

UPPER MIDWEST ENDURANCE AND COMPETITIVE RIDES ASSOCIATION



From the Prez....

It's a few days into January as I write this, and I can't help but look forward to convention. There are some folks I haven't seen for a year and it will be nice to reconnect. I look forward to seeing friends that I haven't seen since my last ride in October. And every year I meet new people. I've seen names in the newsletter who are doing well, riding and winning some awards. I will finally get to put faces with the names I've been reading on the results and top ten pages.

It's also a time to talk and share experiences with fellow riders about hoof care, feed programs, saddle fit, tricks with tack, conditioning strategies, and most importantly dreams and plans for next season. The "free" time is the time I love the most. Please share with others your favorite ride and why. Try and get someone who's not been to that ride to come try it!

I wish to thank in advance DRAW for hosting, AHDR for the Friday night gathering, and the Awards Committee for gathering a stellar line up of items. Lastly my great appreciation to you: for riding all year and coming to convention, hosting or helping with a ride, and of course our veterinarians for watching out for our equine partners.

See you soon!

Theresa Meyer



WHAT HORSES THINK OF WINTER TURNOUT

RESEARCHERS FIND THAT THE BENEFITS OF TURNOUT TIME AREN'T REDUCED BY POOR WEATHER.

New research from the University of Connecticut suggests that horses on pasture are generally undeterred by wintery conditions, walking roughly the same distance every day regardless of the weather.

For the study, the researchers chose four mares and five geldings who were used for the university riding program during the day and turned out in a .85-acre pasture with a small adjacent paddock area each night. Once a week for a year, researchers fitted each horse

with a GPS unit to collect movement data over a 10-hour period.

They found that the average distance each horse traveled during the night was consistent---3.5 kilometers (a little more than two miles)---but the paths they took varied greatly. In the spring and summer months, the horses traveled throughout the larger paddock each night. During the winter, they traveled the same distance but stayed in a smaller area, close to the fence line and hay.

The researchers conclude that, "this information shows that turnout is still important for horses in all seasons, even in poor weather, if they are to maintain natural travel patterns."

Reference: "Effect of season on travel patterns and hoof growth of domestic horses," Journal of Equine Veterinary Science, July 2014

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"The essential joy of being with horses is that it brings us in contact with the rare elements of grace, beauty, spirit and freedom."

~ Sharon Ralls Lemon

Applied Common Sense
Sponsors of the UMECRA Top 10 Mileage Award

doesn't, the ground has no "give" and you'll want to stick to a walk.

- Cold air can worsen respiratory issues. Some studies have shown that extremely frigid air---in the single digits---can lead to minor inflammation in the lungs. If your horse is already dealing with a flare-up of recurrent airway obstruction (also called heaves) cold air could exacerbate the situation ---you'll want to skip the below-freezing rides until he's breathing easier. But resist the urge to shut him up in the barn to "protect" his lungs: The dust and ammonia fumes inside will be far more damaging than any cold, fresh air.

- Proper warm ups take longer in cold weather. Cold weather necessitates taking a few minutes more at the start of your ride to prepare tendons, ligaments and cartilage for the work ahead. Warming up heats crucial structures by increasing blood flow, a process that will take longer if you are starting at lower temperatures. Stick to the walk and slow trots, with gentle bending and stretching exercises, for about twice as long as you might in the summer. Keep in mind that a horse with arthritis is going to feel stiffer in the cold air. This stiffness, however, will resolve with a careful, gradual warm-up. If your arthritic horse doesn't improve over the first 20 minutes of a ride, the problem isn't the temperature. Call your veterinarian to discuss a more aggressive arthritis-management strategy.



Why does my horse do that?

You're riding along and your horse has a nice clear sight line on the trash can up ahead. Just as you pass the trash can, your horse spooks at it! Why does that happen?

We all know that a horse has almost 360° of vision – especially while grazing. But did you know that your horse really sees the world in two different perspectives? Looking forward your horses can view an object with both eyes – binocular vision, which allows them to see well far away. They can also can focus on the world with one eye – that's their monocular vision.

While you are at a distance, the horse is looking at the object with his binocular vision – he's focused on it with both eyes looking forward. This is good until you are about 4 ft from the object. Then the object gets a little fuzzy and maybe drops out of his sight altogether. Just as you pass the object, the trash can comes into focus with one eye seeing it with their monocular vision. It is at the transition between the

two types of vision that the horse is most likely to spook.

If you allow the horse a nice free rein so he can get a good look at the object as it transitions from binocular to monocular vision, the horse will be less likely to spook!

From "How to Think Like a Horse" by Cherry Hill



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Horses

Maya Angelou wrote, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." This applies to horses. You win their heart when you make them comfortable with their body and sound. You have a very special place in their mind when you encourage them to think and respect their errors. They never forgot when you treat them as partners. You can win their stomach with carrots, sugar, or any other treat but you don't win their respect. It would be in fact more appropriate to use the word esteem. You can get a form of "respect" through domination or social order but it is more about submissive obedience. It is, for the horse, more a matter of survival than respect. They look in your pocket for treats but they don't like you. They obey but don't have any esteem for you. The ones who really look at you as a partner read your mind; they don't need spectacular demonstration of love. "True friendship comes when silence between two peoples is comfortable." (Dave Tyson Gentry)

There is a fundamental difference between a skilled rider and a master. A skilled rider makes the horse execute movements. A master gives to the horse the athletic ability to perform the move soundly and at its utmost potential. La Gueriniere was a true Master. He did not create the shoulder in to get a score in the show ring. Dressage tests were not part of the equestrian world at this time. François Robichon de la Gueriniere created the shoulder in to enhance the horses' athleticism. There is no mastership without extensive understanding of the equine locomotor mechanism. Henri Pointcare wrote, "It is through science that we prove, but through intuition that we discover." This is definitively true for the equestrian art. Most discoveries have been made first by intuition and proven later by science. There are also "intuitions" that have been proven to be wrong by science. True masters do not repeat false intuitions under the name of tradition. True masters question and analyze our predecessors finding in the light of actual knowledge.

Mastership is a long process of learning and experience. It cannot be replaced by extensive advertising. It is done but it is usurpation. Dennis Overbye wrote, "The Joy of Physics isn't in the results, but in the search itself." Riding is physics; it is about interactions of forces and consequent actions. The joy of riding and training and teaching is not in the execution of the movement; it is in the fascinating process of leading the horse's brain toward the body coordination adapted to the athletic demand of the performance. With the science of motion, we are creating a generation of masters. You might never reach the experience, knowledge and fame that will make you a Master for the next generations, but you will be at your own level, a master in your horse's heart and it is all that matters. Jean Luc Cornille



Supplementing the Supplemented Feed

By Juliet Getty, Ph.D.

"For an adult horse with moderate activity, feed .75 to 1.0 lbs per 100 pounds of body weight." These are the feeding instructions for a popular commercially fortified feed. If your horse weighs 1100 pounds (500 kg), you'll need to feed 8.25 to 11 pounds of feed per day. For enough calories? Enough protein? Enough vitamins and minerals? Yes, to all of the above and more. That's a lot of feed! That could amount to three to five two-quart scoops (depending on the weight of the feed) per day. And you'll need to divide it into multiple feedings since meal size should never exceed 4 pounds (your horse's stomach is small compared to the rest of his digestive tract).

Chances are excellent that you don't feed anything close to the suggested amount. Does it matter? Yes. Most of what you pay for when you buy a fortified feed are the fortifications. You pay for the vitamins, the minerals, and any special ingredients such as flax seed and soybean meals to provide omega 3s and protein. The only way your horse will benefit from these nutrients is to feed according to directions. Modify them and you'll need to "supplement the supplement." For example, this feed provides 100 IUs of vitamin E per pound. If you fed half of the recommended amount, say 5 pounds, your horse would only receive 500 IUs per day. That's the bare minimum, according to the National Research Council, for a 500 kg horse. Most equine nutritionists agree, however, that this horse at maintenance would do better at amounts closer to 1,000 IUs per day. Furthermore, as activity increases, so does the vitamin E requirement. Therefore, supplementation would be appropriate. Other nutrients such as omega 3 fatty acids, vitamins A and D, minerals such as copper and zinc, and a host of feedstuffs provided to offer enough fat and protein, may need to be supplemented when less than recommended amounts are fed. As you can imagine, it becomes very tricky to figure out just how much to supplement. You could simply give half the supplement dosage if you are feeding half the fortified feed dosage. But to do this accurately, you should figure out how much your horse would have gotten if fed the recommended amounts, and then calculate how much supplement to feed to make up the difference. If you're not comfortable with crunching numbers, your best source of information would be a qualified equine nutritionist. Bottom line... pay attention to labels, weigh your feed using a scale, not a scoop, and keep your calculator handy when making adjustments that supplement the supplement.

Juliet M. Getty, PhD, is an independent equine nutritionist.

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PRESIDENT
Theresa Meyer
3028 181st Ave NW
Cedar MN 55011
763-753-5236
thmeyer753@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT
Tony Troyer
867 N 45th Road
Earlville, IL 60518
815.539.7375
il4aerc@aol.com

SECRETARY/TREASURER
Jill Feller
N9280 Cty Hwy TW
Mayville, WI 53050
920-948-9502 (cell)
jfeller@nconnect.net

POINTS KEEPER

Robin Schadt

7342 W 115th Street
Worth, IL 60482
708.280.8241 robinschadt@aol.com

REGIONAL DIRECTORS
ILLINOIS
Sarah Mower
526 S Fair
Olney, IL 62450
618.868.2999
dammitthunder@yahoo.com

MICHIGAN
Wayne Gastfield
723 N. Warner
Fremont, MI 49412
616-924-2605

MINNESOTA
Dianne Schmidt
319 Summerfield Dr NE
Eyota, MN 55934
507-282-7333

WISCONSIN
John Wagner
W359 N 8280 Brown
Street
Oconomowoc, WI 53066
262.844.4115
jwagner288@wi.rr.com

AERC REGIONAL REPS
Connie Caudill – Ride
Sanctioning
812-967-5973
Sue Keith
812-949-1629

SANCTIONING
COORDINATOR
Jill Feller
N9280 Cty Hwy TW
Mayville, WI 53050
920.948.9502
robertcrispin@netscape.net

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Peggy Pasillas
9928 Rich Valley Blvd
Inver Grove Hgts MN 55077
651-450-7959

peggy@pasillas.net
UMECRAnews@gmail.com

DIRECTORS AT LARGE
Nicole Mauser-Storer
201 S Cameron Lane
Bartonville, IL 61607
309.697.5591
n.mauserstorer@huskers.unl.edu
Bill Suskey

5605 W Pine Lane
Mequon, WI 53092
262.242.9402
hellsbellsfarm@gmail.com

VETERINARY REP
Olivia Rudulphi
281 Ruby Road
Noble, IL 62868
618.752.7181

Wineglassfarm1@yahoo.com

WEBSITE EDITOR
Nicole Mauser- Storer
201 S Cameron Lane
Bartonville, IL 61607
309.697.5591
n.mauserstorer@huskers.unl.edu

RIDER REPS
Max Bernsdorf
N5630 Hwy 42
Kewaunee, WI 54216
920-388-3128
miranch@hotmail.com

Elizabeth Laurie
15215 60th Street
Plymouth, MN 55446
612.559.1030
ealaurie@mac.com

Bonnie Mielke
562 W34264 Piper Rd
North Prairie WI 53153

262-392-9369
bonniemielke@hotmail.com

Joslyn Seefeldt

5738 Klug Road

Milton, WI 53563
608.774.7490
joslynsfiberfarm@aol.com