



FEBRUARY 15, 2009

President Steve Harris  
Vice President Nancy Allbright  
Secretary Ann Smith  
Treasurer Ginny Rench  
Past President Fran Whetten

Board Members:  
Craig Stevens  
Marlee Vanderbeck  
Diane Lovett

**NANCY BEGAN HER LIFE-LONG LOVE AFFAIR WITH HORSES IN THE VERDE VALLEY.**

VVHC Vice President Nancy Allbright was born in Southern California. She came with her family to Northern Arizona when her stepfather was chosen to manage the transportation of steel from the Flagstaff railhead to Page for the bridge, then for the cement haulage from Clarkdale to Glen Canyon Dam. The Verde Valley was where she began her life-long love affair with horses. Returning to Southern California, she graduated from high school, met and married Jan, and began a family. Shortly after their first daughter was born, they decided to raise their family in the country and moved to the high desert of Southern California. Very quickly followed their first horse, a second daughter, and a program devoted to breeding, raising and showing POAs that lasted for 13 years.

After a short period living outside of Colorado Springs, CO, they decided they were really “desert rats” at heart and that it was too cold for too much of the year. Nancy convinced Jan they should check out the Verde Valley. In 2000 they were able to relocate to the best-kept secret in the state (shhhh) with the youngest daughter and two yearling fillies. Since then Nancy has trained her Appaloosa mare, done some showing, a bit of dressage and is currently back to trail riding on her mare and a POA gelding that she bred and raised, and exploring natural horsemanship, all fit in around her job supervising the medical records department for Drs Lindquist and Rufo in Sedona.

Having raised their two daughters around horses, Nancy is eagerly awaiting the introduction of horses to the next generation, their 18 month old grandson and the next grandchild due to appear in June. Having lived in Southern California and seen how quickly livestock land/trails can disappear, she is anxious to see that all horse people stick together to maintain their way of life and sees the VVHC as a vital component of that.

**IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN – DUES ARE DUE** – The VVHC Board of Directors appreciates each membership in the organization. We want and NEED your membership and participation in keeping viable a venerated and important horse organization in the Verde Valley. Each year everyone, even old members, must fill out an Application for Membership to submit with your dues. The application is available online at [verdehorsemen.org](http://verdehorsemen.org). **THIS ISSUE OF THE VOICE OF THE HORSEMAN WILL BE YOUR LAST IF YOUR DUES AREN'T PAID.**

**CHERRY CREEK WASH WAS A SUPER RIDE.** Trail Boss Craig Stevens reported 10 riders on a beautiful day riding up Cherry Creek Wash to the end. They explored the falls, but they were dry. Two guests joined VVHC members for the 2 ½ to 3 hour ride.

**BOARD DISCUSSES FUTURE PROJECTS.** At the Board of Directors meeting on Feb. 3, members decided because of the current economic atmosphere a big horse trade oriented show should be put off until things improve. There was brief discussion of possible activities for Arizona's centennial celebration in 2012 and this will be ongoing. With the threat of State Parks closing and a severe cut in all budgets, federal, state and local, we will have to "tighten our cinches" and do what we can to ride out the difficult times and look forward to still being a great club to ride with and help promote future trails and events.

**BUCKLE SERIES TO CONTINUE.** The VVHC Board agreed to help the City of Cottonwood continue the Buckle Series of barrel races and pole bending to be held at the Cottonwood Equestrian Center starting every Thursday night March 5 and running through April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Club members are volunteering to help set up barrels and poles and dragging the arena between runs. If anyone can volunteer, please call Ginny at 928-634-9354 for details.

**VVHC TO SPONSOR POKER RIDE FOR CHARITY.** The Board of Directors voted to sponsor a Poker Ride to benefit Connections Equine Therapy in Cornville. The ride will be advertised in Phoenix in the Bridle and Bit magazine and also locally. The date is April 25. The ride will leave from the trailhead on 89B between Cottonwood and Sedona and go to Oak Creek for lunch. The lunch will be brought in by packhorse and will be hamburgers and hot dogs, salad, chips, drinks, etc. The cost will be \$35 per rider. Each poker hand will cost \$5. The winner will be determined at the trailhead at the end of the ride. High hand winner wins the "pot" of ride fees. A percentage of the proceeds will go to Connections with a smaller amount to be kept by the club. If you are interested in going, call Diane Lovett at 928-634-2767 or e-mail her at [Lovett@commspeed.net](mailto:Lovett@commspeed.net). She will see you get an application and will answer questions and provide details. You must have a Red Rock pass for your vehicle for this event. Locally they can be bought at the Red Rock Ranger District on Highway 179 in the Village of Oak Creek, or at the Cottonwood Chamber of Commerce or the Sedona Chamber of Commerce. If you have a Golden Eagle Passport or other federally issued recreational pass, that will be acceptable. Space is limited so if you want to go, call Diane.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MARCH 14

Coffee Creek Ride. This ride will go to the historic Coffee Creek Ranger Station (1924-1948) where we will see old foundations, a dam and cistern and remnant artifacts. Meet at the gravel pit on Forest Road 9571B and be ready to ride at 10:00. Bring lunch to eat along Coffee Creek. This loop ride will mainly be

along F.S. roads with good footing. There will be one section with a bit of rocky cross-country. This will be a fairly flat ride with a small hill/saddle to cross over on the return trip. It will take approximately 1.5 hours to the site and 1.5 hours back. FS 9571B is just opposite the Page Springs turnoff on 89A. From Cottonwood you have to go on up to the FS 525 turn on 89A, do a U-turn and go back for a right hand turn onto FS 9571B. From Sedona just make the turn. Take the dirt road to the pit where there is adequate parking and turn around. Call Janie Agyagos to let her know you are coming or with any questions. Call Janie weekdays at 203-7507 or evenings at 634-4016 or cell 300-0523.

- APRIL 7 VVHC Board of Directors meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Marlee Vanderbeck's house in Verde Santa Fe. Any questions call Marlee at 649-3999.
- APRIL 11 Groom Creek annual cleanup. Mark your calendar. Call Steve Rench at 634-9354 for information as to carpooling, time, etc. See article in this issue for details.
- APRIL 25 VVHC Poker Ride – see article in this Voice of the Horseman for details.
- MAY 3 Sanctioned barrel racing at the Verde Valley Fair supported by VVHC. See article in this issue.
- MAY VVHC Annual Meeting – see April Voice of the Horseman for details
- JUNE 26 – 28 Animal Disaster Services Annual Trail Ride at Groom Creek Horse Camp. See article in this issue for details.

**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.

**RIDE TO HELP ANIMAL DISASTER SERVICES.** The annual Animal Disaster Services Trail Ride will be held the weekend of June 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>. You must reserve your space in the Groom Creek Horse Camp for that weekend. It is the weekend before July 4<sup>th</sup>, so you should reserve early. It will be catered beginning Friday dinner with 3 meals Saturday and ending with Sunday's breakfast. Cost will be \$120.00 per person. Any questions call Spike Hicks at 928-778-1833 or e-mail [spikehicks@cableone.net](mailto:spikehicks@cableone.net).

**ANNUAL GROOM CREEK HORSE CAMP CLEAN UP** The annual clean-up day will be April 11. The Prescott Saddle Club and Back Country Horsemen have agreed to split the cost of drinks and lunch for those who attend and help. VVHC will also help with drinks. Those planning to attend should bring gloves, pruning saws and loppers and rakes. Please try to be there from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Meet at the group campsite #25 in Loop C where we will take a count for lunch. It is vital to support the Groom Creek Horse Camp to keep it for horse camping only. Any questions call Spike Hicks at 928-778-1833 or Steve Rench at 634-9354.

**FORMER VVHC PRESIDENTS PASS AWAY.** Two former VVHC presidents have passed away recently. David Payne was president approximately 15 years ago. He is survived by his wife Elaine Ross who is

currently a VVHC member. Our condolences to Elaine. There will be a memorial service for David on Sunday, February 22 at the Willows in Camp Verde, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. This will be a potluck, so bring your favorite dish to share. Plan to eat around 1:30 p.m. Call Ann Smith at 301-7588 for information and directions.

Wendell Petefish was president several years ago also. Wendell passed away at his home in Illinois sometime in December. He is survived by his wife Julie.

**SANCTIONED BARREL RACING AT THE VERDE VALLEY FAIR.** On Sunday, May 3, the last day of the Verde Valley Fair, the National Barrel Horse Association will have a full day of barrel racing competition. The NBHA chose the Cottonwood Equestrian Center for their event because of the central location and the quality of the arena. Time only will be run from 2:30 to 4:00 p.m. Pee Wees start at 4:15 p.m. and competition begins at 4:30 p.m. Classes will be Open 4D; Youth 3D; Senior 3D and Novice Rider. There will also be pole bending 3D. Several different side pots will be offered and there will be a 50/50 raffle.

VVHC members will be asked to help in the arena. Members are also asked to get as many sponsors for this event as possible. If you know of anyone, business or personal that might sponsor, be sure to contact them. Sponsor fees are: \$25 for a listing on sponsor list. \$50 for listing on list and announcement at the beginning of the event. \$100 on list, announcement throughout the event and on advertising and can place their own banner on the arena fence. Award sponsor (\$75 minimum), name on award, announcements throughout the show. You can also be a \$200 barrel sponsor to get your name on the barrel (provided at a reasonable cost) or be a raffle sponsor. SEE ENCLOSED FLYER. If you have any questions, or for details on work assignments and times, call Ginny at 928-634-9354. If anyone is interested in the racing contact Callie Van-O at 928-699-4219 or [nbha08@hotmail.com](mailto:nbha08@hotmail.com). Callie is involved in the Special Olympics program and will have some Olympians helping out at the arena.

There will be more discussion and detail at the April 7 Board of Directors meeting and in the April 15 Voice of the Horseman. Put the event on your calendar and plan to help out and/or get a sponsor for the arena. Hopefully we can work this into a moneymaking event for the club. Please volunteer to help with sponsors or in any way you can.

There is a new group in town – and they are having fun! The group consists of horses and their human partners who get together every week and play. They play with big green balls, barrels, tarps, platforms, jumps, and carrot sticks (we'll get back to those later). The group prides itself on its vast diversity – a few hail from the Mideast (Arabs), a couple call themselves native Americans (Quarter Horses), another claims to be from Tennessee (yes, a Walker!) and there is even an individual from Iceland (call him a horse not a pony please!). But they are enjoying the opportunity to teach their humans how to speak 'equus' – and they have done a terrific job so far as four of their humans just passed a test and are now Level 2 natural horsemanship students.

The Levels program is part of Linda and Pat Parelli's 'home schooling' for humans that horses around the world are delightfully nickering about. Why? Well, back to the carrot stick – humans are learning that it takes more than a carrot to win a horses' respect; and it also takes more than a stick to be a leader – hence carrot-stick. But, 'natural horsemanship' is way more than just learning how to use an orange colored stick – it involves learning to communicate which is when *two or more* individuals *share* and understand an *idea*. And in order to communicate, the humans are learning *to speak* as well as learning *to read* the language of 'equus'. This enables them to relate to their horses on a whole new level. Listen to what a few of the human partners have experienced since the horses joined the play group:

- "I can see and feel a connection with all three of our animals that wasn't there before; primarily I think they're looking at me as a leader finally." *Ginny*
- "I have noticed a much better bond with Bubba since starting the Parelli Natural Horsemanship. All of my horses seem to be much more predictable and I am more confident about who I am leading them out of the pen on any given day. I have also learned to handle them with love instead of just going through the motions ...." *Rich*
- "Looking back I had no idea that you could play with your horse on the ground and form such a special relationship with your horse by learning to communicate with them in way that they can understand. I was only concerned about getting on and riding as often as I could without giving much thought to how my horse felt about that... I realized that ... I wanted to ... learn to be a better horseman ... the natural way. Over the recent months I have seen a huge difference in my relationship with my horse and we really enjoy our time together. *Randy*



The new Natural Play Group is proud to announce the achievement reached by four of its humans. Congratulations for passing the Level 1 test! (from left to right) Randy Schultz, Rich Bring, Sheril Cooley, and Ginny Rench.

# Connie Reeves, a Cowgirl Until the End, Dies at 101

By DOUGLAS MARTIN  
Published: August 25, 2003

Connie Reeves, who was very likely America's oldest cowgirl, died in San Antonio on Aug. 17, 12 days after she was thrown from her horse, Dr Pepper. She was 101.

She was riding her favorite horse, a 28-year-old paint, on the morning of Aug. 5 when Dr Pepper threw her over its head. Her neck was broken, but she was not paralyzed, The Kerrville (Tex.) Daily Times reported. The Associated Press said she died of cardiac arrest.

Meg Clark, owner of Camp Waldemar in the Texas Hill Country, where Mrs. Reeves taught riding for 67 years, said she had been riding more this year than in previous years and was delighted that Dr Pepper remained so spirited.

"That was how she wanted to live her life, and that was how she wanted to end it," Ms. Clark said on Wednesday. "She wanted to be on horseback."

As a baby, Mrs. Reeves was photographed on a horse -- as well as on a cow, something she could never quite explain -- and went on to manage a ranch and teach about 30,000 girls to ride over the years at a summer camp. She could herd steers, shear sheep, kill rattlesnakes and cook for hungry cowhands.

At first she did not think she deserved to be inducted into the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in 1997, but then decided she had as much right as the next lady, given the things she had done and the things she knew.

She knew, for example, that a horse could smell fear. When she ended up with one leg shorter than the other after falling from a horse, she did the sensible thing: she had the heel of one cowboy boot raised.

Mrs. Reeves's greatest fame came last year when Justice Sandra Day O'Connor of the United States Supreme Court was inducted into the Cowgirl Hall of Fame in Fort Worth. Reporters could not resist interviewing the hall's oldest member, whom the event's organizers were more than willing to make available.

After all, a quotation from Mrs. Reeves, "Always saddle your own horse," had almost become the hall's motto. Liz Smith began a gossip column by suggesting, "It's not a bad motto, even if you are just getting into your Mercedes."

Many things Mrs. Reeves did seemed to make history, particularly in Texas.