



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 16

Tack sale

Rolling Hills General Store

March 21

PVPHA general meeting

Empty Saddle Club

April 6-7

Tom Curtin horsemanship clinic

Info: Call Kim Glaza, 310-345-3272

Ernie Howlett Park

April 6-7

Novice ranch sorting clinic

Info: martinperformancehorses.com

Mantic Farms, Anza, Calif.

April 7

Callie Bell trail clinic

Info: 310-375-9322

Portuguese Bend Riding Club

April 18

PVPHA general meeting

Empty Saddle Club

Events listed here are not necessarily sponsored or endorsed by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Horsemen's Association. If you would like an event included, send the information to pvpha2010@gmail.com.

Seahorse property in escrow

by **MELODY COLBERT**
CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Seahorse Riding Club—the privately owned and operated training stable on Crenshaw Boulevard next to the Peter Weber Equestrian Center in Rolling Hills Estates—is now in Escrow to a development company called Oxbow Partners, which wants to close the stable and build an assisted living facility instead.

We learned about the pending sale

a couple of weeks ago when the city of Rolling Hills Estates invited some members of its Equestrian Committee to meet with Oxbow Partners at City Hall (with less than 24 hours' notice) in order to share equestrian concerns with the new owners of the property, who have indicated that their desire is to replace the stable with an assisted living facility.

The escrow period is two years to allow for certain conditions to be met

See SEAHORSE, Page 3.

NEXT PVPHA GENERAL MEETING: MARCH 21

March meeting features feeders

by **BETSY SCHOETTLIN**
VICE PRESIDENT OF EDUCATION

SMHN, Freedom Feeder, Porta Grazer, Natural Feeder, Busy Buffet. What are they; how do they work; and why would I want one?

One of the most talked about new approaches to horsekeeping these days is the trend toward slowing down the feeding process so that horses eat their feed over longer periods of time. If you have done any research on this, you may have been overwhelmed by the wide range of products and pricing on the available feeders. Many of them cost several hundred dollars, must be ordered sight unseen, and are expensive to ship.

At the next PVPHA meeting, we will learn how the top five feeders work, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of each.

We will also have Barbara Ailor at the meeting talk to us about a proposed Volunteer Trail Patrol program for the Palos Verdes Nature Preserve. Rancho Palos Verdes is set to consider the program proposed by the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy. This program would not be just for equestrians but for hikers, bikers and anyone who is interested in educating preserve users about the area's natural resources.

As a reminder, the Empty Saddle Club requests that meeting attendees leave their dogs at home. U

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NEWS BRIEFS

Tom Curtin to host horsemanship clinic

Trainer Tom Curtin will host a horsemanship clinic at Ernie Howlett Park in Rolling Hills Estates on April 6-7 from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m.

“Curtin is a great teacher who enjoys working with people as much as he does with horses,” according to a flier about the clinic. “During the clinic, Tom offers each rider the opportunity to experience feel, timing and balance at his or her own level.”

There will be two sessions each day—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The morning session will focus on foundation skills, while the afternoon session is for advanced riders.

The cost for both sessions is \$500, while individual sessions will cost \$300. It is \$30 to audit.

For more information, contact Kim Glaza at 310-345-3272 or email her at kghorsemanship@hotmail.com.

PVPHA to sponsor Junior Drill Team

The PVPHA is the new sponsor of the Junior Drill Team, organized by Kelly Yates. Practices will start up again this summer.

Rolling Hills stables measure fails; Further election results released

Rolling Hills Measure A, which would allow residents to use their stables for residential purposes as long as the exterior remained stable-like and the structure could be converted back to agricultural uses, was defeated at the polls on March 5.

The “no” votes on Measure A prevailed, 55.6 percent to 44.4 percent.

The second ballot measure, Measure B, modified the city’s existing view-protection ordinance to exempt mature trees and limit a protected view to the view that existed when the homeowner moved in. The measure passed with a 5-vote margin, 50.3 percent voting in favor and 49.7 percent voting against.

After 10 terms in office, Thomas Heinsheimer was not re-elected. As the top two vote-getters, Bea Dieringer and Jeff Pieper were elected to Rolling Hills City Council.

PVPHA donates \$500 to Boy Scout Project

The PVPHA Board voted March 14 to award a \$500 donation to an Eagle Scout project to repair the dressage arena at Dapplegray Park in Rolling Hills Estates.

“THANK YOU,” Boy Scout Mark McHugh, who is leading the project, said in an email to the PVPHA. “After coming home from school today I was very excited to read your email. I promise to do a great job.”

The new fencing is estimated to last 15-20 years, according to McHugh.

The dressage arena was last renovated around 1999, according to RHE Community Services Director Andy Clark. Rotted rails have been replaced multiple times since then, and a new gate was installed in 2008.

The Eagle Scout project will involve replacing the rails on the fence, as the posts and the gate are still in good condition, Clark said.

The work days are scheduled for April 19-22.

“We welcome the opportunity to support the community, and we very much appreciate the BSA’s support of so many of the events and projects in this community,” said PVPHA corresponding secretary Melody Colbert.

News briefs are generally about 100 words. Submissions may be edited for spelling, grammar, space and style. To submit a news brief, email pvpha2010@gmail.com. U

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Wylene Wilson Back in October

by CHARLENE O'NEIL
PVPHA PRESIDENT

What a great time we had with the Wylene Wilson Clinic! She was an inspiring woman who shared her knowledge, her incredible "horse sense" and her bold outlook for riders and auditors alike.

Thank you to the Empty Saddle Club for including the PVPHA in your TGIF potluck and for "a Night of Wylene" in the big arena.

Wylene promises to be back in October, so watch for the dates.

On another note, the property on which Seahorse Riding Club is located is now in escrow with Oxbow Development. They are planning a senior housing project on the site! I find the prospect dismaying and sad and I urge you to contact the city of Rolling Hills Estates regarding this very important issue!

A great PVPHA general meeting is planned for March 21. We'll discuss a variety of horse feeders designed to slow down our horses' eating and make their meals more akin to grazing. For more information, see Page 1. See you there! U

SEAHORSE: Potential buyers seek to build assisted living facility

Continued from Page 1.
for project feasibility.

A primary condition will be for the city of Rolling Hills Estates to rezone the property from its current commercial recreation designation. The city would have to rezone the property to some type of residential designation for the proposed assisted living facility to be built.

At the March 2 annual Policy Session for Rolling Hills Estates, audience member Clark Davis questioned whether the City had begun "negotiations" with Oxbow partners. City council members said they had only very recently learned of the pending deal, and City Manager Doug Prichard indicated that the city has not begun working with the developers.

Davis also said that the developer and the city would "have a battle on their hands" if it becomes apparent that this proposal is moving forward.

In reply to a question about whether or not the stable is on "unstable soil" (such as fill or landfill), Mayor Frank Zerunyan stated that the property consists entirely of "native soil."

I also spoke during the public comment period of that meeting.

"Seahorse Riding Club is a cornerstone of our equestrian community—not only in terms of the number of horses, but in the fact that it offers a level of service and a unique opportunity for advanced training that is not found in the other three 'cornerstones' on this side of the hill: Palos Verdes Estates Stables, Peter Weber Equestrian Center and the Empty Saddle Club," I said. "The other stables could not accommodate the large number of horses housed at Seahorse, so it is likely almost all of the horses housed there would have to be moved

out of the area. The livelihoods of the professionals who render services to Seahorse clients, including trainers, veterinarians, farriers, etc. will be severely negatively impacted if this facility is closed, and they are very concerned about this possibility.

"I want the city to make sure this deal falls through."

I also said that I was dismayed that the owner did not make it known publicly that the property was up for sale, precluding the chance for someone who would continue the equestrian use of the property to buy it.

Equestrians need to keep abreast of developments. You can contact the Rolling Hills Estates City Council and let council members know how you feel about the rezoning of this property and the intended development. You can find contact information on the city's website at www.ci.rolling-hills-estates.ca.us.

We will update information as it is made available. U

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Use PV Patch to promote events, news

by **NICOLE MOORADIAN**
DISPATCH EDITOR

Palos Verdes Patch (palosverdes.patch.com) is a relatively new, online only publication that provides local news for residents of the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

While a group of Patch editors—including *Dispatch* editor Nicole Mooradian—take care of the hard news (think police blotter, city issues, elections), there are plenty of ways you can connect with your neighbors on the site.

Have a block party, equestrian clinic, school function or other event you want to publicize? Post it on the Palos Verdes Patch calendar, located at palosverdes.patch.com/events. It's absolutely free, and once an event is put online, the original poster can go back and edit it—useful in case you want to add more to the description or fix a typo!

Residents are also able to post announcements, which are user-created articles. Announcements can be about awards, events, Grandma's record-breaking Yahtzee game—anything! Post an announcement at palosverdes.patch.com/announcements/new.

Above all, we invite people to start a blog on Patch! With a blog, you can share your opinion on local issues; brag about your group's accomplishments; and even share your favorite recipe! For more information, visit palosverdes.patch.com/blog/apply.

For more information about posting events and announcements, or about starting a blog, contact Patch community editor Lindsey Baguio at lindsey.baguio@patch.com. Send any news tips you have to the editorial team at palosverdes@patch.com. U



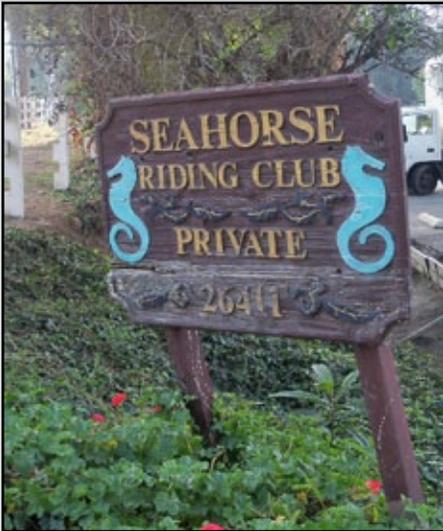
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ODE TO SEAHORSE



VICKEY KALAMBAKAL / PALOS VERDES PATCH

First they came for the Peter Weber Equestrian Center
And I didn't speak out because I wasn't boarding a horse there.

Then they came for Palos Verdes Estates Stables
And I didn't speak out because I don't live in PVE.

Then they came for Empty Saddle Club
And I didn't speak out because I wasn't a member.

Then they came for Seahorse Riding Club
And I didn't speak out because I wasn't a hunter/jumper show person.

Then they came for my horses in my backyard
And there was no one left to speak for me. U

—Anonymous

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ALL PHOTOS ON PAGE 6 BY LIZ KANE / ALL PHOTOS ON PAGE 7 BY RUTH SOBECK

Page 6, clockwise from left: 1. Younger participants stand up on their horses during Wylene Wilson's clinic Sunday morning. 2. If you can move your saddle from side-to-side, and the horse stands still, you can stand up on your horse, Wilson says. 3. Wilson stands on a participant's horse after wrapping a tarp around the mare's head. 4. Marissa Rogers swings a tarp around herself as she stands on Tyson, a mustang she trained for an Extreme Mustang Makeover competition.

Page 7, top: Participants on Saturday stand on their horses for a group picture. Bottom: Wilson convinces one horse to walk over a tarp.



RUTH SOBECK

‘Extreme Wylene’ emphasizes confidence

by **NICOLE MOORADIAN**
DISPATCH EDITOR

Wylene Wilson, a two-time winner of the Extreme Mustang Makeover competition, and her assistant Marissa Rogers traveled to Ernie Howlett Park at the end of February to teach local riders how to be more confident in the saddle.

More than 20 riders participated in the two-day clinic in Rolling Hills Estates, and at least a dozen people audited. The clinic included lessons in communicating with horses, instructions on how to perform an emergency stop, an obstacle course, relay races and more.

Many participants commented afterward on how valuable they found the instruction.

Wilson will return to The Hill in October. For more information, contact Kelly Yates.

Check out this page and the opposite page for photos from the clinic! 



©Ruth Sobeck

RUTH SOBECK

Poetry Festival founder has ties to old Hollywood westerns

by **KATHARINE LOWRIE**
PALOS VERDES PATCH

Sixteen years ago, Pam Turner created the Cowboy Poetry and Music Festival—an event that has launched the likes of singer Boomer McClennon and groups such as the California Cowboy Band and the Cross Town Cowboys.

Just don't misconstrue songs like "Don't Fence Me In," "When the Bloom is on the Sage" and "I'm an Old Cowhand" as country-western music, said Turner, a vivacious redhead whose parents, grandparents, aunt and uncle were products of Hollywood's golden age of cowboy movies—the days of Will Rogers, Tom Mix and Roy Rogers.

"It's cowboy campfire music," the 63-year-old Culver City resident stressed, explaining how the music inspired the idea of the festival held annually at the Empty Saddle Club in Rolling Hills Estates. "The difference is that these were songs of the range. They didn't sing about love and heartache, 'I lost my wife' ... 'My dog got run over by a train,' you know? (The campfire songs) are talking about the life of the cowboy."

A lot of the cowboy songs of the 1930s and '40s derived from poems. "They were called 'windies' because they were long-winded," the lively festival founder said over the weekend. "They would recite them around the campfire when they were on the cattle drives."

Someone would bring out a guitar or a harmonica and set the poems to music, she added. "Cowboys also liked to sing to the cattle to keep them calm on night watch."

Pam Turner's back story, as they say in Hollywood, began in Culver City, once known as "The Heart of Screenland" because that's where all the studios and back lots were located. These were places where her father, Paul Pitti ("a real singing cowboy," Turner said), and her grandfather, Bennie Pete Pitti, worked as stuntmen, she said.

Bennie Pete Pitti was renowned for his expertise with bullwhips, roping, stunt riding and knife throwing.

One legendary family story revolves around Paul's wife, Shirley, who as a bride of two months was selected by her father-in-law to participate in his knife throwing act at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

"They had rehearsed it," Turner said, except for the part where Paul and his brother, Carl, covered Shirley with butcher paper. "And what grandpa would do was outline her body by throwing the knives at her without



CONTRIBUTED BY PAM TURNER / PALOS VERDES PATCH

The original Westernaires singing group, including Paul (front) and brother Carl and Carl's wife, Mickey.

being able to see her."

Randy Turner, 62, who was participating in the interview with his wife, said, "The brides had to stand for the knives; that was a family ritual." (Aside from being an integral part of the Rolling Hills Estates festival, Randy has produced the Backlot Film Festival in Culver City, which both Turners are heavily involved in.)

What was so funny about the Shrine incident, Pam Turner said, was that a microphone set up backstage to catch the thwack of the knives also caught Shirley's repeated expletives. "The audience was just cracking up."

The family's Western trajectory started when Turner's grandfather, Bennie Pete Pitti, left St. Louis, Mo. at age 13 to join the circus. He met his wife, Ethel, while touring with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show in 1913.

"There were all these little circuses," Turner said, explaining how her grandfather learned his craft by touring with the Al G. Barnes Circus and the Tom Mix Circus. "Tom Mix was a very big cowboy star, and they used to winter out here in California."

Culver City was a brand-new town back then, so Bennie and Ethel bought a house, now an historic landmark:

“We were among the first 500 families to settle there.”

Bennie got a job as a stuntman at the Culver Studios, known then as the Ince Studios (founded by Thomas Ince in 1918). During this period, he met Will Rogers Sr.

“Will hired my granddad as a chauffeur, but what he really wanted him to do was teach his sons how to rope,” Pam Turner said. Since Will Sr. was always on the road, she said, “he didn’t have the time to teach the art to Jimmy and Will Jr.”

Armed with a family album, Turner showed a picture of her grandfather sitting behind Will Rogers, Jr. on a bicycle built for two and teaching him to rope for the movie “The Will Rogers Story.”

Bennie’s two sons, meanwhile, Paul (named after silent film star and friend Pauline Frederick) and Carl learned all the tricks of the cowboy trade and became cowboy stuntmen like their father. Carl also acted in bit parts in silent movies and got his first screen credit in Hal Roach’s *Of Mice and Men*.

At one point, Paul, Carl and Carl’s wife, Mickey, formed The Westernaires. “They sang on the radio on KFI in the 40s and 50s,” Turner said, “and were on one of the first KTLA-TV shows, a Western family show.”

Her parents became good friends with Will Rogers Jr., who owned two ranches in Los Angeles. “He had one up on Sunset (Boulevard) and one in Culver City,” she said. “It’s long gone, but grandpa bought the ranch (in Culver City) and we lived on it. We had movie stunt horses, and that’s what I learned to ride on.”

One stunt horse, a beautiful, white Arabian/Morgan cross, was her “babysitter,” said Turner, who was riding at 19 months. “He’d walk around, and I would just sit on his back. His name was Warrior.”

Another favorite childhood memory is of the stunt cowboys visiting on weekends and her grandfather coaching them in “roping and bullwhip tricks” and knife throwing.

Pam and Randy are currently working with friend and writer Ross Hawkins on “The Celluloid Cowboys,” a documentary tentatively set for release in April.

Turner, who graduated from Cal State Dominguez in theatre arts, worked for years in the entertainment industry. “I got into the behind-the-scenes stuff,” she said, adding with a laugh, “Unlike actors, I always had work.” A lot of it was at UCLA. “I did lighting for all kinds of concerts.”

Hired as technical director at the Norris Theatre in 1983, she lasted only six months. “The theatre was overbooked ... I was putting in 80 hours a week,” she said. She also

worked the 1984 Olympic Games, doing tech for gymnastic events at UCLA.

That was the year she met Randy.

“We met basically at Church on the Beach in Hermosa,” said Randy Turner, who has operated a window washing business for 30 years. He previously owned two delis and a restaurant in Hermosa called The Garden of Eden. Both Turners are ordained ministers.

“We’d both been married twice before and were divorced,” Randy said. “I’m reading a book about counseling ... because I wanted to learn how to be really married. So Pam walks up, and I’m brown as an Indian with long hair, and she didn’t know if I was an Indian or a white guy.”

“Turns out he is part Indian,” she said, laughing. They married in 1985.

When Pam decided to go back to California State University Dominguez Hills to get her Masters in marriage and family therapy, Randy went along with her to complete his undergraduate degree.

“It was really nice going back to school and having classes with my husband,” said Turner, who graduated in 1989 and interned at a drug rehab program. “I wanted to help people. The fact that I had this background in theater and I’m outgoing, it’s been really helpful.”

The Turners lived on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, where they kept horses, and Pam joined the PVPHA. “I started going to meetings and said, ‘I like this!’ They are into preserving trails ... horsekeeping. They are really good service organization,” she said.

Elected to the PVPHA as vice president of education, she was in charge of booking monthly educational and entertainment programs. But back in January of 1998, “usually a down month after the holidays, we needed some pepping up,” she said.

She remembered a famous cowboy poetry festival that takes place later in January in Elko, Nev. “So I thought that it would be fun to have our own festival, sort of a warm up for Elko; or, as it turned out, a platform for our local cowboy poets to share their works,” she explained.

There were only about 20 people at the first one, she said, among them cowboy/poet Steve Deming and Wanda Smith, who writes “lovely poems” about the Peninsula. It was very casual, the poets reading their work in front of the fireplace at the Empty Saddle Club.

“Over the years we grew and audiences packed the clubhouse enjoying the music, poems and eventually the free chili dinner provided by the

Continued on the next page.



KATHARINE BLOSSOM LOWRIE /
PALOS VERDES PATCH

Pam and Randy Turner

Continued from the previous page.

PVPHA Board,” she said. “The sound system got larger and we added some set dressing, a western backdrop and more musicians.”

Redondo Beach resident Steve Deming, author of *The Source—Poems of the Trail* and member of the California Cowboy Band, can't believe it's been 16 years since the Turners started the festival. “Who's counting when you are having fun?” said the poet musician, who is also managing director of U.S. Energetics, Inc., a new real estate development company in Redondo Beach dedicated to clean energy projects.

“It was certainly fun again this year as the California Cowboy Band and the Cross Town Cowboys teamed up again to make for a wonderful evening,” Deming added.

A few years into the festival, Pam Turner asked her parents to join the festivities as *The New Westernaires*: “Mom sang and dad brought out his old guitar and started picking out songs, cowboy campfire songs.” Pam and Randy played with the group, as well.

Paul Pitti, Turner said, would tell the stories behind the songs, saying things like, “There was a song written back in the 1930s, and the poem was set to music. And Cole Porter was going to use it in some movie. And then more people began to record it, including Bing Crosby. The name of the song was ‘Don't Fence Me In.’”

Where Turner's mother passed away in 2007, 2012 turned out to be Paul Pitti's last year at the festival. He suffered a major heart attack, and after a stay at UCLA Medical Center, he died at home in Culver City.

Beforehand, friends stopped in to say goodbye to the former U.S. Marine and movie cowboy, who was known



CONTRIBUTED BY PAM TURNER / PALOS VERDES PATCH
Stuntman Bennie Pete Pitt, Pam Turner's grandfather, teaches Will Rogers Jr. to rope.

to do so much for others. A member of St. Augustine Catholic Church for all his 88 years, Randy said, “Paul was a (World War II) vet and ... went through four beach-heads without a scratch.”

Pam Turner was with each parent when they passed. “They were around when I came into the world,” she said, “and I wanted to be around when they went out of this world and into a better place.”

Pam and Randy Turner now live in the second Culver City house her father owned. It is located behind the Sony Pictures main gate.

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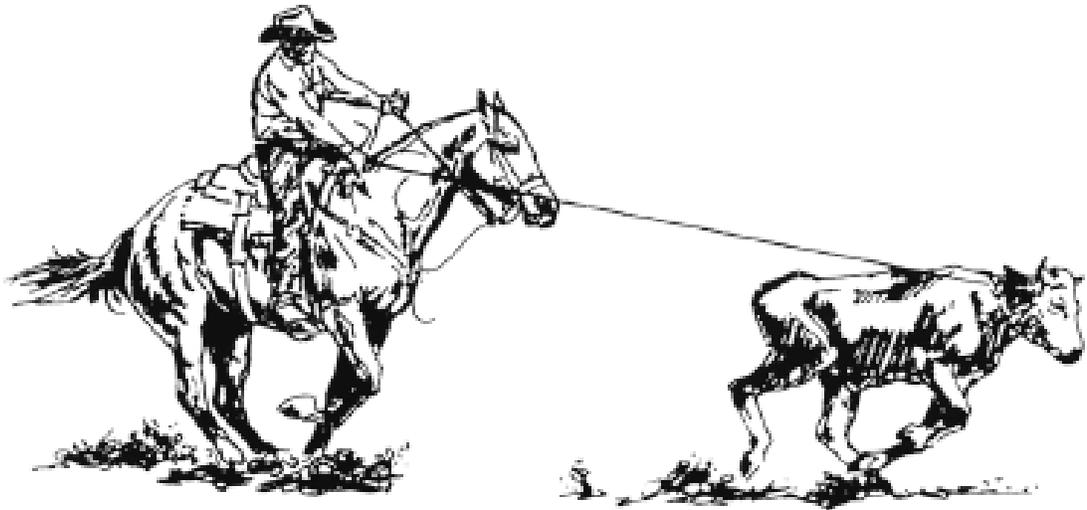
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Dispatch edited by Nicole Mooradian.

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