

Backcountry Skills Clinic - 2013

It is seldom a simple matter to pinpoint the contributory factors of a successful event. This year's annual Backcountry Skills Clinic was the exception. Outstanding presenters and participants, both human and equine, contributed largely to the clinics success.

From equine first-aid to equine therapeutic massage, participants were treated to the knowledge of several of the top equine professionals in their fields.

The presenters!

Dr. Steve Hardy, DVM, held an interactive session on the diagnoses and treatment of common equine emergencies that occur in the backcountry. Participants learned to assess a horse from top to bottom. From wrapping an injured leg to the proper way to apply eye ointment, the hands on demonstration gave the participants the opportunity to monitor vital signs including heart beat, capillary refill and digital pulse.



SBBCHI member C. Chick takes his turn at monitoring Amber the demo horses' heart rate.



Dr. Steve Hardy, DVM and Dani Hardy, present wilderness first-aid for horses



Finished leg wrap. Any vet that uses duct tape is a good vet in my book!



Amber stands patiently while Dr. Hardy administers eye ointment.

Thanks again to Dr. Hardy for his passion, dedication and willingness to share his time and skill in helping horse enthusiasts better prepare themselves to ensure the safety and care of their four legged counterparts.

And a VERY special thanks to Amber the SUPERSTAR demo horse. She stood patiently while we poked, prodded, monitored and bandaged her for two hours and still had time to be a schooling horse in the safe trail riding clinic.



Amber gets her heart rate monitored



Amber the demo horse. We love you.



Dr. Robbin Knight, DVM

Dr. Robbin Knight, DVM of Idaho Equine Hospital specializes in internal medicine. Dr. Knight's focus on Bio-Security and toxic weeds was delivered with a wealth of knowledge and invaluable information.

Dr. Knight lectured on the identification of toxic weeds and how to treat a horse that has consumed a potentially hazardous amount. Toxic weeds common in our area are poison hemlock, tansy ragwort and red maple.

With the rising threat of contagious equine diseases such as EHV-1 and strangles – Dr. Knight emphasized the importance of isolating your animal at the first sign of illness to prevent the spread of these serious diseases from horse to horse.

Before you head out on the trail – assess your animal; if they are showing signs of illness, have them checked out before risking exposure to other horses. It is better that one horse miss a ride or two than risk exposing multiple horses and/or possibly missing an entire season of riding....or worse.



Poison Hemlock - often found growing along ditch banks in wet soil and has a distinctive celery stalk type smell.



Tansy Ragwort

Mike Watkins – Certified Equine Massage Therapist of Equi-Touch Horse Massage. It was Squaw Buttes privilege to invite Mike to present at this year's clinic. Mike serves the entire Pacific Northwest and parts of Canada in a genuinely passionate quest to bring the gift of healing touch to horses of all disciplines including endurance, barrel racing, roping, reining, pleasure, cutting, ranch work and now the versatile trail horses of the back country!



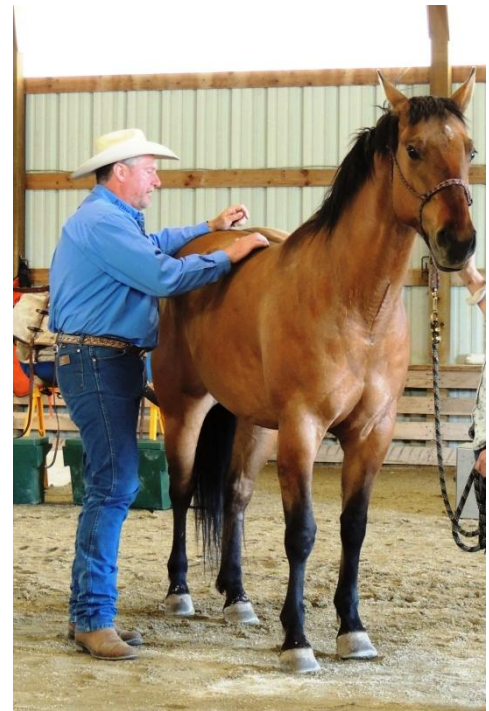
Mike Watkins - Equi-Touch Horse Massage

Mike explained the techniques and benefits of equine massage while performing a live demonstration on one of our own trail horses, Jack. The difference in suppleness and self-carriage before and after Mike worked on Jack was impressive.

As Mike began his assessment of Jack, he pointed out the areas of concern and some common causes of those

sensitive regions. Jack's right side, particularly in the poll and lower back, had the most tightness and pain.

After the presentation, Mike fielded questions, evaluated and worked on a number of horses and helped participants with proper saddle fit. Mike also expressed the importance of using a top quality saddle pad for enhancing that correct fit.



Mike points out a particular sore spot on Jack



Ranch and Home sponsors Mike and is your source for western fashion, farm and ranch supply, sporting goods and more! Locally owned and family operated, Ranch and Home has been serving the Southeastern Washington and Northeast Oregon since 1974.

<http://www.ranch-home.com/>

David Farris – Equine Nutritionist “Nutrena” horse feed



David's presentation revolved around the equine digestive system and the classes of nutrients a horse requires. David is a spokesperson for Nutrena – a major player in the animal feed industry.

<http://www.nutrenaworld.com/products/horses>

Water is the MOST IMPORTANT nutrient; horses can't live long without it! Always make sure there is an adequate, clean supply of water. Horses generally drink about 2 quarts of water for every pound of hay they consume. In high temperature, hard work, or for the lactating mare the water requirement may be 3 to 4 times the normal consumption.

Fat can be added to a feed to increase the energy density of the diet. Fat has 9 Mcal/kg of energy, which is three-times that of any grain or carbohydrate source. Fat is normally found at 2 to 6% in most premixed feeds; however, some higher fat feeds will contain 10 to 12% fat. See *Fat Supplements* section for more.

Carbohydrates are the main energy source used in most feeds. The main building block of carbohydrates is glucose. Soluble carbohydrates such as starches and sugars are readily broken down to glucose in the small intestine and absorbed. Insoluble carbohydrates such as fiber (cellulose) bypass enzymatic digestion and must be fermented by microbes in the large intestine to release their energy sources, the volatile fatty acids. Soluble carbohydrates are found in nearly every feed source; corn has the highest amount, then barley and oats. Forages normally have only 6 to 8% starch but under certain conditions can have up to 30%. Sudden ingestion of large amounts of starch or high sugar feeds can cause colic or laminitis.

Protein is used in muscle development during growth or exercise. The main building blocks of protein are amino acids. Soybean meal and alfalfa are good sources of protein that can be easily added to the diet. Second and third cutting alfalfa can be 25 to 30% protein and can greatly impact the total dietary protein. Most adult horses only require 8 to 10% protein in the ration; however, higher protein is important for lactating mares and young growing foals.

Vitamins are fat-soluble (vitamin A, D, E, and K), or water-soluble (vitamin C, and B-complex). Horses at maintenance usually have more than adequate amounts of vitamins in their diet if they are receiving fresh green forage and/or premixed rations. Some cases where a horse would need a vitamin supplement include when feeding a high-grain diet, or low-quality hay, if a horse is under stress (traveling, showing, racing, etc.), prolonged strenuous activity, or not eating well (sick, after surgery, etc.).

Minerals are required for maintenance of body structure, fluid balance in cells (electrolytes), nerve conduction, and muscle contraction. Only small amounts of the macro-minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, sodium, potassium, chloride, magnesium, and sulfur are needed daily.

*http://esc.rutgers.edu/publications/factsheets_nutrition/FS038.htm

The Participants!

This year's theme for the clinic was "Safe trail riding." Chuck and Lorraine Chick set up a wonderful course that simulated many obstacles a rider might encounter on the trail. From bridge crossings to bicyclist and from flapping plastic to giant bouncing rubber balls, this course had it all. A few of the obstacles – like the now infamous teeter-totter bridge – were new to many of the participants.



Participation in the clinic was outstanding! Folks from all skill levels brought their horses to try their hand and hooves at the course. I was especially impressed with the way participants and members supported each other. There was always someone willing to help out the next person facing a new challenge.

One never knows when they might encounter a giant rubber ball in the wilderness!



Participants began by leading their stock through the course



The wind added an authentic element to our challenge



Anybody can do this in forward...let's see you try it in reverse!



This horse was an appaloosa before she went through the car wash!



Balancing on the teeter-totter bridge was a snap after Addie's therapeutic massage with Mike Watkins



Billy Bob did not appreciate being treated like a circus elephant.



"Spot" masters the circus podium with ease!



Navigation of the Ribbon Forest of No Return



Piece of cake for a seasoned trail horse



Moral support for crossing the tarp bit of doom



I barely survived the Ribbon Forest of no Return and got my spots washed off at the car wash...I am NOT touching these barrels.



There's that elusive rubber bouncy ball again!



It's more common to come across a bicyclist in the back country than you might think.



Heather and Willow master the spongy bridge of terror!



Don't do it Paint - you'll come out the other side a sorrel!



Sometimes you just gotta set your can down and take a nap.



It's the master mind behind the giant rubber bouncy ball! Are you trying to get it to levitate Janine?



Page offering Jack a helping hand across the teeter-totter bridge



Pepper has no trouble carrying Rachael safely through the deadfall forest



Pepper about to pass through the tickly fingers of foam

