# The Sound Advocate

Thank you for 50 years of service to the Tennessee Walking Horse




A Champion for All Gaited Horses

Volume 9
Issue 3, 2026

# Sound Advocate

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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

The Sound Advocate is a digital magazine published quarterly by Friends of Sound Horses, Inc. Reproduction of any article is prohibited without the express written permission of FOSH.

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.

FOSH does not endorse the content of any advertisement in this publication, nor does it warrant the accuracy of any advertisement.

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 gvehige115@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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Half page $75
Quarter page $60
Business Card $25
Directory $25

Discounts for Multiple Issues
2 issues - 10% off total fee
4 issues - 20% off total fee
6 issues - 30% off total fee

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.

Like us on Facebook.

**On the cover:** After 50 years, Canada's *Walking Horse News* is ceasing publication. The April 2026 cover is courtesy of Marjorie Lacy.

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# From the President...



Dear FOSH Friends and Supporters,

We thought you might want to read an unusual letter from Ms. Juarez, USDA, in the event you have not seen it on their website. It is on page 7 and once again, we are angry and saddened that the Horse Protection Act (HPA) appears to be nonexistent for big lick owners and trainers. From two events, their drug of choice was a sedative – in which 97.6% of the horses tested positive while 59% of the samples contained two or more prohibited substances. I cannot imagine what additional evidence the USDA requires to enforce the law.

According to Ms. Juarez, the publishing of the information will cause an immediate and significant reduction in the use of sedatives and other prohibited substances. I am scratching my head on this one as publishing names, tickets, suspensions, etc., has not made a single dent in stopping these horrific practices. Ms. Juarez should realize this as she has been involved in HPA enforcement for a long time, including when suspension records were made public.

Next up, how was your Summer? I realize it was unbearably hot for most of us; however, we would love to hear if you tried any new-to-you activities with your trusty steed. It seems that some of our members no longer find showing to be as much fun or as interesting. What is cool is that our members continue to expand their horsemanship skills and knowledge by attending clinics just like the Carl Bledsoe clinic held last weekend.

We also have in this issue an article by my dear friend, Barb Wood. Barb and I met at hunter jumper riding lessons forty years ago and stayed in touch through horses, careers and relationships. Barb went the warmblood dressage route until a few years ago when she tried Western Dressage with a gaited horse! Of course, she's crazy about his abilities, attitude and mind.

Here is to some great trail riding this autumn with sunny skies and mild weather! Enjoy!

*Teresa*

*Teresa Bippen, FOSH President*
*Tbippen1957@yahoo.com*

# From the Editor...



Hello FOSH Friends.

This year I've joined the board of directors of two different equine organizations. It's not like I need anything more to do, but they were both in somewhat dire straights from people resigning. I figured I could help out at least until they were able to find additional people.

FOSH is in a similar situation. Many of the board members have been serving for years, and they are ready for a break. Might you be interested in helping? Or maybe you know someone who would like to get more involved. No experience is necessary. You really just need a love for horses. Please consider giving some time to help promote these beautiful gaited horses.

The cover story in this issue is an interview with Marjorie Lacy, the power behind *Walking Horse News* for 50 years. I have a huge amount of respect for keeping a publication active for so long. I know first hand the struggle to keep a magazine alive when advertising support wains and the difficult decision to stop publication. I did the same thing in 2017 with a magazine that had been around for 30 years (although I didn't have it that entire time).

Then round two of seeing a magazine end was during my tenure at the Arabian Horse Association as the managing editor of *Arabian Horse Life*. They decided to stop its printing and along with it I lost my job. Equine media (particularly print media) is a difficult place to be. Congraluations to Marjorie for her many years of dedication and success. I hope she enjoys her downtime.

Take some time to enjoy this issue. I'd also love to hear what type of stories you would like to read going foward. This is your publication. Please feel free to email me at stephaniejruff@gmail.com.

*Stephanie*

*Stephanie J. Ruff*
*Editor, stephaniejruff@gmail.com*



## Open Letter from USDA Animal and Plant Heath Inspection Service

Dear Management of Horse Shows, Exhibitions, Sales, and Auctions (Management), Horse Industry Organizations and Associations (HIOs), and Designated Qualified Persons (DQPs); and Owners, Trainers, Exhibitors, Custodians involved in Horse Protection Act (HPA) Regulated Events:

Last month, I provided you with an update on the USDA's work to implement a recommendation from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to collect swabs from the pasterns of horses at HPA-covered events for substance testing and blood samples to identify medications that may alter a horse's behavior during compliance inspections. The initial scope of this effort involves collecting samples without gathering any associated personally identifiable information about the horse, its owner, custodian, rider, or any other person associated with the horse.

Today, USDA shared aggregate findings from two events on its website. Consistent with NAS' recommendation, the laboratory analyzing the samples followed the United States Equestrian Federation's rules for substances. Out of the 41 post-show blood samples (from padded and flat shod horses) collected at the two events, the laboratory findings show that 97.6 percent of samples contained sedatives, and 59 percent contained two or more prohibited substances, including local anesthetics, NSAIDs, corticosteroids, and antihistamines. These results can be found on USDA's Horse Protection webpage under the header, "Horse Protection Event Reports" at aphis.usda.gov/hpa.

We recognize that the industry needs timely information to support compliance and prompt corrective action. Accordingly, we will continue to collect samples at HPA covered events and will share aggregated results—without any personally identifiable information—on our public website and directly share them with industry stakeholders.

As sampling and testing continue, we expect to see an immediate and significant reduction in the use of sedatives, masking agents, and other prohibited substances – both of which are critical to eliminating soring and ensuring fair competition. We will continue sharing additional summaries of laboratory findings so that stakeholders can monitor trends, evaluate progress, and make informed decisions in advance of upcoming events.

Your leadership and cooperation remain critical as we work together to eliminate soring practices and strengthen the integrity of HPA covered events. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Emi Roberson at emily.a.roberson@usda.gov or (405) 394 4846.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Juarez
Deputy Administrator, Animal Care
USDA APHIS

Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.

# Do you have a passion for supporting sound gaited horses?

## *Friends of Sound Horses (FOSH) needs you!*

In 2027, the FOSH board will have three openings. The nominating committee is reaching out to FOSH members to see who may be interested in filling the role of President and the role of Secretary/Treasurer. The role of Secretary/Treasurer may be combined or separated at the discretion of the board.

**The nominating committee consists of Lucy Rangel, Anita Dunham, and Gina Vehige.**

The board will vote on filling these key officer positions at the November/December meeting. Board positions are strictly volunteer (unpaid). The current president and secretary/treasurer will assist with the transition to newly appointed officers.

# Officer Duties

## President

- The President schedules and presides at meetings of the Board and consults with Board members on meeting agendas.
- The President votes in the case of a tie vote by the Board.
- The President represents the Board in conducting the day-to-day management of FOSH business and performs other duties delegated by the Board.
- The outgoing President serves as a nonvoting advisory member of the Board for one year after the term ends (unless elected to serve a new term as a Board member).
- The President serves as the chief spokesperson for FOSH.

## Secretary

- The Secretary maintains the business records of FOSH.
- Takes minutes at all meetings and distributes them to Board members.
- Performs duties customary to the office and other duties assigned by the Board.

## Treasurer

- The Treasurer maintains all financial records of FOSH.
- Accounts for all funds and keeps financial records.
- Issues monthly financial statements.
- Performs other duties customary to the office and as assigned by the Board.

Meetings are generally monthly when there is business to conduct and are held via teleconference.

Per the bylaws, no individual employed as a trainer or the spouse of a trainer may serve as a member of the FOSH Board.

## Interested in running?

**Please contact Gina Vehige at**
**gvehige115@gmail.com**
and include a short biography and why you are interested in the position.

# Celebrating 50 Years of *Walking Horse News*

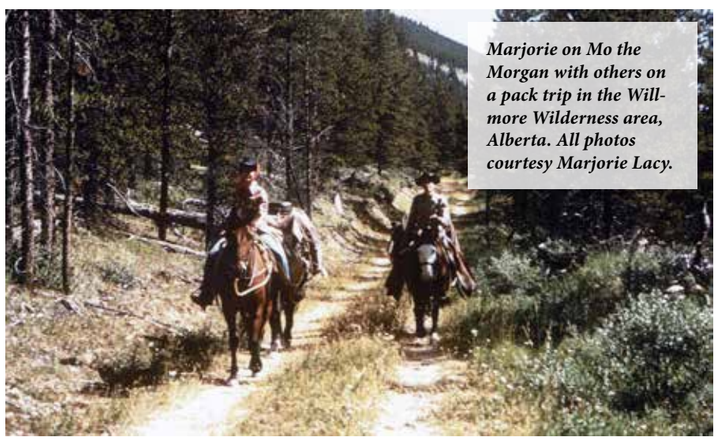
With the Canadian *Walking Horse News* publishing its last issue in August 2026, we wanted to hear from the person behind it all, Marjorie Lacy, and congratulate her on celebrating 50 years of dedication to the plain-shod Tennessee Walking Horse (TWH).

**Sound Advocate:** Were you always interested in horses? How did you get involved with Tennessee Walking Horses and what do you love about them?
**Marjorie Lacy:** I was always fascinated with horses – any and all horses. I think I must have been imprinted on them as a toddler in the forties, seeing the big black team that worked at the lumberyard near our house come back to the barn to be unhitched.  (The teamster even let me ride up on the wagon bench with him once in a while!)

After I learned to read, I devoured every book I could find about horses. Marguerite Henry's Album of Horses about many of the American breeds was so interesting. In it, the old-time Tennessee Walkers sounded ideal, but I'd never seen or heard of one in Manitoba at that time.

Skip ahead a quarter century. My husband and I were living in Edmonton, Alberta, and we had four horses for mountain riding and pack trips. My little bay Morgan was an excellent horse for me, a novice rider, except for his jack-hammer trot! However, every once in while he would go into a smooth gliding gait – just like riding on a cloud. But it was transitory, usually when he was walking down a slope and wanting to go faster than I would let him without breaking to a trot. I remembered the description of the Walkers from *Album of Horses*. If there actually was a breed that smooth, I wanted one!

So, I started searching for Tennessee Walkers. This was in the late 60s early 70s, long before the internet. I checked all the local and provincial classifieds in all the newspapers and farm papers. I contacted



*Marjorie on Mo the Morgan with others on a pack trip in the Willmore Wilderness area, Alberta. All photos courtesy Marjorie Lacy.*



the very few who advertised Walkers. No luck, but I kept a record of any I found. I also sent for Calvin Miller's Double Diamond Ranch catalogs. My dream catalogs! Dozens of Walkers listed there, but Rhame, North Dakota was a long, long way to go for a horse.

In the meantime, we'd moved west to be closer to the mountains. And one day in 1974 I saw an ad in the Western Producer paper for two TWH mares in Alberta which was not that far away. They turned out to be a mare and filly that I'd sighed over from Millers catalog! We drove right down to see them. We purchased both, a big palomino, Major's Gold Lady, and her 3-year-old daughter by Sun's Merry Man.

Since we had no land of our own yet, we made a deal with folks I'd discovered on the other side of the province who owned Prince Radar, a stallion from Montana. We arranged that they would keep the mares on a foal share basis while we searched for land.

Those two mares were the beginning of our adventure with Walkers. I treasure the easy-going, people-friendly temperaments. The 24-year-old stallion I own now, Uphill Heir Trigger, aka Smokey, is the 4th generation from that first mare, Major's Gold Lady.  We raised him and his mother, Uphill Arnica (Sawdust), along with others from the same lines. Uphill Sand'N Sable (Betty Buckskin), Sawdust's



*Lady's Merry Mist Canadian # 89, USA #713370 was one of the first two TWH Marjorie owned.*

daughter, achieved the Platinum Dam Award offered by the Canadian Registry, while Smokey was named the first Platinum Sire. They are the only Walkers to achieve this award to date.

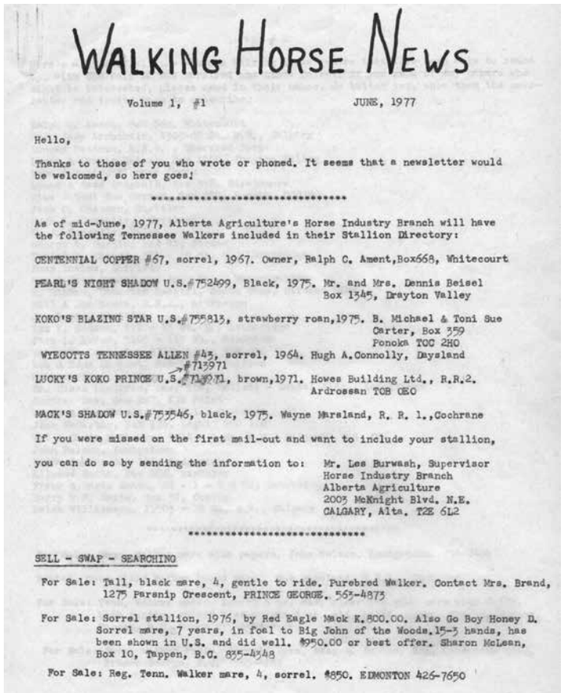
There are 39 TWH in the Candadian Registry of the Tennesse Walking Horse (CRTWH) that carry our Uphill farm prefix and many more sired by stallions we stood at Uphill Farm over the years.

**SA:** What made you start the *Walking Horse News* (*WHN*)? Who bore the cost of those first years?
**ML:** The search to find a Walker here in Alberta took me so long and was so much more difficult than it should have been. I'd enjoyed receiving the Morgan Horse newsletter and thought "Why couldn't the Walkers have something like that?"

So, I sent out a letter to about 17 TWH folks whom I'd found in my search and asked if anyone else would be interested. Quite a few replied, others contacted owners

they'd heard of, and before we knew it there was a list of over 30 names.

It turned out that there was already a thriving group of owners in southern Alberta who had organized TWH classes at various fairs and horse shows. Another group who already owned Walkers were the dog trial guys who train and compete with their bird dogs, mostly pointers, on the Saskatchewan and Alberta prairies. These dogs cover a lot of ground and need a fast smooth-going horse to follow them. There were individuals from all over Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan and Manitoba, even some as far east as Ontario who had TWH, but we just hadn't been connected. Now that was to change.



WALKING HORSE NEWS

Volume 1, #1 JUNE, 1977

Hello,

Thanks to those of you who wrote or phoned. It seems that a newsletter would be welcomed, so here goes!

**********************************

As of mid-June, 1977, Alberta Agriculture's Horse Industry Branch will have the following Tennessee Walkers included in their Stallion Directory:

CENTENNIAL COPPER #67, sorrel, 1967. Owner, Ralph C. Ament,Box668, Whitecourt

PEARL'S NIGHT SHADOW U.S.#752499, Black, 1975. Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Beisel Box 1345, Drayton Valley

KOKO'S BLAZING STAR U.S.#755815, strawberry roan,1975. B. Michael & Toni Sue Carter, Box 359 Ponoka T0C 2H0

WYECOTTS TENNESSEE ALLEN #43, sorrel, 1964. Hugh A.Connolly, Drysland #719971

LUCKY'S KOKO PRINCE U.S.#719971, brown,1971. Howes Building Ltd., R.R.2. Ardrossan T0B 0E0

MACK'S SHADOW U.S.#755846, black, 1975. Wayne Mareland, R. R. 1.,Cochrane

If you were missed on the first mail-out and want to include your stallion, you can do so by sending the information to: Mr. Les Burwash, Supervisor Horse Industry Branch Alberta Agriculture 2003 McKnight Blvd. N.E. CALGARY, Alta. T2E 6L2

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SELL - SWAP - SEARCHING

For Sale: Tall, black mare, 4, gentle to ride. Purebred Walker. Contact Mrs. Brand, 1275 Parsnip Crescent, PRINCE GEORGE. 563-4875

For Sale: Sorrel stallion, 1975, by Red Eagle Mack K.800.00. Also Go Boy Honey D. Sorrel mare, 7 years, in foal to Big John of the Woods.15-3 hands, has been shown in U.S. and did well. $950.00 or best offer. Sharon McLean, Box 10, Tappen, B.C. 835-2348

For Sale: Reg. Tenn. Walker mare, 4, sorrel. $850. EDMONTON 426-7650

The first *Walking Horse* ewsletter, three pages long, went out in June of 1977 (photo bottom left). I mailed out 70 of that first one and by the August one had 24 subscribers (since I'd asked for a subscription fee of $2.00 to cover postage, stencils and paper. I'd been given permission to use the school equipment and typed the stencil (Hunt & Peck method) and cranked it out by hand on a spiritmaster typewriter. One hundred seven-page *Walking Horse* newsletters were mailed out in August.

By October we had 45 subscribers, and 71 by December. People were hungry for information, eager to write about their TWH, send ads for sale or wanted, and ask questions about training, registration, and where to find others with Walkers. I subsidized the newsletter to all for whom we could find addresses that first year but after that only sent a free invitational copy to anyone new who came along.

**SA:** When did you add another person to assist you? Why did you move from a newsletter to a magazine format? Switch from a typewriter to a computer? Source to outside printing? Go on-line?
**ML:** The newsletter continued as simply printed pages until the end of 1987. It changed when Jo Kingsland came on board with a vision of the *WHN* as a professionally printed breed magazine. *WHN* bought a Gestetner so we could print more than 100 copies at a time. (The typed stencil faded out by 100 copies!) We then added some photocopied pages so we could include a few photos. Next came professionally printed covers, paid for by ads from breeders who wanted to advertise their farms and stallions. Eventually the whole magazine except the covers was photocopied (and the Gestetner is still sitting in my basement). Also in the 80s *WHN* was asked to become the print carrier of news from the CRTWH, incorporated in 1984.

Like a snowball rolling downhill the newsletter kept growing. In the 90s, we were carried columns by Allanna Jackson, Backyard Walkin', and Franne Brandon's From Foundations to the Future. Subscriptions rose to nearly 500, and some issue contained 40 to 50 pages. But then in 2000 Jo announced she'd be 65, and she was retiring. I really thought this was the end. I'd gathered most of the content and stories, but Jo had been setting up and mailing the magazine. How could it continue?

Then came desktop publishing! We had been using computers for several years but not to that extent. I persuaded Jo to stay on for another year while I learned the basics. With a new computer and lessons on how to use the Publisher program, WHN carried on. Trail Printing, the local printing shop, allowed me to work there, and they took over printing the magazine. Jo agreed to continue mailing, and at last *Walking Horse News* was a professionally printed magazine with colour photos and ads (but colour only on the covers).



VOLUME XXIV No. 1 JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2000

Walking Horse News

In 2016 Jo died suddenly. From then on the magazine had to be mailed directly from Edson. That was the year that it became an e-mailed publication as well. When one of the original subscribers moved to South America but still wanted his WHN magazine, there was only one way to accomplish it. I set up an e-mail version in addition to the print copy, which some others appreciated as well. They really liked the fact that it was all in colour.

The years marched along. On the 45th anniversary of *Walking Horse News* I thought how neat it would

be to have the whole magazine printed in colour. Colour photos were now so easily taken on subscribers' phones.  When I asked the printer to do the whole magazine in colour, he charged me the same as for greyscale just to mark the occasion! When I saw the results, I just couldn't go back.  Ever since, all photos in *Walking Horse News* have been in colour. Now I wish I could just wave a magic wand and have all the back issues light up in colour! It just adds so much.

**SA:** Why did you put "Dedicated to the Plain Shod Tennessee Walker in Canada" on the front of every magazine since the covers have been professionally printed?
**ML:** In the 80s the question of soring came up. Rumours floated around. Could it be true? It didn't seem to be something we needed to worry about here where nearly all the horses were trail and using horses that were only shod if needed for riding on gravel or rocks or for the occasional show class. But the question 'Is it true'? 'Can it be true'? kept coming up. A real split opened between those who denied it and those who were afraid it was true.

I happened to see a list of persons on suspension for soring and realized one of them was booked to judge an up-coming show in Alberta. *WHN* was asked to carry an ad for it. Surely this wasn't true? I phoned the show chairman. The response was 'What was my problem? He would be off suspension before the show was to occur.'  The upshot was that WHN didn't carry the ad, the show went on, and that particular group of TWH owners stopped supporting the magazine.

**SA:** How have you seen the flat-shod TWH industry change over the years?
**ML:** In my opinion we do not have a TWH industry per se in Canada but more a community. Only a very few made the kind of investment in stock, trainers, and facilities that would qualify as an industry to my way of thinking. There are no shows here anymore. Most who ride TWH are people who love the breed as a valued trail and pleasure horse. And those are mostly the folks who continue to breed and raise them.

As well, interest and enthusiasm for horses and horse-keeping in general is waning. More and more people are living in urban environments and simply cannot afford to keep a horse even if they had the interest. The future of pleasure saddle horses does not look as bright now as it did in the early years of *WHN*.

**SA:** What made you continue the WHN for 50 years?
**ML:** I think the magazine just took on a life of its own. The TWH owners, breeders, and WHN subscribers became my community and, in many cases, my best friends. It's a real wrench to give it up but as they say, nothing lasts forever. I'll still have my horses and my friends.



# My Gaited Journey With My Spotted Saddle Horse Armed Comanche

**By Barbara Wood**

I purchased Armed Comanche whom I call "Chief" in early 2021. At the time, I was apprenticing as a Western Dressage Judge and we were being trained on how to judge gaited horses as well. I was very impressed with the beauty and harmony of the Spotted Saddle Horses and decided to purchase one for myself. I saw Chief, and he was sold after 5 minutes on his back! I could feel his honesty and heart immediately. His gait was four beat, his walk was solid and his lope was lovely. I thought these are the wonderful basics with which to begin our dressage journey. Chief is smart and truly trying to always please me and perform any movement correctly. I personally love to show and so this combination has led us to an extensive and successful show record that just keeps growing.

To begin, Chief is the very first Spotted Saddle Horse to obtain Supreme Champion status with WDAA (Western Dressage Association of




*Barbara Wood aboard Armed Comanche "Chief" at the 2025 WDAA World Show at the Lazy E Arena in Guthrie Oklahoma.*

America). This is hard for any horse and for a Spotted Saddle Horse, this is proof they can shine in the western dressage ring like a diamond.

It is a privilege and honor to ride and own Chief and I do not take this for granted. I train him to soft aids and he is just like a magic carpet ride. I have ridden many trotting/jogging horses in my lifetime and still do, and I can say that Chief is my favorite horse for riding and competing. Chief is fun, and the harmony is there. When we show, of course, we would like ribbons and we do, but we also are out there to show the world just how capable and truly beautiful this horse is.

Our journey is anything but over, and we hope to perform another Gaited Musical Freestyle this year at the World Show in Guthrie, Oklahoma, compete in WDAA live shows and WDAA online shows as much as we can.

Chief is amazing and knows when we are performing and steps up to the plate for every dressage test. We performed two gaited musical freestyles at the World Show in 2024 and 2025 and are World Champions in these divisions.

Chief also garnered several World Championship honors at the Western Dressage World Shows. In addition to these wins and ribbons and prizes, WDAA has other programs for any horse.

One is the WHLPAP (WDAA Horse Lifetime Points and Awards Program). This program travels with the horse through their journey in Western Dressage with WDAA. This program is all about recognizing the growth and accomplishments of the dedicated horses/equines in the program.

There are awards and career milestones earned with beautiful lifetime awards that celebrate your horse's achievements in Western Dressage. These points never expire and travel with ownership changes and different riders.

I enrolled Chief into the WHLPAP program right away as well. As a result, so far, we have so many milestones.

In 2022 Armed Comanche earned his WDAA Register of Merit (35 points) and Register of Achievement (100 points).

In 2023 Armed Comanche received his Register of Excellence (200 points) and Bronze Medal (300 points).

In 2024 Armed Comanche received his Silver Medal (400 points).

In 2025 Armed Comanche received his Gold Medal (500 points) and the Supreme Champion (700 points) Award. Supreme Champion requires at least five tests submitted riding Level 4 or higher and awards a Supreme Champion Buckle.



This is quite the achievement for Chief as many horses can take years to reach these milestones.

Secondly, in 2025 Armed Comanche also won "YEHP"; Year End High Points in two Open Gaited divisions, which is a new program though WDAA. A beautiful belt buckle is awarded to all horse and rider combos who place in their divisions. YEHP rewards Western Dressage horses for their performances across various classes throughout the competition year, encouraging broader and more competitive participation in WDAA-recognized shows.

After many years riding and competing in classical dressage, I am impressed with WDAA. I believe it has opened a new door for these beautiful harmonious partnerships with all equines. WDAA has embraced the gaited horses with appreciation and respect. I am so excited about this for so many horses! There are so many gaited horses out there! The Spotted Saddle Horses are one of my favorites. They look so spectacular in the dressage ring and our attire can be simple or dressy if you like. I always dress to try and bring out the beauty of Chief when I show. It is a choice, and for me it is part of an artistic expression and pride.

My passion for the Spotted Saddle Horse continues to grow, and I am always so excited to judge them at shows, see them attending clinics and taking western dressage lessons. Get out there!

Canadian Registry
of the
Tennessee
Walking Horse



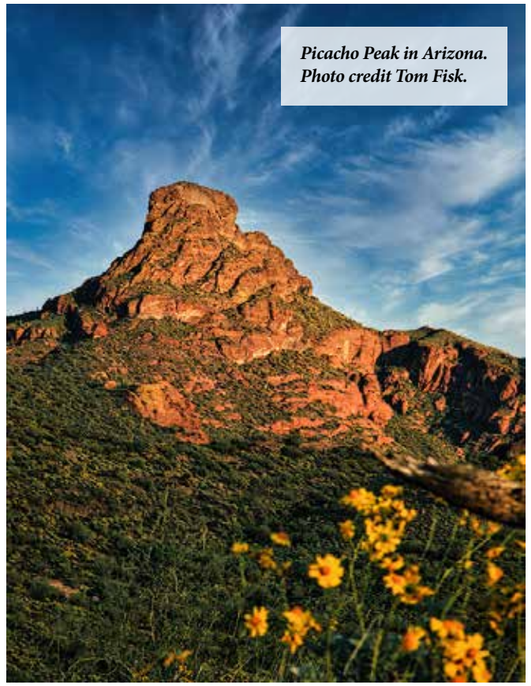
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# Riding History: Gaited Horses on the Butterfield Overland Trail

By Janet de Acevedo Macdonald



*Picacho Peak in Arizona. Photo credit Tom Fisk.*

The Butterfield Overland Route stretched roughly 2,800 miles from St. Louis to San Francisco, carrying passengers, mail, and freight across some of the most varied terrain in the American West. Today, much of that original corridor still exists in fragments — dirt roads, ranch tracks, county lanes, and preserved historic segments — offering modern riders a rare chance to experience history not as a distant story, but as a landscape you can feel beneath your horse's hooves.

For gaited-horse riders, the Butterfield is especially compelling. The route's long, rolling distances and mixed footing echo the very conditions that made smooth-gaited horses so valuable to 19th-century travelers. Riding these segments today is a way to connect the past and present through motion, terrain, and the steady rhythm of a horse bred for distance.

**A Road Built for Endurance**

When John Butterfield launched his Overland Mail Company in 1858, he created the longest stagecoach line in the world. Coaches traveled day and night, stopping only to change horses, repair equipment, or take on water. The route crossed:

- the Ozarks of Missouri and Arkansas
- the prairies of Indian Territory
- the deserts and sky-island basins of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona
- the rugged passes of Southern California

The Butterfield line operated for just under three years, but its impact was enormous. It connected communities, accelerated communication, and laid down a corridor that would later influence railroads, highways, and settlement patterns.

An 1860 Butterfield courier riding near Tucson wrote that his "little pacing horse never once broke my writing hand," even over rocky ground — a reminder that smooth-gaited mounts were prized for keeping riders functional mile after mile.

Today, riders can still trace portions of that original path — and in many places, the land looks remarkably similar to what travelers saw in the 1850s.

**Missouri: The Journey Begins**

Missouri was the eastern anchor of the Butterfield system, with St. Louis the official starting point. But it was Springfield — the first major division headquarters — that became the operational heart of the route.

Modern riders exploring Missouri's Butterfield segments will find:

- rolling oak-hickory forests
- limestone bluffs
- creek crossings
- quiet gravel roads that parallel original stage lines

The Missouri State Fairgrounds in Sedalia also holds a unique connection: the grounds include historic structures and exhibit areas that interpret the state's transportation and agricultural heritage, making it a natural complement to any Butterfield-themed ride or visit.

**Across the Southern Plains and Deserts**

As the route moved southwest, the terrain shifted dramatically.

**Apps for Modern Riders**

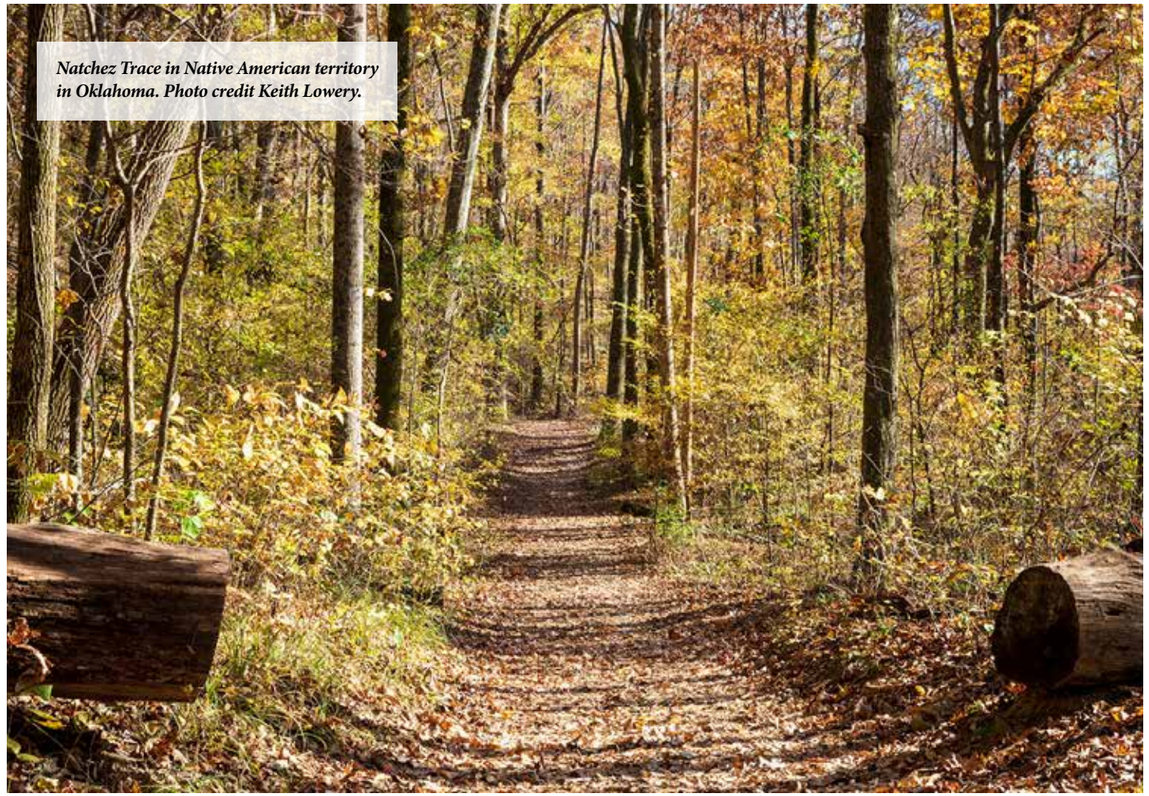
While there is no single, official "Butterfield Overland Trail App," most riders build their own toolkit using these three apps:

- NPS App — Best for Fort Bowie, Dragoon Springs, Apache Pass, and any NPS-managed Butterfield sites. Includes maps, interpretive stops, trail descriptions, and offline access.
- Avenza Maps — The most practical navigation tool for riders. Allows offline use of geo-referenced BLM, USFS, NPS, and county maps that overlap Butterfield segments. Shows your exact location even without cell service.
- Ride With GPS — Useful where local historical societies or trail groups have uploaded Butterfield-adjacent gravel or county-road routes. Not comprehensive, but excellent for mapped segments.

<u>Indian Territory (Oklahoma)</u>

Riders encounter open prairie, blackjack oak, and long, rhythmic stretches ideal for gaited horses. Many county roads still follow original stage alignments.

A trader on the Natchez Trace once recalled his horse "moved like a shadow under the trees," the only sound the soft thud of hooves on leaf-molded earth — a timeless description of what gaited horses offered long-distance travelers.



*Natchez Trace in Native American territory in Oklahoma. Photo credit Keith Lowery.*

Texas

The Butterfield corridor through Texas is vast — more than 700 miles — and includes:

- ranch country
- desert basins
- rugged canyons
- historic stage stops preserved or marked by local groups

Some of the best-preserved segments lie in West Texas, where the landscape remains wide, quiet, and unchanged.

New Mexico and Arizona

These states offer some of the most visually striking remnants of the route:

- volcanic mesas
- high-desert grasslands
- sky-island foothills
- preserved ruts and stage stop ruins

Arizona's portion is especially evocative. Riders can explore areas near Fort Bowie, Dragoon Springs, Picacho Peak, and the San Pedro Valley — landscapes where the Overland Mail coaches once rattled through Apache Pass and across open desert.

California: Final Push to the Pacific

The last leg of the Butterfield route crossed the mountains and chaparral of Southern California before descending into the coastal valleys.

Riders today can experience:

- oak-studded hills
- historic ranch corridors
- preserved stage stations
- multi-use trails that parallel original alignments

The terrain is demanding but rewarding — a fitting end to a transcontinental journey.

**Why Gaited Horses Belong on Historic Trails**

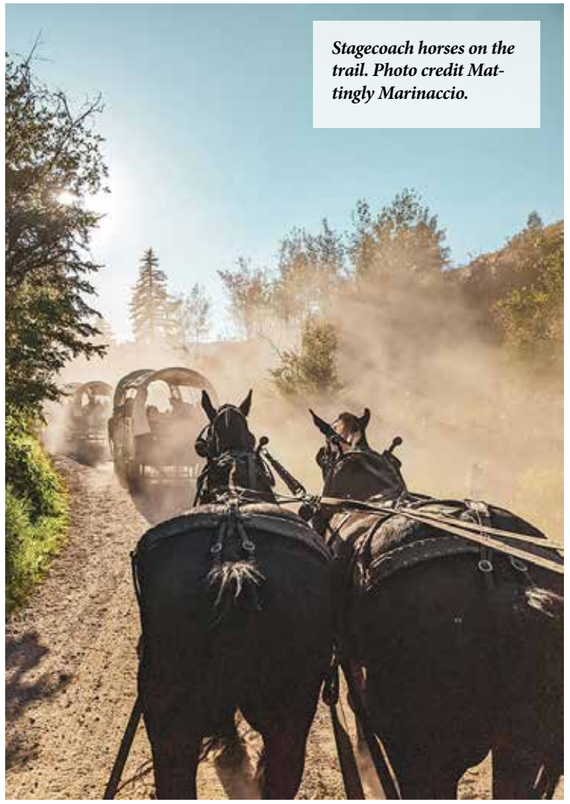
Long-distance travel shaped the development of gaited breeds. Riders valued:

- smooth movement over rough ground
- efficient energy use
- the ability to cover miles without excessive fatigue

One drover joked that men on trotting horses "walked like they'd been split in two," while those on smooth-gaited mounts were ready to keep going — a blunt testament to why gait mattered on the open prairie.

On the Butterfield, these qualities shine. Whether you're tölting, fox-trotting, racking, or running walk, the terrain invites a steady, forward rhythm that feels both natural and historically appropriate. Riding a gaited horse on the Butterfield isn't reenactment — it's continuity.



*Stagecoach horses on the trail. Photo credit Mattingly Marinaccio.*



*A dirt track portion of the trail stretches for miles. Photo credit Brett Sayles.*

**Traveler's Notes**
- Total historic route: approx. 2,800 miles
- Operation: 1858–1861
- Stagecoach speed: 5–12 mph
- Travel time: 22–25 days end-to-end (depending on weather, Apache Pass conflicts, equipment failures, and river crossings)
- Best modern riding segments: Missouri, Oklahoma, West Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Southern California

**Planning Your Ride:**
Modern riders typically explore the Butterfield in segments. Some of the most accessible options include county roads that follow original alignments, public-land trails near historic stage stops, ranch or private-land rides offered during special events, and heritage corridors maintained by local historical societies.

For more history and route details, local historical societies along the Butterfield corridor — including the Greene County Archives (MO) (greenecountymo.gov/archives/), the Oklahoma Historical Society (okhistory.org/), Fort Bowie National Historic Site (AZ) (nps.gov/fobo/index.htm), and the San Bernardino County Museum (CA) (museum.sbcounty.gov/) — offer maps, archives, and visitor information.



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*Thank you!*

# *How Much Should You Feed Your Horse?*

**by Jim Fiorini, aka "Jim the Feed Guy"**

*Originally published on Facebook.*

One question that I am often asked is "how much should I feed?" The true answer is another question; "How high is up?" I have covered the three categories of commercial horse feed; balancer, performance feed and complete feed.

Balancer and performance feed rates are determined after a horse is being fed as much forage as necessary to maintain weight.

Complete feed is used when forage is not available or when the horse's condition is not conducive to forage. Every feed that is complying with the AAFCO guidelines is required to publish feeding directions on their bag or feed tag. Below is an example of the feeding directions for a performance feed and I can tell you from experience that these tables for any feed are next to useless and are only published to maintain compliance with regulations.

Here's why.

This is a performance feed so it is designed to be fed in addition to forage. This is clearly indicated; however the baseline rates are based on 1.2% of the horse's bodyweight. That is probably a bit low since most of the feed guidelines are 1.5% of bodyweight so that's one strike. Now let's talk about the quality of the forage. First cutting? Second cutting? Orchard grass? Coastal? The weight management attributes of forage have as many variables as putting an object into Earth orbit. Literally rocket science.

One of my favorite subjective variables is work. My "heavy" work is probably just a warmup for many professional riders.

Although I go by "Jim the Feed Guy" I am really the forage first guy. Before I will suggest a feed program I like to ensure that the horse is being fed maximum forage to maintain a healthy weight because forage is what keeps a horse healthy and the natural fiber is what is best to maintain weight.

The supplemental fat and carbs in performance feeds should only be required to offset work and performance requirements. But that's not really important for this piece.

The only important statement of feeding directions because it is the only one that is black and white can be found by skipping all the way to the bottom where you will find the "minimum feed rate."

As you can see in the example the minimum feed rate for this feed is 0.3 pounds per 100 pounds of bodyweight. Mathematically, if your horse weighs 1,000 pounds it will require a MINIMUM of 3 pounds of this feed per day to meet the daily requirements as prescribed by the NRC in order to sustain a 1,000-pound horse at maintenance. Basically eating, sleeping and making manure.

So, if your 1,000-pound horse is gaining too much weight on 3 pounds of Healthy Edge and you cut it back you are cheating the horse out of essential nutrition. Likewise, if the horse is holding a good weight on 3 pounds per day but is in work he is likely being underfed nutrients.

These are cases when a feed should be supplemented with balancer or, if possible, feed more or better forage for weight and add a ration balancer.

Over the years I have heard many times some version of "Oh, that feed is awful. I fed it a few years ago and my horse looked terrible!"

"Really! How much were you feeding?"

*Continued on page 31*

| | Weight of Horse in Pounds | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Lifestyle** | **600** | **800** | **1,000** | **1,200** |
| Minimum Hay or Equivalent Pasture* (lbs/day) | 7.00 | 9.50 | 12.00 | 14.50 |
| | **Strategy® Healthy Edge® Horse Feed (lbs/day)**** | | | |
| Maintenance – Minimum Activity | 2.00 | 2.50 | 3.25 | 3.75 |
| Maintenance – Average Activity | 2.75 | 3.50 | 4.25 | 5.00 |
| Maintenance – Elevated Activity | 3.25 | 4.25 | 5.25 | 6.25 |
| Light Work | 4.00 | 5.25 | 6.50 | 7.75 |
| Moderate Work | 5.50 | 7.25 | 9.00 | 10.75 |
| Early Gestation (first 250 days) | 2.75 | 3.75 | 4.50 | 5.50 |
| Late Gestation last 90 days) | 4.25 | 5.50 | 6.75 | 8.00 |
| Breed Stallion | 4.75 | 6.25 | 7.75 | 9.50 |

*This is the recommended minimum amount of hay to be fed. If feeding more hay, reduce the feeding rate of Strategy® Healthy Edge® horse feed by 1 pound for every additional 2 pounds of hay fed.

**Do not feed less than 0.3 pounds per 100 pounds of body weight per day. If your horse gains too much weight at that minimum feeding rate, then you should replace Strategy® Healthy Edge® horse feed with Enrich Plus® ration balancing feed.

# Murdoch Minute

## No. 100: Level Your Chin

By Wendy Murdoch

Do you tuck your chin when you ride? Feel tension in your throat and neck? Have difficulty breathing when you ride? Try to pull your chin back to your collar to sit up straight? Forcing your head position will adversely affect your rein contact and overall position. Yes, it is important to balance your head for good riding but not by creating tension in your neck.

Next time you ride notice what you do with your chin. Do you pull it down and in toward your throat? Do you pull your head back? Look down at the horse's withers? Or perhaps you push your chest forward and pull your shoulders back? Do you think of a string on the top of your head and try to pull yourself upward? While this can be a useful image for some, overdoing it can create a too-straight neck and overly tucked chin.

Your head weights approximately 8 – 15 lbs. That is about as much as the average bowling ball. It is perched on the top of your spine and supported by the entire spine and pelvis.

Often, when you attempt to "sit up straight" the natural curves are altered. The lumbar curve increases because you have overly hollowed your lower back. The cervical curve increases when your chin juts forward and up and is decreased when you pull your chin toward the back of your shirt collar. For good head balance it is best to allow the lumbar spine to flatten slightly due to your sitting position on the horse and maintain a natural curve in your neck so that your entire spine can lengthen upward and balance your head with ease.

To find a balanced head position take your reins in one hand and make the letter "L" using the thumb and index finger of your other hand. Bring the "L" toward your throat and chin. Place your thumb on your sternum. Most likely it will be at the very top, which is called the "manubrium". This piece of the sternum is the same of the Superman shield. Place your index finger on the point of your chin. Rest your chin on your finger and feel the length of your neck when in this position. Think of lengthening your neck slightly by "pricking your ears" the way your horse does when he sees something in the distance. Feel how your chest softly rises and your neck lengthens when you keep the "L" and prick your ears.

Ride at walk, trot and canter with your "L" marking the position of your chin. Change hands when you change direction. Of course if you need to, return your hand to the reins for steering or if your horse gets anxious. Remove your hand and continue to ride imagining the "L" and pricking your ears.

Use this Murdoch Minute to balance your head. When your neck lengthens without tension by you maintaining a space between your chin and your chest your shoulders relax. This improves your rein contact. When you need to keep both hands on the reins think of pricking your ears to lengthen your neck and always remember to enjoy the ride!







*Photo 1 (left): The rider is tucking his chin to his chest and pushing his chest forward. As a result he was always behind the motion of the horse.*

*Photo 2 (top): He has made an "L" with his thumb and index finger and placed the thumb on the sternum and index finger on the chin bone. This lifts his chin and lengthens his neck. Also notice how the chest has softened.*

*Photo 3 (bottom): Having taken his hand away he has maintained his neck length softer but open chest so that his head is well balanced without tension while restoring a natural curve to his neck.*

# Why Horse Owners Need to Rethink Bug Season the Rest of 2026

*Courtesy Merck Animal Health*

A record-breaking El Niño weather pattern has arrived, and with it a potentially unexpected impact on horse owners. Combined with expanding tick ranges and the first detection of New World screwworm in the U.S. since 1966, the threat for horses has changed in 2026.

How El Niño Reshapes Mosquito Risk

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently confirmed the onset of El Niño – one of the fastest developing on record, with a greater than 90% probability of strengthening into a "super El Niño" by fall.[1] The important issue for horse owners isn't whether their region will get more rain but rather the volatility of the season's weather. El Niño shifts bands of wet and dry weather in ways that are difficult to predict, creating ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes that transmit West Nile virus (WNV) and eastern equine encephalitis (EEE).

"It's the instability," explains Maureen Long, DVM, PhD, DACVIM, professor of equine medicine at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine. "Dry conditions followed by the wet create 'the pothole effect.' These are focal zones of standing water where mosquitoes, birds and animals all converge, creating the conditions for intense WNV and EEE transmission."

Rather than relying on previous mosquito season trends, owners should monitor local mosquito activity and consult their veterinarian as conditions can shift quickly and in unexpected locations.

A Region-by-Region Look at the Risk

The effects of El Niño will vary by geography, but few horse country regions will be unaffected, Long warns. Her regional breakdown:

- Southeast: Above-average fall and winter rainfall is creating conditions for year-round mosquito activity. Fall boosters are particularly important this year, protecting not only against WNV, which peaks in fall, but also against early spring EEE transmission.
- Midwest, Northeast and Mid-Atlantic: Warmer winters with less snow and more rain increase flooding risk, elevating mosquito-borne disease exposure through spring and summer. Coastal areas face heightened arbovirus risk from predicted winter rainstorms.
- California and the Southwest: El Niño effects are already established, with warmer ocean and land temperatures driving an intensive start to mosquito season, including high numbers of WNV-positive mosquito pools, dead birds and confirmed human cases.[2]

Vaccination Timing Matters

WNV is now endemic throughout the United States, while EEE continues expanding beyond its historical hotspots. Protection depends on completing recommended foundational annual vaccinations and staying current on booster doses.

"Young horses need more time to establish a strong antibody response and are more susceptible to EEE," Long notes. "Owners of horses under 5 should talk to their veterinarian about whether more frequent vaccination is appropriate, especially in the South."

Because the window before peak mosquito season may be compressed this year, owners should review vaccination schedules with their veterinarian and consult the American Association of Equine Practitioners vaccination guidelines for WNV and EEE. Many cases occur in horses that have not completed recommended annual vaccinations or received appropriate booster doses.

Ticks Continue to Spread

Changing weather patterns are only part of the story. According to Erika Machtinger, PhD, associate professor of entomology at Pennsylvania State University, expanding tick populations are also being driven by changes in wildlife populations, land use and habitat. Together, these factors are allowing ticks to establish themselves in areas where horse owners have historically faced lower risk.

"Horse owners should not assume historical patterns of tick risk still apply," Machtinger says. "Routine tick checks, vegetation management and locally appropriate veterinary prevention are becoming increasingly important."

Earlier this spring, the CDC reported that emergency department visits for human tick bites were the highest for that point in the season since 2017[3],underscoring broader seasonal tick activity across many parts of the country. "Horses and humans are exposed to many of the same tick vectors, including blacklegged ticks, making it reasonable to expect that broad patterns of tick-borne disease risk may be similar," says Toby Pinn-Woodcock, DVM, DACVIM, associate clinical professor at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine.

The two most common tick-borne diseases affecting horses in the U.S. are anaplasmosis and Lyme disease, both caused by pathogens transmitted by blacklegged ticks. Common clinical signs in horses with anaplasmosis include fever, lethargy, limb swelling and jaundice. Lyme disease is associated with four clinical syndromes in horses, including uveitis, neuroborreliosis, cutaneous pseudolymphoma, and nuchal bursitis (aka poll evil). Lyme disease is also frequently implicated with clinical signs of shifting leg lameness, joint swelling, back and neck pain and change in attitude, however a definitive diagnosis is challenging in these cases.

"Lyme disease in horses is considered a diagnosis of exclusion," Pinn-Woodcock explains. "A veterinarian must first rule out other common causes of these nonspecific clinical signs and find evidence of Lyme disease

exposure using an antibody detection test before concluding a Lyme diagnosis is appropriate – and many horses in endemic regions will test positive on antibody detection tests due to exposure."

Pinn-Woodcock encourages owners in both established and newly endemic regions to remain vigilant year-round. "In the northeastern U.S., tick-borne disease is diagnosed in horses year-round – tick activity decreases in colder months but it is not absent."

Another Emerging Threat

Mosquitoes and ticks aren't the only insect threats horse owners should be watching this year. New World screwworm (NWS), absent from the continental U.S. since 1966, has been confirmed in Texas and New Mexico, prompting USDA livestock movement restrictions and a national response effort. Unlike mosquitoes and ticks, screwworms target open wounds, making routine wound inspection a critical new habit, particularly for owners in southern states, where warmer year-round temperatures create a higher risk of sustained screwworm presence.

Eradication efforts are underway, but the timeline is measured in months to years. Horse owners should consult their veterinarian for current guidance on wound management and fly control and monitor screwworm.gov for the latest USDA recommendations as the situation evolves.

Stay Ahead of the Season

In a year defined by weather volatility, expanding tick ranges and emerging threats crossing U.S. borders for the first time in decades, horse owners can't rely on last year's assumptions to protect their horses this summer. "What makes this year different isn't just one threat – it's the convergence of several at once," says Chrissie Pariseau, DVM, MS, DABVP (Equine Practice), cVMA, Senior Equine Professional Services Veterinarian for Merck Animal Health. "In my experience, the horses that fare best are the ones whose owners stay informed, stay connected to their veterinarian, and are proactive in protecting their horses."

Dr. Long puts the stakes plainly: "When it comes to WNV and EEE, vaccination is the only reliable tool available." There is no specific treatment once a horse is infected. In an unpredictable season, the window to act is now.

Horse owners should review their horses' vaccination status with their vet. Vaccines that provide protection against WNV, EEE and WEE, such as PRESTIGE® 5 + WNV from Merck Animal Health, play an important role when administered according to veterinary recommendations.

*References*

*1 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Climate Prediction Center. ENSO Diagnostic Discussion. August 2026. cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.shtml*

*2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. West Nile Virus: Current Year Data. 2026. cdc.gov/west-nile-virus/data-maps/current-year-data.html*

*3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "CDC Data Show Weekly ER Visits for Tick Bites Higher Than Usual." April 23, 2026. cdc.gov/media/releases/2026/2026-cdc-data-show-weekly-er-visits-for-tick-bites-higher-than-usual.html*



*How Much Should You Feed Your Horse cont.*

"Oh, he's an air fern so I only fed about a cup twice a day."

The feed was great, the fact that the horse needed 4 pounds per day of the feed for full nutrients but was only getting 1 pound per day was why the horse looked terrible.

So, when starting any new feed be sure that the horse has all of its health and dental boxes checked, keep full-time hay available (unless it's chubby), start with the minimum daily feed rate and go from there. That will be your hard baseline.














# Soring DATA SHEET



*"That just looks wrong."*

— 10-year-old boy while watching video of a "big lick" horse shown in stacks and chains, June 10, 2011.

## WHAT IS SORING?

Soring is deliberately inducing pain to exaggerate a gaited horse's movement for the show ring. A variety of devious and cruel methods have been devised over the years. Soring violations also include many methods used to avoid detection. Soring is against Federal law and is subject to fines and penalties if detected at a public show or sale.

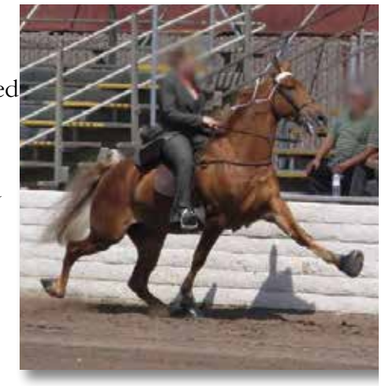
Soring includes the abuse of chains, foreign substances and chemicals, illegal shoeing to change the natural hoof angles, length of toe, weighted shoes, pressure shoeing, as well as the insertion of blocks and other devices between the hoof and the shoe stack to place pressure on the frog and sole of the foot to create pain in the front end of the horse. These methods all 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 hocks. Slang for an obviously sore-going horse is "going too deep."

## WHY IS THIS ABUSE DONE?

Soring is practiced to get gaited horses to artificially enhance their step to win in shows. A winning image is rewarded with ribbons, cash, recognition, future breedings and training fees.

## ENFORCEMENT TO END SORING

There is a federal law called the Horse Protection Act, which prohibits soring at shows and sales, enforced by the USDA. However, most inspections are self-regulated by HIOs (horse industry organizations licensed by the USDA.)



*"The topical samples from Tennessee Walking Horses had the highest incidences of positives (of illegal substances from gas chromatography samplings) that I've ever seen in my life."*

— Dr. Tomas Tobin, leading veterinarian in drug control and toxicology in competition horses, November 5, 2010
www.thomastobin.com

*Soring violations ... bilateral sore ... unilateral sore ... scar rule ... foreign substance ... illegal shoeing ... falsifying records ... pressure shoeing ...*



Artwork by Victoria von Kap-herr www.vonkapherr.com

## Pressure Soring

Pressure soring causes pain in a horse's front feet, so when each front hoof hits the ground, the horse will "snatch" the foot off the ground, resulting in an unnatural, high, dramatic step.

## HOW IT'S DONE

- Grinding the hoof sole down so thin "beads of blood show" and the sole gets spongy and super-sensitive.
- Taking the hoof wall down slightly shorter than the sole, so it provides no supporting protection, called "rolling the sole."
- Inserting hard objects between the shoe or pad and the tender sole, such as bolts (removable for inspections), half a golf ball, hardened epoxy, or a dried piece of hoof.
- "Blocking," which is standing the horse for hours on wedges duct-taped to the hoof.
- Purposely foundering a young horse (called "the natural fix" and "nature's way of soring").
- "Road foundering" the horse by riding fast on a hard surface such as a paved road.
- Extreme tightening of metal hoof bands to cause pain from excessive pressure on the hoof.

## HOW TO DETECT

**Observations:**



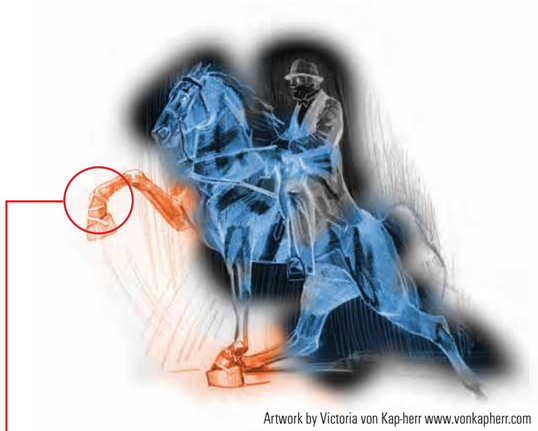
Horse in pain at a May, 2010 horse show.

- Horse lies down in stall and groans in pain.
- Horse is crampy and unwilling to move.
- Horse warms up into motion with a "praying mantis stance," with abnormal weight thrown on his hind quarters to avoid front end pain.
- Horse stands in classic "standing in a bucket" pose to alleviate pain in front legs (photo above).
- Response to hoof testers (ideal if shoes are pulled first).
- Digital radiography (x-ray will show extreme thinness of sole, any foreign objects, or excessive coffin bone rotation).
- Thermography to detect hot spots from pain.

## *Methods Used to Avoid Detection at Inspection*

- **numbing agents** that wear off between inspection and show time (such as injected anesthetic, "the shot," or surface application of Lidocaine).
- **"stewarding":** teaching the horse at practice inspections that flinching or reacting will cause worse pain, such as a beating or using a "hot stick" or electric prod.
- **distraction devices:** a nerve gum cord, bit burr under the saddle, hand twitch, alligator clips on sensitive genital tissue, or surgical staples under the mane, applied just before an inspection to cause distracting pain elsewhere during the inspection.
- **horse switching:** providing a substitute horse for inspection under false paperwork, and then switching and putting the sored horse into the show ring.

*fixing ... pressure soring ... "putting the fever in the foot" ... pressure shoeing ... "pinching the toes" ... bolting ... blocking ... "under pressure" ... "in a bind" ... quicked ... hot nailed ... "tightened up" (for bands) ... cranking ... "fixing below the pastern" ... going too deep ... concussion foundering ... "peak point" describes the maximum pain point in the weekly soring process ...*



Artwork by Victoria von Kap-herr www.vonkapherr.com

# Chemical Soring

Chemical soring is the application of painful, caustic liquids to tenderize the horse's pastern area (ankle), so the repeated strike of a chain is painful and causes the horse to snatch his foot higher with each step. The chain, a crucial part of this show horse style, is termed an "action device," and the exaggerated gaits cannot be created without this chain.

## HOW IT'S DONE

Chemicals are applied to the horse's lower legs, then the leg is wrapped in plastic for days. This causes the chemicals to "cook" into the flesh. This creates highly sensitized front pasterns that are painful when the chain strikes with every step. Examples of soring chemicals used:

- kerosene
- diesel
- croton oil
- GoJo hand cleaner
- WD40 oil
- mustard oil

With the increased scrutiny of soring-related scars, another cruel practice is used to remove the telltale scarring. The horse's legs are covered in a chemical stripping agent, which burns off old scar tissue through a very painful process.

*"Without the chains, there would be no need for a scar rule."*

– Humane activist, May, 2011.

## HOW TO DETECT



- Palpation
- Gas chromotography or "sniffer"
- Thermography
- Blood or saliva tests
- Drug-detection trained dog
- Visual inspections for:
  - scarring and inflammation, signs of soring insults.
  - wavy, rippled, curly hair on the front legs, an indicator of repeated chemical soring with leg wraps.
  - cording, a type of scarring caused by the plastic wrap sliding down and tightly bunching around the pasterns.
  - checking for application of foreign substances, by walking the barns and trailers at a show.



USDA scar rule violation photos, 2009

*Fixing ... Touching ... "putting them in a bucket" ... Soap 'em ... Fly spray (a term owners use so they can avoid admitting knowing that an illegal substance has been used on their horse) ... getting them right ... brushing them ... square 'em up ... head shake in a bottle ... dropping them ... Mojo (commonly used by people referring to GoJo hand cleaner) ...*



2-year-old in training with cruel mechanisms



Spotted Saddle horse hoof sheared off by band at show



The "big lick" package



2-year-old in training at renown stable

# What Can Be Done to End Soring?

## WHAT WOULD HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON ELIMINATING SORING?

- ☑ More money allocated to the USDA's enforcement. At present, USDA's inspectors attend only 7% of the shows, due to budget constraints. Relying on "self-policing" with industry inspectors has not been effective over the past decades.
- ☑ Severe penalties for those guilty of soring. Substantial fines and mandatory, serious suspension periods for trainers and owners, including lifetime bans and prison time, would deter soring.
- ☑ Federal ban on "pads and action devices," commonly termed "stacks and chains."

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP END SORING?

**Learn More**

- www.StopSoring.com for latest news and facts on soring
- www.SoundHorseConference.com for presentation lectures on soring
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) on Horse Protection www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/hp
- Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/tenn_walking_horses

**Get Involved**

- Run for a Board of Directors' position with the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders & Exhibitors Association (TWHBEA) and effect change from within.
- Propose changes to the TWHBEA bylaws that preclude anyone from holding leadership positions who has had soring violations within recent years.
- Join FOSH or the HSUS.
- Volunteer for FOSH projects to end soring.

**Voice Your Concerns**

- Tell your Congressmen that you demand full enforcement of the law and adequate HPA funding.
- Inform traditional show venues and their sponsors that you will not support them because these shows encourage soring.
- Demand that the USDA and the industry inspectors enforce the law effectively.

**Report Soring to the USDA, HSUS, and FOSH:**

- Document soring incidences observed at barns or shows with photos or video and submit personally or anonymously.
- Report barns and trainers engaging in soring practices.
- Report scheduled "outlaw shows" organized without licensed HIO inspections.

**Friends of Sound Horses, Inc. (FOSH)**
Lori Northrup, President
6614 Clayton Road #105, St. Louis, MO 63117
716-474-7580 • Lori@Northrup.com

**The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)**
Keith Dane, Director of Equine Protection
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**United States Department of Agriculture, APHIS (USDA)**
Dr. Rachel Cezar, Horse Protection Coordinator
Dr. Chester Gipson, Deputy Administrator
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301-734-5784 • Rachel.Cezar@aphis.usda.gov

*"Call it what it is. This is torture."*

— Internationally-renown clinician, February, 2011

*... stinging ... rolling the toe ... bubble gum (use of commercial sole support product to cause sole pressure) ... putting a button in ... screwing it down ... jack bolts ... pressure plates ... screws ... bolts ... cranking ... heel spring helper (heel spring with a foreign object used to cause pressure at the apex of the frog)*

# FOSH Sound Principles

Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.

**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.



## 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

**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 or 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



Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.
A Charitable, non-profit 501 (c) (3)
non-voting member organization

## Friends of Sound Horses, Inc. Sound Show / Event Support Form

*Please print or type information below*

Name of Event: _____

Event Description: _____ (show, clinic, expo, etc.)

Breeds Included: _____

Date(s) of Event: _____

Location of Event: _____ (street)

_____ (city) _____ (postal code) _____(state or province)

_____ (country)

Principal Contact Person: _____(name)

Principal Contact Person Email: _____

Principal Contact Person Phone: _____

Name of Organization to RECEIVE Support Check: (check will be made out to…)

_____

ADDRESS to where support check should be sent:

_____ (street)

_____ (city) _____ (postal code) _____ (state or province)

_____ (country)

If your event is approved, you should receive your support check within 30 days.

Please EMAIL this completed form to: president@fosh.info (faster) or mail to:

FOSH 6614 Clayton Rd., #105 St. Louis, MO 63117

*For FOSH use only… Amount provided:* _____



Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.
A Charitable, non-profit 501 (c) (3)
non-voting member organization

## Friends of Sound Horses, Inc. Scholarship Request Form

*Please print or type information below*

Student Applying: _____(name) Age: ____ (yrs)

Student Email: _____

Student Phone: _____

Student Address: _____ (street)

_____ (city) _____ (postal code) _____(state or province)

_____ (country)

School Name: _____

Major: _____

Date of Last FOSH show participation*: _____

Attach copy of acceptance letter and note date on letter here: _____

School Address: _____ (street)

_____ (city) _____ (postal code) _____(state or province)

_____ (country)

*Note: Checks will be made out to [Institution Name] for the benefit of [Student Name] and will be sent to the attention of the Financial Aid department.* If you are chosen to receive a scholarship, you will be notified within 90 days of applying.

Please EMAIL this completed form to: president@fosh.info (faster) or mail to:

FOSH 6614 Clayton Rd., #105 St. Louis, MO 63117

*For FOSH use only… Amount provided:* _____ *Date sent:* _____

**Scholarship Guidelines are on the following page (and do not need to be submitted with this form).**

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.

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

FOSH
Friends of Sound Horses, Inc.℠

## 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? _____