

The Near Side - HorseChannel.com

The Near Side - Dispatches from Horse Illustrated HQ

The Horse Illustrated staff works hard to bring you the best of the horse world each month. But when we're not in the office we're usually at the barn, or any place that's horsey! In addition to living equestrian lives, we're always finding fascinating horsey stuff that we think you might enjoy beyond the magazine. The Near Side is our place to share what goes on in between issues at Horse Illustrated. Join us for the ride!

For more info on the Horse Illustrated team, read on >>

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

Heavyweight Horses

By Leslie Potter

Imagine you're a horse dealer. You specialize in finding people just the right horse for their needs, be it a reliable "husband horse" for easy-going trail rides or a spunky pony for an ambitious kid starting her riding career. One day, you get a call asking for something very specific.

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Thursday, January 19, 2012

Name That Horse

By Leslie Potter

When I worked as a riding instructor at a summer camp, nearly half of the kids who came to ride were named either "Emma" or "Emily." Okay, yes, that's an exaggeration, but it seemed that way. We recently compiled a list of the top names for mares, geldings and stallions based on Club Horse profiles. Apparently, the equine equivalent of "Emma" is "Buddy".

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Monday, December 19, 2011

Once an equestrian, always an equestrian

By Leslie Potter

I came across this gem in my daily perusal of horse world news. A 98-year-old great-grandmother in Montana mentioned to her granddaughter that she'd like to go for a ride. Gladys McLarnon had ridden throughout her entire life, but it had been 15 years since her last ride. Her granddaughter passed the request along to a hospice worker, who contacted a nearby therapeutic riding center.

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Wednesday, December 14, 2011

Don't Drink and Ride

By Leslie Potter

During a family road trip as a kid, I remember driving past an ice cream shop where a group of riders had stopped for a snack. This blew my mind at the time. I'd never thought about people still using horses for transportation like that, and the idea of being able to ride a horse down to the store to get some ice cream seemed like the ideal summer afternoon to me. Frankly, it still does.

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Friday, December 9, 2011

Armchair pole bending

By Leslie Potter

It's no secret that I'm a fan of helmet cams. Since it's a safe bet that I will never ride the Rolex cross-country course or race a Thoroughbred, getting a rider's-eye view of those experiences is a fair replacement.

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Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Horse Illustrated Covers 2011
By Liz Moyer

Here at the Horse Illustrated offices, a lot of effort goes into creating the cover each month. We sift through hundreds of thousands of images from top equestrian photographers, looking for the perfect shot of the perfect horse to represent the issue. The image of the cover horse is what you see first on the newsstands, or when you open your mailbox. We want it to catch your eye and make an instant connection.

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Friday, December 2, 2011
Course walking to the beat
By Leslie Potter

Everyone knows that hunt seat riders, especially equitation riders, are very serious. Clad in conservative, traditional beige breeches and navy coats, these riders demand perfection from their horses, their grooms, and themselves. Horse shows are a place for hard work, discipline and concentration, not for self-expression.

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Friday, November 23, 2011
Know Your Tack Shop
By Leslie Potter

Now that Black Friday is here and Christmas shopping season is officially open, you're probably making your list and checking it twice, unless you're one of those overachievers who gets it done by the end of October. For the rest of us, it's time to decide on a shopping plan of attack.

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Friday, November 18, 2011
Another horse movie
By Leslie Potter

I've been reading a lot about War Horse lately. People who follow the movie industry seem to think it's got a shot at an Oscar nomination. The highly-anticipated screen adaptation of the stage adaptation of the novel will be out on Christmas. If you can't wait 'til then to get your new-horse-movie fix, there is another film that was released in limited markets last week.

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Friday, November 11, 2011
Another cute horse video
By Leslie Potter

There's nothing quite as moving as inter-species friendship, is there? I came across this video this week, and it's one of my favorites. A French Bulldog meets a stately police horse in New York City, and initial timidness (on the dog's part) eventually turns into unabashed canine joy.

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Friday, October 28, 2011
Snoopy's Swan Song
By Leslie Potter

Last weekend, Snoopy had a retirement party. We went to our first, last and only off-the-farm show of the season, and I had decided it would be our last hurrah. When I told friends and family members of my plans to retire him, the nearly universal response was, "Again?"

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Friday, October 14, 2011
No foxes were harmed
By Leslie Potter

Fall always makes me a little sad, as it means that summer has ended and we're moving into the dreary days of winter. It's too bad, because fall itself is a nice season with perfect temperatures for enjoying long trail rides. The crisp air and smell of

dried leaves always triggers the memory of the first—and so far, only—time I tried fox hunting.
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Monday, July 25, 2011
Cute horse video of the day
By Leslie Potter

I'm not one to complain about the heat, but it has been a bit too much lately, hasn't it? I've spent much of my time at the barn just hosing Snoopy down with cold water and leaving him in his stall with the fan on for the hottest afternoon hours. I've scrubbed and refilled his water bucket to make sure he has access to cool, clean water (which he invariably snubs and instead waits until he's back outdoors where he can enjoy the earthy flavor of the shared pasture trough.)
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Friday, July 22, 2011
Why is there a horse in my basement?
By Leslie Potter

I read a lot of horse-related news here at Horse Illustrated HQ, and after a few years of doing this, I've noticed trends. For example, several times throughout the winter I will read stories about horses that have fallen through an iced-over pond in or near their pasture. Surprisingly, these tend to have happy endings after an edge-of-your-seat tale that usually involves volunteer fire departments. This trend helps me to appreciate the importance of secure fences and safe turnout areas.
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Wednesday, July 13, 2011
Dressage for everybody
By Leslie Potter

They say dressage is good for every horse and rider. It's just correct training, right? So when the announcement for my boarding stable's annual dressage and combined test show series came up, I said, "Why not?" and signed Snoopy up for Intro Test A.
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Friday, July 8, 2011
Celebrities, horses and hypocrisy
By Leslie Potter

Singer Sheryl Crow recently announced that she would be donating part of the proceeds from an upcoming concert to The Cloud Foundation. Crow has long been a supporter of the Mustang advocacy group and she's putting her money where her mouth is to help the cause of blocking a large-scale BLM roundup in Nevada. So why are other animal welfare advocates angry with her?
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Tuesday, July 5, 2011
The Junkyard Horse
By Leslie Potter

If you're plugged into equestrian social media, you may have heard about Sugar, a 33- or 34-year-old (reports vary) horse in the town of Mattawan, Michigan. She is known to locals and her facebook fans as The Mattawan Junkyard Horse because, well, she lives in a junkyard.
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Wednesday, June 29, 2011
Spielberg and Horses
By Leslie Potter

By now you have probably heard of War Horse, the young adult novel turned London/Broadway stage sensation. The play recently cleaned up at the Tony Awards, winning the big award for "Best Play" along with five other awards. The production is noted for its use of lifesize horse puppets to portray the equine characters. While the puppets are highly stylized, the trained puppeteers control their every movement and mannerism, creating a convincing equine portrayal.

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Thursday, June 23, 2011
Celebration at Old Friends
By Leslie Potter

Recently we posted a news item about Old Friends, a Thoroughbred retirement center here in Kentucky. Due to a clerical error at the bank, the charity found itself in dire need of a pretty substantial amount of money to pay the mortgage. The good news: They were able to raise the funds and negotiate with the bank to get everything resolved. The better news: They posted this video of their mascot, Little Silver Charm, playing soccer, and it is ridiculously cute.

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Tuesday, June 14, 2011
The Olympics: do you still watch?
By Leslie Potter

It seems like just yesterday we were trying to follow the equestrian events across the globe at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, and yet, we're now about a year away from the 2012 London games. Where has the time gone? And moreover, does anyone still care?

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Friday, June 3, 2011
My Day as a Dressage Scribe
By Holly Werner Caccamise

For a long while, I've been interested in learning to scribe for a dressage judge. As a rider who competes, I spend long hours pouring over the scores and comments on my tests, so what could be better than sitting with the judge as she evaluates dozens of riders right in front of you?

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Thursday, May 26, 2011
Latin Rhythms in the Bluegrass
By Leslie Potter

One of my favorite things about working at Horse Illustrated is having the opportunity to visit different farms and meet horses and horse people that I would probably never meet otherwise. If you've received your July issue, you know that we featured horses of South America (and if not, you'll be getting it soon!) In preparing that article and the related HorseChannel video, we had the opportunity to meet some wonderful ambassadors, human and equine, from the Paso Fino world.

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Monday, May 16, 2011
Richard Jeffery Rolex Course Walk
By Holly Werner Caccamise

On Sunday morning, May 1, 2011, the media had a special invitation to walk the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event show jumping course with its famed designer, Richard Jeffery. Snappily dressed, as the British are known for, he patiently answered questions and told us about the course's winding design.

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Wednesday, May 11, 2011
A Romantic Cowboy
By Leslie Potter

The other day I heard "Where Have All the Cowboys Gone?" by Paula Cole on the radio. I hadn't heard that song since sometime in the 90s, and to be honest, I hadn't missed it. If this song didn't immediately spring into your head when you read the title, it's the one where she is lamenting her one-sided relationship with an inattentive boyfriend/husband who doesn't pull his weight around the house.

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Friday, April 29, 2011
Riding the Rolex Course
By Holly Werner Caccamise

On Thursday afternoon I also had a wonderful opportunity to "ride the cross-country course" with a small group of media in a mounted course walk hosted by David O'Connor, Olympic gold medalist and future U.S. eventing team coach, as well as Olympic eventer Bobby Costello.
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Thursday, April 14, 2011
Show Season Kicks Off
By Holly Werner Caccamise

After one of the snowiest winters in Kentucky's history, most horses around here are pretty rusty. It was definitely a challenge to keep horses going through December and January, and most ended up having extended vacations. Thankfully February was more cooperative. Through it all, I tried my best to keep my semi-new partner, Dexter, in baseline fitness.
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Tuesday, April 5, 2011
Horses on TV
By Leslie Potter

A cowboy using a Blackberry to conduct business from horseback. It sounds like a lead in to the kind of joke you'd hear on A Prairie Home Companion. It turns out it might actually be a stroke of marketing genius.
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Wednesday, February 9, 2011
Girls and Horses
By Leslie Potter

In my daily scanning of the horse-world news, I came across an NPR article about the unsolvable mystery of why girls love horses. It's a human-interest piece, not a scientific study, and it doesn't really make any serious attempts at answering the question, but it offers some interesting opinions.
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Friday, February 4, 2011
Horse Toys
By Leslie Potter

Does your horse play with toys? Mine definitely doesn't. You could give him the latest and greatest stall toy, and he'd sniff it once, decide it wasn't edible and go back to his nap. In fact, most horses I've known are just not that excited about toys. The peppermint-scented stall toys lovingly purchased by doting owners for their beloved horses always seem to be ignored until they end up becoming yet another plaything for the nearest Border Collie. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, January 18, 2011
Riding Through the Fire
By Leslie Potter

Have you ever heard of the festival of San Bartolome de Pinares? This annual celebration includes one of the most bizarre equestrian traditions still in existence. Residents of this village in Spain create a sort of steeplechase track where the jumps are flaming piles of brush. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, December 30, 2010
New Year's Resolutions for the Horse World
By Leslie Potter

I always make New Year's resolutions, and sometimes I even remember what they are long enough to stick with them for a few months. But I'm not going to bore you with my pledges to eat more vegetables or go to bed earlier. Instead, here are my thoughts on what I think the horse industry should work on in 2011. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, December 12, 2010
Christmas Shopping for the Equestrian
By Leslie Potter

Right now, my inbox, mailbox and even my facebook news feed are all filled with holiday gift ideas for equestrians. Usually they come with some enticing 10% off or free shipping offer or something like that. It's all very tempting, of course, but there's one problem. I have no equestrians on my holiday shopping list. I'm just not sure that my non-horsey parents and siblings would be excited to receive a pair of winter riding breeches or a colorful saddle pad. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, November 8, 2010
Last Show of the Year
By Holly Werner Caccamise

Last weekend was the last show of the year for Dexter and me. It's always a bittersweet time—your horse is at the peak of his fitness and preparedness, but once it's over you know you'll be staring out the window into the cold until at least April, dreaming of horse shows and warmer weather. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, November 4, 2010
Bring Your Horse to School Day?
By Leslie Potter

When I was a senior in high school, my class decided that our senior prank would be to stage our own Take Your Dog to School Day. One spring day, a bunch of seniors went to class with Fido in tow. It's a pretty tame senior prank, but it was cute and amusing, and the administration had a sense of humor about it, although the principal did make everyone take the dogs home by the end of first period. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, October 27, 2010
Show Season
By Leslie Potter

Last weekend, Snoopy and I went to our final show of the season. It was also our first real show of the season. We did a schooling show back in March, but then a whole lot of nothing all summer until this sole rated show. It's our 2010 show season condensed into a single weekend. [View Blog >>](#)

October 18, 2010
Reflections on WEG
By Leslie Potter

Now that we've had a few days to recover from the madness of 16 days of the World Equestrian Games, I'm going to share a few thoughts that just didn't fit into our regular coverage of the events. [View Blog >>](#)

September 28, 2010
What I Did in One Day at WEG
By Liz Moyer

Got my boots shined at the Bit of Britain store with some fabulous Italian shoe polish, the name of which escapes me at the moment—might have to go back and get some... [View Blog >>](#)

September 27, 2010
Test Driving a Reining Horse
By Leslie Potter

I've tried various forms of English riding throughout my life, but I have to admit, my riding resume is woefully devoid of any substantial western experience. So when I heard that the National Reining Horse Association (NRHA) was giving visitors the chance to ride a reiner at the World Equestrian Games, I signed right up. [View Blog >>](#)

September 26, 2010
Going Shopping at the World Equestrian Games
By Holly Werner Caccamise

Most equestrians love a good trade fair, and I'm no exception. Today I decided to go out and get the lay of the land among the vendor booths and other tents at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games. Whether you're coming out later on, or just living vicariously, here's a rundown of the offerings. [View Blog >>](#)

September 25, 2010
Welcome to WEG
By Kimberly Abbott

There's really no eloquent, professional way to describe my being at the 2010 Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games other than, "this is so cool!" Upon arriving this morning to watch the reining competition, the horse park was still fairly quiet. It has been transformed into a Disney-esque "It's a Small World" ride. [View Blog >>](#)

September 21, 2010
Riding in the UK
By Lesley Ward

I just got back from my yearly jaunt over the pond to attend the Burghley Three-Day Event in Stamford, Lincs. I used to live and work in England so it's always fun to visit friends and relatives—and to shop at one of the biggest horse trials in the world. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, August 27, 2010
Working out with Zenyatta
By Leslie Potter

At 5'8", I will never be a jockey. But, thanks to video recording technology, I can see the view from the back of a Thoroughbred race horse. Check out this video from CBS News and the Washington Post. [View Blog >>](#)

September 10, 2010
Horseless Horse Sports
By Leslie Potter

Good news for the horseless horse lovers out there. You can compete in your favorite equestrian sports without investing all of your time and money into horse ownership. Well, these are slightly modified versions of horse sports, but it's better than nothing, right? [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, August 16, 2010
Finding a Horse-Friendly Town
By Leslie Potter

We recently ran a poll here on HorseChannel asking visitors if their town is horse-friendly. About 18% of you said yes while nearly 50% picked "not at all." [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, July 8, 2010
Dexter's Debut
By Holly Werner

After a rough spring with a pesky, persistent abscess, I was finally able to show Dexter last weekend for the first time since buying him in November 2009. After recently selling Zephyr to a lovely family with a young daughter, I had more time to focus on Dexter and get him fit. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, July 7, 2010
"We Regret the Error"
By Leslie Potter

You've probably come across a horse-related article or two in your local paper. Usually they're nice human interest pieces about a successful local equestrian or some sort of riding program in the area. Every once in a while, though, you'll read one of these articles that was so clearly written by a non-equestrian that you just have to laugh. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, June 25, 2010

Fly Masks: Functional and Fashionable
By Leslie Potter

I used to be a casual fly mask user. I'd put one on Snoopy if I was turning him out after a ride, but if he went out without one, I didn't worry about it too much. Most of the other horses at my barn weren't wearing one, so it can't be too bad to go without, right? [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, June 24, 2010
Al-Marah Arabian Horse Galleries
By Kim Abbott

The new Al-Marah Arabian Horse Galleries exhibit at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington, Ky., is a must-see not only for Arabian horse enthusiasts, but for all horse lovers. It's a wonderful representation and dedication to the history, beauty and talent of a breed that has played such an important role in human culture as well as the evolution of the horse. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, June 14, 2010
New Digs
By Leslie Potter

Last month, I moved Snoopy to a new barn. In the seven years that I've owned him, he's really only lived at two different boarding stables, so I was worried about how he'd settle in, but so far, he seems quite content. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, May 18, 2010
Just Jump It
By Holly Werner

While waiting for Dexter to recover from his abscess, I recently had a chance to borrow a wonderful horse for a lesson. Basil is an Oldenburg/Thoroughbred cross who competed in a long-format CCI* last year at the age of only 7. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, April 30, 2010
Equine Affaire, Ohio
By Kimberly Abbott

As a self-proclaimed horse fanatic, I jump at any opportunity to totally immerse myself in anything and everything horsey. So when I found out that I was going to the Ohio Equine Affaire for work, I was obviously ecstatic (Ah, the perks of my job!). [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, April 28, 2010
Cowgirl Up!
By Kimberly Abbott

I had my very first western riding lesson yesterday! I've been a dressage rider from day one, with a little jumping education thrown in here and there, but I've always been interested in trying western riding, or stock seat. [View Blog >>](#)

Sunday, April 25, 2010
Rolex Wrap-Up
By Holly Werner

When all was said and done, Great Britain's William Fox-Pitt maintained his lead to win the 2010 Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event. Phillip Dutton moved from fourth to second aboard Woodburn, and Becky Holder remained in third with Courageous Comet. [View Blog >>](#)

Saturday, April 24, 2010
Rolex Day 3: Cross-Country
By Holly Werner

Yet another day dawned rainy and wet, with extreme thunderstorms and "tornadic winds" forecast for the afternoon. It was

announced early on that the ride times would skip the normal 11:45-1:30 lunch break in order to send riders through the course earlier and finish long before the usual time of 3:30. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, April 23, 2010
Rolex Day 2: Dressage
By Holly Werner

The second day of competition at Rolex dawned gray and rainy. Phillip Dutton kicked things off with his third horse, Woodburn. A steady test in the downpour yielded a very respectable score of 47.7. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, April 22, 2010
Rolex Day 1: Dressage
By Holly Werner

The first day of Rolex began very quietly with nearly empty stands, as usual. A particularly chilly April morning clocked in at only 47 degrees as the sun came up. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, April 16, 2010
Borrowed Wheels
By Holly Werner

Before Dexter got his abscess, I had entered a spring event. Usually the weather is terrible in early April, but I decided to take my chances since I was itching to get out. By the time it was determined Dexter wouldn't be able to go, it was too late for a refund. However, my fabulous trainer, Megan, was nice enough to offer me one of her horses to ride! [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, April 2, 2010
Spring Fever
By Liz Moyer

Spring has finally sprung here in Kentucky. The bluegrass is turning green and horses are feeling frisky, including Chance and his pasturemate, the lovely Dapple Apple. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, March 31, 2010
Abscess!
By Holly Werner

Several weeks ago, it was time for Dexter to be shod again. I'd been working with him a lot in hopes of not having to resort to tranqs again, and he seemed much calmer about having his feet pulled and prodded in every direction. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, March 23, 2010
Riding with Will Rogers
By Liz Moyer

"A man that don't love a horse," Will Rogers wrote August 17, 1924, in the New York Times, "there is something the matter with him. If he has no sympathy for the man that does love horses then there is something worse the matter with him." [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, March 11, 2010
Horses, Helmets and Equestrian Heroes
By Leslie Potter

By now, you've surely heard about Courtney King-Dye's accident in Florida. You can read the article here. Current reports are that she is gradually improving and her vital signs are good, but she is still in a coma. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, March 8, 2010
Short and Tall, Big and Small
By Kimberly Abbott

I recently started riding two new horses that couldn't be at more opposite ends of the equine spectrum. Chyanne is a 14-hand Haflinger and Diesel is a 17-hand Clydesdale-cross. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, March 4, 2010
Spring is in the Air
By Leslie Potter

This has been a particularly rough winter. We haven't had any major blizzards here in central Kentucky, nor did we have a debilitating ice storm like we did last year. No, this winter wasn't so dramatic, but it has just sort of droned on and on and on with neverending cold weather and just enough snowfall to be inconvenient. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, February 24, 2010
The Wonder Years
By Liz Moyer

Today is Chance's birthday—he turns 4, which makes him an official adult horse now. I have been getting a lot of comments lately on how much he's grown up and filled out. Which he absolutely has! But he's still a baby to me. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, February 12, 2010
Top 10 Horsey Wish List Items
By Holly Werner

As February drags along, we are faced with yet another icy, snowy day here in Kentucky. Apparently there is snow on the ground in 47 of 50 states right now, with 49 (and possibly 50) of 50 expected by Saturday. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, February 4, 2010
Point-Two Air Jacket
By Lesley Ward

I spent last weekend snooping around the American Equestrian Trade Association show in King of Prussia, Penn. It was great looking at all the new equestrian products on offer. One new item stands out in my mind, the Point Two Air Jacket. This is a vest that you put on over your body protector before you gallop off to jump cross-country fences. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, February 1, 2010
Retired Police Officers on the Auction Block
By Leslie Potter

Without a doubt, 2009 was filled with bad news in the horse world and the world at large. One depressing trend of recent news is the loss of mounted patrols from cities across America. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, January 29, 2010
Blue Hors Matine
By Leslie Potter

Some sad news from the dressage world this week. On Monday, January 25, Dutch dressage star Blue Hors Matine was euthanized after breaking a leg in a pasture accident. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, January 22, 2010
As Seen on YouTube
By Leslie Potter

It's hard to be lazy when you have horses to take care of. Unless your horses live on green pasture with a source of potable water, you have chores to do every day. At bare minimum you have to scoop grain, toss hay, fill buckets and muck stalls, and that's on a slow day. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, January 15, 2010
Dressage King
By Leslie Potter

If you follow the international equestrian scene at all, or if you read the news here on HorseChannel, then you are no doubt familiar with Dutch dressage rider Edward Gal and his remarkable mount, Moorlands Totilas. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, January 12, 2010
Winter on the Farm
By Lesley Ward

After reading Leslie's blog about the freezing conditions we're experiencing here in the Bluegrass, I thought I'd contribute my two cents. I'm fed up with this crappy weather! [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, January 11, 2010
A Winter Wonderland
By Leslie Potter

Most regions of the United States have been experiencing extreme cold over the past couple of weeks. Sure, it's January, so we shouldn't be expecting sunbathing weather, but it has been exceptionally frigid. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, December 23, 2009
Arresting Argyle
By Holly Werner

I recently purchased a couple of new turnout blankets for Dexter and Zephyr, since the old rugs were A) totally devoid of all waterproofing and therefore acted more like a sponge; and B) torn to shreds and sit horribly on the shoulder so as to create rubs. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, December 22, 2009
The Measure of a Horse
By Liz Moyer

When I bought Chance and brought him home this summer, I went through a major downsizing in the horse and tack department. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, December 10, 2009
Winter Reading List
By Leslie Potter

As I write this, snow is furiously blowing past the windows. It won't stick, and the forecast predicts it will be clear by this afternoon, but for now it makes for a dramatic view. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, December 8, 2009
Back on the Vaulting Pad
By Kim Abbott

I recently had a vaulting lesson for the first time in a few months. Although I was wary about my muscles and the cold weather, it was worth it! [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, December 1, 2009
Belated Thanks
By Leslie Potter

Thanksgiving is a fairly low-key event in my house. My family celebrates the holiday a thousand miles away, and given Thanksgiving's inconvenient proximity to Christmas, I prefer to save the air travel fund for the latter. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, November 24, 2009
Tally Ho!
By Liz Moyer

Last weekend my barn held a "mock" fox hunt. What exactly is a mock fox hunt? Well, no actual foxes or hounds were involved, but instead it was a big fun group ride and a chance to get out of the arena to hack and jump, plus a scavenger

hunt and costume contest, all followed by a potluck at the barn. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, November 10, 2009
I Grab Mane over 18" Crossrails
By Leslie Potter

Despite recent warm temperatures, it is November, and there's no denying that winter is getting close. I'll be the first to admit that I lose a lot of motivation when daylight saving time ends and the cold weather sets in. [View Blog >>](#)

Saturday, October 31, 2009
Horses in Disguise
By Leslie Potter

One equestrian experience that I've missed out on is entering a costume class. In fact, I don't think I've ever dressed my horse in costume at all, unless posing him in a Santa hat for Christmas pictures counts. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, October 28, 2009
Pumpkin Carving!
By Leslie Potter

The other day we got together with some of the staff from our sister publication, Hobby Farms, and had a pumpkin carving party. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, October 7, 2009
Parade of Breeds
By Leslie Potter

My first trip to Kentucky was a field trip with my riding instructor and a group from my barn when I was about 15 years old. We visited several of the legendary Saddlebred farms in the area, watched a race at Keenland and spent a day at the Kentucky Horse Park. I was pretty sure I'd found heaven. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, October 5, 2009
Vaulting Demo
By Kim Abbott

I made my first public appearance in vaulting this weekend at the Festival of the Horse in Georgetown, Ky. I was nervous about being nervous, but the event was fairly small, and since it wasn't a competition, I felt almost completely comfortable; let's not forget that I was exhibiting myself in a skin-tight unitard. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, September 30, 2009
Movie Star in the Making
By Kim Abbott

I had a star-studded weekend that began at the Secretariat Festival in Bourbon County, Ky., on Saturday. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, September 28, 2009
My Rainbow Latigo
By Allison Griest

This July I celebrated my purchase of a used Crates Lady Reiner. I am still so excited that I stumbled upon such a gem. For the purposes of this story, know that my saddle conveniently came with a leather latigo, so I didn't think about putting on the nylon one from my old saddle. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, September 24, 2009
Vaulting Lessons
By Kim Abbott

With each vaulting lesson I take, my fears subside and my confidence grows. I've graduated from a stout Haflinger named Cheyenne to a much taller (probably 15.1 or so) Quarter Horse named Leo. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, September 17, 2009
Not Quite Right
By Lesley Ward

It's always frustrating when a horse comes up slightly lame and there doesn't seem to be a cause for the lameness. My five-year-old Thoroughbred, Tee, hasn't been quite right for about a week and a half. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, September 16, 2009
A Day at the Park
By Leslie Potter

On Saturday, Snoopy and I attended the Kentucky Equine Humane Center benefit show here in Lexington. The show was held at a fabulous nearby park with an extensive equestrian center. [View Blog >>](#)

Monday, September 14, 2009
A Horsey Keepsake
By Kim Abbott

After Mirkos lost a shoe, I decided to make an art project out of it. You can purchase horseshoes decorated with beads and ribbons and hang it in your home as a sophisticated way of showing your love for horses, but wouldn't it be more meaningful if you used your own horse's shoe and decorated it yourself? [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, September 11, 2009
Party Like It's 1959
By Leslie Potter

When I was a horseless (and equitationally challenged) teenager aspiring to be a world champion saddle seat equitation rider, I dreamed of someday making it to Louisville. The word itself seemed magical. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, September 8, 2009
Graceland in Pictures
By Kim Abbott

Here are some photos from my trip to Graceland. [View Blog >>](#)

Saturday, August 29, 2009
Aged to Perfection
By Leslie Potter

Our latest HI Spy question asks about the older horses that have had an impact on your equestrian life. If there's one topic that makes me sentimental, this is it. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, August 27, 2009
Herding...Goats
By Allison Griest

I think baby farm animals are adorable. I remember growing up and seeing baby goats and sheep in the fields in Texas and thinking, "I really want to play with baby farm animals!" [View Blog >>](#)

Saturday, August 22, 2009
"No Hoof, No Horse"
By Holly Werner

We've heard it said a thousand times, but the old adage remains true. Last night, Certified Journeyman Farrier Rodney King of Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital gave a talk at Alltech's monthly News & Brews meeting. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, August 21, 2009
Excuses, Excuses

By Leslie Potter

It's too hot. It's too cold. It's raining. It might rain. It rained yesterday. I have errands to run. The ground is too soft. The ground is too hard. I don't have time.

I am the queen of excuses. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, August 19, 2009
My Visit to Graceland
By Kim Abbott

I recently took a very special trip to Memphis, where I was given a tour of Elvis Presley's stables. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, August 12, 2009
Ups and Downs of Horselessness
By Allison Griest

As a free agent in the horse world, there are lots of pros and cons. Within the past week I've gotten to experience both extremes. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, August 11, 2009
Vaulting Lesson No. 2
By Kim Abbott

For my second vaulting lesson, I left the stationary barrel behind and moved on to the real deal--an adorable, plump little Haflinger. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, August 7, 2009
Vaulting Lessons
By Kim Abbott

I've decided to embark on a new journey in my equestrian life: taking vaulting lessons. [View Blog >>](#)

Wednesday, August 5, 2009
Living in a One-Horse Town
By Leslie Potter

I'm lucky enough to have my dream horse. I may have had to wait 21 years to enter the world of horse ownership, but it was well worth it. [View Blog >>](#)

Tuesday, July 28, 2009
In the Pink—Again
By Lesley Ward

This weekend I did something I haven't done in a long time—I went out and jumped some cross country fences. [View Blog >>](#)

Thursday, July 23, 2009
The Young Ones
By Allison Griest

During the past few weeks I've had the opportunity to ride my friend's young horse. He's a very willing, polite little guy, but he is absolutely still a baby. [View Blog >>](#)

Friday, July 17, 2009
A Purple Ribbon
By Leslie Potter

In an act of support for the rare-in-Kentucky Morgan breed, my co-boarder Dana and I decided go to one of the nearby county fairs that offered a Morgan class. I'd never actually competed at a county fair before, so I wasn't sure

what we were in for, but for a twenty minute drive from the barn and five bucks a class, there really wasn't much to lose. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, July 10, 2009
Misadventures with Mirkos, Part Deux
By Kim Abbott

Mirkos was recently moved to a new pasture after his herdmates left him with one too many hairless patches of skin. I urged him several times in the past to stick up for himself, but as the low man on the totem pole, I guess there's not much he could do. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, July 8, 2009
Good Morning!
By Leslie Potter

I am not a morning person. I've never been a morning person. Sure, I'll get up at the crack of dawn for the occasional horse show or something fun and out of the ordinary. But for the daily grind, I am very much one of those people who abuses the snooze alarm until the last possible second. [View Blog>>](#)

Thursday, July 2, 2009
Saddle? Check. Horse? Not yet.
By Allison Griest

This weekend I road-tripped to Murfreesboro, Tenn., with the Managing Editor of Hobby Farms, Lisa, to watch the American Ranch Horse Association World show. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, June 26, 2009
Yay for Yard Sales!
By Kim Abbott

I recently came across the buy of the year, no, the decade, no, the millennium! The Kentucky Equine Humane Center, an equine rescue facility in Nicholasville, Ky., collected horse tack, blankets, buckets, et cetera for a yard sale to raise money to help take care of the horses. [View Blog>>](#)

Monday, June 22, 2009
My "Aha" Moment
By Kim Abbott

I attended Centenary College in New Jersey for its equestrian program and had the opportunity to ride many horses throughout my four years. Learning to work with various horses and their unique personalities is a great way to improve your riding experience, but I always wanted to work with one horse so I could hone my skills. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, June 19, 2009
Alltech Tour
By Holly Werner

On Tuesday afternoon, the Horse Illustrated staff was invited on a tour of Alltech's headquarters in Nicholasville, Ky. As you probably already know, Alltech is the title sponsor of the 2010 FEI World Equestrian Games. [View Blog>>](#)

Thursday, June 18, 2009
Best Monday Ever
By Allison Griest

This week I had the best Monday night I've had in a long time, and it wasn't because The Bachelorette airs on Monday nights. It was for a number of reasons. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, June 17, 2009
Rockin' the Rust Britches
By Lesley Ward

Young Rider Magazine is doing a feature about riding in college in the next issue, so assistant editor Allison Griest and I went on a hunt to find pictures of ourselves competing. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, June 16, 2009
"Sit Happy!"
By Kim Abbott

That's the motto of Salli Systems, manufacturer of saddle chairs that are touted as being able to improve your posture and overall health. Here at HI, we receive information about new products that can benefit the lives of equestrians on a daily basis. [View Blog>>](#)

Monday, June 15, 2009
The Life Aquatic
By Leslie Potter

Our current HI Spy question asks visitors to share what they would love to have in their dream barn. This is a topic I could probably go on about for a very long time. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, June 12, 2009
Misadventures with Mirkos
By Kim Abbott

As Mirkos and I neared the end of our ride one afternoon, I noticed a skunk waddling his way toward the arena. Although I was debating continuing our ride a little longer, that clinched my decision to stop for the day. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, June 10, 2009
Brain Buckets
By Leslie Potter

I recently retired my old helmet after many years of service. And by "many years of service" I mean it protected my head for three or four years, and then spent the next five or six years sitting on my head looking like it was doing something useful. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, June 9, 2009
Back in Texas
By Allison Griest

This weekend I was able to visit my family in Texas. The main reason for the visit was to help my parents pack and get ready for their move. However, Saturday morning was reserved for a visit to my old barn. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, June 3, 2009
Show Ring Victory
By Leslie Potter

A couple of weekends ago, Snoopy and I went to our first big show of the season. This was a landmark show for me, since it was the first all-Morgan show I'd ever competed in. [View Blog>>](#)

Tuesday, June 2, 2009
The Sustainability Principle
By Holly Werner

On May 18, I had the pleasure of attending Alltech's 25th International Animal Health and Nutrition Symposium. The theme was "the sustainability principle." [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, June 1, 2009
A Horse to Remember
By Liz Moyer

June 1st was the day I said my final goodbyes to Ted. While today is the anniversary and it will of course be on my mind, not a day goes by that I don't think about him. [View Blog>>](#)

Saturday, May 30, 2009
The Kentucky Experience
By Kim Abbott

The plans for "The Kentucky Experience" were unveiled in a press conference held at the Kentucky Horse Park on Friday. Two of my co-workers and I took a break from work to find out what this is all about. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009
Happy Birthday Snoopy!
By Leslie Potter

When your best friend turns 21, it's an unofficial American tradition to take him out for a drink or two. However, today is Snoopy's 21st birthday, and I think we'll find some other way to celebrate. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 29, 2009
Ponies & Peonies
By Liz Moyer

I recently horse-sat for my friend Debby. She has three horses on her property. They live out full-time, so the daily routine is pretty low maintenance. [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, May 27, 2009
Trail Riding at Shaker Village
By Lesley Ward

On Memorial Day, my friend Bridget and I packed up my horses Jasper and Tee in my trailer in the morning and headed off to Shaker Village, near Harrodsburg, KY, for a trail ride with my neighbor Judy and her horse, Luna. [View Blog>>](#)

Friday, May 22, 2009
I Ride a Rocky
By Elizabeth Moyer

In putting together the July issue of HI that's hitting the mailboxes right now, I was able to get out of the office and do a little "field research." [View Blog>>](#)

Wednesday, May 20, 2009
Showing in Kentucky
By Allison Griest

As a girl from Texas and a rider who hasn't shown her own mount in five or more years, it goes without saying that competing in a combined test in Kentucky this weekend was quite the experience. [View Blog>>](#)