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THOUGHT OF THE MONTH: **Happy Fourth of July!**

How Important is Salt?

By The VHN Writing Team



As far as important minerals go, salt is one of the main minerals essential to a horse's diet but is often overlooked. Many horse owners and enthusiasts understand that salt is linked with a horse's intake of water, especially in the summer. Understanding salt intake goes hand in hand with electrolyte usage, which is explained in the next article.

But there's a bit more to it than just water consumption. Salt is integral to the body's electrical functioning, just as it is with ours. The makeup of what we know as common salt is actually sodium and chloride, both of which are important for the body's processes.

These two substances are dissolved in the bloodstream and they are then used for the electrical signaling throughout the body. The musculoskeletal system and nervous system cannot work correctly without them. Sodium also plays an important role in hydration because of its ability to retain water in the body's tissues.

Without the proper level of sodium, dehydration becomes inevitable and it is without this function of sodium that a horse's thirst would not be triggered. This is where the association of water intake and salt becomes well known.

A bad balance of sodium can also cause blood sugar and glucose issues, leading to overall bad health. This imbalance can however take a longer period to develop and many times the signs of a deficiency are hard to recognize unless they are severe.

One interesting sign of a potential deficiency is called "pica." Pica is the behavior of licking on surfaces that may have small amounts of salt on them due to a dietary deficiency of the minerals.

Horse's will naturally seek out salt when none is readily available. Not drinking enough water can also signal a lack of salt. Experts will often recommend the addition of salt blocks to the horse diet, where the animal can consume salt at its own discretion.

If this is not enough, there are salt supplements that can be added to food. It's best to be aware that salt mixes that appear mostly or all white are not typically made of natural salt.

Pink, brown, red, or grey is a better coloring to find. If you suspect a salt deficiency in your horse, it is best to seek the advice of your veterinarian, who can confirm whether or not your horse needs extra dietary support and where to go from that diagnosis.

For a more in depth look at salt when in combination with other electrolytes, read on to page 4 for a break down on what electrolytes really are and how they may be useful for you horse.





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Serving the Southwest since 1992

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The Basics of Electrolyte Use

By The VHN Writing Team



The summer season is in full force, with much of the west heating up to record temperatures. Luckily for us, we have the use of air conditioning, among other things, to beat the heat and intense sun. Unluckily, our horses don't have the same access to round the clock cool air.

There are a myriad of things we can do to help our horses cope with the crazy temperatures, like providing adequate shade and rinsing them down. One of the most popular things owners can do is the administration of electrolytes in our horses water.

When our horses sweat throughout the day, contained in that perspiration are electrolytes. No matter what your horse is doing, his breed, his age, or his workout amount, every horse will sweat out electrolytes.

He may sweat a little, he may sweat a lot, but he will lose electrolytes every time. Electrolytes are made up of common minerals found in the body, like sodium, potassium, and calcium.

When a horse is deficient in electrolytes it can lead to serious physiological problems, so by replacing those electrolytes with supplements, you can help protect and revitalize your horse's body.

Electrolytes can be given mainly in powder forms and also in liquid. Many owners choose to use a powder form that is flavored, like apple for example, so horses are more likely to enjoy and drink larger amounts at a time. This can be placed in a horse's water bucket, a secondary water source, or in a wet food as well.

Inside the powder mixture there are several minerals. Sodium, Chloride, Potassium, Magnesium, and Calcium. These are important for most body functions, like digestion, pH levels, neurological function, fluid regulation, muscle contractions, and more.

Sodium is considered to be the main, top of the list mineral in electrolytes as it regulates your horse's thirst. When your horse sweats, you may notice that his sweat will dry a white color and almost crusty. That is the salt content in the perspiration, or sodium.

When the sodium in the electrolytes mixes with chloride, it makes sodium chloride, or what we know as table salt.

These minerals can also be lost through urinating and feces, just as they are in humans. Horses can lose around 15 liters of sweat per hour, sometimes more depending on activity level. Sodium is the mineral lost the most in this process.


Many owners will ask whether or not their horse truly needs electrolyte supplementation. Often it is associated with more dire or intense sweating and workouts, like professional sport horses. But as we have seen with the steep increase in temperature, exercise is not the only cause of sweating.

Heat in combination with humidity can be a harsh, even deadly, combination. The Heat Index is an index that combines the temperature of the air on a given day and the amount of humidity, typically in shaded areas. So for example, while the temperature may say it's supposed to be 95 degrees, if there is perceivable humidity, it will actually feel hotter.

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The amount of humidity can contribute multiple degrees to the temperature of the day. In the summer, particularly during monsoon season, the heat index will rise considerably.

Studies are also showing that horses will lose larger amounts of sweat in humid weather.

It is thought that for horses with the lightest regiment of work can do without the supplementation of electrolyte formulas. Their usual feed could be enough to keep their body balanced, and the addition of a salt block can aid in that balance.

If your horse does a moderate to extreme workout, extra supplemental sodium and other minerals may be necessary and at greater capacity. For a horse to recover from such a work load when the temperatures are blazing, they need electrolytes and the provision of such minerals to adequately recover post workout.

If you've ever exercised your horse to a higher degree and then given him electrolytes, you may find that his recovery time is much shorter or easier. As our horses age, the heat will take a harder toll on them, so electrolytes can also help older horses recover and stay healthy.

Electrolytes don't always have to come at the end of a workout either. They can be given before and even during. If it's excessively hot out, you can help prepare your horse's body earlier in the day. If you are at a competition where your horse will workout multiple times, you can provide electrolytes between rounds.

It is important that if you use a form of electrolytes that is not dissolved in water, you must provide a source of water for your horse to drink. In the case of giving electrolyte pastes to horses on a trail ride, you must be able to provide a large amount of water so that he can satiate his thirst and put those minerals to work in his system.

With any change in diet or supplementation, it is best to consult with a vet to rule out potential side effects or dangerous combinations of ingredients if your horse has other supplements he takes regularly.

• Happy Trails Monthly Recipe •

Created by Chef Sharon Hauht

“Skillet Chicken with Raspberry Sauce”

Prep Time: 10 min Prep/total time: 30 min. Servings: 4

Ingredients:

4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (5 ounces each)
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 1/2 cup seedless raspberry jam
 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce
 1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Directions:

Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. In a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray, cook chicken over medium heat for 5-7 minutes on each side or until a thermometer reads 170°.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced to 1/2 cup. Serve with chicken.

“Baked Mushroom Chicken”

Prep Time: 20 min Cook Time: 20 min Servings: 4

Ingredients:

4 boneless skinless chicken breast halves (1 pound)
 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
 3 tablespoons butter, divided
 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms
 1/2 cup chicken broth
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 1/3 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/4 cup sliced green onions

Directions:

1. Flatten each chicken breast half to 1/4-in. thickness. Place flour in a resealable plastic bag; add chicken, a few pieces at a time. Seal and shake to coat.

2. In a large skillet, brown chicken in 2 tablespoons butter on both sides. Transfer to a greased 11-in. x 7-in. baking dish. In the same skillet, saute mushrooms in the remaining butter until tender. Add the broth, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil; cook for 5 minutes or until liquid is reduced to 1/2 cup. Spoon over chicken.

3. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 15 minutes or until chicken is no longer pink. Sprinkle with cheeses and green onions. Bake 5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted.

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About Happy Trails Kitchen



Sharon Hauht is the owner of Happy Trails Kitchen that specializes in baking and artfully decorated custom celebration cakes, cupcakes, cookies and sugar art for your special occasion. Sharon is an award winning cake decorator who has more than 40 years experience. Sharon competed with her team, Gouly Goblins, on Season 10 of Food Network’s Halloween Wars and was featured on the Road to Halloween Wars, which aired on September 13, 2020.

Happy Trails Kitchen (HTK) is registered by the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) as a cottage food operation, which means HTK’s food labels have been approved by SNHD, applicable recipes have been lab-tested for shelf stability (pH and water activity), and Sharon Hauht has been approved to bake and decorate cakes out of her home. She can print edible images (logos and Photographs) on your confections. She has her food handler’s card for food safety.

You can see pictures of some of her recent projects on her website: www.happytrailskitchen.com. You can contact Sharon through her website or by emailing her at happytrailskitchen@gmail.com or call (702) 277-8000. HTK is also on Facebook and Instagram under HappyTrailsKitchen.



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Things That Will Always Drive Horse People Crazy

By The VHN Writing Team



Horse people are a very passionate and dedicated group of individuals, which is understandable given the animals they are passionate about. It takes a lot of work, love, and commitment to be a horse person.

Being a part of the horse community means that you “get it.” You understand what it takes and what it’s really about. You understand what horses are about and what it means to own one.

With that passion also comes situations that absolutely drive horse people bonkers. There are things that would drive any person crazy, but there are very specific situations that drive horse people crazy and it’s only a matter of time before we’ve experienced them all.

Here are some things that drive horse people up a wall, let’s see if you can relate.

1. When the grocery store only stocks so many big bags of carrots at one time and they end up getting taken by people that are “buying in bulk.” All you can think is, “you have no idea what buying in bulk really means,” as you prepare for some angry horses with no carrots at dinner time.

2. Cars that speed around you when you are on a shared back road. Horse people are perfectly happy to share the road when they’re out on a ride. We are not, however, okay with vehicles revving past because they won’t give the time of day to slow down and give some room.

3. This same principle applies to bike riders that refuse to share and zip around corners against the flow of natural traffic. Even more so when they’re in groups of five or more.

4. How some people automatically believe your rich or extremely well off because you have a horse. *major eye roll*

5. Vehicles that follow to closely behind your horse trailer and zip into the extra space you’re leaving between you and the vehicle in front. Like don’t mind me, I’m just hauling live animals at a high rate of speed, no big deal. Never mind that I can’t exactly stop on a dime like your sports car.

6. When non-horsey friends or friends of friends/ relatives ask to ride your horse. Even worse, when they just assume that they can or that their children can because it would “be fun” and “they’ve never done it before.” Your flighty five -year -old, 16 hand warmblood is perfect for that experience.

7. When the same friends ask if you can give lessons and don’t understand why you wouldn’t want to. “You already have a horse and all the stuff for it. It’d be good money.”

8. Any other types of comments or questions that make horses seem like easy keepers or not that big of a deal. We do in fact need to see our horses every day, usually twice a day. We do in fact have to spend that much money on feed and other essentials. We do in fact have to train and ride that often.

9. Being out and about with your horse and a group of people get too up close and personal with you. This usually involves wanting to take pictures, asking a million questions, kids that want to put their hands all over your horse, and dogs that get too close for comfort or constantly bark.

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10. That individual that calls a miniature horse a baby. Every. Time. Also, when that person starts talking like they know so much about horses because they used to ride their grandparents old pony when they were five. The kicker is when they start disagreeing with you about “horse facts.”

11. When you’re trying to sell your horse and the person that’s interested says they have the same level of horse experience like the person in #10 and they want to test ride. Yea, I don’t think so.

12. If you’re giving lessons to a child and the mother is a nosy nervously with zero horse experience. Odds are good that she’ll try and micromanage in some way or expect an Olympic champion by the second week.

13. People that feed your horse treats without your permission. Even worse when the treat they wanted to feed was in no way horse compatible. Then they get annoyed or angry as if you’re being too uptight. Please take a look at my typical vet bill and then tell me I’m overreacting.

14. Neighbors that complain when you park your trailer in front of your house overnight so you can unload stuff/ stock or charge it for a trip. Sorry to ruin your view of the front of my house.

15. When people insult your way of riding, saying that the riding they see on tv isn’t like what you do. Or when they ask why you don’t do jumps that tall or why you don’t do shows like that.

16. When strangers complain that all events are abusive to horses and using saddles, spurs, bits and other tack is cruel for no reason. They say that every horse should be set free to roam and live naturally. Sometimes they can be found at rodeos or other shows commenting in the seat next to you or they say these things when you strike up a conversation and mention that you have horses.

How many of these hair pulling experiences have you had? Are there any you would add to the list? These situations can be annoying and exhausting at the same time, but luckily you can find comfort in the se friends, and your equine buddy. They get it.

Things That Keep Your Horse Cool During the Summer Heat

By The VHN Writing Team



The term “record breaking” when it comes to heat is a pretty terrifying term. Summer can be a brutal season, and for our horses that remain outside 24/7, rising temperatures can come with serious hazards. Everything from puffing, to mineral loss, and even a cease in sweating. While your horse will have to deal with the heat until Summer says its goodbyes, there are things that you can do to make the time being more comfortable.

1. Be smart about your workouts. Avoid the hottest parts of the day. Before the sun is fully up and well after it has gone down will be the mildest parts of the day.
2. Do not make the mistake of thinking that cloudy/ humid days are somehow cooler. Humidity can actually raise the heat index considerably, make it feel hotter and causing your horse to take longer to cool down from riding.
3. Utilize water after intense workouts. It does not have to be a full on bath, but rinsing your horse down with water will cool his system down quicker and it will get any accumulated sweat off of him.
4. Keep his water buckets topped off, and have a spare bucket and extra water ready in case of a malfunction with automatic waterers. The water in your horse’s bucket will continue to warm up as it sits through the day, and let’s face it, our horses don’t like hot water any more than we do when we’re thirsty. So topping off your horse’s water bucket a couple times a day will keep it fresh, especially if he is drinking regularly.
5. If your horse is overheated or puffing and rinsing him off doesn’t seem to help, try using a different method. Take some large cheap towels and get them wet. Ring them out so they’re not dripping but still fairly full of water and place them in a container with ice. A large cooler is best. Let them sit for a bit and you can even top them off with cold water over the top of them. When you’re at the barn, take the towels and drape them over your horses body. It’ll be a little shocking because they will be fairly cold from the ice, but they can stay on his body like a barrier from the heat. It’ll give his system a break from having to work so hard.
6. Get a kiddie pool. If your horse is on the braver side, you can get a cheap kiddie pool to fill with water and let him play in it. The pool and water might not last long depending on how exuberant your horse is about playing, but it will give him something to do that cools him down for a little while.
7. Make sure your horse has a source of shade throughout the day. You’d be surprised just how much your horse will benefit from constant shade while the sun is beating down over head. This will also reduce the risk of sunburn.
8. Mistors are another great way of keeping your barn and stalls cool while the sun does its baking. The light mist will keep the heat and the flies off of your horse and they are fairly easy to install and keep maintained.
9. Fans. It might not feel like fans make much of a difference, but if you’ve ever been sweating and then felt a breeze, you’ll actually feel like you’re being cooled down. The moving air cools the water or sweat on your skin just like it does for a horse. Having fans by your horse can keep air circulating if the day is stagnant.
10. Electrolytes. By giving your horse these minerals, you are keeping his body primed to sweat and sweating is his body’s way of cooling down naturally. If your horse is lacking in the minerals that keep him sweating, his body is going to have a harder time.

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In Memoriam: Remembering Your Equine Friend

By The VHN Writing Team



There are some pains in life that are not only some of the most brutal, but they are some of the most expected and guaranteed. Death is a natural part of life and when we take an animal and make the commitment to love them with all that we have, we are also signing an unwritten agreement that we will be there during their last pains and their last breaths.

The pain we feel at their passing is the true price we end up paying for all of the love and wonderful times our animals give us. It may be horrible in the moment, but we can't deny that that pain is worth it. If we were given the chance to do it over again, we wouldn't change a thing, and we would happily endure that same pain to have another day with them.

It may not seem like it during a recent passing of a loved equine, but there are ways to feel better and remember our dear ones after they have left us.

1. Look at pictures and remember the good times. If you took any pictures with your equine buddy, you can take some time to look through them. Have some kleenex ready because there will be a few tears but it can also be cathartic to embrace and think of all of the good moments you had.

2. Take your pictures and get them printed. Finding ways to honor your equine is a wonderful way to celebrate their memory and also keep them close. You can put pictures in different parts of your home, like beside your bed or even in your barn/ tack room.

3. Have their items made into keepsakes. You can preserve one of their horseshoes, their halter, name plate, a braid of hair, their bit, and more. Have them placed in a frame or display box to keep them safe for long term.

4. Hire an artist to do a drawing, painting, or even sculpture of your horse. They can utilize pictures you have to create a unique piece of art, of either just your animal or you both together.



5. Have a custom pillow or blanket made. Sometimes we just need something to hug, and a blanket or pillow printed with your buddy's picture can allow you to grieve and recuperate with something more tangible.

6. Take your horse's shoe or braid of hair and turn it into something wearable. You can DIY or hire a professional. It can be a bracelet, ring, a necklace, some earrings, a belt buckle. Anything unique that you can think of. They can all have your horse's hair or embellishments.

7. Have a custom urn made. Many cremation services will offer urns as part of a package. If you cremate your horse, consider what you would like to have his ashes stored inside. It could be something simple or something more personal. There really are no limits. Ashes can also be used in jewelry to make glass beads, or used in art pieces mixed in with mediums to create a work.

8. Spread some or all of your horse's ashes somewhere. It may feel difficult to keep your horse's ashes on a shelf or somewhere in your home. Consider making a day or whole trip out of it. You can sprinkle your horse's ashes in many places or just one. It could be where you got him from, where he was born, your first trip together, where he passed, your favorite spot together, anywhere really. Some owners even make arrangements to one day have their animal's ashes buried with them.

9. Make a journal. You have so many memories logged in your head, consider putting them to paper. Take a journal and write down your feelings and moments with your horse. Some things may even come back to you as you continue to write and remember. Decorate the journal with all kinds of items and crafting utensils. Make it unique to you and your horse. There's no deadline for finishing, no requirements for completion, it's whatever you want it to be.

10. Get a tattoo. One of the ultimate ways to memorialize an animal is with a tattoo, as they are on your body for life. It's a big commitment and comes with a lot of decisions, like finding the right size, design, price, and tattoo artists for the job. So take it easy and research as much as possible to make the process simple and so you get what you want.



11. Donate money or time to an animal cause. Giving money or giving your own labor in honor of your animal is a wonderful way to both give back and make you feel good in the process. It helps fellow animals and let's you work towards something as you come to terms with your loss.

12. Talk about your animal. Perhaps one of the simplest ways to remember and honor your animal's memory is by talking about them. Share stories, share the good and the bad, and the difficult. Share your knowledge and what was so great about them. It can be a relief to speak about them and to confide in friends, family, and others in the horse community.

No matter how you decide to cope with the loss of your equine, remember there is no "right" method to grieving, no set pattern or approach. Do what feels right and what you can handle. And remember that in the end, we all see each other again. They're waiting for us, just on the other side, forever young, forever happy, and forever ours.



One Pole Challenge

By Zen Equine Bodywork, Photos Courtesy of Jessie Mix

“What are some of the exercises or stretches I can do?” is a common question from my bodywork clients. It’s a great question, and it shows their commitment to doing their best to help their horse stay healthy, supple and happy. With this in mind, I have compiled some exercises which are simple, yet effective, to help not only supple your horse but also infuse some fun into your routine.

Today, the exercise I am going to highlight is the “One Pole Challenge!”

What is the One Pole Challenge? This is an exercise that is gaining momentum on social media platforms, however, as many of you may have guessed, it was invented way before it gained its newfound fame. Aside from the fact that it is quite a satisfactory exercise to get your horse to complete the challenge and brag about it, this exercise is quite beneficial on multiple fronts. Let’s get started.

You will need a single ground pole for this exercise. Place the ground pole somewhere in the round pen or in the arena and simply walk your horse down the length of the pole – right feet on the right side and left feet on the left.

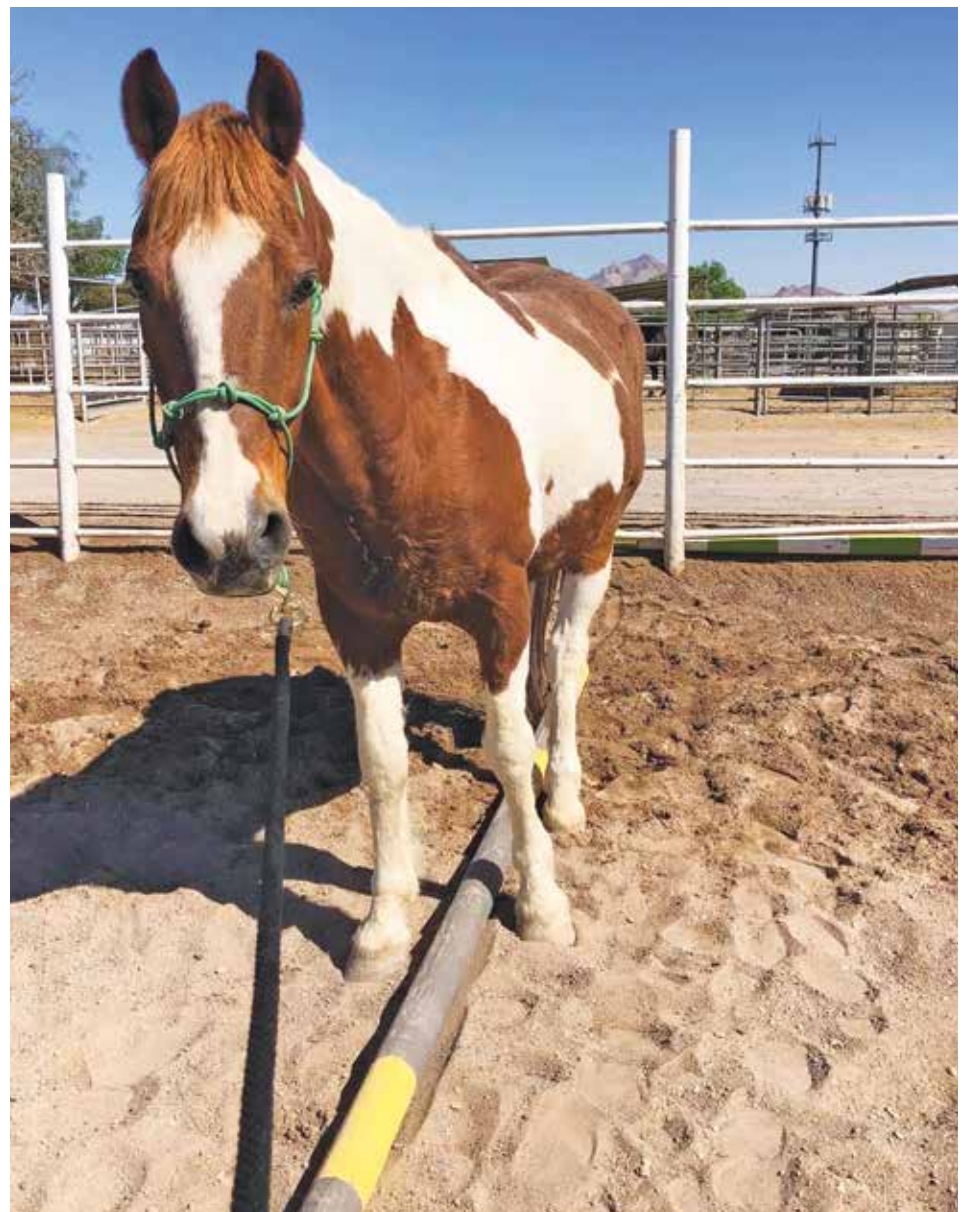


This exercise sounds deceptively easy but it can be challenging for your horse. The reason this is a challenge is because your horse will have to pause and actually think about where it is placing its feet. He or she will have to figure out what you are asking s/he to do.

Have fun with the exercise and take one step at a time. Be sure to encourage the horse to keep the right feet on the right side of the pole and left feet on the left side. Keep the exercise engaging and finish up on a positive note within 10 – 15 minutes, regardless how far your horse has progressed.

According to Jec A. Ballou, the author of numerous equestrian books including the book titled 55 Corrective Exercise for Horses, the single pole exercise helps with postural adjustments and it helps with sharpening the proprioception - the connection between hoof/brain to brain/hof which helps the body with better coordinated limb positioning.

This exercise is great for most horses, and it’s especially beneficial for horses that tend to stand with a narrow stance, as it resets how the horse moves its four feet.



If your horse is coming back to the arena after being stall-rested or is recovering from trauma or operation, please check with your veterinarian for an all-clear for this or other exercises.

I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to email zenequinebodywork@gmail.com or tag me at @zenequinebodywork on Facebook or Instagram when you have completed your challenge.

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Uniquely Equestrian, Uniquely You

By The VHN Writing Team



The world is full of people who will doubt and judge you. There's no way around, no way of avoiding it. If there's an opinion to be had, someone will have one about you. If there's a bad thing to be heard, it will be heard all over. It's inevitable.

And it's painful.

Remarks about you personally, your animal, the way you ride, what you enjoy, and how you go about doing your thing. Whether you'll succeed or whether you'll fail. Whether you have what it takes to begin with and if your efforts are completely in vain. You'll hear everything you're doing wrong, and not a single thing about doing it right. It will seem like everyone is against you.

Really, you'll be faced with people telling you the harshest thing, that you shouldn't be you.

After all, that's what it is when you're told you shouldn't do something a certain way or at all. When you're made to feel like what you think, what you feel, and what you like is unimportant or even foolish.

When you're afraid to be who you are and do what you enjoy, that's when this article comes in.

So here it is, even in the smallest measurement, the briefest words. Here is your sign, the hand reaching above water to lift you up so you can take a breath, the arms to catch you when the opinions bring you to your knees. Here is the shove forward to keep going, and the shield to guard your back while you head on. Here is the mantra to repeat while you look in the mirror. The words to remind yourself in the car. The advice to take to heart while you leave all others behind.

Be uniquely you. Be uniquely equestrian.

It's not for others to decide what makes you happy or what you should do with your life. It's not for others to say who you are and what you're capable of. It's not for everyone around you to point you in the "right" direction. It's not their story to write or their song to sing.

It's yours.

Every single time, it is yours. There is freedom in that blessing, to truly accept that it's your life at your fingertips, and no matter the noise flooding your ears, the doubts crowding your mind, you have everything you need to make what you want, happen.

If you want to go to the NFR at 70, do it. If you wanna be a male barrel racer, do it. If you want to become the proverbial "cat lady" of the horse community and have ten mini horses to drive, do it. If you wanna get into horses later in life and start from scratch, do it. If you wanna be just as good as the guys, do it. If you want to wear your fancy western get up to the barn every day just because you like it, do it. If you want to go to the Olympics, do it.



For every rider that has questioned themselves. For every horse person who has quit. For every owner who has given up. Right now is the moment to be you and forget the rest. It's your journey to make, and it will keep going without you if you let it.

So, don't let it go.

Be uniquely you, be uniquely equestrian. Every time you go to the barn. Every time you ride your horse. Every decision you make about your equestrian life, do it with gusto and with the confidence that it's what you want, and nobody else.

If you need a partner, look no further than your equine. He's right there with you. If you have more than one horse, more than one donkey, more than one mini, if you have a whole group of them, that's your herd. They're waiting for your go ahead, your signal to move forward. And they'll be with you every step of the way.

There will be talk, don't listen. There will be looks, shrug it off. If someone asks why you're doing what you're doing, all you have to say is, "Because I want to."

You don't owe anymore explanation that. You don't have to explain the why's and the how's. You don't have to prove that you can do it. You don't have to prove a single thing. In fact, you don't owe anybody anything, ever, when it's your happiness that's at stake.

It's you that will regret it. It's you that has to live with the knowledge that you didn't try to get what you wanted so badly. It's you that will have to come to terms with the fact that you decided to be only half of yourself.

You decided to dull yourself down and blend in.

So don't blend in. Color outside the lines, break the mould, be wild, be free, be all the things you were scared to be, that you didn't dare embrace.

After all, it's like a really great quote that makes a lot of sense. "Fears are wolves without their teeth."

When the time comes that you sit down exhausted and start to wonder if it's worth it, if you're being silly, if you look stupid, ask yourself if you're making decisions for someone else or for you. Are you being you? Are you being your kind of equestrian?

Music inspiration for this article:
Wolves Without Teeth by The Music Room





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Fun in the Sun Horse Riding Games

By The VHN Writing Team



With the pandemic on the mend and events opening back up, the thirst for some horse fun has steadily been ramping up. Though summer tends to put a damper on horse shows, it doesn't mean that you can't create your own horse fun with some friends. There are so many games you can play with your friends and their horses, and they can be fun for all ages. Just remember to be safe, stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and take advantage of the evening temperatures.

Egg and Spoon: a totally classic game, egg on a spoon is exactly as it would be on the ground, only you're on a horse. The race is done with each rider holding a spoon with an egg and whoever reaches the finish line first with an intact egg wins. This can also be done with partners to make it a longer race.

Relay Race: You can find something fun to use for this game, like a ribbon, baton, horseshoe, teddy bear, any smaller hand held object that can be passed from one person to another can work. Each team can have a few people on it, say 4 or 5. The object is passed from one rider to the next as they finish each section of the race, which ever team crosses the finish line first wins.

Red Light, Green Light: This is a game for a bunch of riders. All of the riders on their horses stand in the arena, and while the horses are walking about, someone calls out red light and each horse must stop. The horses that don't stop are out and the process keeps going until there's a winner. It can be made harder as the game goes by doing a trot or sporadically calling red light.

Fill the Bucket: This game involves water and a team. There is a bucket waiting at the front of each row and a ways down the line is another bucket of water. Each team has a sponge and each rider must go down, soak the sponge, come back up and squeeze the water out, then hand off the sponge to the next person. Whoever gets a full bucket wins or has the most water when the time is called. This can be a great summer game to stay cool.

Musical Ground Poles: Have a bunch of ground poles ready and spread through the arena. Play some music, and when the music is paused, each horse needs to be standing over a pole. Any horses that didn't catch one is out, and each round has one less ground pole until there is a winner.

Follow the Leader: Pick a leader and this rider will be at the head of the line. All the rest will follow as the leader chooses maneuvers, like changing leads, speed, direction, dropping stirrups, anything that could be fun. This will require quite a bit of space and not too many riders so that things don't get mixed up as the game gets going.

Simon Says: This is just like classic Simon Says, only you're on a horse. The game leader will say, "Simon Says.." and give a command, like two point, back up three steps, do a circle, scratch your horse's neck, and so on. If the leader doesn't say Simon Says before the action, whoever does the command is out.

There are so many fun games to play on horseback that we didn't include in this list. They can be variations on classic games that we've all played or something from Gymkhana and other sports. They can also be as beginner, intermediate, or hard as the group wants, which means they work for young riders and old. The addition of water and other fun materials can really make the game day fun in the summer heat.

Do you have any favorite horse games?

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Is Your Horse ... *Gasp* ... A Bucket Tipper?

by The VHN Writing Team

There are no words that can quite describe the anguish and frustration of seeing your horse's feed bucket tipped over and dumped of its contents, especially when it was filled with clean water or brand new feed. This feeling is even worse if your horse is wasting pricey supplements and important medications.

Yes, your horse has in fact become a bucket tipper. *old time horror movie scream*

A common issue, bucket tipping can become an annoying and costly habit to break. While you can take steps to try and train your equine buddy, keeping him from dumping his feed bucket altogether may prove to be more difficult than you once thought.

What's more is that if your horse dumps his feed into a dirty or sandy area, he could be ingesting sizeable amounts of that dirt over time, increasing his risk of intestine problems. Bucket tipping can be an issue of a picky eater, boredom, a health issue, or just your horse's naturally lovely personality.

If your horse is not suffering from a health problem, is sufficiently entertained, and likes his food, it can be quite the head scratcher as to why he's doing this.

Most of the time, it's either a personality quirk or he has an issue with what he's being fed in.

So how do you fix this behavior? There's a few things you can do.

Try putting your horse's feed into a bucket with a flat back and securing it to his gate. Make sure that the bucket is flat backed, otherwise it won't work.

Also take into account how high you position the bucket, as you do not want your horse to paw and get his foot stuck on the edge. Shoulder height is a good position to place it in.

There are also feeding cannisters that sit over the tops of rungs on a fence and are designed for this type of feeding. They can act as a scoop and a feed bucket at the same time. To secure them, you can use bailing twine or other types of clipped secures to keep it in place. Make sure that it is secured, otherwise you're back at square one with food all over the floor.

If the feed bucket that your horse likes to tip over is smaller and narrow in proportion, he may find a larger and shallower feeder more to his liking. It's almost a mind trick, making it seem like he's eating off of a really big space like the ground.

Horses naturally graze and search for food over a large, flat area. If you put his feed into a shallower bin with lots of room, he can push it around and forage as he likes without feeling enclosed.

Another benefit is that a bin with a larger bottom is hard to tip over, especially if it's made with a heavier material. And durability is always a plus with horses. That means he won't be able to crack it like thin, cheap plastic.

You can also bolt or tie your horse's feeder to his gate. If you are worried about injury to your horse or the fence, consider securing it loosely so that the bin will move still side to side but cannot be tipped over or pulled from the fence. Then you won't have to worry about dings in the gate or having the bin ripped away from the ties.

Another feed bucket hack is to place the bucket's bottom into a small tire. This makes it heavier and much less likely to tip as your horse forages. You may have to do some searching to find the right bucket and tire combo that fits.

A plus is that old tires are inexpensive to acquire and can be replaced as needed. It's not a big deal if the tire has holes or is worn down, so long as it can clasp around the bucket and be snug.

If you've experimented beyond sanity with every solution and it's impossible to keep your horse's feed from hitting the ground all the time, consider utilizing a rubber mat under where he eats.

This way, if he must eat off the ground, and it's clearly a must, he won't be eating sand/ dirt with his food every time he takes a bite. It's also very easy to sweep or hose off a rubber mat for routine cleaning. That way, he gets what he wants, the goober, and you can have peace of mind that he isn't eating clumps of dirt every day.

While it may take some time and patience to figure out what works for your individual horse and how well it will stand the test of time, in the long run you will know that you are keeping him safe and healthy without him being known as a dreaded bucket tipper.



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Bada Boom, It's Fireworks Season

By The VHN Writing Team



All hail the glorious fireworks season when children rejoice and horse owners cringe. Fourth of July is upon us and that means the sky is going to be alight with rainbows of color and loud pops and cracks. For horse owners, this time of the year sets us on edge, as it's nearly a guarantee that our horses will be stressed out.

Every horse is different when it comes to the noisy light show, with some being mildly annoyed or gazing off into the distance wondering what the heck is going on. Others go completely bonkers like the sky is falling, which to a horse, that may well be what they interpret.

There's not much to be done for preventing fireworks in their entirety, but it is still possible to prepare in advance and take measures to keep our horses safe and as sane as possible.

First, speak with your neighbors, especially if there are areas around you that do not have horse property. Many times those that do not know about horses don't truly realize how anxious our animals become because of the noise.

If you can speak to your neighbors and maintain good communication, you may be able to persuade them to keep their fireworks at a distance or between certain hours. It's not a guarantee that every neighbor will oblige or be understanding at all, but if you can put your best foot forward before the holiday, you just might get lucky.

Next, prepare your horse's environment. The jury is out for whether or not it's best to have horses roam free or have them stalled during the mayhem. The best way to decide is to have your horse stay where he is, meaning if he is usually inside his stall in the evening, keep him there so he feels more secure.

If he has buddies that he likes to be around, keep him around them so he feels safe in a "herd". If your horse is typically loose in a turn out, that can also work. Make sure that wherever he is left during the fireworks, it has been inspected for safety.

Your horse will likely pace about, even jumping at noises, pawing in agitation or more. Keep his space free of anything he could get hooked on or stuck in. It is only temporary, from when the fireworks get going to when they finish.

Keep a source of water for him however, as he will likely be sweating and worked up. He'll need to drink through the few hours the noise lasts. He can also be quieted with some hay or other forage, just enough to munch and distract him.

If your horse is staying in a field, make absolutely certain that all fencing is secure and there is nothing your horse can trip or get caught in as he tears around. He will get excited and probably start running about. The last thing you need is an injury or for him to chance jumping over a fence to escape.

If you have the ability, stay with your horse while the fireworks are going off. It's better to keep your eyes open in case of problems, especially if your horse seems to need an intervention during extreme stress.

If you cannot be there, try to get someone trustworthy to watch over your horse.

Always provide emergency contact information and any materials needed for your horse's care if you cannot be present. If there is ever a time where something could go wrong, this could very well be it.

For horses that are flighty or prone to anxiety, consider getting a sedative for the night. It may seem harsh to drug your horse even for just a few hours, but if he has any chance of becoming unreasonable or unmanageable to the point of danger, a sedative may be the safest thing for him and you. Your vet can guide you on what to use, the dosage, and administration.

If necessary, you can also test this medication prior to the holiday so you can see how your horse reacts and if it's a good fit for him. Then you'll know a go to medication for stressful situations where nothing else helps.

Some people with dogs and cats that hate fireworks will resort to playing loud music or movies to block out the firework noise inside their homes. You can also do this same technique of drowning out the sound by playing music in the barn. It won't erase the noise completely, but it may be enough to at least keep the pops from being so startling for your horse.

Also consider keeping the lights on in the barn and in his stall/ turn out. Yes, no harsh light might seem calming during the chaos, but your horse can see better in the light, so if he does start moving about, he'll be able to navigate his space much easier.

Plus, you'll be able to see what he's doing without a flash light or having to pop the lights on every so often. Having the lights on can also offset the sudden bright flashes of fireworks in the sky which can be confusing for your horse.

If it's possible, consider moving your horse to a different area that's more sheltered from the noise or even a property where you've checked that there are no fireworks close by. It could be a friend or family members property. This isn't always feasible, but if you're able, you can do a test run a couple days before.

It's also a priority to keep yourself safe during the craziness, especially if no one else is around to help you. Don't ride or try to handle your horse too much while the fireworks are going off. You're only there to monitor and keep your horse quiet until the display slowly peters out for the evening.

Stay calm and try to soothe your horse as much as possible, but if he wants his space, let him have it. No matter how insistent you are, he will still be more focused on the booms and flashes in the sky than you.

Have a large source of water handy in case of an accident or fire. It may be from the fireworks of others or a bonfire. But random brush fires are common during this holiday, and if you live in an area with a lot of open land/ brush, have your water hoses ready and your vehicle/ trailer waiting in case of emergency. It's better to eliminate extra steps for yourself if you do have to evacuate your horse or get help.

Also consider making a group thing of it if you are boarding at a facility. Many owners will spend time with their animals during the crazy celebration, so why not have a nice quiet barn get together to keep your horses company. Bring snacks and enjoy the night. A group of familiar people will only help to calm the horses.

Fourth of July fireworks and fireworks other times of the year can be pretty unavoidable, but with a plan of action, you may find this year's celebration a lot easier to ride out.



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<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> *The scheduling of events for all organizations and locations is currently under constant change due to COVID-19. For the most up to date schedules, attendance, and virtual show dates/ info please regularly visit the corresponding websites.* <i>Thank You</i> </div>						
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 APACHE LAND APPALOOSA CLUB Meeting 7:00pm, Horseshoe Restaurant, Benson AZ; Contact Fred @ 520-384-5332	13 NSHAV GENERAL MEETING 7pm Olive Garden - 1361 S. Decatur Blvd. 702-645-2988 POSS GENERAL MEETING 7pm @ WULFY'S Hwy 160 Pahrump 775-727-9576	14 HCON MONTHLY MEETING 7pm Doc's Saddlery 6185 Elkhorn RD LV, NV 702-361-5456 BCH of UTAH WASATCH FRONT CHAPTER 7:00pm American Legion 345 Depot st Clearfield, UT Info. 801-773-9419	15	16	17
18	19	20 SSPHC MONTHLY MEETING 7pm IHop Cheyenne & Rainbow 702-373-2673 paintmee@aol.com	21 LVHA GENERAL MEETING, 7:15pm; Marie Calenders - 8175 W. Sahara Info: keppes@cscinfo@aol.com	22	23	24
25	26 S. NV REGIONAL TRAILS 4701 N Torrey Pines Dr., LV Contact Ed @ 702-645-1791 editoredd@juno.com	27	28	29	30	31

AUGUST 2021 CALENDER OF EVENTS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 APACHE LAND APPALOOSA CLUB Meeting 7:00pm, Horseshoe Restaurant, Benson AZ; Contact Fred @ 520-384-5332	10 NSHA GENERAL MEETING 7pm Olive Garden - 1361 S. Decatur Blvd. 702-645-2988 POSS GENERAL MEETING 7pm @ WULFY'S Hwy 160 Pahrump 775-727-9576	11 HCON MONTHLY MEETING 7pm Doc's Saddlery 6185 Elkhorn RD LV, NV 702-361-5456 BCH of UTAH WASATCH FRONT CHAPTER 7:00pm American Legion 345 Depot st Clearfield, UT Info. 801-773-9419	12	13	14
15	16	17 SSPHC MONTHLY MEETING 7pm IHop Cheyenne & Rainbow 702-373-2673 paintmee@aol.com	18 LVHA GENERAL MEETING, 7:15pm; Marie Calenders - 8175 W. Sahara Info: keppes@cscinfo@aol.com	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 S. NV REGIONAL TRAILS 4701 N Torrey Pines Dr., LV Contact Ed @ 702-645-1791 editoredd@juno.com	31	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0;"> VALLEY HORSE NEWS DEADLINE 15th of EVERY MONTH valleyhorsenews@gmail.com </div>			

Farm Animal Adoptions

All you have to do:

Is provide a photo of the animal/ animals.

Give a short description explaining why they are such a great candidate for a new home.

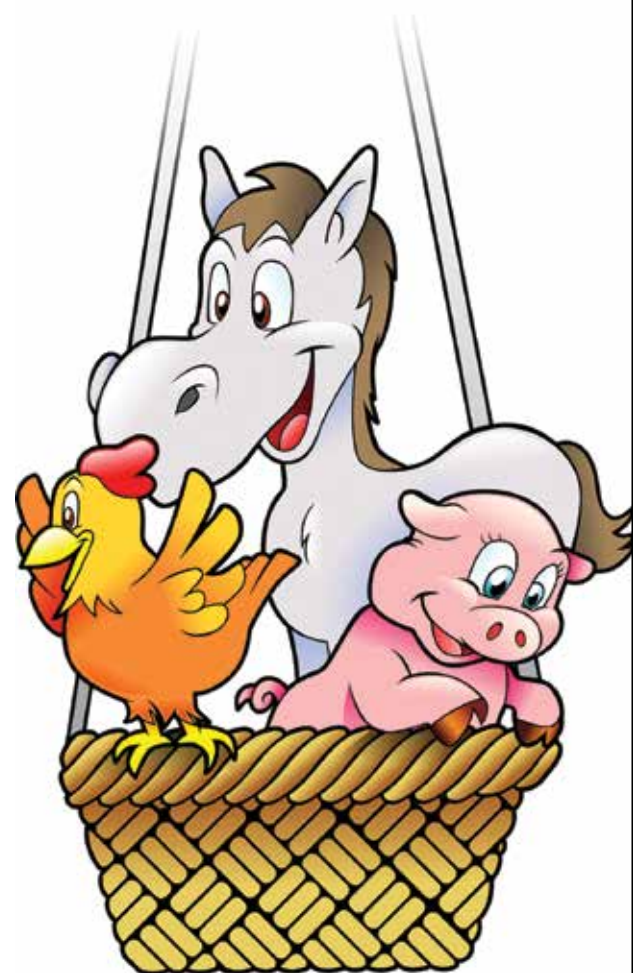
And lastly, provide the best contact information for those that are interested.

Your photo, description, and contact will go here for everyone to see and hopefully will make it to the perfect new home.



Open to all: Horses, Donkeys, Mules, Miniature Horses, Cattle, Piggies, Goats, Sheep, Chickens, Ducks, Geese, Farm Fowl, Rabbits, Alpaca, and Llamas!

Any farm animal in need has a place in this section for as long as they need it!



Welcome all rescues, sanctuaries, and non-profits!

Now is the chance to give farm animals in need of adopting and fostering an extra spotlight - **on the house**.

Valley Horse News will now have an adoptions section solely for farm animals at shelters and organizations that need to find a loving, forever home. On this page, every month, you will find photos and information about wonderful animals that could be the perfect addition to your home or farm. You will also find the organization that they come from and how you can get in contact.

This section will remain in the paper *indefinitely*.

As long as there is an animal that needs it, it will be open for listings. With COVID on the decline many animals are in need of new homes, so here will be the space to feature them.

Are you an organization or know of an organization that helps farm animals? Contact now for more information and to be featured on this page every month. Remember, this page is for **adoptions only**.

Animals for sale by owner must be advertised in other sections.

Please spread the word far and wide about this section so we can facilitate as many adoptions as possible. These precious animals need and deserve all the help we can get. It is a personal goal to make this section explode every single month! A home for every animal that comes on this page is not only a worthwhile but completely possible goal.

Just imagine what could be done by this time next year. So let's make it happen!

Have questions? Email us at valleyhorsenews@gmail.com or call 702-808-7669

We will provide all of the information you need and answer any inquiries you may have.



Terri Gamboa Team

#1 in Acreage Properties

in Las Vegas



Cindy Parker
702-528-1048

Sommer McDaniel
702-370-2404

~ NW, NE, SE ~

Terri Gamboa
702-528-5473



7080 S Pecos Rd. 3.9 Acre Secluded Prop., 2 bed/ 2 bath house to live in while build then as guest house. 10 car garage converted horse barn, electric gate, 100 tall pine trees \$1,975,000



4335 N Fort Apache. 1/2 Acre Lot in Private 4 Lot Cul-De-Sac, Priced as Package to Include Gorgeous Architecture Plans for Custom Luxury Home \$289K



1330 Morning Sun. Huge elevated .89 acre lot. Gorgeous location nestled at the base of sunrise mtn. Strip, valley & mtn views. Perfect setting for custom home. Zoned for horses. \$185K



1A Torrey Pines & Buckskin. Almost 1 Acre in the NW. Build Your Dream Home on this Corner Lot. Water Main Installed, Power Right at Corner of Property. Quiet Location. \$235,000

Excellent Land Lenders - 80% Financing!!



Call Terri Gamboa (702) 528-5473



Email: TerriGamboa@aol.com



Website: www.TerriGamboa.com



Terri Gamboa Team

#1 Horse Property Specialists

in Las Vegas



Cindy Parker
702-528-1048

Sommer McDaniel
702-370-2404

- NW, Pahrump -

Terri Gamboa
702-528-5473



6600 Via Provenza Ave. 5.27 Acre Equest. Est. 3,458sqft House + 2 Add. Guest Houses. 10 Stalls, 5 Pastures & 1 Rehab Pasture. Lighted Dressage Arena + Practice Arena. Warm Up Riding Trail \$3,250,000



1750 Mae Rd. 20 Acre Horse Property, 360 mtn views. Investment potential. Water rights & water well. 3 bed, 2 bath, screen covered sunroom/Patio. Fully fenced. \$499,000



6760 Hinson St. Authentic Spanish Colonial Single Story. 1/3 of an Acre. Jaw Dropping Inter. Finishes. Wood Floors Of Oak, Redwood & Pine. Covered Back Patio W/ Built In Bbq, Pizza Oven \$749,500



6842 Vintage Highlands Ln. Single story on just under 1/2 acre. Gated community. Gorgeous landscaping. Versatile floor plan, possible 5 bed. Pool & mtn views. Upgraded finishes. \$585K

**Call the #1 Horse Property TEAM to list your property here!
Call us to find your DREAM Horse Property!!**



"Ride in Floyd Lamb Park, approx. 2,000 acres, best ride in town!"

Call Terri Gamboa
(702) 528-5473



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A Team of Professionals #1 IN NEVADA
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**#1 in Luxury Homes on Acreage
in Las Vegas**

Cindy Parker
702-528-1048

Sommer McDaniel
702-370-2404

~ NW & NW by Floyd Lamb ~

Terri Gamboa
702-528-5473



6385 Iron Mountain Rd. 2 Acre Equestrian Estate. 3,550 Sq Ft, Pool, 21 Stalls, Large Arena, Round Pen, Hay Shed, Across 1,500 Acre Floyd Lamb Park. \$1,390,000



4820 Pounding Surf Ave. 2 Story Home 2,156 sq ft, in a private gated community w/park. Tall ceilings, Fireplace, granite countertops. 4bed/3bath + loft. Pool size backyard. \$475,000



2A Mustang & Maggie. 2.22 acres, incredible mountain views, 2 sides block walls, corner lot in equestrian neighborhood. Across from 1,500 acre floyd lamb park \$495,000



8645 Trails End. Dream 2 acre horse prop. with unique house-barn. State-of-the-art barn, 16x16 stalls, vet, tack, 265' X 120' arena & dressage arena. Access to FLP for best riding in town! \$ 998,800

Floyd Lamb Park - 1,500 Acres - NEW TRAILS - Best Ride in Town!

*****GREEN ROLLING HILLS, PONDS, BIG TREES, TRAILS!*****



"Ride in Floyd Lamb Park,
approx. 2,000 acres, best ride in town!"

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