

Mustang and Burro Trails On Delmarva

*A newsletter by the Delmarva Chapter of The American Mustang and Burro Association, Inc.
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NEWS AND NOTES

AMBA member, Corrine Rudell-Deans and her husband, Dan, plan to participate in the Western States Wild Horse and Burro Expo at the Livestock Center in Reno, NV on August 18-20. They plan to take several of their mustangs west for this event. Corrine has been the winner of the high point mustang belt buckle at the Mid-Atlantic show for the past 3 years. She says that she wants mustang and burro enthusiasts in the West to know that their counterparts also exist in the East.

The Wild Horse and Burro Expo will include 3 days of showing, demonstrations by top trainers (including Richard Shrake and others), a vendor fair, auction, raffle, mustang adoption at Palomino Valley, and an evening of fun on Thursday night where attendees can meet and speak with the clinicians.

Information about the Expo can be found on www.wildhorseandburroexpo.com. Our Mid Atlantic Show is listed on this website along with other wild horse and burro events for 06.

****Equine Herpes Virus Alert****

Some of us in Delaware recently received a letter from the Department of Agriculture saying that all horses showing or racing in Delaware must have appropriate vaccinations for this virus within 90 days of participation in any event. The Herpes 3 virus was recently found in several horses at Fair Hill but it was not the more serious Herpes 1 that closed Pimlico. All members are advised to be cautious when riding or transporting your animals anywhere. If you did not receive a letter from the Dept of Ag, contact the state veterinarian's office in Dover for the information. Dr. Towers retired in January and Dr. Odor is the interim State Veterinarian. At this writing it is unknown what

effect this will have on coming events, including our own Mid-Atlantic Wild Horse and Burro Show.

Delaware Horse Expo – March 24-25

Linda Chick will again be sponsoring the Delaware Horse Expo at the Delaware State Fairgrounds on March 24 and 25. This event kicks off with a dinner dance and auction hosted by the Delaware Equine Council on Friday evening March 24 in the Exhibit Hall. Music will be provided by the Jones Boys and the buffet dinner will be catered by The Smiths. Tickets are \$25 each. Contact Juanita Melling or Marge for tickets.

The Chapter has been invited to have a table at the Expo featuring the Adopt a Wild Horse or Burro Program as well as advertising the Mid-Atlantic show. There will be a tack auction beginning at 9 am in the Quillen Arena followed by an all breed and grade horse auction at 11 AM. There will be exhibits, vendors, seminars, clinics and demonstrations taking place all day.

Other Coming Events

Saturday, March 11: St Patricks Day Ride at 11 AM from Sunset Stables, Lum's Pond State Park. \$10.00 Call 834-7588

Saturday, March 18 Mini clinic "Ready to Ride" at Tuckahoe Equestrian Center, 11 am. Learn what you should take along as trail gear and where to carry it on a horse. Bring a long lead line. Karen Mack is leading this ride and will guide or instruct anyone who would like trail tips. Karen Mack - Ph. 410-778-3827

Also the "Movin' On Ride" will also take place at Tuckahoe on March 18 at 1 PM. This is a faster paced ride for experienced riders and horses. Karen Mack is the contact person.

Saturday March 25, Beach Ride at Cape Henlopen State Park, Lewes DE 10 am. Benefits Southern Delaware Therapeutic Horseback Riding. Contact Kerri Shelly at 302-422-5291.

Saturday, March 25 - "Bomb Proofing Your Horse" by the Volunteer Mounted Patrol, Fair Hill, MD. See details on line at www.fairhillvmp.com

Saturday, April 1, rain or shine "Judged Pleasure Ride" at Blackbird State Forest. Benefits Tuckahoe Equestrian Center and Therapeutic & Educational Riding. Call Pat Kemp 302-659-1103

Wednesday, April 5 Quarterly Meeting of the Maryland Horse Council in Marriottsville, MD at 7:30 pm. There will be a Horse Camping Demonstration. Everyone invited.

Friday-Sunday, April 28-30 Fair Hill Spring Ride

The Stuff of Legends

While many U.S. Cavalry horses were known to have mustang ancestry, especially in the early days, it is also known that wild horse management areas in Utah and Wyoming include mustangs that are descended from Cavalry horses.

The Cavalry was mighty particular in the horses they used as the efficiency of the Cavalry depended almost entirely upon the condition of the horses and everything was done for the comfort of the horse. The horses spent as much time as possible on pasture but feed was supplemented with hay and grain. When on a march the horses carried 10 to 15 pounds of grain along with all the other equipment necessary. With care a Cavalry horse could serve up to age 25.

On Cavalry posts reveille sounded at 5:30 a.m. with breakfast and routine horse care following. Mounted drill was held from 8 to 10:30 a.m. and a second stable call at 4 p.m. The men were usually assigned a particular horse and spent roughly 5 hours a day riding and caring for him. (Cavalry horses were all geldings, usually of solid color, bay preferred.) This resulted in very close bonds between man and horse. A farrier was assigned to each company and cared for approximately 70 horses.

An ordinary day's march averaged 20 miles. Animals with strength and stamina were necessary as a horse ordinarily carried rider and supplies equaling approximately 1/3 of his weight. Horses needed the

ability to cross natural obstacles, stand quietly in hiding when necessary and tolerate weapon fire from their backs

In the 1880s the Cavalry began to offer formal horsemanship training. Troopers received instruction in saber drill and regular and bareback equitation. They were often expected to ride a fractious horse with the stirrups crossed over the saddle so that the feet hung free. Training was based on European cavalry techniques and many officers were sent to France to study horsemanship. Kind treatment was especially emphasized. Daily exercises included jumping ditches, maneuvers in formation and mounted calisthenics that were called "monkey drills."

Little by little the horses were conditioned to artillery fire. Mounted men on experienced horses fired their guns some distance away from new horses that continued to march on a track. During subsequent sessions the horses moved closer to the sound until their own riders fired from horseback. The same technique was used to accustom horses to waving flags, standards, beating drums, cannon, and other military noises.

In combat the Cavalry rode into battle but dismounted to fight. Every 4th man was supposed to take the horses back behind the lines but often were unable to do so. The result was that many were turned loose and ran wherever they wanted. Even though the horses were trained to remain still under fire, they often panicked, plunged, reared and kicked. Many died in action or from exhaustion, exposure or overwork during a long campaign. In these instances the troopers shot their horses when they were too injured or too weak to keep going. In long campaigns both man and beast suffered enormously. Often there was bad weather without adequate shelter, food, wood or water. In winter the soldiers dressed in just about everything they owned and were hardly able to mount their horses. Sometimes both horses and troopers froze to death during the night. If an appropriate picket place could not be found the trooper would wrap the halter line around his hand and lie down to sleep using his saddle as a pillow. The horse would graze all around the sleeping man even nudging him from time to time to seek the sparse grass upon which he lay. There is no known instance of a horse either stepping on or injuring his rider.

The Army eventually employed an extensive breeding program and military mounts contributed much to foundation stock horse bloodlines with such animals as Doc Bar, Jesse James, Oklahoma Star, Joe Reed II, Skipper W and Sugar Bars.

