



Paddock Paper

Northern New Mexico Horsemen's Association Newsletter

June 2026

What Does It Take to be a Champion?



If you have ever wondered what it takes for you and your horse to be winners on any show circuit, wonder no more. Come to our monthly program meeting, Wednesday, June 24, 7 pm, to get the “inside scoop” from our speaker, Sophia Hoekstra.

She is the head trainer and manager at The Trinity Ranch and leader of the Trinity Show Team. As such, she specializes in developing riders and horses through a

horsemanship-first approach rooted in feel, communication and respect for the horse.

In fact, Sophia has been the trainer for our Youth Riding Program since its inception! So, she will also talk about what it takes to go from being a beginning rider to winning ribbons and buckles in various competitions. She'll update us on the students NNMHA sponsors, and how she coaches new riders ready to compete for national titles. Finally, Sophia will tell us how much time is required to practice and the realities of the costs of this discipline.



Articles & Pages

Ridge Riders – p 2
NATRC Clinic in June – p 2
Leisure Distance Riding – p 3
Extreme Cowboy Clinic – p 4
Camino de los Burros – p 6
Board Notes – p 7
Bulletin Board – p 9

Her other credentials include being a Pinto Horse Association (PtHA) World and Reserve World Champion, multiple Western Dressage Association (WDAA) World Show Top Ten finisher and American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) year-end award recipient. You will hear how she has successfully trained and shown horses ranging from young prospects to national-level competitors.

Her students have gone on to earn multiple World and Reserve World Championship titles, including a PtHA Horse of the Year award earned by an amateur rider under her program. Throughout her career, Sophia has introduced more than 1,000 riders to horsemanship, always believing that happiness and partnership between horse and rider are at the heart of a successful program. Sounds like a great overview of how junior riders go on to becoming national winners. Bring your questions to the meeting!

We meet at Dr. Field Goods Kitchen, 187 Paseo De Peralta, DeVargas Center, SF. The closest entrance to the restaurant is on the south side of the center. There is plenty of parking. Join others for dinner at 6 pm in the main restaurant area. Please be in the separate meeting room a few minutes before 7 pm.

Celebrate July 4 with Ridge Riders

On Saturday July 4, we're heading to the Pajarito Mountain ski area for cool weather and beautiful scenery. Ride in the shady aspens and tall pines with our usual stop overlooking Valles Caldera. This well marked trail is rocky in some areas and the climb is moderate. The ride tops out at 10,000 feet. It's a popular ride, so join us!

Directions

Take Highway 285 north to Pojoaque, exit Highway 502 to Los Alamos. Follow Trinity Drive to West Road, then turn left and then right on Ski Hill Road. Continue four miles to the ski area parking lot. Our staging area will be at the end of the parking lot in the lower-level area. Trail Boss Ed Srsic will be there at 9:30 am and we will be in the saddle at 10 am. Look for his white truck and trailer. If there are any issues with weather or forest service closures, he will text on Friday afternoon regarding cancellation to those who have signed up.

Reminder: Our ride on Saturday, June 6, is the Nambe Badlands.

To sign up for any of our rides, register in advance and sign our online waiver at: nnmha.org/events. There, click on Ridge Riders. You must be a member for insurance purposes, and you can easily become a member (or renew your membership) on our website. For questions, contact Ed directly at 415 305-3238, riders@nnmha.org.

"Intro to NATRC" Clinic for Juniors & Adults on 6/27 & Leisure Division NATRC Ride on 6/28

Whether you are new to distance riding or experienced, the one half day NATRC (North American Trail Ride Conference) Clinic is designed to improve your partnership with your horse. Then Sunday is a 10-mile "leisure division" NATRC competitive trail ride. Anyone twelve years of age and older is welcome.

The clinic includes sessions for both junior and adult participants.

On Sunday, June 28, riders participate in the competitive trail ride. The average pace on the singletrack and ranch road course is 3.2 mph. Riders may register for either or both clinic and competition. All events will be held on a beautiful private ranch in the pastoral Ojo Caliente River valley, one hour north of SF off Highway 285. Camping is available at no charge.

This event is a fundraiser to benefit the NNMHA scholarship fund. On Saturday night there will be a dinner and raffle (with great prizes) all to support NNMHA! When you purchase your dinner (\$25) you will automatically be entered in the raffle. Folks can also purchase raffle tickets without dinner.

For more information and to register/RSVP contact: [Amelia Adair](mailto:AmeliaAdair@outlook.com), ride manager, AJASantafe@outlook.com, 720-563-1018.



So, What is Competitive Trail Riding?



"It's not a race," says Amelia Adair, ride manager of the upcoming Ojo Caliente LeD ride and clinic. "Rather, riders who compete in North American Trail Conference (NATRC) competitive trial rides learn trail riding skills" such as safely managing their horses over distance. There are different divisions and length of rides.



Riders in NATRC competitions are judged on their horsemanship, safety and partnership with their equines.



Equines are judged on their fitness, soundness, trail ability and manners. They are evaluated before, during and after the ride.

Riders may use any type of saddle and tack so long as it fits the equine. All riders must ride at the same pace; competitors are timed out at 30 second intervals and finish within the ride pace "window". The equine and riders are evaluated over judged obstacles (which must be natural and present on trail), and the equine goes through a P&R (pulse and respiration) evaluation on trail to assess their fitness.

NATRC's motto is "You're going to learn something." It's a terrific sport for deepening your partnership with your equine.



“You learn something and have fun with like-minded equestrians, whether you just come for the clinics or the competitive ride, or both,” she explained. “Or volunteer to help or just come camp with us. In any case, you’ll learn how to better communicate with your horse, either riding or observing others or both!”

NATRC is a distance sport competition over a measured trail that is completed within a window of time. It was formed in 1961, and there are six regions. Region 3 includes NM. The organization promotes horsemanship and horse care, as they apply to the sport of distance competition. NATRC events offer a variety of challenging and education experiences designed to strengthen horse and rider partnership.

It organizes clinics, leisure division riders, mileage challenges, webinars, volunteer opportunities and conventions – all for both youth and adults, novices and the more experienced. Judges prepare scorecards that give riders information about their performance at obstacles and horse fitness measurements to support continuing learning. For more info about NATRC: natrc.org.

Obstacles + Timing = Extreme Cowboy Clinic; We Watched, Learned, Had Fun



There were some new and mighty challenging obstacles at the first-ever-in-SF Extreme Cowboy Clinic last month. A full house of rider and horse teams were coached by clinician extraordinaire Sara Tyree on the first day of the clinic. On the second day, it was the real thing. The teams took on the obstacles again, but with a big twist: Riders not only were evaluated on their handling of obstacles but also the amount of time with each obstacle.

It was a real competition with winners claiming bragging rights and points, should they continue toward the Extreme Cowboy Association’s annual championship event.

It was a great opportunity to watch and learn from both hands-on coaching and actual competition, whether as a rider or auditor.

Many thanks to Sara (standing with white hat) who not only coached the rider but also the horse. She guided riders of when and how their equines were ready (or not!) to complete the obstacle made for a successful and fun set of experiences on both days. These photos help tell the story...





The pile of zombie logs perhaps looked like a graveyard of wood to some equines, but not others. The water obstacle was either puzzling, terrifying, tasty or walked through like a stroll down the trail – depending on the horse and rider!



The task of riders dismounting, picking up a branding iron and pretending to brand the make-believe cow and then remounting presented an up-and-down challenge.

No matter the challenge, each horse and rider team finished the clinic with better techniques to negotiate a variety of obstacles in

less time, while having a lot of fun. Congratulations, teams!

Kudos to Carol Marthens and crew for the two days, and more, and to David Lyles for photos.



Started by renowned trainer and clinician Craig Cameron, the Extreme Cowboy Association (EXCA) is specifically designed to invite riders of any age and at all levels to participate in a variety of different competitive classes. It hosts clinics throughout the US and worldwide. To learn about EXCA, go to: extremecowboyassociation.com.



Clinician Sara Tyree, Sara Tyree Performance Horses, El Paso, TX, is a seasoned horsewoman, trainer and coach in cutting, cow horse, ranch versatility, reining, all-around competition and extreme cowboy racing. She placed in the top

20 in the EXCA World Finals Pro Division and earned third place in the EXCA World Finals Futurity.

Camino de los Burros Parade on Plaza

Any size, shape or color – burros on parade will melt all hearts. The parade, in its third year, celebrates the contribution burros have made to the urban and agricultural development of NM and the region. The event is organized by Jacqueline Fleming, Watrous, NM.



Participants included NNMHA members Joyce Davis (right) with Carlotta and Leanne DeVane with Luna (left), were among the 17 who brought



their burros.

The group also included a contingent from Longears Safehouse, a donkey rescue in Estancia. Among volunteers was NNMHA member Karen Denison who helped with crowd control. She reported it was the largest crowd, by far.



Most burros carried the tradition pack saddle and their people dressed for frontier days. After getting organized at the Cathedral

Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, the participants paraded to nearby streets, around the Plaza and back. Spectators mingled with the burros and their people at a meet-and-greet after the parade. Congrats to all for strutting their stuff (and to Karen and David for photos).

“Thank You” from San Juan County Horse Bowl Team

“Thank you for pledging your heart, hands, and head to our community...(in) sponsoring the NM Virtual Horse Bowl Contests,” wrote members of the team. Their signatures appear on the note!



Board Notes

Organization News

Ralph Larranaga reported that financial updates will be provided to board members next week, when details are expected from our agent. He doesn't anticipate any significant changes or issues.

Howard introduced Tara Debevec who will be attending board meetings in the future. She is providing coordinating and consulting support for NNMHA. Tara is currently working on identifying various tasks and their relationship across the organization that will help us to be more productive and efficient. She has talked with every board member and advisor and is now mapping where there may be challenges (and opportunities!) in completing a wide variety of tasks. A greater presence in social media was just one example of where we may be missing opportunities to expand our reach.

Regarding communications, the 2025 Community Report is underway with input from board members and others. It will be posted on the website upon completion, probably this month. Everyone was encouraged to provide photos from last year's events. Going forward, everyone was encouraged to take photos wherever NNMHA logos appeared on clothing or vehicles/trailers are welcome for use in the newsletter. Members, be sure to also send your photos to the newsletter editor.

Jay Diamonon reported there were no further membership renewals this past month. He will continue to send reminder emails to all non-renewing members. Jay will also continue to personally contact members who have not renewed. With those he has talked with, nearly all say they thought they had renewed or had simply forgotten to do so.

He recommended creating a more user-friendly database in the near future. He explained, for instance, the current database doesn't flag new members, and various lists exist throughout the organization that aren't coordinated. Another issue that needs attention is possibly switching to a different payment processor. Jay has agreed to work with Tara and our IT consultant to recommend ways to create a more efficient and effective means of these technologies.

Lynn Allen said we have received four applications for the Eldon and Karen Reyer Youth Scholarship. The board reviewed all applicant information and approved two applications. She also reviewed an application to support the Mora County 4-H Horse Camp, and the board approved.

Howard Gershon discussed July program meeting ideas provided by Rose Farley (who couldn't attend the meeting). He noted that all the ideas were great. The group discussed and narrowed the list of ideas to be finalized by Howard, Rose and David.

There was also discussion of either broadcasting live our program meetings or posting recordings of the meeting on our website.

The next board meeting is Thursday, June 11, 7 pm, via zoom. Members are welcome to attend meetings, so contact a Board member anytime for details.

Events, Rides & Clinics

Carol Marthens provided a final update to the Extreme Cowboy Clinic, May 9 – 10. She noted a few last items for discussion, including clinician meals and lodging and parking signs at HIPICO.

Amelia Adair reviewed plans for the NATRC Clinic later this month. All events will be held near Ojo Caliente, one hour north of SF off Highway 285. (See separate articles.)

In Town & on the Road #2

Our merchandise shows up wherever equines and their people gather. Couldn't miss this hat at the Extreme Cowboy Clinic in May. If you see "merch" (hats, vests, bumper stickers, for example) somewhere, send a photo and a note about where and when. You just never know where you will see NNMHA next!



Do You Know...

The US is home to about 6.65 million domestic horses, with the majority involved in recreation riding, showing and racing. How many horses live in your favorite states?

According to the American Horse Council, there are about 113,500 horses in NM. Here are counts in some nearby states: Arizona, 142,000; California, 535,000; Colorado, 265,000; Nevada, 41,200; Texas, 767,000; Utah, 96,400.

Other states with large horse populations include Florida, 387,000; Kentucky, 238,000; Missouri, 230,000; North Carolina, 205,200; Ohio, 256,000; Pennsylvania, 223,600. Rhode Island has the smallest population with 2,600.



Bulletin Board

Bulletin Board is a "one-stop shop" for all equine-related products, services and events. Current members may submit listings of no more than 80 words. Be sure to include a name, brief description and website, phone and/or email for contact purposes. We can't edit fliers or other materials provided to us and be assured of describing your news accurately. Send your listing to: Sandra: smithcom@goldengate.net. At any time, let us know if you need your current listing removed or changed. We rely on members to keep their info correct and up to date.

Classifieds

STUART H. GARBER, DC, PhD, AVCA

Equine chiropractor. Equines and canines, but also happy to treat any critter with a spine. By appointment. Call: 505 913-7493.

NORTHSIDE BOARDING

Ride out on miles of trails, five minutes from NM599/La Tierra Rd. Reasonable rates, relaxed atmosphere. Prices from \$500 to \$400/mo. for pens 12x60 and larger. Arena, round pen, three tack rooms, wash rack, trailer parking. Horses fed grass mix or alfalfa twice daily. Boarders provide extras, we feed. Owner lives on premises. Contact: Carolyn, Centaurus Ranch, 505 474-0821.

EQUINE PORTRAITS

Helen K. Garber is available to create a unique photographic portrait of your horse or you riding your horse. In sizes up to 10 feet wide. Can be printed on paper or fabric. Her work has been acquired by museum collections such as the Getty Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum archives of the Venice Biennale and the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts & Sciences. Contact: Helen, 310 344-7883, www.helenkgarber.com (Helen K Garber Studio), mail@helenkgarber.com.

EQUINE BODY WORK

Susan Smith | Equine and human Ortho-Bionomy® powerful and effective therapeutic bodywork. Registered Instructor and Advanced Practitioner. Equine acupressure massage, certified. Both in-person and online courses are offered. By appointment. Contact: Susan, 505 501-2478, info@susansmithsantafe.com.

BODYWORK AND MASSAGE

Sandy Benson offers Integrated Equine Bodywork and Massage, working with the whole horse to build trust, restore balance and release tension. Certified in Masterson Method since 2018, CST since 2005. Consider it an investment in wellness. Contact: sandybenenson@earthlink.net, 505 920-2497.

BOARDING AT RANCHO MARIPOSA

15 minutes from Old Pecos Trail in the Eldorado area. Indoor arena, outdoor dressage and jumping arenas, access to trails. Training and instruction available. We welcome equestrians of all disciplines! Call or text Anna: 505 490-0990, info@mariposasantafe.com.

SANTA FE PONY CLUB

The Santa Fe Pony Club is looking for new members, volunteers and sponsors as the new year begins. The Club welcomes 5+ ages (adults too!). For more info: lindsaylechner@gmail.com, www.ponyclub.org.

HORSE SITTER

Professional care of your equines and other pets while you are away. Extensive experience caring for horses, dogs, cats and other precious creatures. Experience as Animal husbandry Instructor, beginner riding instructor, wilderness guide, wrangler and Ranch Manager. Contact: Laurie, 970 390-5597, thepoetlaurie@hotmail.com.

HORSE BOARDING

Everything WESTERN Learn, grow, succeed and have fun boarding at Loal Tucker Horsemanship, Lamy. Professional trainer, cattle, mechanical flag, heel-o-matic, roping dummy on site. Group, semi- and private lessons. Indoor and outdoor arenas, round pen, six-panel Priefert horse walker, 12x12 stalls with runs, heated auto waterers, individual tack lockers, hot/cold wash rack, trailer parking, 40 acres of trails. Colt starting issues, refinement, showing. Contact: www.loaltucker.com, 505 466-3961.

EQUINE VETERINARY SERVICES

Offering an integrative equine practice, combining western preventive and emergency care, as well as Traditional Chinese Veterinary Medicine, including chiropractic, acupuncture and herbal options. Contact: Dr. Shannon Subasi, Los Alamos Equine Veterinary Services, 240 681-1125.

SEEKING PRIVATE BOARDING FOR ONE HORSE

Due to sale of the property where we board, we're looking for a private barn in the Eldorado/Lamy area with room for one horse. Request daily group turnout and some room to ride on property. Can be self- or partial-care and I'm happy to serve as backup for your horses. I'm respectful, tidy and low drama; my horse is respectful, herd experienced, low in pecking order and blind in one eye. Contact: Sylvie Anacker, 415 309-0162, asorges@gmail.com.

SELF CARE BOARDING

Arrowhead Ranch has self-care boarding space available for horse owners wanting to be more hands-on with their horses and their care. Roomy indoor/outdoor stalls with large runs attached. Includes water with electric hookups, outdoor arenas, SF river trail access, trailer parking, hay, grain and tack storage. Located in town off West Alameda. Clean, safe, gated. For more info: arrowheadsantafe@aol.com, 505 690-4955.

TWO SENIOR HORSES FOR SALE



24-25 year-old gelding (left) ridden primarily on trails for the last 15 years. Sound, has reining training and light handle. 24-25 year-old gelding (right). Trail experience, most popular children's horse at Challenge



NM in SF. For more info: 505 670-2924.

BRAND NEW PAD FOR SALE

New, never been out to the barn. Classic Equine Zoombang Zone Series. 3/4-in felt with Black Micro Suede Saddle Pad. Size 30x32". Regular price \$350...now \$300. I can bring it to Santa Fe or meet you in Albuquerque. Contact Nance: nance@swcp.com.



RAINBOW RIDGE FARM LLC

New boutique boarding facility located in Edgewood NM. Stalls with separate paddocks and daily turnout. Indoor riding arena, outdoor riding arena, round pen for training and trails off property and nearby. Self-care and full care, short and long-term options available. Two current openings. Contact: Sandi Hutchison, rainbowridgefarmllc@hotmail.com, 505 205-5452.



HORSE PROPERTY FOR SALE

9 Jacinto Road, \$900,000. Los Caballos Subdivision, SF County. Ten level acres, 20 miles from SF. Includes a 3,434 sq. ft. two-story, five-bedroom, four-bath house. Horse amenities include 2,818 sq. ft. six-stall horse barn, turnouts, tack room with half-bath, hay storage, arena and roping corral. Plus, a separate 1,805 sq. ft. workshop/garage with mechanic's pit. Contact: Penelope Vasquez, Associate Broker, 505 690-3751, penelopenewmexico@gmail.com, Sotheby's International Realty, 505 988-2533.



WESTERN SADDLE FOR SALE

Beautiful western saddle hand built and carved by noted saddle maker Slim Green with matching bridle and breast collar. Like new condition with 15-inch seat. \$1,200 or best offer. Contact: Howard Gershon 505 690-8433.



WINTEC SADDLE WANTED

Looking for new or in-good-condition Wintec western saddle for trail riding, 15" seat, 8" gullet. Email: smithcom@goldengate.net.

Training/Trainers

TERRY BERG TRAINING

Trainer offers lessons, training and show coaching, among others. Specialties include ranch riding, reining and ranch trail. Contact: sfcolores@sprynet.com, 505 473-4147.

LINDSAY LECHNER EQUESTRIAN SERVICES

Currently accepting new lesson students ages 5 + on your horse or one of the lesson horses and horses in training, focused on Dressage basics, introduction to jumping, trail riding essentials in and out of the arena and fox hunting. We travel to local shows and other recognized competitions in NM and surrounding states. Rancho Mariposa and other locations in the Eldorado/Lamy area. For more info, contact Lindsay: 513 850-5839, lindsaylechner@gmail.com.

MIKEL CARMON, M.A., EAL, TRAINING

Natural horsemanship lessons start on the ground. "Horse Wellness for Wisdom" helps you learn how to "read" your horse, build trust and connection that makes you the leader in your horse's mind. With over 35 years of experience, my work promotes mental, physical and emotional wellness with individuals, couples, families, corporations, small businesses. (It's not therapeutic riding.) Equine Assisted Learning certified. Also teach harnessing and driving lessons, using my good team of mules, Bo and Jesse. Contact: Mikel: 307 277-1235, fc4126@gmail.com.

Clinics/Workshops/Events

Note: The New Mexico Horse Council (NMHC) posts fliers for shows, clinics and demos throughout the state in its newsletters. Go to: www.nmhorsecouncil.org and click on "News" to see any newsletter. You can also see info on NMHC Facebook.

LEISURE DISTANCE COMPETITION

The North American Trail Riding Conference (NATRC) - Region 3 (it includes NM) event is Saturday, June 27 - 28, near Ojo Caliente. This is one of several rides that NATRC hosts throughout North America. For more info: Amelia Adair, AJASantafe@outlook.com, 720 563-1018.

CAT PARKS CLINIC · THE SANTA FE SERIES | YEAR TWO

Trinity Ranch is proud to welcome back Cat Parks to SF for an exclusive boutique horsemanship clinic, Friday, July 31 – Sunday, August 2, Trinity Ranch, SF. Sophia Hoekstra is the clinic host. The clinic emphasizes lighter, clearer communication between horse and rider through feel, understanding and practical horsemanship. Choose (or attend both) a Foundation Horsemanship morning session designed for green horses, green riders or an Advanced Horsemanship afternoon session for riders pursuing greater finesse and higher-level work. Both sessions are tailored to the individual horse-and-rider teams, so sessions are limited to 10 teams. Overnight stalls and weekend camping are available. Auditors are welcome. For more info, contact Sophia: 612 940-7766, soph.hoekstra@gmail.com.

Board and Committees

Officers of the Board

President	Howard Gershon	howard@reach-newheights.com	505 690-8433
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Ridge Riders	Ed Srsic	esrsic@gmail.com	415 305-3238
Community Outreach	Leanne DeVane	leannedevane@gmail.com	505 469-1165
	Karla Lauritsen	karlauritsen@hotmail.com	505 286-3732

Advisors to the Board

Program Co-chairs	Rose Farley	rfarley@comcast.net	214 726-6013
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Clinics	Carol Marthens	luminaryllamas@msn.com	214 662-9616
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Membership	Jay Diamonon	jay.diamonon@gmail.com	713 303-1004
Newsletter	Sandra Smith	smithcom@goldengate.net	505 983-0144
At-large	Karen Denison	redmule@kdt.net	505 469-2698

Website <http://www.NNMHA.org>
NNMHA Email contact@nnmha.org

Please contact any Board member with questions or comments about NNMHA plans or activities. We welcome your ideas. Board meetings are usually held each month, and members are invited to participate in Board meetings. Meetings may be online or in person. See phone numbers and emails for Board members.

NNMHA seeks to inform and educate our members and the broader northern New Mexico community with regard to equine wellness and equestrian activities. We generally do not take an advocacy position on such issues, but endeavor to keep members and others aware of developments that NNMHA deems may be of interest.

We welcome letters to the editor for publication. Please send letters to Sandra, smithcom@goldengate.net. Letters must be written by an active member and include a name, email address, phone number and full street address, as well as any information sources used in the letter. If used, submissions may be edited due to space limitation and other considerations.



*Be kind whenever possible.
It is always possible.*

Dalai Lama

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