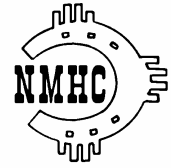


**New Mexico Horse Council**  
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**JULY/AUGUST 2007**

*"The horse you get off is not the same horse you got on; it is your job as a rider to ensure that as often as possible the change is for the better." – Author Unknown*

**Calendar**

**Aug. 30 (Thursday):** Final Review of Bachechi Open Space Master Plan, Public Meeting, 9800 4<sup>th</sup>. Street NW, Albuquerque, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

**Sept 7 – 23:** New Mexico State Fair, State Fairgrounds, Albuquerque. Horse Shows Every Day. NM Horse Council State Fair Tent and Booth in front of Horse Arena.

**No NMHC Board Meeting In September**

**Sept. 18 (and Oct. 16)** Greater Albuquerque Recreational Trails Committee, 4:30 PM.

**Oct. 9 (and Nov. 6)** New Mexico Horse Council Board of Directors meeting, 7:00 PM

**Oct. 15:** Deadline for nominations, Horse Person of the Year and Certificates of Appreciation.

**Nov. 1 – RTP** Application available online.

**Nov. 2 – 4:** AHC and SHCAC meetings, Lexington, Kentucky.

**Nov. 14 – 15:** Governor’s Bicycle, Pedestrian, Equestrian Committee, Santa Rosa.

**Watch for: NMHC Annual Meeting / Awards Dinner/Election of New Board members**

**May 2 – 4, 2008:** NMHC Horse Fair

One of the goals of the Board this year has been to get the word out that this is a STATE Horse Council, not a city Horse Council. We are experimenting with having meetings in places we’ve never had them before, in an attempt to build membership and help people feel there is something here for them. If you would like to host a meeting in your part of the state, please contact Rusty Cook, President, or Val Cole, Newsletter Editor, and tell us what you have in mind. If you live outside the Albuquerque area and would like to run for a position on the Board in the Annual Elections coming up this winter, let us know that also.

Planning is under way for the 2008 Horse Fair. We have received many suggestions regarding how to improve the event, and a committee is hard at work to come up with a plan that is exciting, dynamic and interesting to an even wider segment of the general public as well as the equine industry in our state. Involve yourself!

NMHC is involved in many valuable projects for equestrians in the state. We are working on trails and access issues, unwanted horses, abused horses, identification and documentation of wild horses, facilities for horse shows, and much more.

And it’s not all work. The annual Trail Ride has been very popular and will probably be held in a different location next summer. The NMHC booth at the State Fair will focus on breeds and disciplines that may not be well known to the general public, as well as disseminating information on the Horse Council. There are many other possibilities for activities that bring members together – so if you have an idea and can spearhead it, we need to hear from you.

**New Mexico Horse Council Looks Ahead**

*Rusty Cook, President*

The Board of the New Mexico Horse Council is making progress and looking toward the future. At the beginning of the year, there were empty seats on the Board and a majority of the directors were Albuquerque residents. Several of those open positions have been filled, and we now have members from several other communities in the central part of the State plus Santa Fe.

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## State Fair; NMHC Tent and Booth

For many years, the Horse Council has provided a 20 x 30 tent with a stall, tables and chairs in the grassy area in front of the Horse Arena free of charge to horse clubs and interest groups during the State Fair. Expo NM lets us set up, and panels for the stall have been donated. Even so, it is an expensive outlay for the Horse Council. The tent rental is high, and we also offer a trailer pass and a gate pass for the users. Each year, the Board decides that this enterprise fulfills very well the education and outreach goals of the Council. Many volunteers report that visiting children are touching a horse for the very first time in their lives. And some go on into the Horse Arena for "further indoctrination". In 2007, Charlie Poore of **Quickstalls** will be providing the stall. Jan Henfling ([jkh@att.net](mailto:jkh@att.net)) has done tremendous work contacting the clubs and interest groups. Few things are harder than setting up a schedule, but here is what we have so far:

### Friday September 7

**Show:** Hunter/Jumper

**Tent:** Valles Caldera

### Saturday, September 8

**Show:** Hunter/Jumper

**Tent:** Juan Tomas Hounds

### Sunday, September 9

**Show:** Hunter/Jumper

**Tent:** Cloud Dancers Therapeutic Riding

### Monday, September 10

**Show:** Paint and Palomino

**Tent:** High Desert Riders

### Tuesday, September 11

**Show:** Pinto and Buckskin

**Tent:** Cloud Dancers & Bosque Farms Rodeo Association

### Wednesday, September 12

**Show:** All Breeds

**Tent:** La Espuela Ranch

### Thursday, September 13

**Show:** 4-H

**Tent:** Cloud Dancers & Rodke Peruvian Pasos

### Friday, September 14

**Show:** Quarter Horse Open & Youth

**Tent:** Suffolk Punch Draft Horse

### Saturday, September 15

**Show:** Quarter Horse Open & Youth

**Tent:** Colonial Spanish Horses

### Sunday, September 16

**Show:** Quarter Horse Open & Youth

**Tent:** Single Action Shooting Society, 4-H

### Monday, September 17

**Show:** AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse

**Tent:** Bosque Farms Rodeo Association

### Tuesday, September 18

**Show:** Appaloosa

**Tent:** Back Country Horsemen of SF

### Wednesday, September 19

**Show:** Miniature Horses

**Tent:** Land of Enchantment Miniature Horse Club

### Thursday, September 20

**Show:** Carriage Driving, Haflinger, Draft Horses, Donkeys

**Tent:** Rio Grande Mule & Donkey Association

### Friday, September 21

**Show:** Carriage Driving, Draft Horses, Mules

**Tent:** RG Mule & Donkey Association

### Saturday, September 22

**Show:** Arabian, Half/Anglo Arabian, Saddlebred, Morgan, Hackney Ponies

**Tent:** Single Action Shooting Society

### Sunday, September 23

**Show:** Same breeds as Saturday 9/22

**Tent:** Single Action Shooting Society

We should emphasize that these are the groups that responded to our e-mails offering the space. It is not easy to bring a horse to the State Fair, and we look forward to the groups (and the NMHC Directors who will also be there) serving as ambassadors for all of us. Come visit! You may see horses of all types (that Suffolk Punch must be the only one in NM), mules, donkeys, hound puppies and even a white buffalo!





## Trails and Land Use

**HB 990.** The Santa Fe Conservation Trust (host of the June 1 Trails Summit, which brought together supporters from many levels of government as well as individuals) reports in its Summer 2007 newsletter that with the passage of this bill, New Mexico joins just two other states (CO and VA) in allowing tax credits on conservation easements to be sold. The maximum tax credit (which cannot exceed 50% of the value of the donation) was also increased from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Therefore, landowners who are faced with encroaching development can now sell their tax credit through a “qualified intermediary” to a willing buyer and use the money for any purpose. Farmers, ranchers and owners of other open space in Colorado are often investing this money into infrastructure improvements, while keeping the land base available for working farms and ranches. New Mexico’s bill was introduced this year by Representative Peter Wirth and approved by the Senate on the final morning of the 2007 legislative session.

**Valles Caldera.** Several horse people attended at least one of the public meetings held by the Valles Caldera Preserve to solicit comments from users. For those who have not been lucky enough to go out riding in this huge extinct volcano with its beautiful land and trails. Riders can visit on a reservations only basis, with payment of a user fee. Since the Preserve is used for hunting and ranching as well, access for hikers and riders is controlled and seasonal. Particularly after the disappointment of the Bachechi hearings (more below), attendees were encouraged by the supportive attitude of the staff at these meetings and brainstorming sessions. NMHC member William Averill commented: “The most troubling portion of this discussion (if it can be labeled as troubling) is the goal of financial sustainability for the Preserve by 2015. In retrospect, this was probably an unattainable goal. Most of the suggestions by participants included a variety of ‘high-dollar’ facilities such as a dude ranch, luxury lodge, and campgrounds managed by concessionaires. The difficult task ahead will be to keep those activities from completely overrunning its multiple use by the somewhat less affluent local public.” However, for most users in

New Mexico and Southern Colorado, some sort of overnight capability for horses and riders is essential. Again, we are encouraged that from an ecological perspective, horses and mules are considered part of a sustaining use of that part of the Jemez Mountains with minimal impact on the environment. William Averill strongly suggests that the NMHC could be a contributor to the governance discussions now and in the future.

**Rio Grande Trail.** Jessica Terrell, State Trails Coordinator (remember lobbying for that position to be funded a couple of legislative sessions ago?) spoke to the Bicycle/Pedestrian/Equestrian Committee Public session in Santa Fe on August 16. She outlined progress on the Rio Grande Trail, the expansion of the Albuquerque area Paseo del Bosque trail along the river. Eventually, using \$4 million in funding to begin several projects, this multiple use trail will be “as long as is feasible” – and the Rio Grande does run from Colorado to Mexico. Says Dave Simon, Director of New Mexico State Parks, “This is truly an old concept. For centuries, the Rio Grande has been used as transportation, and a source of life-sustaining water. Building the Rio Grande Trail would be a new way to honor this heritage.”

**Recreational Trails Program.** Terrell also spoke about the Recreational Trails Program, which she administers for the state Energy and Minerals Department. The RTP is a Federal program, providing up to 80% of funds for eligible trails projects. The RTP application for FY 2008 will be available for download on the State Parks website after November 1, 2007; completed applications are due on April 1, 2008. After Department screening, the State Trails Advisory Committee will evaluate the proposals and select the fund recipients.

Two NMHC directors, Eldon Reyer and Maura Lewiecki, are members of this Committee – and they are meeting before the application is out to ensure that equestrian trail activities are correctly included in the point evaluation system. Several years ago, the NMHC unsuccessfully submitted an application for a pedestrian/equestrian bridge underneath the overpass on the north side of Montano Bridge. This would have allowed





equestrians and other “slow” users to cross over the existing bridge on the south side, go under Montano overpass on a dirt surface, and recross to the trail on the north side. At present, bicycles speed down the incline from both north and south to meet all other users in a very narrow paved tunnel adjacent to the Clear Ditch. Conflicts are common, to say the least, and injuries and lawsuits (not to mention horses that make a violent resolution to avoid tunnels) have resulted from these conflicts. Perhaps it is time to dust off and update that application, find a government entity to partner, and try another submission.

**Cibola Travel Management Plan.** Several NMHC members have been participating in public meetings discussing a mandated Travel Management Plan for off highway vehicles. NMHC has the final scoping report available, but basically all uses, including equestrian, other than motorized vehicles remain unchanged. There are unauthorized trails that the forest management plans to close, but funds are not yet available. Attention Santa Fe horse owners: The Santa Fe National Forest is holding public meetings as well. Just Google “Santa Fe Forest Travel Management Plan” for a schedule.

**Matthew Avenue Bridge Bollards.** As part of the San Juan Chama Water Project, which impacts all parts of Albuquerque and the Rio Grande to the north, funds were set aside for a pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian bridge over the Alameda Drain at its intersection with the Griegos Drain and Matthew Avenue. Trail users cheered, as the alternative puts them on a narrow, blind curve of Matthew with the deep, concrete lined Alameda Drain just four feet away. However, shortly after it was opened two bollards (31” metal, concrete filled posts) were set at the trail end, just 36” apart. Riders complained to the project manager beginning the day the postholes were dug, with no results. (Crossing the bridge on horseback with traffic a few feet behind, and squeezing through an opening a yard wide, bordered by metal posts, is okay if everything goes well. One can’t count on that with horses. After receiving the response that the bollards were ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant and kept ATV’s and four wheelers off the bike trail, and would stay as is, NMHC expanded its letter writing campaign and looked for national standards on bollard



spacing. We found only one – the US Forest Service mandates a 48” opening. Then the NM Department of Transportation bicycle pedestrian liaison, Tim Rogers, lent a copy of the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) Guide For The Development of Bicycle Facilities. Under “shared use” paths they suggest odd numbers of bollards with 1.5 meter (5’) spacing, pointing out that regular motorized traffic will be barred, and safety is increased for other users. Armed with the guidelines, we resumed writing letters with copies to other officials. We have now heard unofficially that the bollards will be removed and a single one erected at the south end of the bridge, which will give riders a little bit more than a four foot opening. (The north, or Matthew Avenue end of the bridge, has a wheelchair ramp and curb directly adjacent to the street.) The new trail crosses several streets; gates, trail bollards and log walkovers are placed at all these intersections.

**Trails Design Brochure.** NMHC is revising its own trails design brochure, “Integrating horses and riders into multiple-use trails planning and design”. We will alter the draft to add these recommendations on bollard width. We are also proud to have contributed to the new “Equestrian Awareness Brochure” created by the Bicycle, Pedestrian and Equestrian Committee of the NM Department of Transportation. Over the last year, Bicycle Awareness brochures and Pedestrian Awareness brochures were revised as well, and will be available in English and Spanish.

**Horseways Contribution.** NM Horseways was formed by concerned horsemen several years ago, with a goal of preserving trails in urban areas. Over time, membership dropped and those remaining voted to dissolve, donating the treasury to NM Horse Council to be dedicated to trails preservation. I asked Maura Lewiecki for an update recently, and she reported that originally NMHC was planning to use some of the money for GPS mapping of equestrian trails. However, with a little urging MRCOG (the Mid Region Council of Governments) agreed to include equestrian trails in its 2030 plan, incorporating the maps we had and continuing the project. Therefore, the Horseways money is still intact and we might proceed with a published trail guide and map in some form. One bump on the trail is the





Village of Corrales – they are extremely protective of their trails and do not want them to appear on maps distributed to visitors.

**Bachechi Property.** From the Bernalillo County Open Spaces brochure: *“9521 Rio Grande Boulevard NW. The Bachechi Property (27 acres) was purchased by the County in 2000. It abuts the Rio Grande Valley State Park and Paseo del Bosque Trail. Bachechi was previously used as an equestrian facility. The New Mexico State Legislature provided \$150,000 for site planning and implementation. The New Mexico State Environmental Department sponsored clean-up of the leaky underground storage tanks with over 900,000 cubic yards of contaminated soils removed to date. Site monitoring continues. The County is in the master planning stage of developing the property for public use.”*

Timeline: In 1974, Dianne Migneault (now Fay) leased the property from the Bachechi family, and appeared before the Bernalillo County Commission to obtain commercial zoning as an equestrian facility according to her master plan. She replaced the chicken coops in the barns with horse stalls and founded the Rio Grande Equestrian Center. From 1974 until 2005, the acreage was continually used as a commercial equestrian facility, under different managements, variously named Sullivan Stables, Carlos Stables (after owner Carlos Bachechi) and the North Valley Equestrian Center. It was used for shows, events, summer camps, horse boarding, trail rides, clinics and other horse related activities.

Planning for future use started shortly after its purchase by Bernalillo County in 1999. Although planners repeatedly mentioned equestrian uses (and this was enthusiastically supported by horse owners), subsequent events suggest that public input was solicited to meet a legal requirement, and had no chance of influencing decisions

In late 2004, a “charette” was created, with individuals representing various interest groups invited to Sites Southwest, which was contracted to hold the charette meetings. The first was held in January 2005, but after a second meeting all future meetings were cancelled and the charette’s work discarded. In February 2005, the Bachechi family objected to the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Authority’s plan to erect a large pump station on up to two acres of the property, saying they had sold the parcel to the County below market price with the agreement that it would remain open space, and the pump station

“destroyed the reason for which the property was sold to the County”. They asked for the return of the property. In November, the County filed suit to condemn the land needed for the pump station.

In 2006, a public meeting asked attendees for preferred uses of the property. In “dot tallies” the top three uses were equestrian (26), a grove trail (8) and a perimeter trail (6). Also, Cloud Dancers (a non profit, therapeutic riding group) invited a structural engineer to evaluate the better of the two barns and presented a plan to the County to bring the barns up to current standard and move their horses and riding program to that location. They never received an official response, but less than two weeks later that barn was razed. Also in October 2006, the dueling lawsuits between the Bachechi family, Bernalillo County, and the Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Water Authority were very quietly settled. The only mention of the settlement in the Albuquerque Journal archives is on May 16, 2007 – but that “settlement agreement” appears to be the County Planning justification for completely ignoring the overwhelming support for a small equestrian arena seen in public hearings in May and June 2007. The relevant part, #6, says *“use of the property shall be limited to preserving watersheds and groundwater recharge areas, public access to the Bosque, preserving land for wildlife and native plants, trails, recreational (emphasis mine), educational and scenic purposes.”* At the “final public meeting” to be held August 30, I believe we will be offered four horse trailer parking spaces. An article appearing in the Albuquerque Journal Saturday, August 25 Patrick Bachechi (who surrendered any interest in the property in the Settlement Agreement, in return for \$55,000 and a promise to name the area Bachechi Open Space) is quoted as saying “horses take up a lot of room” and “the family would prefer more quiet, passive uses”. But nothing in the Open Space Regulations prohibits a small, 100 x 200 foot arena to settle horses before a trail ride.

There is neighborhood opposition (one wonders why they purchased across the boulevard from a commercial horse property?) And one horse owning neighbor, since moved to the west side, says “remember, these are the same people that successfully prevented a school from being built. What chance do you think you have?” Is it over?





## Flea Market

**Sandia Trailer Sales** (Morey and Rita Liebling), long time supporters of NMHC and the Horse Fair, hosted the 2007 NMHC Flea Market and tack swap at their business in Edgewood. Although the event suffered from a lack of leadership and a lack of publicity outside NMHC, a fine time was had by those who attended. It's cooler up in the mountains, but we all still appreciated the water and soft drinks provided by Morey and Rita. I know of two saddles and one cart that sold, and NMHC is sending a check to the NMHC Foundation for sales of items donated by Linda Thorne, Vita Zodin, Maura Lewiecki and others. NMHC held its "first annual" Flea Market and Tack Swap at La Boca Negra Park in 1992, in a tent donated by the National Guard Armory. Since then, such events have become popular fundraisers for several clubs; all proceeds from our booth rentals help defray expenses for the State Fair tent and booth.

## Fugitive Dust

When I tell colleagues at American Horse Council meetings that Albuquerque and Bernalillo County have passed a fugitive dust ordinance, and that riding in arenas and kicking up dust that travels off site is prohibited, most think I have been out in that New Mexico sun too long. However, the ordinance has been in place for several years and NMHC is eternally grateful to Jay Koch and his ad hoc committee. Along with other concerned horse owners, they managed to convince the Air Quality Control Board that horses are agricultural, and that small operations should not be subject to most of the proposed regulations and fees.

The three year initial period is over, and proposed new regulations have been distributed. NMHC has a copy and will be happy to send them for review. There appear to be few changes in the agricultural area, with the "disturbed area" within a parcel exceeding  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre to be subject to the regulations. That is quite a large arena. However, John Libertore of the Regulatory and Policy Advisory Committee, in a response dated 8/17/2007 to a letter from the Council, says: *"the statement that 'if a disturbed area is less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  acre in size, it would fall outside the regulations' is accurate in terms of Part 20 requirements for requiring a fugitive dust control programmatic*

*permit. However, areas classified as conditionally exempt may be required to comply with all requirements of Part 20 if the department determines that the fugitive dust emitted from any of these source classifications will adversely affect the safety of an individual within Bernalillo County...Also please note that the department's proposed amendments are just that: proposed. The Air Board will determine what amendments shall be adopted for Part 20."* At the Air Quality Control Board meeting August 8, the Board members approved adoption of the proposed regulations as an Action Item at their December 12, 2007 meeting. We will need some horse owners to attend.

## Excess Personal Liability Insurance – NMHC Member 2008 Benefit?

**The Horse Council** already purchases an annual club liability policy from Equisure. It covers club events such as the Horse Fair, Trail Ride, Flea Market, State Fair Booth and monthly Board meetings. However, several state horse councils have changed their individual dues structure to cover **Personal Excess Liability Insurance** and the NMHC Board has been discussing such a change for NMHC in 2008.

**Availability.** The insurance is offered to individual and individual life members – cannot be offered to club or commercial members.

**Cost. \$19.00 per year per member,** for all or any part of a calendar year. Realistically, Councils increase the charge to members to **\$20** to cover monthly reporting requirements.

**Participation.** 100% of the individual members are required to participate. There is an opt-out available (some members belong to other organizations, such as the US Equestrian Federation, which already offer this insurance) which requires payment of the premium to NMHC (and thence to Equisure). After that, the member sends a letter to Equisure requesting the "opt out" option and premiums will be refunded to the member.

**Reporting requirements.** NMHC sends a monthly report to Equisure declaring number of members, names of insured and date membership is effective. Premiums are also due





monthly, and “must match the number of members being reported.

**Claims.** The insurance is excess over any other valid and collectible insurance; all claims must be submitted in writing to Equisure.

**What’s Covered.** “EXCESS PERSONAL LIABILITY in respect of all sums which you may become legally liable to pay as compensation for accidental bodily injury to any person or accidental damage to property or personal injury to any person arising out of the use and/or ownership of a horse or horse-drawn vehicle.”. This ownership is understood to include:

- Riding a horse on the public highway or elsewhere;
- Leading a horse on the public highway or elsewhere;
- driving a horse-drawn vehicle;
- grazing or stabling a horse or circumstances where the horse is not in your control.

“In the event of your giving permission for any person to use your horse or horse drawn vehicle, such person will also be indemnified.”

**What’s Not Covered.** “No coverage is provided for liability arising out of your business or profession or the use of a horse drawn vehicle for hire or the practice or preparation for or participation in racing under the rules of any legally constituted racing authority.

- Expected or intended injury resulting from reasonable force to protect persons or property.
- Liquor Liability if you are in that business.
- Employers Liability assumed by you under an insured contract.
- Asbestos.
- Family and household members.
- Property owned, rented, leased or occupied by you.

The President of the New York State Horse Council described the insurance as “covering the dirty deeds your horse does.” When NYSHC instituted the insurance, they lost some members due to the increased cost; however, this was temporary and membership actually

increased within two years. Boarding stables, for instance, began requiring that the owner of any horse entering the property purchase the insurance.

### More on Dues

Whether or not the excess personal liability insurance is adopted, President Rusty Cook asked that the cost of member services be assessed. We have completed that task, using estimates for the remainder of 2007 based on the final four months of 2006. Cost per member of newsletters, postage, business telephone, website, American Horse Council dues and the portion of the club liability policy assigned to members is approximately \$16. (Cost would be higher, but 61 NMHC members have checked the box on the dues invoice to receive the newsletters as an e-mail pdf. Many prefer a paper copy – I do myself, but there is no question that sixty stamps times six newsletters is not insignificant.)

Since dues now are set at \$15 for individuals (165 in 2007), \$200 for paid lifetime (7), and \$30 for Club or Commercial (45) we may well need a dues increase even if we elect not to add excess personal liability insurance. NMHC members vote on the dues structure for the ensuing year at the Annual Meeting.

We should note also that the above figures for “member services” do not include the Council’s other projects. The Horse Fair is a separate account, and the expenses for the State Fair booth, Trail Ride, Brochures, Horse Coloring Books and Liability Signs are not included here. Nor are the informal donations of time and money from so very many members. Stamps, time, gasoline, out of pocket items – we should keep track of the hours, at least, as Back Country Horsemen do.

### Annual Meeting

Instead, we recognize those we know about with Certificates of Appreciation and the annual Horse Person of the Year or Lifetime Achievement Award at the Annual Meeting. We don’t have the date or place yet, but watch the mail and the website. Please take some time now to think of people who have done special things for the Council, the Horse Fair or the New Mexico Horse Industry and NM horses.





**Certificates of Appreciation.** Send names to any director or the President, Rusty Cook, by October 15. I've sent nine!

**Horse Person of the Year, 2007.** Criteria are not spelled out in detail, but just think of someone who has really done wonderful things for New Mexico horse people, the New Mexico horse industry, or the general welfare of horses here. The person may or may not be a professional in the industry, but the spirit of volunteerism should also shine. Who's eligible? Any adult New Mexico resident, with the exception of the people who have already been named as Horse Person of the Year – **Karen Reyer, Elsie Shollenbarger, Melanie Scholer, Suzanne Norton Jones and Blair Darnell.** These will serve as a screening committee for the applications; the Board of Directors will make the final selection. Send in your nominations by **October 15** to NMHC, Nomination, P.O. Box 10206, Albuquerque, NM 87184. Give us a brief biographical sketch and the reasons you think this person should be the NMHC Horse Person of the Year.

Those present at the Annual Meeting also elect NMHC Directors. Under the Bylaws, we have a 15 member Board, with each member serving a three year term and five terms ending each year. In 2007, terms end for Maura Lewiecki and Nancy Searles; the other three openings were never filled after resignations.

### **American Horse Council**

Our Bylaws require that we join the American Horse Council annually as a State Horse Council member, and it gives us a chance to see how much work they can accomplish in Washington, D.C. in the legislative and regulatory areas with a really tiny staff. The Annual Meeting and Issues Forum, held June 17 – 19 rather than in April this year, hosted more than 150 people. Many of these represented the 17 state horse councils that registered. Topics covered included Equine Identification (the National Animal Identification System); equine disease, including measures to contain the EMC Herpesvirus outbreak this spring; State Horse Parks; an update on plans for the Alltel 2010 World Equestrian Games; and partnerships between horsemen, forestry services and youth

groups to maintain trails for horseback riders and others. The Unwanted Horse Coalition also shared the work they have done, including growing their membership, debuting their new web site ([www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org](http://www.unwantedhorsecoalition.org)), publishing an awareness brochure, and developing a handbook about “owning responsibly”.

The State Horse Councils Advisory Committee meeting was well attended, with the SHCAC reluctantly bidding farewell to liaison Nicole Lamoreaux, who left the American Horse Council for another position. AHC is restructuring, and it appears that the new Communications director, Sarah Chase, may be “our person at AHC”. We met in subcommittees (Recreation, Fairs and Expos, Communications, Promotion, Issues), then reported to the full meeting. We also heard a legislative and regulatory update including emerging issues. It was not all work – the SHCAC hosted a reception on Sunday, and the AHC had one on Monday. Tuesday, we attended an awards luncheon to see the 2007 Van Ness Award (for dedication and service to the industry) given to Jane Gilbert, President of the New Jersey Horse Council. Charlie Smith of the HOK architectural firm introduced himself to me, saying they had been selected to build Governor Richardson's new equestrian facility at Mesa del Sol. And I talked presenters out of two useful looking documents, Management Policies 2006 of the National Park Service, and the Maryland Horse Park & Agricultural Education Center Feasibility Study.

Those who stayed until Wednesday were urged to meet with their state legislators, and Kevin McColaugh of AHC was able to set up appointments with all five for me. Of course, one expects to meet with a staff member, and usually that staff member is well acquainted with our areas of concern. I was able to hand over NMHC information (if you mail it, it is irradiated and possibly damaged, and is delivered several weeks late) and also listen to the staffers and add them to the e-mailing list for the NMHC newsletter. Congresswoman Heather Wilson did come out to speak with me. And Representative Steven Pearce had very graphic photos of the child's horse that was





killed and partially eaten by wolves in Catron County. Each office asked if the NMHC had a position on horse slaughter (we were neutral when the issue was last discussed, because the membership is divided) but we do realize that if and when slaughter is banned, simple math says not enough horses will find other uses.

### **State Horse Councils Advisory Committee Meeting, November 2 – 4**

The Kentucky Horse Council will host the November meeting in Lexington. In conjunction with this meeting, the AHC will hold an issues forum at Keeneland Race Track on Friday, November 2. SHCAC committees will also meet beginning at 6:00 PM Friday. Saturday, SHCAC attendees will take a bus trip through Kentucky, with lectures on the bus covering the meeting theme, “Facilities”. We will be visiting Smarty Jones at his breeding farm, Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital, and the Kentucky Horse Park for a tour of planned facilities for the 2010 World Equestrian Games. Sunday is the SHCAC business meeting, with reports from the subcommittees and also “networking” reports from each Horse Council present. Anyone is welcome to register and attend these meetings; the hosting Council tries to get sponsorship to keep the meeting price reasonable. For updates, see the SHCAC website ([www.statehorsecouncils.org](http://www.statehorsecouncils.org)), the AHC website, [www.horsecouncil.org](http://www.horsecouncil.org). or the Kentucky Horse Council site for registration and hotel information ([www.kentuckyhorse.org](http://www.kentuckyhorse.org)).

### **Governor Richardson’s Proposed Equestrian Facility**

HOK architectural firm is indeed developing plans for the \$25 million (so far) equestrian facility to be built at Mesa del Sol south of Albuquerque. A small local committee, with experts in rodeo, western stock events and hunter/jumper shows is overseeing the planning. When these preliminary plans are a little farther along, they will be shared with other horse groups. The name is not yet finalized but groundbreaking should happen soon, and the project is on a fast track.

Although many horse owners are aching for an alternative to the Expo NM Fairgrounds, with

its aging facilities and, some say, indifference to horse events at the highest levels, what will be their alternative when the new facility is open? Unless highly subsidized, it will not be affordable for many smaller shows. Without marquee events like the US Arabian Nationals, and with the threat to move the Downs at Albuquerque operation east of town, what will happen to the State Fairgrounds? During a month of very wet weather and Valley flooding several years ago, NMHC attempted to work with Expo management to structure individual use of the arenas, with a reasonable fee. We hit a stone wall and finally gave up. But this would bring in some money, as would leasing stall space and arenas to trainers who do not own facilities. If Paul Blanchard’s Downs does give up its Expo NM lease, it has also been suggested that Expo NM, having the plant in place, might attempt to obtain a license and run its own meet.

### **2008 Horse Fair**

Even if ground were broken tomorrow, we have not seen a proposed “use date” for the Mesa del Sol facility. Therefore, the only place suitable for the 2008 Horse Fair will be Expo NM, and we have again booked the first weekend in May, the 2<sup>nd</sup> through the 4<sup>th</sup>. There is a Horse Fair Task Force meeting every two weeks, wrestling with Gantt charts, timelines and, mostly, funding questions (like finding some).

We are happy that **Julie Goodnight** will be coming to the Fair. She has many proposals for possible clinics and her articles have often appeared in the Horse Trader.

What is a snappy, energetic, exciting new name for the event? The task force will be “rebranding”. They have identified the strengths and weaknesses and are determined to emphasize the one and repair the other.

A part of the profits from the silent auction at each Horse Fair are intended to be directed to the 501(c)3 charitable organization called the New Mexico Horse Council Foundation. That Board will be expanding soon and publishing guidelines for grants once the endowment is heftier. Karen Reyer holds the chair position; Kathy Falter is treasurer.



## NAHMS Study

The Council has received three volumes of the most current **National Animal Health Monitoring System** Equine report. "Equine 2005" is the USDA's second study of the equine industry; the first was reported in 1998. The information is gathered from farms and equine operations with five or more "equids" and concentrates on early identification of disease outbreaks, reducing exposure to infectious organisms and optimizing resistance to disease through vaccination.

We received and you may borrow: Part 1, "Baseline Reference of Equine Health and Management"; and Part 2, "Changes in the US Equine Industry 1998- 2005". Reflecting current concerns with limiting disease spread, the third volume is a "Baseline Reference of Equine Health Management Strategies at Equine Events in Six States". Of the six, Colorado and Texas border New Mexico.

Again, population figures are not relevant because only horse operations with five or more equines were studied. However, here are a few intriguing tidbits:

45% of the horses that died over the previous 12 months were aged 30 or more.

89% of operations employ some forms of insect control.

13 % of farms thought some annual vaccinations were important, but never got around to it.

The value of U.S. equine exports exceeded the value of U.S. swine, cattle, poultry and sheep live-animal exports each year from 1996 through 2005.

### The Night They Invented....

The "champagne gene" is a dominant dilution gene, first documented in 1996 by Philip Sponenberg, DVM, PhD of Virginia Tech and Ann Bowling, PhD, of UC Davis, according to an article in Horse.com. Although often mistakenly called "pumpkin-skinned palominos" or albinos, the champagne gene is distinctly different from the cream gene or the dun gene.

Champagne foals are born with bright blue eyes and bright pink skin. As the foal ages, mottling appears on the skin and the eye color changes to light gold, green, hazel or brown. A chestnut, sorrel or red based horse that possesses the gene will appear gold in color; a black appears chocolate or lilac, and a bay will look dun to mocha, with chocolate points.

### Horses as High School Students

*Quarter Horses:* The jocks, strutting around flexing muscles. Not too bright, but responsible for all the trophies in the glass cases.

*Thoroughbreds:* Preppies. Athletes, but not jocks. Monogrammed blankets, leather halters, latest custom trailer and tack.

*Arabians:* Rah! Rah! Sis Boom Bah! Gooooo Team!

*Hackney Ponies:* Band geeks, marching along with their knees and heads held high.

*Friesians:* Big, bold, always in black, the biker clique.

*Ahkel Tekl (Akle Takl? Ackle Tackle? Akhal Teke!):* Foreign students with strange names.

*Saddlebreds:* Popular, pretty, gifted, always homecoming king & queen. Frequently marry, move to suburb, have 2.5 beautiful children. People wish they would divorce, get fat or go broke but they never do.

*(One guess at the favorite breed of Ashley George, who sent this along.)*

### One Is The Loneliest Number...

Denmark has the highest number of horses per capita in Europe, and pays attention to research on horse behavior.

A draft bill by the Ministry of Justice, to be presented by the government at some future time, specifies that keepers of horses should have at least two horses. They will recommend that the horses have social contact, but so far have not determined what this social contact should be. (Source: America's Horse, AQHA.)

