



JUNE 15, 2009

President Steve Harris  
Vice President Marlee Vanderbeck  
Secretary Nancy Allbright  
Treasurer Ginny Rench

Board Members:  
Craig Stevens  
Judi Avery  
Connie Koff  
Barbara Braun  
Fran Whetten

Marlee Vanderbeck is the subject of this month's board member bio.

**I DON'T REMEMBER A TIME IN MY LIFE WHEN I DIDN'T WANT TO RIDE A HORSE, OWN A HORSE OR BE A HORSE.** When I was 9 years old I was lucky enough to take a few riding lessons. I rode every chance I got until I was finally able to get my first horse, Comanche. By then I was in my early 20s. When I became pregnant with my third child we had to make the choice to let Comanche go to a new home – **BABY OR HORSE????**

As I continue to tell my youngest son (now with two children of his own), "I'm still not sure choosing baby was the right choice!" Of course that is only a joke. I have three wonderful children, a daughter and two sons. And they have given me seven amazing grandchildren; five granddaughters and two grandsons. The youngest was just born on May 21st. And, best of all, some of them are already showing signs of having the "horse gene."

About four and a half years ago, I retired from my job as a medical practice administrator and my husband and I moved from New Jersey to Cornville. About three months after we moved here we bought Tequila, a Tennessee Walker, and have since added another Walker and a Fox Trotter. Now I am living my dream, spending most of my time on the trail with my horses.

We still have a beach house in New Jersey and spend the summers and holidays back there with our family. We love living out here and once my husband is retired, we will probably live here full time – with **FREQUENT** trips back east to be with our family.

\* \* \*

After a very enjoyable trail ride and potluck, the **Annual Meeting of the VVHC** was called to order by President Steve Harris on Saturday, May 21, at the home of Milton and Gail Pate. Eighteen members were present.

Treasurer Ginny Rench reported on the **Buckle Series**. The club made a little money on this while providing a fun activity for the community. (See page 3 to read the letter to the editor that ran recently in the local papers.) The club plans to run the Buckle Series again in the fall. Thanks again to all the volunteers.

Ginny also reported that there will be **signage** on Hwy 89A by the APS building, and by Alan's Auto near Auto Zone, pointing the way to the Verde Valley Fairgrounds and the Equestrian Center. The VVHC is contributing to the cost of these new signs.

Steve Harris rode in the **March Against Meth Parade**. He entered in the VVHC's name and won a cash prize which he donated to the club.

**The National Barrel Horse Association** held a successful event at the Equestrian Center on the last day of the Verde Valley Fair. Thanks to volunteers Steve Harris, Steve Rench, and Craig Stevens.

**Newly elected officers and board members** are listed on the front page of this issue.

**Sheep Drive Trail Way:** The BLM is involved in efforts to make this a designated trail, marked and connected across the state. The Verde area to Chavez Trail is one section that needs to be worked on. Steve Harris read a letter from Diane Lovett about the Sheep Trail's history.

Highlights of the **Board Meeting** held at the home of Craig & Leslie Stevens on June 11.

Steve Harris has been working on organizing a **National Senior Pro Rodeo** event in Feb. 2010, to be held at the Equestrian Center. Since this is too big and costly a task for the VVHC to take on alone, Steve is trying to coordinate efforts with the Fair Board and possibly the local chambers of commerce.

Plans are in the works for **Arizona's Centennial Trail Ride** in 2012. Steve Harris is also working on this and coordinating with other groups around the state. Craig Stevens attended Montana's Centennial celebration and said they had a cattle drive, complete with chuck wagons. With enough local participation, it's hoped that we can organize the Verde Valley portion of the ride in a way that will be memorable and a lot of fun for all.

Nancy Allbright suggested that the club sponsor a **monthly gymkhana event** offered on Saturdays, beginning sometime after the first of next year.

Ginny told everyone about a **Horse Soccer Club** that's forming in the Verde Valley, with games to be held at the Equestrian Center. For photos and more info, see page 6.

Judi Avery suggested the idea of putting on an **American Competitive Trail Horse Association**-sponsored Competitive Trail Challenge (CTC). These events involve approximately six judged obstacles arranged around a 6-10 mi. course. There will be a CTC in Flagstaff at Crowley Park on June 27, and a few board members are hoping to either attend or participate to learn more about these events. You can visit the website at [www.actha.us](http://www.actha.us). *The Horse Show with Rick Lamb* on RFDTV will feature ACTHA events on 6/16 & 6/21.

The Black Tank ride scheduled for June 13 was canceled due to lack of participation.

\* \* \*

Here's the letter to the editor about the Buckle Series that ran in the Verde Independent and the Cottonwood Journal recently:

### **Ridin' to the Rescue!**

The Buckle Series at the Cottonwood Equestrian Center has grown to be a very popular event, drawing competitors from as far away as Flagstaff and Chino Valley. Although it was scheduled to begin its third year, it was on the City of Cottonwood's chopping block due to budget cuts. The Verde Valley Horsemen's Council stepped up and offered to sponsor the series to save this popular event. In the past the city had hired part-time employees to do ground prep and registration. This time, members of VVHC took over those duties and with the skillful help of Hezekiah Allen, Events Co-ordinator for the city, the series ran and drew an even larger number of participants. One reason for the increased participation was that for the first time, winners had their choice of either a \$100.00 check or a buckle, and many riders were excited at the prospect of winning money. (Since the fees weren't going into the general fund, a cash prize could be awarded.) The bottom line is we had a great series! Thanks to the community spirit of the following people who donated their time and energy:

Jan & Jim Starkey  
Craig Stevens  
Mike Jones  
Steve Harris  
Pete Chamberlain  
Nancy Allbright  
Jessica Starkey  
Steve & Ginny Rench

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- June 26 – 28      Animal Disaster Services Annual Trail Ride at Groom Creek Horse Camp. Reserve your space ASAP. Catered ride beginning with dinner Fri. night. \$120/person. Contact Spike Hicks at 928.778.1833 for more info.
- June 28            CAAHA trail ride. Eric Eberhard will be leading a ride to Brolier Lake. Meet at the end of the pavement on Stoneman Lake Rd. at 9:00 a.m. Please RSVP to Eric by the 24<sup>th</sup> at [flash@vicsmba.com](mailto:flash@vicsmba.com)
- July 11             Woodchute Trail Ride on cool Mingus Mtn. In the saddle by 9:00 a.m. Call Judi Avery, trail boss, at 646.8609 for more info and to let her know you're coming. Ride is rated a 3. (Rocky)
- July 11             Interactive Demo with members of the Arizona Horse Soccer League, 5:30 p.m. at the Equestrian Center. Go to [www.azhorsesoccer.com](http://www.azhorsesoccer.com) or call Ginny Rench at 634.9354 for more info.
- July 11             CAAHA (Central AZ Arabian Horse Asso.) is hosting a water crossing clinic at Bent River Ranch. Cost is \$15/person. Contact Ann Smith at [ann.smith124@gmail.com](mailto:ann.smith124@gmail.com) for more info. RSVP by July 6<sup>th</sup>.
- CAAHA is also sponsoring a jump construction contest. Judging will take place July 18<sup>th</sup>, and the winner will receive 5 free jumping lessons. Contact Danielle Keeseey at [caaha1@gmail.com](mailto:caaha1@gmail.com) for more info.
- July 19             Prescott Senior Olympics. Sponsored by Prescott Frontier Rodeo at the Prescott Rodeo Grounds. Open to anyone 50 years and up, on or before Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. Entry fees are \$5.00 per class and \$20.00 registration. Contact Prescott Parks & Recreation at 928.777.1122 for more info.
- August 8           Middle Tank Ride. Meet at the swap meet site on the south side of Camp Verde at 8:30 a.m. and we'll caravan up to the trailhead. Call Connie Koff, trail boss, at 300.7253 for more info and to let her know you're coming. Ride is rated a 2 ½.

**ATTENTION TRAIL BOSSES.** It is extremely important that you have a "Ride Release Form" with you when you lead a ride. Everyone on the ride must sign it. It is on our website at [verdehorsemen.org](http://verdehorsemen.org) and can be downloaded from there. We are trying to get events on the schedule as far ahead as possible so they can be put on your calendars. If special events come up or you need reminding, we will email all those with email and call others. Please remember to check your email for our messages.

- Sept. 11 – 13 Prescott Frontier Days 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Catered Ride at the Groom Creek Horse Camp. Restrooms, picket lines, and corrals available. Entertainment Friday night and an auction Sat. night. Cost of \$175 includes two nights of camping fees. Contact [www.worldsoldestrodeo.com](http://www.worldsoldestrodeo.com) or Prescott Frontier Days office at 928.445.3103, or Diane Judge-Cox, trail boss, at 928.583.0114.
- Nov. 20-22 BCHCAZ's annual trail ride will be held in Bumblebee. More info to follow in upcoming newsletters.

**Attention Trail Bosses.** It is extremely important that you have a **Ride Release Form** with you when you lead a ride, and everyone on the ride must sign it. The form can be downloaded from our website, [www.verdehorsemen.org](http://www.verdehorsemen.org)

We try to get events on the schedule as far ahead as possible so everyone can mark their calendars. If special events come up or you need reminding, we will email all those with email and call others. Please remember to check your email for our messages.

\* \* \*

**The Horse's Hoof Magazine** is an interesting and informative online newsletter especially for barefoot enthusiasts, but with articles of interest to all horse people. This month they've posted a free PDF copy of Issue #30 so everyone can see what they're all about. Check it out at their website, [www.thehorseshoof.com](http://www.thehorseshoof.com)

The magazine is offering a subscription sale now through June 30<sup>th</sup>. All subscriptions, new or renewals, are \$5.00 off, so they're just \$10.00 for one year.

\* \* \*

## Barn Tips

### Tick Removal

Here is a simple way to get them off you, your children, or your pets. Apply a glob of liquid soap to a cotton ball. Cover the tick with the soap-soaked cotton ball and swab for 15-20 seconds. The tick will come out on its own and be stuck to the cotton ball when you lift it away.

### Hoof Protection when Bathing

Before giving your horse his next bath, coat his hoof wall and soles with some olive oil or other vegetable oil. It'll protect his hooves from the drying effects of all that soap and water, but the oil will wear off quickly. The advantage of this over most commercial hoof preparations is that they tend to seal the hoof and create an anaerobic environment which isn't good for the hoof, and can contribute to the development of hoof abscesses.



**Horse Soccer!** These photos of VVHC members were taken at the Cottonwood Equestrian Center on June 13<sup>th</sup>. This was, literally, a whole new ball game for most of these horses, and they took to it in just a short time. Come join the fun on Saturday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

## A Simple Statement

I ride. That seems like such a simple statement. However, as many women who ride know, it is really a complicated matter. It has to do with power and empowerment, and being able to do things you might have once considered out of reach or ability. I have considered this as I've shoveled manure, filled water barrels in the cold rain, waited for the vet/farrier/electrician/hay delivery, changed a tire on a horse trailer by the side of the freeway, or cooled out a horse before getting down to the business of drinking a cold beer after a long ride.

The time, money, and effort it takes to ride calls for dedication. At least, I call it dedication; both my ex-husbands call it "the sickness." It's a sickness I've had since I was a small girl, bouncing my model horses and dreaming of the day I would ride a real horse. Most of the women I ride with understand the meaning of "the sickness." It's not a sport. It's not a hobby. It's what we do, and in some ways, it's who we are as women and as human beings.

I ride. I hook up my trailer and load my gelding. I haul to some trailhead somewhere, unload, saddle, whistle up my dog, and I ride. I breathe in the air, watch the sunlight filter through the trees and savor the movement of my horse. My shoulders relax. A smile rides my sunscreen-smearred face. I pull my ball cap down and let the real world fade into the tracks my horse leaves in the dust.

Time slows. Flying insects buzz loudly. My horse flicks his ears and moves down the trail. I can smell his sweat and to my senses, it is perfume. The rhythm of the walk and the movement of the leaves becomes my focus. My saddle creaks and the leather rein in my hand softens with the warmth.

I consider the simple statement, "I ride." I think of all I do because I ride: climbing granite slabs, wading into a freezing lake, racing a friend through the manzanita, all the while laughing and feeling my heart in my chest. Other days, just the act of mounting and dismounting can be a real accomplishment. Still I ride, no matter how tired or how much my seat bones or any of the numerous horse-related injuries hurt. I ride. And I feel better for doing so.

The beauty I've seen because I ride amazes me. I've ridden out to find lakes that remain, for the most part, unseen; caves, dark and cold beside rivers full and rolling are the scenes I see in my dreams; the Granite Stairway at Echo Summit, bald eagles on the wing and bobcats on the prowl adding to the empowerment and joy in my heart.

I think of the people, mostly women, I've met. I consider how competent they all are. Not a weenie amongst the bunch. We haul 40 ft. rigs, we back into tight spaces without clipping a tree. We set up camp, tend the horses, cook, and keep safe. We understand and love our companions, the horses. We respect each other and those we encounter on the trail, knowing that if you are out there riding, you also shovel, fill, doctor, and wait. Your hands are a little rough and you travel without makeup or hair gel. You do without to afford the "sickness" and probably, when you were a small girl, you bounced a model horse while you dreamed of riding a real one.

Yates Colby