle spasms, and extreme sensitivities to touch. In the United States, there has been little documentation of the disease. Fewer than five horses in 2018 contracted tetanus in Ontario, Canada. If left unvaccinated, the infected horse's chance of surviving is slim, usually only carrying the neurotoxin for a week before the body shuts down.

**West Nile Virus** – West Nile virus was first contracted in 1937, in Uganda, showing few symptoms prior to the rapid decline of the mammal. The primary vector are mos-

quitoes. West Nile Virus shuts down the central nervous system, damaging both the brain and spinal cord. The disease spread to the Eastern coast of New York, finally reaching the United States in 1999. In 2002, there were nearly 15,000 horses that contracted the virus. The host of the disease is the infected bird, in which the mosquito takes in the infected bird's blood and then transfers it to the horse when it bites into the horse.

The AAEP also lists vaccinations against diseases that are considered to be risk-based. These are vaccinations included in a program after the performance of a risk-benefit analysis. The use of risk-based vaccinations may vary regionally, from

population to population within an area, or between individual horses within a given population. Disease risk may not be readily identified by laypersons; it is important to consult a veterinarian when developing a vaccination program. The following are considered risk-based diseases:

Anthrax  
Botulism  
Equine Herpesvirus (Rhinopneumonitis)  
Equine Influenza  
Equine Viral Arteritis  
Leptospirosis  
Potomac Horse Fever  
Rotaviral Diarrhea  
Snake Bite  
Strangles

It is always important to consult with your veterinarian to learn more about any of these diseases and the importance of vaccinating against them.



**Calling All Horse Show Managers! FOSH is delighted to announce that we have a limited number of red coolers embroidered with the full color FOSH logo and the year 2020 to donate to your sound, gaited horse show. Perfect for a high point award!**





*The Harvest  
Youth & Gaited  
Horse Show*

*September 12, 2020*

*Due West Ranch*

*Kansas City, KS*

*Classes for Walking Horses,  
Missouri Fox Trotting Horses,  
Open Gaited Breed, American  
Saddlebred Horses, and Open  
English, Western, and Hunt Seat  
Classes for All Breeds*

*Member*

*(Prize Lists will be posted on Web Sites of):*

*Missouri Horse Shows Association*

*Pony Express Horse Show Circuit*

*Sanctioned by Friends of Sound Horses*

# To Their Health

## Eye Blink Rate and Eyelid Twitches Can Measure Stress in Horses

By Juliet M. Getty Ph.D.



Researchers from the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada, were looking for a non-invasive means to measure stress in horses. Horses can experience stress from a variety of sources including forage restriction, loss of a buddy, isolation, travel, unfamiliar environments, as well as excessive training. While there are physiological and endocrine changes that can occur during stressful conditions, a simple approach is to examine the horse's eyes. Eye blink rate, as well as eyelid twitches, have been used as an indicator of stress in humans, but has not been examined in horses until now.

Thirty-three horses were exposed to three stressful conditions: Separation from herd mates, denied access to feed and startling by a new object. One group served as a control. For each stressor, eye blink rate and the number of eye twitches were mea-

sured. Heart rate was also assessed.

On average, horses performed full-blinks 8-9 times/minute in the absence of any stressors. When stressors were presented, this rate declined to 5 blinks/minute. Half-blinks, on the other hand, increased during stressful circumstances, and they increased the most during feed restriction. Eyelid twitches also increased during stress -- they were only about 2 per minute in the control group, increasing to 6 per minute during feed restriction.

While the herd separation and startling treatments did produce some changes, they were not statistically different from the control group. The most dramatic results occurred when horses were denied feed. In addition, horses experienced a more dramatic increase in heart rate, restlessness, and oral behaviors.

Implications for your horses:

The horse's digestive tract is different from most other species, including dogs/cats, cattle, and humans. It is designed to have a steady flow of forage, lest horses develop ulcers, colic, and inflammatory conditions as they age. As grazing animals, they consistently need to chew and have access to hay and/or pasture, day and night. Without this, they will not only develop digestive disturbances,

but also will suffer hormonal stress responses that ironically lead to obesity due to resulting insulin and leptin resistance. Cushing's disease is also affecting horses at younger ages than usual due to stress-related inflammatory hormonal bombardment, as well as poor diet and exposure to toxins.

Stress takes its toll over time, and one of the most stressful circumstances a horse can endure is forage restriction. This study further supports this premise through examining physiological changes in the horses' eyes and heart rate, as well as other behaviors. Horses experiencing stressful situations will decrease their full-blink rate and increase their frequency of half-blinks and eyelid twitches.



**Calling All FOSH Members! Thinking of organizing a gaited horse clinic? Grants are available from FOSH to support your initiative.**

**Contact [tbippen1957@yahoo.com](mailto:tbippen1957@yahoo.com) for an application.**



# Endurance Riding Convention

By American Endurance Ride Conference

Endurance competitors and enthusiasts from all over the United States and Canada will gather for the annual American Endurance Ride Conference convention March 6-7, 2020, in Jacksonville, Florida.

The two-day extravaganza at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront will include vendor booths, free and paid seminars, awards programs, and a chance for those interested in the sport to find out more about endurance riding from those who are more than happy to share their knowledge and welcome new riders to their ranks.

"This is AERC's first national convention in Florida," said AERC Executive Director Kathleen Henkel. "There are so many equestrian opportunities in the area, and we're excited to welcome riders from other disciplines who want to see what endurance is all about."

AERC, whose motto is "to finish is to win," is headquartered in Auburn, California, which bills itself as the "endurance capital of the world." Founded in 1972, AERC sanctions more than 700 rides from 25 to 100 miles in distance.

The no-cost vendor area, open to all from 8-6 on Friday, March 6, and 8-5 on Saturday, March 7, puts riders directly in touch with tack, equestrian clothing and gear, and saddle vendors and an assortment of other knowledgeable sellers of both needed (feed) and fun (jewelry) goods. A tack swap held during vendor hours is super for finding pre-owned items at bargain rates.

Shopping aside, education is a main component of AERC's convention, with seven seminars on Friday and Saturday that will provide cutting-edge knowledge

for current and prospective endurance riders. Seminar tickets, sold by the day, can be purchased online or at the venue.

## Scheduled Seminars

- \* Extending the Longevity of Your Horse's Career with Melissa Ribley, DVM
- \* Gaining, Training and Retaining Younger Riders, with Jay Randle of the Australian Endurance Riders Association
- \* Recognizing Cardiac/Respiratory Problems with Mariano 56T Mora-Pereira, LV, MS, DACVIM
- \* Joint and Tendon Therapies: What's New? with Jennifer Taintor, DVM, MS,



DACVIM, DACVSMR

\* The Evolution of AERC's Drug Rule, with Jeanette Mero, DVM

\* Equine Chiropractic, with Troy (Ike) Nelson, DVM

\* Lameness Evaluation (See What the Veterinarians See) with Robert Marshall, DVM

But the convention isn't all serious education. It's also a celebration of accomplishments, with both regional and national award ceremonies, and a Friday night dance with The Snacks Blues Band.

In addition, conference attendees always enjoy the popular annual Tack Swap that allows riders to pick up tack and related items at bargain prices, with 10% of proceeds benefiting the AERC.

Local organizations, including The Old Dominion Equestrian Endurance Organization, Inc., East Coast Ride & Tie, Southeast Endurance Riders Association (SERA) and South Eastern Distance Riders Association (SEDRA) will be present to talk about local riding and competition opportunities.

The Green Bean Organization, designed for "green" or new endurance riders, will have a booth at the convention, and will provide friendly information to those new to the sport.

For more information, and to register and receive the best pricing on conference seminars, please visit <https://aerc.org/convention>.

*About AERC: The American Endurance Ride Conference (AERC) was founded in 1972 as a national governing body for long distance riding. Over the years it has developed a set of rules and guidelines designed to provide a standardized format and strict veterinary controls.*

*In addition to promoting the sport of endurance riding, the AERC encourages the use, protection, and development of equestrian trails, especially those with historic significance. These rides promote awareness of the importance of trail preservation for future generations and foster an appreciation of our American heritage. For more information please visit us at [www.aerc.org](http://www.aerc.org).*



**Photo credit: Jonni Jewell.**

# NATRC's New Leisure Division - Worth a Try!

By Bev Roberts

The North American Trail Ride Conference (NATRC) introduced its Leisure Division (LeD) in 2019 with two ideas in mind. First, to introduce new riders to competitive trail riding in a simplified format. And second, to keep experienced NATRC competitors involved who needed a shorter distance.

The LeD format meets a variety of people's needs. For many competitors, the one-day format fits their lifestyle. They can show up in the morning, compete over a 10-12 mile distance, attend a fun awards ceremony, and return home the same day. For those new to the sport, it offers a low stress introduction to competitive trail riding. For others, LeD is a stepping-stone, a try-out before moving into longer distanced, faster paced NATRC divisions. Some riders and equines who can't physically do longer rides anymore have found LeD a perfect niche to be able to remain competitive.

Many long-time riders find interaction with new competitors in the LeD invigorating. The old-timers enjoy answering questions, taking newbies under their wings, and sharing funny been-there, done-that stories.

"I had those late winter blues and found myself with a rib injury and an inexperienced, anxious horse, but was determined to get out of the house and do something!" recalled experienced NATRC competitor Sarah Baldwin of Rockford, Alabama. "So, when the 'Happy Birthday Leisure Division Ride' was announced, I was itching to go. Ten miles of easy trail at a slower pace ... Morgan and I could handle that."

"I am glad we did; it was a positive outing. It was good for socializing my horse to new surroundings and groups. It was also good for socializing me, as I met a lot of new people," said Baldwin. "This was more than a casual ride, as it had the familiar NATRC welcome and emphasis on safety, companionship and helping fellow riders. That is special."

If you'd like to give NATRC LeD or any other NATRC divisions a try, visit [www.natrc.org](http://www.natrc.org) to see the schedule for upcoming events. You'll also find trail riding tips, the NATRC rule book and an offer for free first-time memberships. Come ride with us!



Photo by Cheryl Edmondson.



Photo by Brandy Steele.



Photo by Richard Rosinski.



Photo by Brandy Steele.

**Top left: "In riding a horse, we borrow freedom"— Helen Thompson**

**Top right: With the horse standing still, the judge does a quick check of back, girth, loins and legs, often with a nice pat on the neck.**

**Bottom right: Riders encounter friendly faces on the trails like the one on this volunteer pulse and respiration worker.**

**Bottom left: Every trail has its challenges whether slight, like this uphill, or substantial.**

# FOSH Sound Principles



## **Principle #1**

All FOSH events adhere to the requirements of the Horse Protection Act.

## **Principle #2**

Horses are to be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion.

## **Principle #3**

Horses must be presented as sound in both body and mind.

## **Principle #4**

The preferred way of going is natural, correct, and without exaggeration.

## **Principle #5**

Shoeing is intended only for the protection of the foot and its structure. Where practical, barefoot horses are both welcomed and encouraged.

## **Principle #6**

Handlers and riders are expected to use training techniques and equipment that conform to the highest humane standards as recognized by the general equestrian community.

## **Principle #7**

Exhibitors have a duty to conduct themselves in an orderly, responsible, and sportsmanlike manner.

FOSH is a national leader in the promotion of natural, sound gaited horses and in the fight against abuse and soring of Tennessee Walking Horses. For more information about FOSH or to become a member, please visit [www.fosh.info](http://www.fosh.info) or call 1-800-651-7993.

## FOSH Directory

### Gaited Clubs

#### **Southern Comfort Gaited Horse Club**

Southern Comfort promotes activities highlighting the smooth ride and versatility of all gaited breeds. Pursuits include trail riding, competitions, shows, exhibitions, clinics and many other equine activities. The club promotes horse safety and friendship for all that are interested in horses. Owning a horse is not a requirement. SCGHC is based in southwestern Idaho and is a flat shod exclusive club with members contributing and supporting various interests using sound, natural horses. [www.gaitedhorseclub.com](http://www.gaitedhorseclub.com)

#### **Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club**

The Chesapeake Club is celebrating over 25 years of promoting the versatile, naturally gaited, horse. As a member of the Maryland Horse Council, we have been the voice of the gaited community and through demonstrations, clinics and guest speakers, a resource for other disciplines to learn about the gaited breeds in our region. Members enjoy monthly trail rides, newsletters, parades, clinics, social gatherings, and friendly help. We welcome all breeds, riding styles, and experience levels from beginners to professionals. [Cpwhclub.wordpress.com](http://Cpwhclub.wordpress.com) or [jacquiecowan@comcast.net](mailto:jacquiecowan@comcast.net)

### Breeders

#### **Summerwind Marchadors and Future Foal Breeders**

Plan for your next lifetime partner! Come breed with us! Offering frozen semen (12 stallions in 2020) or reservations for Future Foals "do Summerwind" The Marchador is Brazil's national horse, harking from Iberia, but bred there for 200 years. Expect to be impressed! <http://futurefoal.net> or call Lynn @ 602-999-3915

#### **Missouri Morgans**

Easy gaited in color. Rare gaited Morgans located in the Heart of America near beautiful Lake of the Ozarks; for photos, videos and available horses. Talk to Jim or Vali Suddarth at 417-286-4720 or [gaitedmorgans@missourimorgans.com](mailto:gaitedmorgans@missourimorgans.com)



## OUR FOREVER FRIENDS

### FOSH Lifetime Members

Jo Anne Behling, Wauwatosa, WI  
Esther L. Bell, TN  
Pamela Brand, Carlisle, PA  
Sarah Bushong-Weeks, Denver, CO  
Julie Church, Pagosa Springs, CO  
Mary & William Church, Pagosa Springs, CO  
Luella DeBono, Eden Prairie, MN  
Beverly Foster, St. Augustine, FL  
Nancy Gillespie, Pullman, WA  
Cristine Holt, Dubuque, IA  
Jane Howlett, Pocatello, ID  
Marty Irby, Semmes, AL  
Marjorie Lacy & Walking Horse News, Edson, Alberta  
Sue De Laurentis, Dripping Springs, TX  
Bobbie Jo Lieberman  
Dianne Little, Calgary, Alberta  
Debbie Locke, Mack, CO  
Ann Loveless St. Robert, MO  
Patricia Mayer, East Aurora, NY  
Maggie MacAllister, Staunton, VA  
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Frank Neal, Nashville, TN  
Lori Northrup, Ellicottville, NY  
Anne Northrup, Ellicottville, NY  
Shellie Pacovsky, Bainville, MT  
Denise Parsons  
Anita Rau, Catlett, VA  
Debbie Rash, Chico, CA  
Southern Comfort Gaited Horse Club, ID  
Bucky & Nancy Sparks, Cortez, CO  
Marcy Wadington, Canon City, CO  
Leslie Weiler, Pagosa Springs, CO  
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Gaited Horsemanship

[www.gaitedhorsmanship.com](http://www.gaitedhorsmanship.com)

Since 1961, we've helped riders of all ages learn the sport of competitive trail riding. Alongside other equine enthusiasts, you can deepen the relationship with your horse while learning new skills and setting your own competitive goals.

We invite you to come ride with us today! Rides offered from 8 to 60 miles. Our new Leisure division allows you to arrive, compete, and go home the same day!

**New?**  
**Join for FREE!**

**We share the FOSH philosophy**

NO Drugs, NO Devices,  
NO Exceptions

*The welfare of our equines comes first!*



**NORTH AMERICAN  
TRAIL RIDE CONFERENCE**

[www.natrc.org](http://www.natrc.org)



# Upcoming Events

## **MARCH**

### **Larry Whitesell 3-Day Clinic**

March 6 - March 8  
Springfield, IL  
Contact: Illinois Horse air.

### **Equine Distance Riding Association Conference**

Diane Sept, presenter  
March 20 - March 22, 2020  
Goldendale, WA  
Contact: Kathleen Ferguson  
kferguson@outlook.com

### **Equine Biomechanics Course with Jillian Kreinbring**

March 27 - March 29, 2020  
Loon Lake, WA  
Host Diane Sept  
Contact: Diane Sept  
509-937-2970  
dianesept@aol.com

## **APRIL**

### **Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club, Inc.**

Tuckahoe Spring Fling  
camping, trail riding, social  
time, 4 home-cooked meal  
Contact: Jacquie  
410-923-6157  
jacquiecowan@comcast.net

### **Larry Whitesell 5-Day Clinic**

April 1 - April 5  
Sacramento, CA  
Contact: Jackie  
209-748-2402  
jlsbarton@aol.com

### **Equine Biomechanics Course with Jillian Kreinbring and Susan Harris**

April 17 - April 19, 2020  
Boerne, TX

Contact: Diane Sept  
509-937-2970  
dianesept@aol.com

### **Lessons with Diane Sept (Slots available)**

April 20 - April 22, 2020  
Boerne, TX  
Contact: Diane Sept  
509-937-2970  
dianesept@aol.com

### **Larry Whitesell 5-Day Clinic**

April 21 - April 25  
Pryor, OK  
Contact: Larry  
918-633-9288  
l.lees@sbcglobal.com

### **Chesapeake Plantation Walking Horse Club, Inc. Fair Hill Spring Getaway**

April 23 - April 26  
Contact: Jacquie  
410-923-6157  
jacquiecowan@comcast.net

### **Connected Riding Clinic/ Lessons**

April 25 - April 26, 2020  
Evansville, WI  
Contact: smokemil@mac.com  
609-575-2408

### **Larry Whitesell 5-Day Clinic**

April 28 - May 2  
Rhode Island  
Contact: Darlene  
401-742-3970  
contactdarlene@gmail.com

## **MAY**

### **Larry Whitesell 5-Day Clinic**

May 5 - May 9

Baxter, TN  
Contact: Jennifer  
931-267-6723  
info@gaitedhorsemanship.com

### **Larry Whitesell 3-Day Clinic**

May 22 - May 24  
Port Clinton, Ohio  
Contact: Mary Ann  
419-341-2372  
theranch@theranchoutback.com

### **Larry Whitesell 3-Day Clinic**

May 29 - May 31  
Brighton, CO  
Contact: Carrie  
720-312-9139  
info@ch-equine.com

## **JUNE**

### **Larry Whitesell 5-Day Clinic**

June 3 - June 7  
Brighton, CO  
Contact: Carrie  
720-312-9139  
info@ch-equine.com

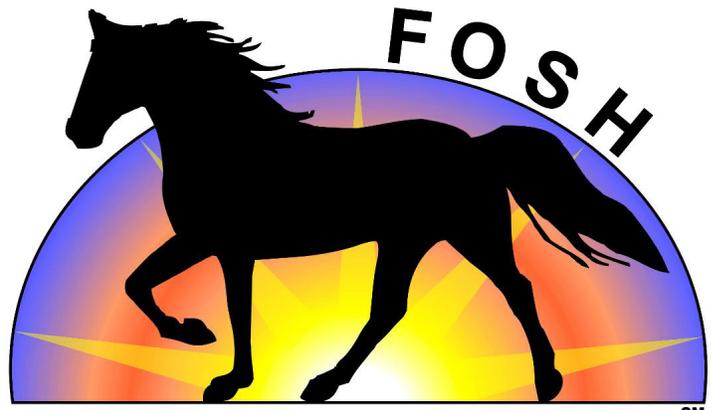
### **Larry Whitesell 3-Day Clinic**

June 19 - June 21  
Heartland, MI  
Contact: Karia  
413-281-2407  
Karia0429@yahoo.com

### **Larry Whitesell 3-Day Clinic**

June 26 - June 28  
Indiana  
Contact: Abigale  
260-248-7385  
Agettinger7@gmail.com

Please consider adding FOSH to your list of worthy causes in making a tax-free charitable deduction or help us to promote legislation, education, and training that protects and helps gaited horses, simply by renewing your own membership or giving a gift membership to a kindred spirit.



**Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.**

We know you have many choices when it comes to giving. Thank you for considering FOSH.

## **FOSH Membership Application and Order Form**

All annual memberships include a digital, bi-monthly issue of the Sound Advocate & educational packets. Mail to: FOSH 6614 Clayton Rd. #105, St. Louis, MO 63117

Type of Membership (check one)

Annual: Single \_\_\_ \$30 Annual Family \_\_\_ \$50 Annual Youth <18 \_\_\_ \$20 Lifetime \_\_\_ \$600

Organization Membership (for your gaited horse club or association) \_\_\_ \$50

Please print neatly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Breed (s) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional donations \_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_ \$40 \_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about FOSH? \_\_\_\_\_