

West Coast Horse Folks Rally Around Their Own

When three horsemen were injured, area equestrians stepped up.

04-21-2007

On Feb. 12, a devastating car accident in Thermal, Calif. seriously injured three professional horsemen. Anthony Alfaro, Arturo 'Speedy' Diaz, and Zachary Price are announcers and backgate "starters" at many West Coast horse shows. During a morning jaunt to work at the new Thermal horse show grounds (the annual event was previously held at the Empire Polo Grounds in nearby Indio), the carpooling trio was hit by another driver. The news spread through the showgrounds quickly, resonating with many other equestrians because they know too well that many workers in the horse industry are woefully under-insured.

Because of the enormous financial costs incurred by these three men and their families, West Coast-based Langer Equestrian Group Inc. will host a benefit horse show May 23, the day before the start of the A-rated Memorial Day Classic, held at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center in Burbank, Calif. Most of the horse show staff, including the judges, is donating their services to the cause. All proceeds from the benefit horse show will be donated to this special fund. Both Dominion Saddlery and Granite Bay Saddlery are donating gift certificates as first place prizes.

"We've held benefit shows in the past," explains Show Secretary Brenda Outwater "and trainers and exhibitors have really supported us. With the kind of support we've been getting, this show can raise some significant money. All of us feel terrible about what happened and want to do something to help."