

Life With Horses - HorseChannel.com

Cindy Hale - Life With Horses

A life spent with horses is never boring, and I'm sharing my adventures on this blog. I spent several decades competing with hunters and jumpers, but now I primarily ride in western tack, cruising the trails on my two Paint geldings, Wally and Joey. I live in Southern California with my often bewildered non-horsey husband, Ron. [Read full bio >>](#)

Monday, November 16, 2009

Horsewomen, Start Marking Your Catalogs!

Hush. Listen. Can you hear it? That slight crinkling sound is being created by thousands of horsewomen flipping through the shiny pages of equine industry catalogs. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

The Starving Horse is Served Some Support

Recently I wrote about a little gelding near me that was slowly starving. He lives in a makeshift corral alongside a path adjacent to the horse trails in our neighborhood. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, November 4, 2009

I Know There's a Trail Here Someplace

It's no small coincidence that the ball cap I grab most often when I go for a trail ride bears the caption "Get Lost" over the brim. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, October 30, 2009

Why I Never Became a Horse Trainer

Once upon a time, when I was infatuated with the realization that I had conquered some small landmark in the realm of horsemanship, I considered becoming a professional horse trainer. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, October 23, 2009

What's Up with All the Skinny Horses?

Quite frankly, I am fed up with people who aren't feeding their horses. Lately it seems I've been exposed to the ugly side of horse care gone wrong. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, October 19, 2009

Why Do Horses Do These Things?

Despite having spent pretty much most of my life around horses, I have a lot of questions that I fear will never be answered to my satisfaction. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, October 12, 2009

"Excuse Me, but Your Horse's Tail Just Fell Off"

My judging experience this past weekend provided me with a memorable experience. In the first showmanship class of the day, a Paint gelding stepped on his fake tail and ripped the darn thing right off. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, October 5, 2009

The Annual Dragging of the Mats

Ah, nothing like autumn! The cooler weather has finally arrived and my thoughts have turned to upcoming celebrations: Halloween, Thanksgiving and yes, even Christmas. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, September 29, 2009

Can I Interest You in a Miniature Tool Set to Go Along with Your Blue Ribbon?

It's customary for the winner of a horse show class to receive some sort of award along with their blue ribbon. In years

past it used to be a memento that was stamped or etched with the name of the show and the date: a silver plate, a crystal bud vase or a porcelain trinket box. Nowadays you're lucky if you receive a bundle of crisp carrots or a hoof pick. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 2009
Sop Up the Sweat and Move On

Can summer please be over? I am so done with the sweat. I am tired of my jeans sticking to my skin. I have to peel them off my body every afternoon like I'm a giant fruit roll-up. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, September 11, 2009
Stow Yer Boots

Apparently there's still one thing my husband Ron can't quite accept when it comes to having horses in our backyard: They come along with a lot of dust and dirt. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, September 4, 2009
I Just Want to Scream

We're all horse lovers, right? Good. So, do you ever see something that is so offensive or so lacking in common sense that you just want to scream? [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, August 31, 2009
Cowboy Clean-up Day

You probably see the title and think I went on some bizarre Extreme Makeover, lassoing all the cowboys in town and forcing them into a bath and a shave. Nope. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, August 25, 2009
A Surprise Around Every Turn

Nearly every photograph I see depicting a trail rider is set in a lush backdrop like a verdant meadow, a forested glen or a southwestern panorama. Being a journalist myself, I understand that editors seek lovely photos that illustrate the ideal. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, August 20, 2009
The End of the Line

Isn't it amazing how, just when you think you have things all planned out, life comes along and messes everything up? That's especially true when you're living your life with horses. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, August 14, 2009
The Challenges of Judging a Horse Show

I know I was crowing about the fact that I was finished judging horse shows for this year. But I received a call from a show manager who was bereft one judge, and she needed a last minute substitute. Who was I to pass up a decent day's wage in this economy? [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, August 4, 2009
Man Advice for Horsewomen

It has come to my attention that horsewomen, as a group, have a rough time with men. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, July 27, 2009
He Went That a Way

There's a lot of coming and going in the world of horses. It seems like I'm always leading a horse in or out of its stall or snapping on a lead rope and leading it to the hitching post. No wonder my feet are killing me at the end of the day. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, July 21, 2009

Retirement Village for Ex-Hunt Seat Riders

I know where all the hunter and jumper riders go once they shelve their field boots and exchange their hunt caps for cowboy hats. They move to my town. At least that's the way it seems, because I continually encounter women I used to compete against on the show circuit. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, July 16, 2009

I Have Shrapnel in my Fingers

It's bad enough that as a horsewoman I'm often plagued with horse slime stains on my clothes, smegma under my fingernails and an aroma of pyrethrin fly spray lingering on my skin. Now, thanks to my obsession with creating mosaics, I've also become the walking wounded. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, July 9, 2009

In Search of Happy Endings

As horse lovers, we spend much of our time teetering on the brink between joy and heartache. Our equine companions bring us much joy, yet they're so fragile that they're always on the verge of injury or illness. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, July 8, 2009

The Re-Education of Red

They say that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. Fortunately you can teach an ex-race horse a new job, at least in most instances. [View Blog >>](#)

thursday, July 2, 2009

A Look at Old Horse Photos

There's a rather trite old saying that horses we love "leave hoof prints on our hearts." I'm not sure about that, but the horses I've owned and ridden certainly left behind a lot of photographs. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, June 26, 2009

Survival Tips on Living with a Young Horse

Joey is a joy. But honest to God, I never set out to buy another young horse. I felt like I had put in my time with young, green horses. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, June 22, 2009

When Llamas Attack

It'll take a little longer for Joey to be fully back to riding condition following his episode of tying up, so I'm spending more time with Wally. I'm not entirely sure the blaze-faced lug appreciates it, because from his perspective the extra attention translates into more work. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

All Tied Up

Have you ever heard the term "precognition"? It refers to those Twilight Zone moments when you get a hunch that something momentous is about to happen. Perhaps I'm psychically gifted, because just last week I was crowing about my large paycheck—figuring I could stock up on hay—when I suddenly got an ugly jolt of precognition. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, June 12, 2009

Secrets of the Horsekeeping Housewife

Sometimes when I step outside my immediate neighborhood, away from the bridle paths and the pick-up trucks adorned with AQHA and APHA bumperstickers, I feel alone. Almost alienated. And then, when I least expect it, I'll cross paths with another horsewoman who's trying desperately to blend in, yet whose mannerisms and comments give her away. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, June 9, 2009
Saving the Best Show for Last

On Sunday I judged the last of my scheduled shows for the year. I may yet get called by a show manager if they're suddenly short a judge, but for the most part I can stow away my lucky clipboard and my collection of sun visors until next spring. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, June 5, 2009
Can You Ear Me Now?

I've always been amazed at a horse's acute sense of hearing. I have to tiptoe out my back door so that Joey won't hear the creak of the hinges. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009
Manure Mania

Let's talk poop. I once read a statement from a veterinary resource that said the average horse produces about 50 pounds of manure a day. My response was, "Really? Is that all?" [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, May 26, 2009
My View from the Judge's Booth

I'm always reading about judges making proclamations from the bench. They attempt to educate the public or sway popular sentiment through their rulings. I'm never going to wear a black robe or wield a gavel, but I have been judging horse shows for fifteen years now, and recently it seems like I've been judging almost every weekend. [View Blog>>](#)

Thursday, May 21, 2009
Saddle Soap Opera

Somehow I've become the owner of four saddles. Don't tell my husband. If things work out as planned, I'll soon be down to a respectable number of only two saddles, and then he'll never know the difference. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 15, 2009
Water Baby

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. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, May 13, 2009
Bitten by the Bit Bug

In my other life (the one before I came smashing to the ground from a jumping effort gone wrong) my tackroom was draped with mahogany and chocolate leather bridles that were outfitted with all sorts of English bits. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 8, 2009
Magical Horses Come to Life

I have to figure that if you're visiting HorseChannel then you were once a horse crazy kid. If so, then you probably grew up drawing horses on every surface that would accept the scrawling of a crayon, pencil, paintbrush or indelible felt tip pen. [View Blog>>](#)

Monday, May 4, 2009
Cowboy, I See Castration in Your Future

The clock is ticking for Cowboy. My mother's palomino colt—sired by an all-around champion AQHA stallion and out of a Trakehner/Dutch show hunter mare—is soon to become a gelding. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, April 28, 2009
Horse Crime of the Year

I don't often dwell on morbid stories about animal abuse for fear of sensationalizing such horrid cases. The last thing I want to do is give a sick minded individual some form of notoriety. But this latest one about a misfortunate horse just really got to me. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, April 24, 2009
The Concho Queen

I have gone concho crazy. It's understandable, really, when you consider that I spent several decades galloping around the hunter show ring clad in drab navy blue wool. My inner penchant for anything bright, shiny and frilly was kept repressed. But now that I've embraced the lifestyle of riding western on the trails, I am making up for lost time. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, April 22, 2009
It's Cheese Only at Horse Shows

It's Wednesday and I think I've finally rehydrated myself from last Sunday's judging assignment. I officiated at a county-rated hunter show at a nearby equestrian park. The heat was sweltering! [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, April 17, 2009
Well Heeled

You've probably heard the old saying that you can't really understand someone until you've walked a mile in their shoes. Just alter that a little to fit the horse world. You really can't understand a horse person until you've walked a mile in their boots. [View Blog>>](#)

Monday, April 13, 2009
Easter Parade

I'm always looking for ways to combine horses with holidays. At Christmas I decorate my tree with equine-themed ornaments. During past Halloweens I've won prizes for the costumes I've created for cooperative ponies. So when Easter rolled around this year, and I realized that my town was hosting a sunrise service at the community equestrian park, I figured, "Why not?" [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, April 10, 2009
Will You Be My Friend?

I've learned a lot from my horses. They've taught me the value of a good sense of humor. When things go wrong around the barn, I can't help but laugh at my own follies. I've also learned to be patient and kind. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, April 7, 2009
Buyers, Beware!

When I was a kid (yes, way back then) there were used car lots that proudly displayed signs reading, "A-Okay!" Such a declaration certified that the cars had passed a quality inspection and that the seller was above the level of riff raff. I wish we had the same stamp of approval for the horse market. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, April 3, 2009
Wally Comments on His Diet

Today I'm handing the blogging duties over to Wally. He has a lot to say. Why? Because he's on a diet. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, March 31, 2009
Clinic Notes

Four horses and riders from Cornerstone, Sue's stable, entered last Sunday's huntseat equitation clinic. Two of the riders were young girls I'd been teaching: Veronica and Siegen. Another rider was my longtime pal, Debbie. The fourth rider was BJ Bullman, a good friend who helps out at Sue's place. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, March 28, 2009

High School Rodeo: The Musical

Act I

Scene: Saturday morning. Riding arena at Cornerstone Equestrian Center. Cindy is giving a lesson on the longe line to Marcie, a nervous adult rider. As Cindy coaxes the trusty lesson horse, Ringo, into a jog, Marcie begins to fret. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, March 25, 2009

Oh Happy Day! Wally Gets a Shoe and I Get a New Horse

In a few minutes I'm heading over to my parents' place to meet up with Ed, our farrier. He's going to nail Wally's front shoe back on, now that the Hoof Abscess from Hell is beginning to heal. [View Blog>>](#)

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Hooray for Hoof Drainage!

Never in my life did I ever think I'd be so happy to witness an oozing infection. But that's how I felt yesterday when Jennifer, my vet, took a paring knife to the sole of Wally's sore hoof. She'd reviewed the xrays and then used the hoof testers to pinpoint the precise spot to begin her excavation in order to open up the abscess in Wally's sole. [View Blog>>](#)

Thursday, march 19, 2009

Dog Gone Justice

With Wally still nursing his sore foot, I'm having to beg, borrow and nearly steal other horses to ride. Yesterday I saddled up Topper, my sister's flashy Thoroughbred, and headed down the trail. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, March 17, 2009

Why Not Double the Fun?

On Friday Wally has a re-check with my vet, Jennifer. Hopefully the Magical Abscess Fairy will have come and, "Poof!" We'll be on our way to recovery! [View Blog>>](#)

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