

Water Baby

By Cindy Hale

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Today was only the second time that Joey has been out in the country on a trail ride. As part of his continuing education I hauled him to the nature preserve outside of town. It's an undeveloped portion of the Santa Ana River, a waterway that eventually flows into the Pacific. While I won't cross the river during the winter or spring, when rain storms can swell the current and lead to pits of quicksand, in the summer and autumn the water level is low and the banks are solid. So I figured this was the perfect opportunity to introduce Joey to the task of crossing a wide swath of running water. I took along a camera to document the adventure, however, I'll let Joey provide the commentary.

"Bridges. They're like an extra long trailer ramp. And just like climbing into a trailer, you never know exactly where a bridge will take you."

"Apparently, I'm either on a trail ride or it's a really, really long walk to the show arena. Yet my mom seems very relaxed and she's dressed in funky clothes (plus my mane isn't even banded), so I'm going to guess we're on a trail ride." "Looks like someone left the hose running back at the barn. Either that, or I slept through a major rainstorm last night, because this place sure has a heck of a lot of water!" "Wait a second. You want me to actually step into the water? Have you noticed it's moving? And it's awfully far to the other side. Where's a bridge when you really need one? Honest, I think I saw a sign for a ferry crossing a few yards back... Oh geez. You're serious! Alright already. Enough with the clucking. And yes, I can feel your spur in my side. I'm going, I'm going!... Wow, it's not that bad. In fact, it's kinda fun! If I prance, I can make the water splash all over my mother's new saddle!" "Despite the fact that I attempted to celebrate my maiden voyage across the river by rolling in the warm, dry sand on the opposite bank—you wouldn't believe how fast my mom can jump out of a saddle!—I was declared a 'Good Boy'. Fortunately, we met up with some friendly ladies on friendly horses, and they were nice enough to take a photo of my mom and me. I tried hard to put my ears up, but I was too busy playing with the roller on my bit. It's my pacifier. When you're only three, you're allowed to be a kid, even when it comes time to pose for a snapshot."

Have any thoughts to share? Just click on Submit a Comment below, or email me at: hc-editor@bowtieinc.com. Joey and I will read them all!

<< Previous Entry

Back to Life With Horses