

RIDE & TIE



NEWSLETTER

<http://rideandtie.org>

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Bree, Kelly and Brandon looking forward to a great race!— Cuyamaca

Courtesy of Mike Young

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ben Volk, Ride and Tie Association President

I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do. ~Edward Everett Hale

Here's to all volunteers, those dedicated people who believe in all work and no pay. ~Robert Orben

I'd like to dedicate this President's Address to all of the people that make Ride & Tie possible. From the R&T Board of Directors to the race directors to the crews to the folks that write and publish the newsletters and handbook; we all volunteer to give back to the sport of R&T. I was adopted into this sport by a gentleman named Don Betts who volunteered to let me use his horse in May 2006. His R&T partner that day, Tim Rubin, graciously volunteered to team with me. Without these two volunteers early in my R&T career, I may not have ever given this sport a try.

The Ride & Tie Association consists of primarily volunteers. Other than paying for veterinarians, most races are fully supported by a wide ranging group of volunteers. Usually these volunteers function like a well-oiled machine, getting the job done with little fanfare and only minor creaks and groans. Guiding a group of volunteers can be a rewarding and humbling experience.

Now don't get me wrong, managing a group of volunteers, of which I am one, can also be a nerve-wracking experience. How can you yell at a volunteer that is a day, week, or month late with a ride flier? Can you just fire them? Well no, that would not work well. Volunteers need to be treated with respect yet shepherded into doing what needs to be done. Some volunteers do the work that needs to be done with a great deal of joy while others do it with a great deal of animosity. Some volunteers expect to be showered with praise while others toil in the shadows and prefer being anonymous.

Some volunteers are Type "A" personalities and some are Type "Z." Mix the two and it's like trying to form an emulsion with 90 weight motor oil and distilled water. Sometimes the only fix is to bring in some more distilled beverages to break the barrier between the two groups.

Some volunteers think that everyone should respond to phone calls, emails, and texts just like they would to an important client. Others feel, hey, I've got a real job with a real paycheck. This volunteer gig will have to take a back seat. There's a place for everyone in a volunteer organization from the over-achiever to the great idea person.

So how about making this the year to spend some quality time volunteering for the R&T association? Maybe help crew a race or help with registration. Or perhaps step up to be the Promotions Director for the R&T Association. Maybe you could volunteer to help at the 2013 R&T Championship or convince a family member or relative to volunteer. We have hundreds of opportunities to volunteer throughout the year at R&T functions. Many times the prime volunteers are so busy that they forget to ask for more volunteers. I think some dedicated volunteers actually reach that nirvana I'll call "Volunteer Endorphin High." It's like a runner's high but this one is fueled by a sense of accomplishment and bliss from volunteering for every task, big or small. Unfortunately, volunteers who reach this level of involvement typically burn out after a year or two. What they need to do is share the wealth.

Ask for help. Reach out and touch someone. Get more people involved. That, my friends, is where you and your circle of friends and family enter the picture. Make a point of helping with a R&T or two this year. Check in with the Race Director and see if they need help. Volunteer for the R&T Board of Directors or become a Race Director yourself. You too will someday experience that elusive "Volunteer Endorphin High" and you'll want to share it with everyone around you.

I know that many of you volunteer a great deal of time to R&T already. I started to make a list beginning with the R&T Association Board of Directors and realized that it would be a very long list. Just know that I am doing the best that I can as President; but I could not do this job without you, the volunteers. From the bottom of my heart, I say "THANK-YOU!" Now let's have a great 2013 R&T season, both competing and volunteering. And please, if I ask you to help, please do help. And if I am running around ride camp looking like I'm about to blow a gasket, please bring me down from my high and say, "Ben, what the heck can I do to help?"

Congratulations to Rick Noer for getting into the 1000 mile club with 1010 miles in 10 years of racing.

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Letter From The Editor

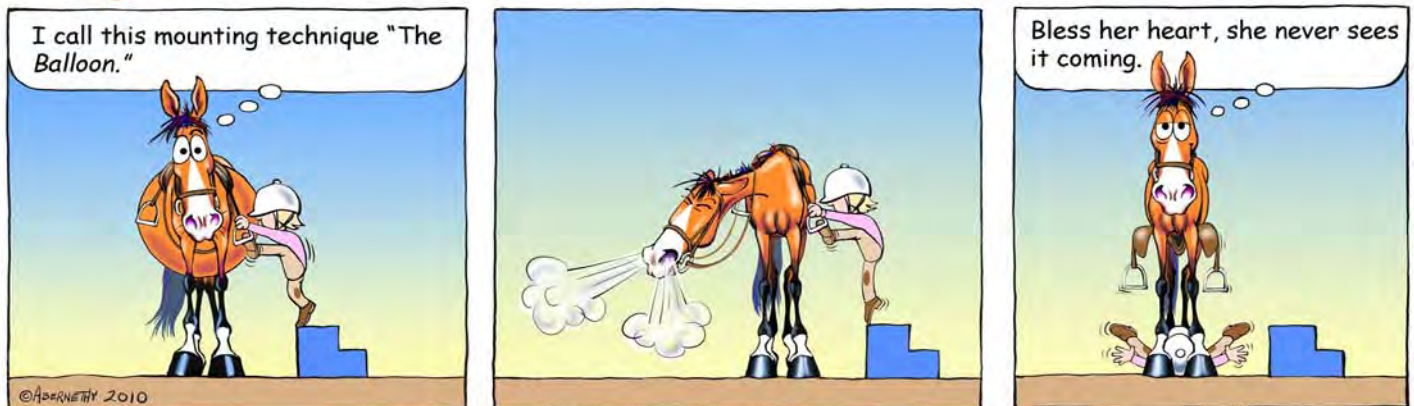
After several months of life-threatening illness, it is good to be able to work on this newsletter. Anything that distracts me is good at this time and there has been a lot to distract me! This issue of our newsletter is just packed full of goodies. Lots of race results; a brief look at race points and miles rankings and the race schedule for 2013 will keep those into the statistics of our sport quite happy for a while.

I am delighted that Joanna Robson has agreed to be an occasional contributor to the newsletter's Vet Section. Joanna can take sole credit for saving my horses' life several years ago. Bella was two-footed lame and three vets along with several thousand dollars had not fixed her up. I was worried about her very survival when I heard about Joanna. Joanna's methods are very different and some would say a bit weird. She took Bella off the Bute and put her on a mixture of Chinese herbs called Body Sore. Joanna began a course of electro-acupuncture and spinal manipulation. Within three days Bella looked better and was in much less pain. After six weeks and a few hundred dollars, I had a different horse greeting me at the stable door every morning and afternoon. Bella has never looked back. Joanna is also well-known for her clinics in saddle-fitting and its pitfalls, for the horse. Her website is <http://inspiritusequine.com>

Finally, it's Fergus! The best cartoon since Calvin and Hobbes. I have come to an agreement with the artist who draws Fergus. As my contribution to Ride and Tie, I will buy (at a reduced rate!) one cartoon per issue and print them for you all to enjoy. Fergus merchandise is available and he has a FaceBook page I'd love you to visit and 'Like'. Next issue we will have a competition and the prize will be a Fergus mouse pad.

Contact Dal at dal@dburnsinc.com or newsletter@rideandtie.org

Fergus BY JEAN ABERNETHY



Wanted: A non-paid volunteer tax person to do the Association's non-profit tax forms. Please contact Steve Anderson (Treasurer) at steve.anderson1@juno.com - Thanks

Sara Speaks - Ride and Tie for the Junior Competitor

Sarah Krue

Photograph courtesy: Greg Ammons

Motivation is often one of the hardest things for me as a young runner to find. As a teenager, life is a rush: wake up, get to school early for chorus rehearsal, go through eight classes, come home and do my homework. I'm exhausted by the time my dad gets home and wants to go running and if he isn't running that day, there's no way I'm going to. Weekends you would think would be easier but I have conflicting interests. I don't want to do a ride-and-tie practice EVERY Saturday; however I do want to sleep in! Saturday nights I often want to hang out with friends or catch a movie with my brother. Running is rarely something I want to do; running has never been something that I as a sixteen year old have loved. Sometimes I feel like the only reason I stick with it is because it makes me feel like I'm being active; but then I remember a list of other things I love about it.



It IS helping me stay active and fit, so that I don't become one of the large number of Americans who are part of the obesity epidemic.

I get to spend quality time with my dad, without the interruption of various events in either of our lives.

It's funny to watch the reaction on my friends faces when I tell them that I ran three miles in the cold before school after they've been complaining about walking out to the car that morning.

If I train, I do better in races, which is fun to tell people about. Everybody wants to be able to do well in a competition!

If I do well in races, I sometimes get prizes!

It gives me a good excuse to use all the hot water in the house!

Running is a gift that I often don't receive well or enjoy until later. It's gold hidden in dirt and when my dad and I do ride and tie, there is a lot of dirt involved so the gold is well accepted. Running is also an essential part of ride and tie, which, despite the running, is a sport I enjoy a lot. My dad and I have worked things out so that he will always run more than me and I will always ride more than him. The beauty of the sport however, is not our strategy but rather the fact that we do it together and share our own personal sports with each other. We don't always get along; he's my dad, we're not supposed to. Sometimes we don't get along with the horse! But whether we're running together or frantically in separate directions searching for a loose horse, we're a team. That team spirit is often what motivates me to get up at 6am in 22 degree weather to run on a golf course. It pulls me up the hills and gives me a push running down them (until I hit the golf cart speed bump.) My motivation is my team and although I'm not such an inspiring team member myself, I know that they're keeping up they're end of the work so I have to keep up mine.

If you have a different style of motivation or story about a time you were either motivated or unmotivated to train, email me at RandTJunior@gmail.com to tell me about it! Your story might even get printed in the next Ride and Tie News Letter! Happy training!

Whenever you can, please let our sponsors know how much you appreciate their support of Ride and Tie

2013 RIDE & TIE RACE SCHEDULE

- Mar 23, 2013, SUNRISE CANYON Ride & Tie, Kennewick, WA**
22, 11 miles. Contact Ira Hickman 509-430-6288 apcconstruction@msn.com or Ben Volk 509-521-6249 bvolk@jub.com
- Apr 6-7, 2013, GIDDYUP & RUN Ride & Tie, Crossville, TN**
4, 7, 15, 25 miles. Contact Joanne Mitchell 865-250-1645 or 423-337-6194 jfgmhorse@gmail.com www.catoosaridgestables.com
- Apr 27, 2013, NO FRILLS Ride & Tie, Star Tannery VA**
12, 30, 55 miles. Contact jjmarshiii@earthlink.net or qeierkm@gmail.com
- May 11, 2013, BILTMORE Ride & Tie, Asheville, NC**
8, 15, 30 miles. Contact Sara Boelt lighteramount1986@gmail.com
- May 11, 2013, CACHE CREEK Ride & Tie, Williams, CA**
15 and 25 miles. Contact Jennifer Stalley 530-755-6777 jdstalley@gmail.com, www.thecachecreekride.com
- May 18, 2013, MT ADAMS Ride & Tie, Mt. Adams, WA**
25 miles. Darlene Anderson or Veronica Glenn endmrcrider@gmail.com or dichamps05@gmail.com
- Jun 2, 2013, Klickitat Trek Ride & Tie, Glenwood, WA *NEW RACE!!***
15, 25 miles. Contact Kirsten Seyferth 310-463-2744 scatris@hotmail.com
- Jun 6-9, 2013, POKIE OKIE Elevator Ride & Tie, Stillwater, OK *NEW RACE!!***
5, 8, 10, 16, 20, 25, 30, 50 miles. Contact Susan Young 918-685-0072 glenn218@yahoo.com
- Jun 8, 2013, DESCANSO Ride & Tie, Descanso CA**
15, 23 miles Contact Terry Howe 619-445-5443 terryhowe@hughes.net
- Jun 9, 2013, LLANO ESTACADO CHALLENGE, Amarillo, TX**
15, 30 miles. Contact Lorie Van Ongevalle 806-676-1339 CoTAHC@aol.com
- Jun 23, 2013, WILD WEST RIDE & TIE, Nevada City, CA**
12, 25 miles. Contact Melissa Ribley 530-268-1378 mmribley@gmail.com
- Jun 23, 2013, STRAWBERRY FIELDS Ride & Tie, Park City, UT**
25 miles. Contact Howard Kent. 801-580-7036 HK@SL.com.net www.strawberryenduranceride.com
- Jul 6, 2013, SNOW TENT SLIDE GOLD COUNTRY Ride & Tie, Georgetown, CA**
25, 12 miles. Contact Susan Smyth 916-663-9410 susansmythjackson@gmail.com
- Jul 13, 2013 BANDIT SPRINGS Ride & Tie, Ochoco Natl Forest, OR**
10, 15, 30 miles. Contact Janelle Wilde 541-846-2460 jwilde@wildevents.info
- Jul 14-20, 2013, FORT STANTON Ride & Tie, Capitan NM**
25, 35 miles (varies by day, check website) Contact Roger or Sue at roger_sue@prodigy.net 505-897-4985
- Jul 27-28, 2013, OLD DOMINION Ride & Tie Weekend, Orkney Springs, VA**
6, 12, 25 miles, clinic also. Contact Lani Newcomb 540-554-2004 give2bute@aol.com
- Aug 10, 2013, SANTIAM CASCADE, Sisters OR**
10, 30, 50, 80 miles. Contact Anna Sampson 503-829-6002 sampson@molalla.net
- Aug 24, 2013, 43rd ANNUAL RIDE & TIE CHAMPIONSHIP, Ft. Bragg, CA**
Contact Ben Volk bvolk@jub.com
- Sep 1, 2013, OLD SELAM Ride & Tie, Old Selam, ID**
30 miles. Contact Beth Bivens 208-989-1069 bbbivens@icehouse.net
- Sep 6-8, 2013, BIG SOUTH FORK Ride & Tie, Jamestown/Oneida, TN**
Course mileage varies, check website. Contact Joanne Mitchell 423-337-6194 865-250-1645 jfgmhorse@gmail.com
- Sep 7, 2013, ONE HEART BENEFIT Ride & Tie Maxwell, IA**
5, 12, 21 miles. Contact Eileen Witt 515-290-2306 oneheartrideandtie@gmail.com
- Sep 15, 2013, BIG BEAR Ride & Tie, Big Bear, CA**
17, 23 miles. Contact Kat Swigart 714-474-3563 katswig@earthlink.net
- Sep 20-22, 2013, CHESAPEAKE Ride & Tie, Elkton, MD**
10, 15, 25, 30, 50, 80, 100 miles. Contact Catherine Peloquin 410-652-3454 cpenguin57@aol.com
- Sep 21-21, 2013, RIDE BEAR I & II Ride & Ties, Gilroy, CA**
10, 25 miles. Contact Sandy Holder 408-218-5028 slholder002@gmail.com
- Sep 25, 2013, OWYHEE CANYONLANDS Ride & Tie, Oreana, ID**
20 miles. Contact Steph Teeter 208-834-2788 steph@endurance.net
- Sep 28, 2013, OWYHEE CANYONLANDS Ride & Tie, Oreana, ID**
30 miles. Contact Steph Teeter 208-834-2788 steph@endurance.net
- Oct 5, 2013, MANZANITA Ride & Tie, Boulevard, CA**
15, 25 miles. Contact Terry Wooley Howe terryhowe@hughes.net
- Oct 5-6, 2013, INDIAN TERRITORY Elevator Ride & Tie, Lake Oologah, OK *NEW RACE!!***
5, 8, 10, 16, 20, 25, 30, 50 miles. Contact Susan young 918-685-0072 glenn218@yahoo.com
- Oct 13, 2013, THE COOLEST Ride & Tie, Cool, CA**
4, 9, 14, 23 miles. Contact Susan Smyth 916-663-9410 susansmythjackson@gmail.com or carriebarrett2@gmail.com
- Oct 19, 2013, FOOTHILLS OF THE CASCADES, Mollala, OR**
25 miles. Contact Anna Sampson or Mary Nunn 503-839-5321 flyingn@molalla.net
- Oct 25-26, 2013, FORT VALLEY Ride & Tie, Fort Valley, VA**
18, 30, 50 miles. Contact Susan Trader 703-556-0223 susntrader@aol.com
- Oct 26-27, 2013, CUYAMACA Ride & Tie Weekend, Julian, CA**
5, 11, 13, 20, 28 miles (varies by day). Contact Gunilla Pratt 858-735-1373 gunillapratt@gmail.com
- Oct 26, 2013, THE HAUNTING Ride & Tie, Bend, OR *NEW RACE!!***
15, 30, 50 miles. Contact Linda Tribby 541-576-244 lltribby@gmail.com or Anna Sampson 503-829-6002 sampson@molalla.net

Horse Sense - Moments of Equine Clarity

Horse sense is the thing a horse has, which keeps it from betting on people. ~W.C. Fields

Riding: The art of keeping a horse between you and the ground.
~Author Unknown

Many people have sighed for the 'good old days' and regretted the 'passing of the horse,' but today, when only those who like horses own them, it is a far better time for horses. ~C.W. Anderson

People on horses look better than they are. People in cars look worse than they are. ~Marya Mannes

Horses and children, I often think, have a lot of the good sense there is in the world. ~Josephine Demott Robinson

Heaven is high and earth wide. If you ride four feet higher above the ground than other men, you will know what that means. ~Rudolf C. Binding



Robert Hancock

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For more information: Jane and Ron Tomzcak, 5973 Stallion Oak Rd, ElCajon, CA 92019, 619-445-0598

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The Veterinary Corner

Introduction to Equine Thermography for the Ride and Tie/Endurance Rider
Joanna Robson, DVM, CVSMT, CMP, CVA, CSFT, CIT

inspiritusequine.com

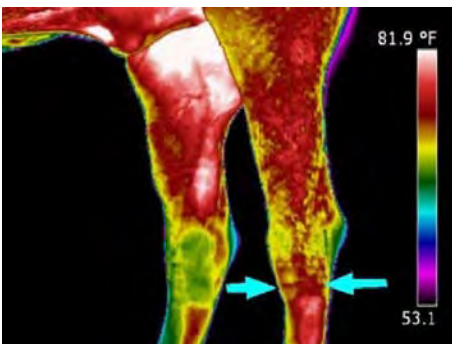
Thermal imaging was introduced to the equine industry in the 1960s, primarily as a screening tool for racetracks and performance horses. However, due to expensive and rudimentary cameras, little knowledge of correct imaging technique and a lack of understanding how to correctly interpret the images, the technology soon fell out of favor both with veterinarians and human medical professionals. Now with improved technology and an understanding of correct patient preparation, imaging environment and image interpretation, thermography is finding its niche in human and veterinary medicine.

The equine industry has undergone a major transformation over the past three decades. Now a multi-billion dollar industry with huge financial stakes both in and out of the barn, there is great demand for the latest and greatest in diagnostic equipment. There is also a more significant emphasis on alternative medicine and non-invasive modalities. Horse owners and trainers are well educated and many expect the same quality of care for their animals that they would for their own human family members. "At the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, where there was millions of dollars' worth of equipment available to the equestrian teams, the most-requested diagnostic tool was thermography. It was fast. It was portable. It was non-invasive. It could detect injury sites before they became lameness problems and could guide practitioners to specific anatomic areas for study using other diagnostic techniques. It was also extremely accurate when used by an experienced practitioner."

So how does it work and what do we use it for? The infrared spectrum is not visible with the human eye. The thermography camera detects infrared waves and creates an image that we can see. Infrared thermography detects heat, and as heat is directly related to circulation (or lack thereof), the camera works to help identify injuries and disease processes in biological systems. The human hand is only capable of differentiating temperature differences around two degrees, whereas the cameras may be sensitive to a tenth of degree or more! Patient images are evaluated for symmetry – comparing left with right and looking for changes in patterning, and a whole animal evaluation is essential for full comparison as well as evaluating for compensatory problems. The camera is so sensitive that it may detect soft-tissue injuries up to two weeks prior to the patient demonstrating any clinical signs!

Suspensory ligament and tendon injuries, saddle-fitting and rider imbalance problems, muscle injuries or atrophy, arthritis, hoof imbalances or infections, jaw problems and more all create changes in circulation or nerve conduction that subsequently create patterns visible with the camera. It is important to understand that thermography is a physiologic imaging modality – thus, it detects changes in blood flow or circulation but cannot tell the practitioner the specific structure affected. Anatomic imaging such as radiographs or ultrasound is often needed to make a specific diagnosis. Thermography is still an excellent tool for localization and can help the owner and veterinarian know where to look for a problem.

What are the most important factors for success with equine thermal imaging? Standardization and correct patient preparation are *imperative* to minimize artifacts and to maximize gain through blood flow and residual inflammation (or lack thereof). Artifacts such as moisture and sweat, dirt, caustic substances, bandages and blankets, can and will immediately negate the correct interpretation of a scan. Environmental control cannot be over-emphasized as critical to a successful scan. Sunlight, radiant heat from metal roofs or barn siding, fans and breezes and the flooring of the barn (mats, dirt, concrete, etc.) can alter images and destroy a scan. Having a clean and dry patient in an environment free of drafts, direct sunlight or moisture, are keys to the success of your imaging scan and to the repeatability and reliability that thermal imaging requires for continued acceptance in the veterinary and equine industries. Correct technician training is imperative. The average cost of a whole horse scan is \$300-\$400 and typically includes a full interpretation and report by the veterinarian.



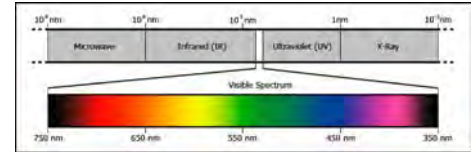
Continued on next page

Interpretation of the images is the other half of a successful imaging equation in a modality dependent on symmetry. In keeping with state veterinary practice laws, thermal imaging interpretation must be done by a licensed veterinarian. Even more important, in addition to a solid understanding of patient anatomy, an interpreting veterinarian must have an understanding of thermal imaging technology to correctly relate the images with possible physiologic changes. Of all the injuries listed previously, thermal imaging is able to locate every one through physiologic changes emitting heat or altered circulation. Though the images are not able to tell the interpreter the specific nature of the lesion, the sensitivity of the camera to detect temperature changes related to disease is key to its success. Changes greater than 1-2 degrees F are considered significant but asymmetry and a deviation from normal anatomic structures are major factors in image interpretation.

For ride and tie and endurance riders, thermography may be essential due to the sports' zero-tolerance policy for medications. Ensuring that your horse is pain-free prior to that ten, fifty or one hundred mile ride is essential.

Barefoot and shod horses are prone to bruises and imbalances. Saddle-fit problems and equipment issues can cost a team soundness and success. Post-ride scans can ensure that your horse has returned to wellness without injury from the previous ride.

Thermal imaging is a diagnostic tool that is gaining more widespread interest and recognition in the equine industry. Infrared camera technology has significantly improved and understanding of the technology is leading to improved interpretation of thermal imaging in biological systems. It is incorrect to tout thermal imaging as a replacement for traditional diagnostics; however, thermal imaging's strength is that it can significantly enhance traditional modalities through improved localization of injury and disease. It is quick, non-invasive, safe and can be done on-site; is cost-effective and has an adjunctive role in highlighting lesions otherwise missed with traditional imaging modalities.



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Western WA: Lisa Preston, contact@rideandtie.org

Steve Anderson 360-588-1730
steve.anderson1@juno.com

Eastern WA: Rachel Toor
racheltoor@gmail.com

Ride and Tie Association Membership Application

Send form and payment to: Ride and Tie Association
2709 Road 64, Pasco, WA 99301-1961
(Make checks payable to The Ride and Tie Association)

Membership runs from January 1 to December 31

NAME(S): (and birthdates if under 16) _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email address _____

Levels of Membership:

\$25: INDIVIDUAL COMPETITOR will receive Ride & Tie newsletter and Handbook, entry form for Championship, one vote on Association general membership issues, eligibility for all sanctioned Ride & Ties held during membership year, and inclusion in and eligibility for the national point system.

\$40: FAMILY MEMBERS, immediate family living at same address. Same benefits as Individual Competitor with two votes per family.

\$100 or more: SUPPORTING MEMBER, same benefits as Individual Competitor with special thanks from the Ride & Tie Association.

\$500: LIFETIME MEMBER, same benefits as Individual Competitor but with no annual dues.

\$20 or more: NON-COMPETING MEMBER showing support for the sport of Ride & Tie. Will receive newsletter and Handbook.

HOW DID YOU LEARN ABOUT RIDE & TIE?

Ride & Tie website? _____

Expo/Convention? (Which one?) _____

Magazine/Newspaper? (Which one?) _____

Other (please indicate) _____

The Ride and Tie Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Membership and contributions may be tax-deductible.

RIDE & TIE

Two people, a horse,
and one tough race...



www.rideandtie.org

Annual Points Rankings - 2012

Top Ten Teams

Man/Man Teams	Points
1I. Hickman/D. Root	225
2J. Osterweis/S. Pont	224
3R. Noer/R. Smith	144
4D. Summers/B. Volk	116
5L. Agur/B. Grant	106
6B. Johnson/P. Johnson	101
7J. Brown/R. Kiernan	96
8L. Hollander/D. Madsen	91
9D. Root/L. Simmons	90
10T. Noll/Volk	85



...stop and smell the horses!

<http://www.cafepress.com/fergusthehorse> Fergus

Top Ten Humans

First Name	Last Name	Total Points	Total Miles
1Gunilla	Pratt	654	152
2Mike	Whelan	654	152
3Tom	Gey	579	127
4Rhonda	Venable	570	175
5Rufus	Schneider	560	112
6Janice	Heltibridle	555	175
7Richard	Noer	523	152
8Dick	Root	520	157
9Jennifer	Monioz	464	137
10George	Hall	456	108



Lily Turaski, eight, on Sunday's Big South Fork 8-miler



All Big South Fork—Courtesy: Joanne Mitchell

Barb Mathews and Karen Isaacs on Jeb Stuart crossing Big South Fork

Top Ten Horses

Horse Name	Owner	Total Points	Total Miles
1Temperance	R. Schneider	584	127
2Stryde	G. Pratt	574	127
3Tanner	R. Venable	565	175
4Findefar	T. Gey	519	102
5Clowns Courage	S. Shaw	490	120
6Flaming Will	D. Root	484	147
7Joe Peshi	Smyth	382	94
8Flyaway Joe	Smyth	373	107
9Nero	D. Anderson	320	55
10LP	G. Pratt	305	90
11Shawnee	J. Heltibridle	305	95

Ride and Tie Gains Ground

Tom Knoll

"Ride and tie"—those were the words I heard as Ben cantered by on Superman. We were a few miles into one of the first ride-and-tie races in the Owyhee desert of southwest Idaho. It was the final day on the final Owyhee Canyonlands ride and Steph Teeter decided to host a 30-mile ride and tie. The Owyhee Canyonlands is a five-day endurance ride that had been held every year since 2002. I have participated in the ride every year. I knew that my last day at Owyhee Canyonlands would be special.

Our ride the Owyhees was small, very small, with only two teams. But, the two teams were composed of friends and both teams were evenly matched. Had there been Las Vegas betting, the betting line would have been even.

Layne Simmons, Dick Root and Will made up one team and they faced off against Ben Volk, myself and Superman. Superman had an illustrious endurance career and the horse is called Clark while in camp. Layne's friend Phil and my friend Cindy volunteered to be the crew at the one vet check located about 25 miles into the ride.

We started at 7:30 a.m. I was riding around the camp checking the saddle fit and stirrup length when Steph announced, "Ride and Tie, the trail is open!" Whether the fit was right or not, it was show time. Superman and I took off after Dick and Will, while Layne and Ben ran behind. The trail climbed up to a desert plateau and we all got down to business. About five or six miles and several ties into the ride I came to a 15-hand bay horse with a fleece saddle cover and a yellow tie and began to untie. "Wait, this isn't my horse," I realized, and continued. Riding Superman a few miles later, I turned around and said to Dick, "We are not on the course." Ben and Layne had missed the turn and left on the wrong desert track. I went a short way on the track and then doubled back. I thought to myself, "Ben is a smart guy. He will figure this out and I took off down the trail to a high vantage point.

I waited and looked back on the trail. Soon enough I saw movement. In the early morning light off in the distance I saw one horse and two runners. We were all back on the trail. I quickly dropped off, tied Superman to sagebrush and ran down into Sinker Canyon.

In Sinker Canyon the trail became very technical, with rocks, branches, fences with buckaroo gates and numerous stream crossings. Soon enough both teams were back together and it was a wild run through the canyon. We all began to feel that competitive pressure. This was turning into a race and neither team was going to yield easily.

We climbed out of the canyon and took off across the desert toward the vet check. Through the next series of ties, no team managed to gain any sort of lead. We passed each other with every tie. Just before the vet check, I tied Superman. Ben was right behind me and he cantered into the vet check, handed Superman to Cindy and ran off down the trail. I came in, took Superman from Cindy (Superman had reached the pulse criteria or 68 beats per minute) and I took him over to "vet" him through. An instant later, Will met pulse criteria and he vetted right behind me. Alright! I was through first and out first!

Both teams had passed through the vet check in less than five minutes. Cindy and Phil were left looking at the undisturbed food and water that they had so carefully laid out on the tailgate of the truck with no sign of the runners and horses except the lingering dust in the air. In this race, with six miles to camp, no one was stopping.



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Ride and Tie Gains Ground

We leapfrogged back to camp shortening the ties and increasing the speed. Still, no team had a clear lead. I came to our final tie about a mile from camp. Ben was the fastest runner in the race and Ben had tied Superman and left for camp. I could see Layne and Dick and I knew that Ben and I had the race in our hands. All I had to do was ride in to camp with a sound horse.

Superman took up a nice easy trot as we went up the road to the finish. Layne and Dick had backed off and we were unchallenged. I rode into the camp area and the final vet check with a sound horse. Everything was complete. Everything, except where was Ben? Dick, Will and Layne came in, but still no Ben. We vetted through but the race wasn't over for my team. Layne, Dick, and I headed back out the trail and found Ben hustling up the road. Ben had made a wrong turn in the final mile and the victory went to Dick, Layne and Will. That's Ride and Tie!

We finished the course in three hours 20 minutes. Later that day the fastest endurance riders would run the same course in about four hours.

For me, it was a fantastic Ride and Tie experience. We were four friends with two good horses. We had friends as the crew and friends as the vets. It was held in a venue that has many fond memories for me. Rarely in a 30-mile race is the finish undecided until the final mile. Rarely are there only two teams that run side-by-side continuously through the whole 30 miles never once gaining an advantage. With only two teams and the entire race so close, it was the pure essence of Ride and Tie.

Ride and Tie Mentors

Do you need a mentor to assist you as you become familiar with ride and tie racing?

You can find information on our web site at <http://www.rideandtie.org/mentor.html>

You can also see a list of current mentors in this newsletter, on page 22

Would you like to mentor someone in the joys of ride and tie that you have experienced?

Contact Ben Volk at bvolk@rideandtie.org or Melanie Weir at melanie.weir11@gmail.com



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FOR THE TRAIL HORSE AND RIDER

Ride and Tie Race Results

Big South Fork I, Long course 20 miles, Sept. 7, 2012, Jamestown/Oneida, TN

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Diane Wilson	Sarah Hendricks	Lure	2:48:00	1
Lorena F Truett	Kathleen Smith	BZ	3:36:00	2

Big South Fork I, Short course 10 miles, Sept. 7, 2012, Jamestown/Oneida, TN

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Lori Lyttle	Malyndia Long	Shera	1:27:00	1
Sara Boelt	Gil Furr	Danziga Dunit Again	2:00:00	2
Courtney Krueger	Sarah H Krueger	Davonna Tom Cat	DNF	

Big South Fork II, Long course 30 miles, Sept. 8, 2012, Jamestown/Oneida, TN

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Amy Betzelberger	Barbara Mathews	Esther	3:08:00	1
Karen Isaacs	Charlesey Charlton	Jeb	3:36:00	2
Lucas Beck	2509 Michael Sullivan	Zena	DNF	

Big South Fork III, Short course 8 miles, Sept. 9, 2012, Jamestown/Oneida, TN

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Diane Wilson	Sarah Hendricks	Lure	1:16:00	1
Stacie G. Boswell	Liana Gonzalez	Salsa	1:39:30	2
Courtney Krueger	Sarah H Krueger	Davonna Tomcat	1:39:35	3
DeeDee Turaski	Lily Turaski	Freedom	1:57:00	4
Samm Bartee	Andrea McCullough	Always Sassy	1:59:00	5
Sara Boelt	Emily Beaver	Teoka Bopp	2:04:00	6
Anna Scoggins	Rebecca Scoggins	Demi	2:10:00	7
Lorena F Truett	Eden Carnes	Mazon	2:26:00	8

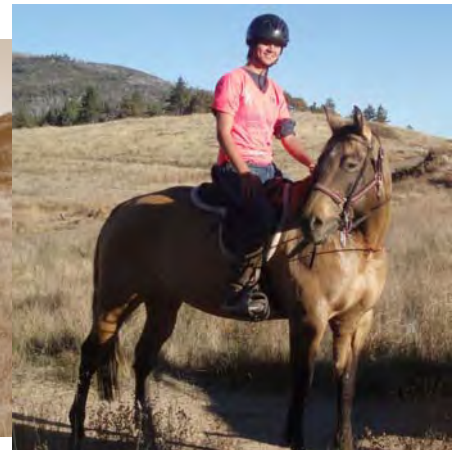


Cuyamaca—Three Riders

Courtesy: Mike Young



Cuyamaca runners start



Cuyamaca Rex and Matt

Ride and Tie Race Results

One Heart Benefit, Long course, 20 mile, Sept. 1st, 2012, Maxwell, IA

Partner 1	ID-1	Partner 2	ID-2	Horse	Time	Place
Raquel Telfer	2280	Lacey Jensen	2283	Angel	2:17:00	1
Hollie Reilly	2447	Richard Noer	1222	Lexus	2:18:00	2
Kristine Hartman	2264	Michael Hartman	2265	Tessie	2:52:00	3
Amy Betzelberger	1934	Srinivas Reddy Bhuypalli	2495	Starr	2:53:00	4

One Heart Benefit, Short course, 12 mile, Sept. 1st, 2012, Maxwell, IA

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Laura Miller	Shollie Falkenberg	Elmer	1:22:00	1
Teresa Harp	Cyndi Pannkuk	Red	1:40:00	2
Nicki Chambliss	Emily Humphry	Scout	2:14:00	3
Renee Humphry	Mallory Natzfinger	Chief	2:16:00	4

Chesapeake, Long course, 20 mile, Sept. 23rd, 2012, Elkton, MD

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Janice Heltibridle	Laney Baris	Shawnee Sail Away	3:45:00	1
Rhonda Venable	Greg Bradner	Tanner	3:45:00	1
Kathy Broaddus, D.V.M.	Lani Newcomb, D.V.M.	Coral	3:46:00	2

Manzanita, Long course, 25 mile, October 6th, 2012, Boulevard, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Gunilla Pratt	Michael Whelan	Stryde	3:54:00	1
Sharlee Rushing	Jonathan Jordan	Chrissy	4:39:00	2
Jennifer Monioz	Tara Jordan	Pebbles	4:56:00	3
Richard Noer	Richard Smith	Temperance	5:15:00	4

Manzanita, Short course, 15 mile, October 6th, 2012, Boulevard, Ca

Partner 1	ID-1	Partner 2	ID-2	Horse	Time	Place
Beth Love	2070	Phil Jones	2474	Cisco	2:36:00	1



Big South Fork Sunday's mob



Courtesy: Joanne Mitchell

Lily & Grandma Tykey Truett on 28-year old Mazon

Ride and Tie Race Results

Chesapeake, Long course 30 miles, September 21st, 2012 , Elkton, MD

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Kathy Broaddus, D.V.M.	Lani Newcomb, D.V.M.	Coral	4:45:00	1

Chesapeake, Long course 30 miles, September 22nd, 2012 , Elkton, MD

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Rhonda Venable	Greg Bradner	Tanner	5:25:00	1
Janice Heltibridle	Josh Cook	Bubba	6:10:00	2
Kathy Broaddus, D.V.M.	Lani Newcomb, D.V.M.	Tidbit	6:11:00	3

Chesapeake, Long course 30 miles, September 23rd, 2012 , Elkton, MD

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Janice Heltibridle	Laney Baris	Shawnee Sail Away	3:45:00	1
Rhonda Venable	Greg Bradner	Tanner	3:45:00	1
Kathy Broaddus, D.V.M.	Lani Newcomb, D.V.M.	Coral	3:46:00	2

Fort Valley, Long course 30 miles, October 26th, 2012, Fort Valley, VA

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Janice Heltibridle	Ann Mebane	Bubba	6:54:00	1

Fort Valley, Long course 30 miles, October 27th, 2012, Fort Valley, VA

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time
Diane Wilson	Sarah Hendricks	Lure	5:14:00
Janice Heltibridle	Diana Burk	Shawnee Sail Away	5:45:00
Rhonda Venable	Mary Gibbs	Tanner	7:17:00

Fort Valley, Short course 18 miles, October 27th, 2012, Fort Valley, VA

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time
Nathan Hoyt	Jim Adams	Katie	3:53:00
Heather Werts	Claire Taylor	Lady Siri	4:05:00
Lisa Downs	Wesley Taylor	PL Mercury	4:07:00



(L) Anna (mom) & Rebecca Scoggins, Sunday's 8-miler

(R) Courtney's daughter on the gray Arab



BSF - Joanne Mitchell

Ride and Tie Race Results

Cuyamaca, Long Course 30 miles, October 26th, 2012, Julian, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Jonathan Jordan	Moses Vaughan	Chrissy	DNF	
Michael Whelan	Gunilla Pratt	Jerry	DNF	
Rufus Schneider	Beth Love	Temperence	DNF	

Cuyamaca, Long Course 15 miles, October 26th, 2012, Julian, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Thomas Gey	Carol Ruprecht	Hat Trick	2:34:00	1
Sharlee Rushing	Tara Jordan	Pebbles	2:41:00	2
Richard Noer	Richard Smith	Koona	2:42:00	3
Jennifer Monioz	Susan Smyth	L.P.	DNF	

Cuyamaca, Fun Course 5 miles, October 26th, 2012, Julian, Ca

Mark Love	Ryan Love	Justin	1:45:00	1
Marlaina Kent	Brenda Rushing	Roxy	2:15:00	2

Cuyamaca, Long Course 20 miles, October 27th, 2012, Julian, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
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Cuyamaca, Short Course 10 miles, October 27th, 2012, Julian, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Time	Place
Rufus Schneider	Beth Love	1:22:00	1
Richard Noer	Richard Smith	1:36:00	2
Aaron Ruud	Phil Jones	1:59:00	3
Bree Cable	Abigail Hughes	2:14:00	4
Kelly Peterson	Adriana Hultman	2:17:00	5
Brandon Bowron	Matthew Chwalowski	2:17:00	6
Thomas Gey	Carol Ruprecht	2:20:00	7
Robert Hancock	Debra Kirk	2:20:00	7

Dressage Queen Goes Rogue

By Jec A. Ballou

Preparations for the Ride & Tie World Championships began the week before with weighty deliberations. The primary agenda item? Which knee-high socks to wear to prevent chafing in the saddle? The neon green ones with bright red mushrooms embroidered on them? Or our tried and true rainbow striped ones from our only previous Ride & Tie event? The decision had nothing to do with how we would complete the race and everything to do with how good we looked in the photos.

In the end, we settled on a pair of neon striped leg warmers, which would not only photograph well but would allow us to wear regular running socks with our sneakers. Voila! A perfect pairing of vanity and function. On a short practice ride before race day, our mount Courage proved himself to be fresh, fit, and ready to tackle a tough course. My partner, Siobhan, proved herself ready to ride like the wind, quite an improvement from her floppy intro into riding one year ago. On a 3-mile downhill single track, I yelled ahead to rein them both in. Tomorrow was race day, after all, and we had no business tearing like hellions on a practice run. Spouting advice like the consummate dressage trainer I am, I lectured Siobhan to take it easy with Courage, keep his heart rate low, feel for any unevenness in his stride, and all sorts of other details.



Jec and Courage with ride and tie correct neon tights!

By 7:30am on race morning, I had consumed enough coffee to forget about the pain in my lower back from sleeping in a tent. I was focused on one thing: having a controlled start with Courage and keeping my team at a sensible, reasonable pace. It was already a stretch for this Dressage Queen's comfort zone to be suiting up in a riding outfit comprised of Lycra tights and striped leg warmers, never mind the fact that our "warm-up" included a river crossing and narrow trail through some brambles. We strapped on our helmets and headed to the starting line— an un-mowed meadow at the bottom of a fire road that headed straight uphill. Being the more experienced rider on our team, I would ride Courage for the start; Siobhan would start on foot. We anticipated that Courage might get a little wild, as is normally the case at a starting line of an endurance event. My strategy for these kinds of situations is not so much about what I intend to do but more about avoiding what EVERYONE ELSE is doing. The leaping grey Arabian to my right, for example? I already have an exit strategy, should he head this direction. Same thing goes for the rearing bay and the frantically prancing brown one, too. As the officials count us down to start time, my primary goal becomes survival. If I can survive this

meadow scene, the race might actually be fun. I give Siobhan a meek wave on the hillside above. Someone shouts "GO!" and we're off. Courage is perfectly composed under me, listening, obedient and eager.

Right as we are clambering up out of the meadow, flanked by snorting, crazed horses, I feel something unexpected happen inside. Suddenly, I feel like a teenager again, full of spunk and speed and who-cares-if-my-horse-is-on-the-bit. After lecturing my partner yesterday about pacing and our necessity for a cautious start, I am leaning forward like a jockey, pushing my heels into Courage's sides. He moves out faster and we are now chasing the front runners up the fire road. I give him another squeeze and he offers more speed. Now, we're flying fast enough to make a thundering sound. And I am surprisingly in heaven. My form stinks, Courage is definitely not on the bit, and we are careening around turns like a barrel racer.

For the next three hours, I never resemble a dressage rider. I am the horse-obsessed teen with two gears: fast and faster. I am the grinning, flopping girl somewhere unrecognizably between posting trot and two-point position. Courage's spirit never lags, nor do his gentlemanly qualities. He is a racing machine. Siobhan and I trade places, running and riding. Inspired by Courage, we both try to run like the track stars we never were but might still become. We streak through the vet check with ease and then begin the steep second loop of the 22-mile course.

Continued on next page

Ride and Tie Race Results

Ride Bear I, Long Course 25 miles, September 22nd, 2012, Gilroy, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Curt Riffle	Cheryl Domnitch	Sabell	3:05:00	1
George Hall	Michele Roush	Clowns Courage	3:13:00	2
Gunilla Pratt	Michael Whelan	Jerry	3:30:00	3
John Hall	Hillary Marrs	Flyaway Joe	4:24:00	4

Ride Bear I, Short Course 10 miles, September 22nd, 2012, Gilroy, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Susan Smyth	Victoria Ordway	Joe	3:08:00	1

Ride Bear I, Long Course 25 miles, September 23rd, 2012, Gilroy, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
George Hall	Julie Jag	Clowns Courage	4:26:00	1
Gunilla Pratt	Michael Whelan	Jerry	DNF	

Ride Bear I, Short Course 10 miles, September 23rd, 2012, Gilroy, Ca

Partner 1	Partner 2	Horse	Time	Place
Jennifer Monioz	Tracey O'Hare	LP	1:39:00	1

Continued from previous page

I let Courage walk parts of the hill as he huffs and puffs and climbs his way to the ridge top of Humboldt Redwoods State Park, a place so high and remote that your only company is the whooshing sound of wind through the trees and a lone bobcat. Standing in the stirrups, I grab a handful of mane to lean my weight forward off Courage's back. Eventually, the trail opens into a field spotted with white wildflowers. Across a narrow valley to our left, three hillsides fold into each other thick with Redwoods.

This is sublime, I think. Late morning sun warms my face, drying my salty forehead.

Courage gives his head a shake, his signal that it's time to pick up the pace again. We speed down a single track that curls back and forth like a ribbon through a thick forest. Courage leans into the turns like a motorcycle racer cornering at the track. We dart left-right-straight, left-right-straight. I was 10 years old the last time I let a horse lean into turns like this, before learning about bend and balance, inside leg and outside rein, poll flexion and all that fancy stuff I have honed for the past 20 years. Briefly, I consider asking Courage for more balance and less speed on these turns. But the thought disappears as quickly as it arose.

Gone is my inner dressage rider. Gone is the woman who trains horses for a living. In her place is a trail-loving rag doll in the saddle. A girl whose cheeks are cramping from smiling so much. A rider with neon rainbow leggings and running shoes.

I give Courage's neck an affectionate rub as he negotiates tree roots and hops over a ditch. I love this horse but not for the reasons I typically would— that he has a smooth sitting trot, that he shows aptitude for collection and flying changes or that lateral work comes easily to him. No, I actually love this horse because he's none of that. He's all trail horse and that's it. He's a trail-winding, hill-climbing, river-crossing, hoof-thundering trail horse that reminds me how exhilarating it feels to ride a horse like him. Courage reminds me about a different kind of harmony than what we arena riders seek. For one, he reminds me not to take myself so seriously or obsess over details.

Siobhan, Courage, and I speed to the finish line in 2 hours and 50 minutes, hooves and neon stripes flying. All of us feel strong and giddy, like we could have kept our pace all day through those Redwoods. Hopefully, we will have the chance to someday. For now, I've pulled on my breeches and boots again to resume life as a dressage trainer, albeit a much looser and smiley cheeked one. My horses here at the training center undoubtedly appreciate Courage's affect. Sometimes we need these little reminders, whether they are a silly horse show, a trail ride or a group outing; to refresh why we love this life with horses so firmly, so unshakably.



Cuyamaca—Adriana Haltman shows off her medal

Peggy's Place

Winter Training Tips

Peggy Smyth began as a Ride and Tie in 1976. She and her partner Val LeBell-Flatley won the Ride and Tie women's titles in 1981, 1982, 1985 and 1986. In 1984 and 1988 Peggy qualified and competed in the Women's Olympic Trials. Peggy continues to hold the women's course record for the Dipsea. Peggy will write a column for each newsletter.

This issue, I want to look at one of my favorite sports. Trail running. For those of you who have never run on trails, a word of warning. It's addictive and can lead to things like taking part in Ride and Tie races. Those of us who do trail run know its benefits. Whether you are an experienced trail runner or a beginner here are some tips.

Getting started:

Find a running partner who knows the local trail routes. Get to know the distances various running trails.



Continued on page twenty-one

Big South Fork Ride and Tie 2012

This year I offered new distances on Friday, (10 & 20 milers) which ya'll took me up on. It was worth it, well maybe not to the Krugers. At least their horse, aka Cruise, was lost, but found relatively close to camp.

On Thursday night after the briefing, I did a small walking tour of the first leg of the Friday pink loop, since everyone seems to get lost right behind camp. Guess I should have done that Saturday night also but that comes later. There were two teams in the 20 and three teams in the 10 mile course which started in unison at 7:15 am right in front of the BSF Superintendent and other dignitaries. I was able to see the competitors on Duncan Hollow Bypass while sitting in a lawn chair with my R&T newbie friend, Lucas Beck, just before they entered the squiggly part of Jack Ridge Loop. Somehow Cruise got away and was lost for about an hour and a half. Fortunately, neither father/daughter human team members were hurt and came back to camp which was about 1-1/2 miles away. Courtney, knowing Sara was unhurt and I went back and walked/ran the squiggly part again in hopes of finding Cruise. When the horse was brought back into camp he had all tack in place including Sara's helmet strapped to his purple breast collar. Advice: Use a rope halter under the bridle with a tied lead (no metal snap to break). It also helps if the lead is a different color or material type than your reins.

For the Saturday Ride and Tie, we had three 30 mile teams start off about 7:10, just after the 50 mile endurance riders. I was able to see them once, at the river crossing. Each team was about 10 minutes apart. The Beck/Sullivan team lost a little time looking for a red Renegade boot in the river. Once found, it was a matter of putting it back on and heading to the vet check. At the vet check the borrowed Beck/Sullivan team horse did not pass the vet check. The mare, Zena might have gotten a stone bruise after losing her boot in the river. The triple novice Beck/Sullivan team consisted of 15 year old Lucas Beck who I know through my local Southern Appalachian Back Country Horsemen chapter. He runs 10 miles before home school starts every clear day at a six minute mile! (Geez!) Michael Sullivan, a marathon runner from the Atlanta area heard about R&T from the Internet thought it sounded pretty cool and thought he would come prepared to spectate but brought his running shoes just in case I could find a team for him. Driving the Beck/Sullivan team back to camp from the vet check I learned about all the events that Michael had accomplished and this was the ONLY event he had not finished. Bummer. Awards for the Saturday ride and tie were given out individually because the competitors were headed home that afternoon.

Ride briefing for the Sunday Ride and Tie had a bunch of people for the eight mile event. A couple more would arrive overnight. I explained the course and should have done another walk behind camp again as that's where one team got off course. We had a good, safe start. My husband, Bobby and Lucas met them at the trailhead turn-around off Hwy 297. Lucas picked up the rest of the ribbons, following the last team back to camp vet check. It was not until I got word that a horse was off course that I could stop Lucas from collecting the trail ribbons on the second 4 mile course. Regardless the award ceremony got rave reviews, especially the electronic tennis racquet bug zappers. There was one team who promised next year there would be a Husband/Husband team! There were five youths under 18 in this year's event! Count 'em! FIVE! And one did two days!

All of this year's BSF RAT shirts were distributed. I do not have any left, sorry.

My volunteers included my absolutely wonderful husband, Bobby Mitchell and my newbie friend, Lucas Beck.

Next year's BSF RAT will be Friday-Sunday September 6-8, 2013. The Giddyup and Run will be April 6th and 7th.

Joanne Mitchell jfgmhorse@gmail.com

Simple Steps to Transition from a Bit to Bitless—Missy Wryn

For many horse riders riding bitless is a scary idea. The common concerns are “I won’t have any control without a bit”, “I would never ride my horse without a bit, it’s too dangerous”, and “I’m scared that my horse will take off without a bit”. Transitioning your horse from riding with a bit to bitless is relatively easy when you learn a few safety techniques that put you in control. No matter whether you ride English or Western, just a simple rope halter is all you need to get started.

Culture and language are basic to any communication between peoples so if I want to ride my horse bitless I need to effectively communicate in a way my horse understands. The basic culture of horses is that of a prey animal whose instinctual survival depends on living in a herd. Since every horse is genetically wired to require a herd leader at all times whether in a herd of horses or in a herd of two, me and my horse, I need to start out by communicating that I’m the herd leader. If I don’t behave like a herd leader my horse will either push me around disrespectfully – maybe dangerously, or walk away disinterested. Turning her backside to me translates to “I’m out of here - you’re not worth my time”. So how do I become my horse’s herd leader? Understanding and properly invoking horse instinct. I’m going to invoke my horse’s natural *instinct* to recognize me as her herd leader by moving her feet. Instinctually whoever is controlling a horse’s feet is the herd leader, that’s the herd culture. Using my body language and the instant release of pressure is how I’m going to demonstrate I am her herd leader. Keep in mind whenever you are with your horse *Horses learn from the release of pressure not the pressure itself*. I start out by teaching my horse to back-up with just a jiggle of the lead rope. It may take a few times moving my horse’s feet but being consistent will invoke her instinct that I am the herd leader. No matter if you are on the ground or under saddle, controlling your horse’s feet makes you the herd leader.

Communication with horses is done through body language, touch and sound. Be mindful of what your body is saying: your horse is watching closely. Be aware what your eyes are saying too. When you look at your horse eye-to-eye don’t be surprised if your horse steps back a bit as you approach. Eye contact is a message of “move”, so drop your gaze and soften your body’s countenance when you approach your horse. When you want your horse to back up look straight into her eyes, present your full chest and ask your horse to back up by jiggling the lead rope slightly and increase the jiggling as you walk towards your horse. The moment your horse takes a step back immediately stop jiggling the rope, drop your gaze and soften your body’s countenance turning your shoulder to your horse and praise verbally “good girl” and stroke her neck. Stroking her neck releases a chemical response that relaxes her, which accelerates learning. These are just a few tips to give you a general idea of how communication using your body, touch and voice works with horses. Now let’s apply some simple techniques to ride bitless while keeping in mind the basic culture and language of your horse. You’ve taken the time to invoke your horse’s instinct to recognize you as the herd leader by controlling her feet, i.e. backing up. Now you want to teach your horse to flex her head from side to side on the ground first and then we’ll translate that under saddle. This is the first step to creating your horse’s emergency handbrake in a crisis. I recommend making nose to girth the *safe and loving place* we go when we are in trouble. So, place your hand over your horse’s nose and gently ask for her head bringing her nose to her girth. Your horse only has to give slightly and then you release her nose for “giving” to your pressure. The release of pressure is how the horse learns they are doing the right thing not the pressure itself – make your release instantaneous.

Once you’ve got your horse giving nicely to the *safe and loving place* you will now flex your horse’s head using the lead rope. Grip the lead rope overhand about 12” from the knot under the chin and gently but consistently pull your horse’s head to the side resting your hand on the saddle area until your horse “gives”. You want to pull her head around about two thirds of the way leaving her to give the last third by dipping her nose to the girth area or creating slack in the lead rope – instantly release the rope from your hand at the moment your horse “gives”. Stroke her neck and verbally appreciate. Do this on both sides until your horse is coming off the slightest pressure when you lift the lead rope to draw her nose to her girth. Remember, take your time. If your horse is nervous and moves in circles stay with her calmly until she stops moving her feet. Praise her when she’s doing what you want and never reprimand for getting the wrong answer, simply help her to understand what you are asking by breaking it down into smaller steps if she needs that. Next you want to teach your horse how to disengage her hindquarters which is getting her to cross her rear inside foot in front of her rear outside foot. This disables a buck, bolt or rear and when combined with nose to girth is equivalent to pulling your horse’s emergency handbrake. While standing next to your horse flex her nose with the lead rope and with your other hand place your thumb on her side where your heel would be if you were in the saddle, and apply pressure asking her to move her back feet.

Continued from previous page

As soon as she moves, even the slightest direction away from your thumb pressure rub the spot, but keep holding her nose in place until her feet stop moving. Keep holding her nose even after her feet stop moving until she “gives”. Work both sides of your horse until she is flexing and disengaging smoothly.

Next you want to move into a walk and apply your emergency handbrake making sure your horse responds with ease listening to you. Work both sides from a walk and then move into a trot and canter applying the emergency handbrake in all three gaits. Once you can shut your horse down in all three gaits calmly and rationally you are now riding safer bitless! All the same cues apply as if your horse had a bit in their mouth since most of your riding is done with your seat and legs; you now have added control of an emergency handbrake in a crisis. You want your horse to respond automatically as if a switch went off in her head as you reach down the rein to pull her nose and your heel simultaneously applies pressure. It becomes a habit for both you and your horse going to the *safe and loving place* when in trouble.

Bitless riding is just as safe if not safer when you are your horse’s herd leader and both of you respond to the emergency handbrake simultaneously calmly and rationally.

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Get fitted for trail shoes at a reputable running store. I like Fleet Feet in Santa Rosa, California. They have often posted adds in the newsletter and when I first visited the store I was delighted at how hard they worked to get me into just the right shoe.

Choose a trail shoe that offers traction. In order to keep ankles more stable, choose running shoes that offer lateral support.

Keep dirt and pebbles from getting inside socks, wear socks that are at least 1 inch above the top of your ankle.

Trail running can present unexpected obstacles like rocks, tree roots and branches. Keep your eyes on the trail a couple of feet ahead. When participating in a Ride and Tie race, keep a roving eye for your tied equine partner. It’s easy to get into “the zone” and miss your horse.

When running uphill, shorten your stride keep your head up and chest forward. Taking long strides can be faster than running uphill. There is *no* shame in walking.

Running downhill, watch your footing. To avoid twisting an ankle or straining your knees, slow down or walk the steep rocky downhill.

If going out for more than 30 minutes carry water, energy bars or gel.

As a safety standard carry your cell phone. Three years ago when trail running I took a nasty fall that resulted in a serious knee injury. Having my cell phone on me I was able to call for help (thanks Dal).

Leave the earbuds (my pet name) at home. Wearing earbuds will keep you from hearing another runner, mountain biker or equestrian coming up from behind. Enjoy hearing the birds, the breeze in the tree tops and the fall of each running step.

Have fun, trail running is the best way to feel like children as we run through the forest. It’s playtime, and we’re called to it.

Questions? Comments? Contact Peggy directly at peggy@dburnsinc.com

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Cuyamaca— Running thru camp



Photo courtesy Libby Volk

Cuyamaca— Splash and Adriana
Cuyamaca all courtesy: Mike Young



Susan Summers with Lola 2012 R&T Championship

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March Mystery Photo Contest! Do you know who, where, when and what?



Here's a clue: Bud Johns is on the left in the cowboy hat and white shirt. Send your answers to me, please:

dal@dburnsinc.com
newsletter@rideandtie.org

November Mystery



No one successfully guessed that this is a photo of Bud Dardi and Peggy Smyth with Monterey Jack at Sunriver: 1979. Bud Dardi won the Tevis Cup race in 1966 and 1968 and won best-conditioned Tevis horse in 1967. Sunriver was the first and only Ride and Tie which Bud completed and earned a completion buckle.

<http://www.teviscup.org/>