



EVENTS

January 15

Cowboy Poetry & Music Festival
Empty Saddle Club

January 15-16

Orange County IEL Show
*Oaks/Blenheim Rancho Mission Viejo
Riding Park*

January 24

RHE Equestrian Committee Meeting
Rolling Hills Estates City Hall

February 3-6

Equine Affaire
Fairplex in Pomona

Save date for Poetry & Music Festival

The Empty Saddle Club will host the PVPHA's 14th annual Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival on Saturday, Jan. 15, instead of the general meeting.

"We've got poets, musicians, chili, corn bread and a whole lot of fun," said festival director Pam Turner.

Chili and corn bread will be served at 6 p.m., and the entertainment—which will feature cowboy campfire songs, poetry, music, comedy and more—is scheduled for 7 p.m.

See "Festival," page 5.

Local rider named ambassador by Royal Equestrian School

by DIANE BARBER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

with the foundation to promote and preserve the historical tradition of Spanish horsemanship.

Diane Barber, a Rolling Hills Estates equestrian, designer and marketing professional, has been named the Official Ambassador to the United States for the Royal School of Equestrian Art Foundation (Fundación Real Andaluza del Arte Ecuestre) in Jerez, Spain. Barber, an alumna of the prestigious riding academy, now works

From trail riding as a child through the forests of Pennsylvania, to discovering English riding at Peninsula Riding Club, to visiting a palace in Spain for the highest level of dressage training on Andalusian stallions with Olympic medalist Rafael Soto, my lifelong

See "Barber," page 9.



PHOTO COURTESY SUSSMAN FAMILY

Riding aside (page 6): Contributor Haley Harrington introduces readers to an old way of riding.



HALEY HARRINGTON

HIPPOH seminar (page 3): Experts share the secrets of saddle fit.

ALSO INSIDE

News briefs	2
Letters	3
Trainer spotlight	4
President's message	5
Classified	9
Horse funnies	10



STEPHAN COOPER

Diane Barber and Bold Brahim ("Jesse") in Rolling Hills Estates.

NEWS BRIEFS

Equestrians march in RHE holiday parade

The Rolling Hills Estates holiday parade, known as the Parade of Lights, featured multiple equestrian groups.

Held Dec. 4, participants marched along Silver Spur Road, Deep Valley Drive and Crossfield Drive. The parade was broadcast live on Cox Communications channel 35 and rebroadcast throughout December.

The parade, which was the 12th annual, almost didn't happen due to the city's budget crunch this year, according to an editorial in the Palos Verdes Peninsula News. Nevertheless, in what the paper called a "shared sacrifice," city staff took a voluntary 25-percent cut in medical benefits, among other reductions, so the parade and other programs could continue.

PV High continues to dominate IEL circuit

After six shows, Palos Verdes High School remains at the top of the rankings in the Orange County Interscholastic Equestrian League.

With 2,504 points, PV high remains No. 1 among the 57 competing schools. Palos Verdes Peninsula High School moved up from the No. 6 slot to the No. 3 slot with 1,080 points, where it's tied with Sage Hill. Chadwick dropped to the No. 8 slot with 865 points. Rolling Hills Preparatory School ranked at No. 47 with 50 points.

The next shows are scheduled for Jan. 15-16, or in case of rain, Jan. 22-23. U



PHOTO COURTESY GIL HOULE

PVPHA Membership Chairman Gil Houle (right) awards Pat Murnane of Wagon Wheel Ranch a framed trail map of the Peninsula in appreciation for promoting the PVPHA's work in the preservation of the trails and horsekeeping.

News briefs are generally 2-5 short paragraphs and fewer than 100 words. To submit a news brief, e-mail the text to the DISPATCH editor at pvpha2010@gmail.com. The editor reserves the right to not include briefs and to edit briefs for length and clarity.

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Like the new layout? Have an idea for a column or feature? Let us know! We've put together a brief survey for our readers, and we would appreciate your input. You can access the survey online at:

<http://dispatch2011survey.tk>

Thank you!

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Letters: Reader shares her dog attack story

The article in the November DISPATCH regarding the pit bull attack in the San Diego area (“We were cornered”) reminded me of the close call I had on my horse, BV, when we encountered a loose pit bull on lower Si’s trail four years ago.

We had a peaceful ride up until the junction where we could either turn toward Hicks ring or continue up Si’s. At that point, a woman and her loose pit bull were coming down the trail from the ring. The dog charged us and began jumping up at my horse’s neck. BV was used to dogs, but he sensed this was no friendly greeting. As we were in a precarious place with a drop off on our left and hill on the right, he spun around and began running down Si’s, the dog on our heels, and the owner running behind, yelling at the dog. I was thrown off balance, and my feet came out of the stirrups. I found myself hanging on, reaching down low on the reins,

pulling slightly, quietly asking him to stop. He did when we got to a wide place on the trail.

I knew the dog wasn’t going to stop chasing us and didn’t want to risk charging out onto Middleridge Road where there could be other riders, pedestrians or cars, so I jumped off, standing between the approaching dog and my horse. Since the day was cool I had on a thick leather jacket, chaps, leather gloves, tall boots and a helmet. I was really angry, the adrenaline was pumping and I was ready to kick that beast into the next county!

My reaction was to stand and fight—how dare he threaten my horse and I on our trail! If I had a gun, I would have shot it. As the dog approached, the owner yelled, “Kick him!” ... duh! Well, I used his momentum, gave him a kick and sent that nasty creature flying across the trail, knocked him right off his feet!

The owner caught up and put the

leash on “Alex” and then kept right on running down the trail. No apologies; she just showed me her back. I yelled at her to “keep that thing on a leash ... there are lots of horses and riders on the trail.”

Afterwards, I looked at BV, and he looked at me, and we heaved a simultaneous sigh. Then I mounted up and we continued our ride. It was a close call, and I thanked God that we were not hurt. Needless to say, our trust factor in each other increased 150 percent that day. He trusted me and stopped his flight from danger, and I trusted that he would listen, stop and stand while I faced the threat.

I understand there is no leash law behind the gates, and this caused some concern. I kept thinking about what could have happened if that dog had encountered hikers or other riders with or without dogs. The outcome could have been much different. **U**

—Pam Turner

Seminar focuses on horses’ well-being

by **DOREEN HOULE**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Thirty people turned out to the home of Gil and Doreen Houle for an impromptu free seminar on Dec. 3.

The seminar featured Dr. Joanna Robson, DVM, CVSMT, CVA, CMP, CSFT and CIT; Jochen Schlees, CMS; and Karen Loshbaugh, CSFT and classical dressage trainer. They created the Horse Industry Professionals Protecting Our Horses (or HIPPOH) Foundation.

The presenters emphasized the horses well-being by having the participants (as amateur horse owners) ask that horse professionals all work together to solve each of each horse’s individual problems.

Robson gave participants a basic understanding of a horse’s skeletal makeup and how the saddle fitting is of the utmost importance for the overall health and well being of the horse’s back.

Schlees gave valuable information on saddle fitting so

owners could double check their own saddles to be sure that they do stay clear of those sensitive areas. He also emphasized how owners must take care of their own physical being in order to be a balanced rider—again, for the horse’s well being!

Loshbaugh taught the basics of getting horses in shape, explaining that having the horse work through their rear

See “Seminar,” page 10.

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TRAINER SPOTLIGHT: LORI BARNETT

Trainer puts cowboys through 'Boot Camp'

Lori Barnett teaches riders the basics in and out of the saddle



COWBOYBOOTCAMP.NET

Trainer Lori Barnett's background in English and western disciplines makes her uniquely suited to teach "Cowboy Boot Camp," which she developed with Jim Moore.

Like a lot of young girls growing up, Lori (Quinn) Barnett was obsessed with horses and began begging her parents for a pony at an early age. They entered her in lessons at age 6 with hopes that would satisfy her desire; however, that just fueled her enthusiasm. She joined 4-H, spent summer days working around horses and visiting Santa Anita races track close to her Arcadia home. During school she studied how horses moved and interacted by drawing them in art class and read everything she could about her beloved animal. Among her favorite children's books were Marguerite Henry's *Five O'clock Charlie* and *Misty of Chincoteague*.

Finally, the 9-year-old worked out a deal with her parents: if she earned enough money, she could buy her own horse. Always the adventurer, her enterprising venture was to wander the bogs near by and catch frogs to sell to the boys at school, raise rabbits and wash cars. She soon earned \$100, which was reluctantly equaled by her parents for her to purchase her first horse, a palomino gelding, for \$200.

More than 25 horses and countless awards, ribbons and accolades later, Barnett is still passionate about horses. Her varied background and training in equitation, jumping, trail and western disciplines has made her one of the most respected trainers and clinicians in the area.

Her obsession developed into a lifelong career when, at 16, she was sought after by an eager following of younger kids yearning to learn from her. Today, she is still teaching, but to mostly an adult crowd through Cowboy Boot Camp, a program created with partner Jim Moore based in Rolling Hills Estates.

"Lori has such a natural affinity for sitting a horse that you can't tell where the horse ends and she begins," Moore said.

The pair has developed a unique program to teach a thorough and practical approach to natural horsemanship and trail riding safety for the beginner, intermediate and advanced adult rider. They offer step-by-step techniques to strengthen horsemanship skills and increase a rider's confidence, as well as teach equine care and horse management. They strive to expose people to the daily realities of equine ownership and teach what works best for the long-term welfare of the horse.

Not designed as a pony camp or brief cram session,

See "Barnett," page 10.

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President's message:

Plan to attend meeting on Chandler Development

by DALE ALLEN
PVPHA PRESIDENT

Happy New Year to you and your horses. I hope everyone had a happy holiday season and survived the rain.

We are ready to start off 2011 with the Annual Poetry and Country Music Festival on Jan. 15 at the Empty Saddle Club (more information on page 1). We hope you can attend this popular event.

We have been negotiating with the Chandler Ranch Developers over the issues and concerns that we have for the equestrian community regarding the project. We plan to have a general meeting for PVPHA members and any others who are interested to present

what we have worked out for this project and solicit community approval.

We do not have a date and place for this meeting at this time, so please watch <http://pvpha.org> and PVPHA e-mails for details.

Please make every effort to attend this meeting and any future meetings on this matter as it develops and goes through the city approval cycle. Your input is very important to us as we try and satisfy the equestrian needs in our city. Please come to ask questions and participate.

I am looking forward to see you and chatting with you at one or both of these functions in January.

I wish you and your families a happy, healthy and prosperous 2011. U

Continued from page 1...

Festival: Enjoy chili, corn bread, poetry, music

Returning performers include poets Wanda Smith and Janis Lukstein; musicians Kathy Stowe and Steve Craig; singer Diana Barber; and local group The California Cowboys (Steve Deming, Craig Ruppert and Mel Harker). In addition, the Cross-town Cowboys will yodel and sing classic cowboy tunes.

Cowboy campfire songs from the 1920s through 1950s will be led by 87-year-old Paul Pitti, an original cowboy from the era, and his group of New Westernaires.

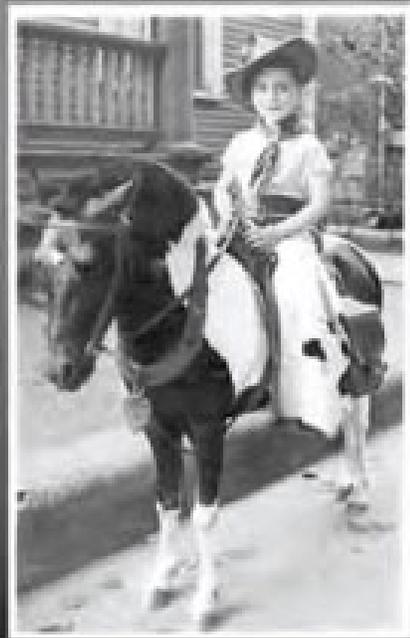
All are welcome, and admission and dinner are free. U

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Riding Aside

Sidesaddles offer security, links to bygone eras

by **HALEY HARRINGTON**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



PHOTO COURTESY KAROL KAFKA (TOP) / JOHN HARWOOD (BOTTOM)

Top: Members of CA_Aside model sidesaddle fashions from the Victorian and modern eras.

Bottom: A competitor takes a jump at a U.K. sidesaddle show.

The image of a regal woman riding her elegant mount is often the first image that comes to mind when one thinks of riding sidesaddle. The romantic image is one that continues to pull at the hearts and minds of people around the world—young and old, men and women.

Riding aside is an ancient art. Sidesaddles can be traced to the ninth century, and there is even evidence women were riding aside in the time of the ancient Greeks.

Nevertheless, Catherine de Medici, the daughter-in-law of King Francis I of France and reportedly a daring horsewoman, is credited with first hooking her right leg around the pommel, which improved security and allowed her to face forward. Prior to that time, women sat sideways in the saddle, gripping the pommel with their hand, as someone led the horse for them.

Riding was often reserved for women of the upper middle class; however, many members of the calvary kept sidesaddles, partly because it was a more secure way to break horses, and partly because they would still be able to ride should they be injured. In fact, it is said that while recovering from an illness, the Marquis de Lafayette used a sidesaddle during an 1824 visit to Rhode Island.

A more secure seat

In some ways, riding aside and astride are very similar. Both have a huge variety of saddles, including English, western and historic styles. A rider can do almost anything aside that they could astride, including barrel racing, working cattle, jumping, reining, hunting and mounted shooting.

Nevertheless, for an astride rider learning sidesaddle, there are some major differences. Of course, one must use different muscles. According to Nancy Harvey, who has been riding aside for many years, “The most difficult thing is getting used to only one leg for cueing and collection of the horse. The security is from the knees down, instead of using the whole leg.”

In many ways, sidesaddles are seen as a more secure alternative to riding astride. Many war veterans, handicapped persons and therapeutic riding programs use sidesaddles because they enable people to ride who might not

have been able to otherwise. Additionally, injuries that prevented a rider from riding astride may not prevent the rider from riding aside. For instance, many women who develop hip problems as they age turn to sidesaddle to allow them to ride longer.

Like saddles designed for riding astride, many sidesaddles can be classified as either English or western saddles, although the trees can be quite similar. Some western sidesaddles, in addition to skirts and rigging like their astride counterparts, even have grab handles for extra security while cutting cattle. Modern versions of both styles tend to have both an upright pommel for the rider to hook her leg around and a leaping pommel, which the rider can press her knee against, on the near—or left—side.

The majority of sidesaddles are designed for the rider to carry her legs on the near side; however, a few off-side saddles—where the upright and leaping pommels are placed on the right side—are in circulation.

Living history

“The romanticism is my favorite part (of riding aside),” said Karol Kafka, president of American Sidesaddle Association regional chapter CA_Aside. Some sidesaddle riders dress up in period costumes to emulate the romantic picture of aside riders from hundreds of years ago.

Lillian Chaudhary, a saddlemaker who specializes in sidesaddles and advisor for CA_Aside, points out that riding aside “evokes a sense of history, a connection with our past.” Sidesaddle riders participate in historic reenactments and parades dressed in their period costumes. They are living history.

“There is something contagious about riding aside,” Chaudhary said. “Even experienced equestrians may never have seen a sidesaddle rider before and are instantly enchanted by the grace and beauty ... Spectators are naturally fascinated and curious about how riders hold themselves on sidesaddles.”

Parades are an important and exciting part of many aside riders' lives because it offers them an opportunity to show other people the beauty of what they love. Some riders choose to wear period costumes while others wear modern sidesaddle habits. Aside riders can be seen in parades around the country, including the Tournament of Roses Parade; more than 20 sidesaddle riders participated in the inaugural parade for President Barack Obama.

Sidesaddle riders also perform in exhibitions and competition. Exhibitions are another way that sidesaddle riders are able to introduce people to their lovely sport. CA_Aside participated in a demonstration during the Polo in the Park exhibition, which was held at the Golden Gate

Continued on the next page.



JOHN HARWOOD

AQHA may consider allowing sidesaddle riders at shows

The American Quarter Horse Association does not allow specific sidesaddle classes nor does not currently permit competitors to ride aside in regular classes at its shows.

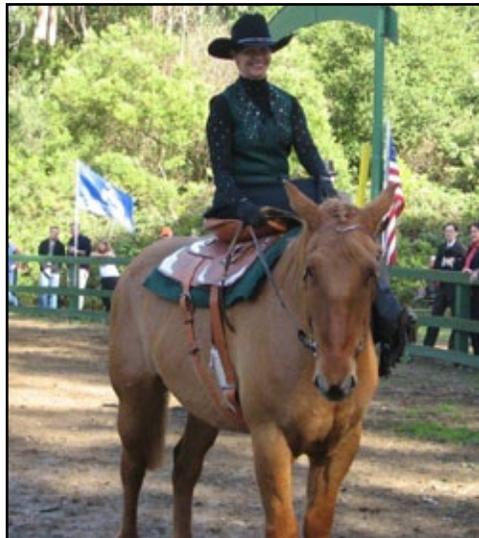
According to Jennifer Williams, president of the American Sidesaddle Association, many stock breed, 4-H and open horse shows take their cues from and/or follow AQHA rules.

In a note on the ASA Facebook page encouraging sidesaddle riders to contact the AQHA in favor of the proposed rule changes, Williams wrote, “(The ban) means we miss the chance to show our horses aside.”

Williams and others recently submitted two rule-change requests to the organization—one to create sidesaddle-specific classes and another that would allow riders to show aside in any class.

Rule changes are considered at the annual AQHA convention in March.

— Nicole Mooradian



SUSSMAN FAMILY / N. MOORADIAN / KAFKA

Top: Sidesaddle class at Arabian Youth Nationals

Middle: A Victorian-era sidesaddle

Bottom: A rider shows off her western sidesaddle.

Continued from the previous page...

Sidesaddle: 'There is something contagious about riding aside'

Park in San Francisco on Sept. 26. Spectators were treated to a wide variety of tack and attire dating from the Victorian era to modern times.

"Our demos are geared to showing people how it is possible to achieve an extremely secure seat on a sidesaddle," Chaudhary said. "That usually triggers a few converts who are eager to give it a try."

In the show ring

Breed shows often offer sidesaddle classes, although an aside rider can elect to ride sidesaddle in classes that are typically ridden astride provided there are no rules regarding the saddle. The Arabian Horse Association is one organization that offers sidesaddle-specific classes at its shows.

Additionally, the Side Saddle Association, which was founded in 1974 and is based in the United Kingdom, offers sidesaddle-only shows, as well as informal riding and social activi-

ties for its 1,200 members. It sponsors the National Side Saddle Show, held annually by the National Side Saddle Show Group, which hosts the SSA's equitation championships. Riders from all over the world travel to the U.K. to compete.

The U.S.-based International Side Saddle Organization offers a high-point awards program to its members. The ISSO, founded in 1974, also certifies instructors and judges.

The NEA Sidesaddle Association, founded in 1979, also offers a yearly awards program as well as clinics at various horse shows throughout the year. It's governed by the United States Equestrian Federation.

The ASA is a much younger organization, founded in 2007. The association is dedicated to preserving the art of riding aside, fostering community and serving as a resource for sidesaddle enthusiasts throughout the U.S. U

For more information, visit the following organizations' websites:

- American Sidesaddle Association: <http://americansidesaddleassociation.org>
- CA_Aside: http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/CA_Aside
- International Side Saddle Organization: <http://sidesaddle.com>
- NEA Sidesaddle Association: <http://sidesaddleinfo.com>
- Side Saddle Association: <http://sidesaddleassociation.co.uk>

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Horse Trail Riding In Beautiful Palos Verdes, California

Continued from page 1...

Barber: Adventure began with desire to learn more about horse's lineage

passion for horses has taken me on an incredible journey—a journey culminating with the honor of my recent Ambassadorship appointment by the Royal School in Spain.

So where and how did this connection to Spain begin?

Several years ago my curiosity and my fascination with the Spanish lineage of my horse, Bold Brahim ("Jesse"), landed me in a 2002 riding vacation in Carmona, Spain, at Epona Equestrian Center. Little did I know that my equine adventure was just the beginning of a deep heart connection to Spain, the country's special people and their magnificent horses.

In addition to dressage training and exploring olive groves and vineyards on horseback, I toured the Arabian farm where my horse's grandsire, Sidi Brahim, was born. (Sidi Brahim was named Horse of the Year for all of Spain in 1976.) The Garcia family of Epona also took me to see the "dancing stallions" at the Royal School in nearby Jerez—the first of many performances that would captivate me.

A few years after my stay at Epona, I was invited to join a European equine tour with Dr. Robert Miller—the globally acclaimed "father" of equine imprinting—and his veterinarian friends. Once again, I found myself at the Royal School, but this time I was in the palace with the school's veterinarians, instructors and administration.

At the reception following Dr. Miller's natural horsemanship lecture, I learned about the winter training courses for invited guests. The thought of attending was a fantasy at the time because I was a non-competitive amateur dressage enthusiast,

but I boldly applied anyway.

Just before Christmas in 2005, I learned that I had been chosen to fill one of the eight coveted seats for a 2006 February *doma classica* (classical dressage) intensive program, which included *doma vaquera* (Spanish cowboy dressage), driving and work in-hand. After graduating from the first course, I was offered another training seat in 2008, which I happily accepted.

When asked what I attribute to the honor of my recent appointment, my response is always the same: "My great affinity for Spanish horses and Spain, my hard work and enthusiasm as a student at the Royal School, and

the amazing friendships that I forged when I was there. I wore a smile to the stables every day, and my heart on my sleeve—and the Spaniards at the school connected with my passion and respect for their equine world."

I am now charged with taking my dedication to the school to the ultimate level as I lead the effort to bring the Spanish horses and riders to the United States for the first time in 2012 to perform "How the Andalusian Horses Dance." Venues for the event have not yet been announced.

For more information, Diane Barber may be contacted via her website at <http://equestriandesignery.com>. U

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Continued from page 3...

Seminar: Clinicians emphasize saddle fit

end and back will benefit them for life. This will help prevent injuries by strengthening the necessary muscle groups for carrying a rider.

After absorbing all of this, seminar participants had a great barbecue with plenty of great conversation.

The lecturers will be organizing a more extensive symposium in March. Since all participants found the first seminar so invaluable, the additional one will be a great opportunity to build on it.

For more information, log on to <http://hippohfoundation.info>. U

Continued from page 4...

Barnett: 'Boot Campers' learn at own pace

"boot campers" learn at their own pace, depending on their own time, availability and means. Instruction and demonstrations are offered daily within their low-stress and personal stable environment to enhance a rider's in-saddle control by learning such skills as active riding, correct and precise cueing and maintaining proper gaits. The result is a solid riding foundation to more effectively communicate with horses.

"Our efforts are aimed more toward enhancing a horse's natural instincts, rather than dominating and suppressing them," explained Barnett. "Never ask anything of a horse that a horse would not do naturally."

Horses are wonderful creatures and they can adapt to a wide range of training techniques and systems, when the riders use a particular system consistently. Natural horseman-



PHOTO COURTESY LORI BARNETT

ship is based on an understanding of equine behavior and the idea that horses look for leadership, direction and assurance that they're safe.

"It is up to us to understand horses and to determine what they tend to do in nature in any given situation and then use systems and techniques that are in close conformity to their natural instincts," Barnett said.

For more information about Cowboy Boot Camp and its programs, visit <http://CowboyBootCamp.net> or call 310-377-8834. U

HORSE FUNNIES

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Submitted by Doreen Houle.



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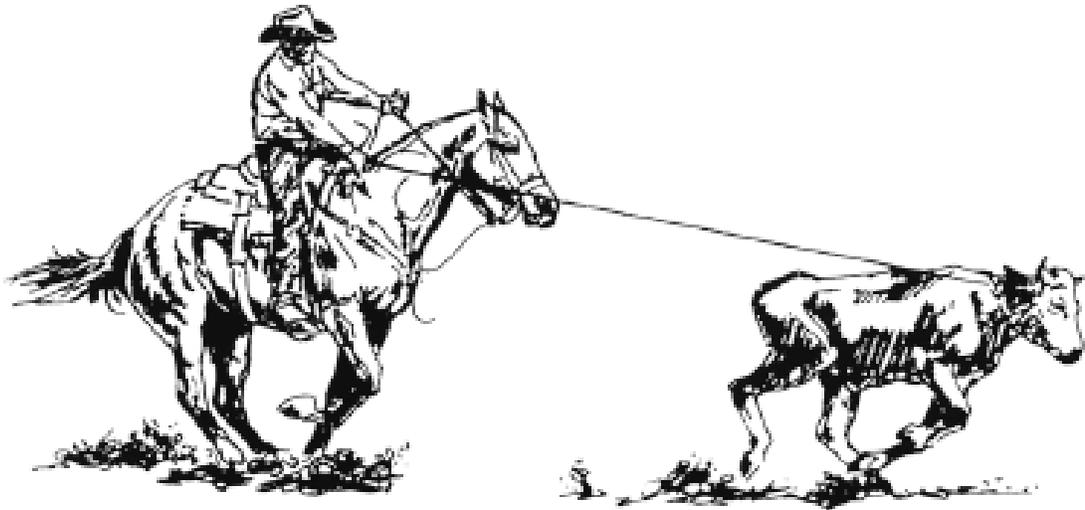
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DISPATCH edited by Nicole Mooradian.

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