

# Quicksilver Quips

February 2023

*Happy  
Valentine's  
Day!*



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## **Officers**

2023 Board members are

Jerry Wittenauer - President  
Magda Bartilsson - VP  
Nick Warhol - Treasurer  
Elaine Elbizri - Secretary  
Carloyn Tucker - Board  
Rachel Miura - Membership  
Magda Bartilsson - Board  
Brian Reeves- Board

## **Newsletter Editor**

Elisabet Hiatt [lazo@ucsc.edu](mailto:lazo@ucsc.edu)

QSER on the Web:  
<http://www.qser.net/>

## **President's Message**

(Incoming) Presidents Message

Jerry Wittenauer  
26 January 2022

At the January QSER Board Meeting, I was honored to be selected as the incoming President of the Quicksilver Endurance Riders. I served in the past year as our President, and didn't get thrown out – so I must be doing something right! I'm looking forward to serving the club this year, and sustaining an active and engaged membership. We have a strong team in-place to run the Club, and we invite your comments, suggestions, or participation as the year progresses! Our Board Meetings are generally held on the "3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday" of each month, via ZOOM, and all club members are welcome to join in – just send me a note and I'll include you on the ZOOM invite.

At our January Board Meeting, we took a look at the year ahead, and there is plenty on our plate! Upcoming activities that you will hear more about, and hopefully that you can participate in, include:

- A club-hosted "Quicksilver Social" at the AERC Convention in Jacksonville on 23 Feb.
- Volunteer opportunity – the QSER Club has been invited to help staff the McCann Stadium Finish Line for the 67<sup>th</sup> Annual Tevis Cup Ride in Auburn on 29 July – a chance to see the ride up-close and lend assistance to finishing horses and humans!
- Club support to the Annual Fireworks Ride in Santa Cruz (July 8)
- An August weekend horse camp at the Santa Cruz Horsemen's Association
- The Quicksilver Fall Classic has been scheduled for 30 Sept in San Martin – we'll be pressing hard to gather in volunteers this year!
- Planning and leading our club's social activities – awards, monthly newsletter, yearbook, and annual banquet, web-page, and Facebook Group (whew!).

In closing, I want to thank-you all for giving me the opportunity to serve, and give something back to this sport that has brought me so much fulfillment. Best wishes to you all for a safe and productive year with your equine partners!

## *Last Chance!!*

**Mary Anderson** said she \*may\* be able to add "a few" late meal requests for tickets to the **Quicksilver banquet on 2/4/23.**

**If you are interested, please contact her directly at:**

Cell 408-891-8878

Hi everyone- I added the **2021 club directory** to the "members only" page on the web site. From the web site click on the "Members only" button.

There is a button to download the directory in PDF format. If anyone has any content, or any ideas for what they would like to see on the website please let me know.

Thanks  
**Nick**

### 2023 QSER Club Calendar

18 Jan - Election of 2023 Officers  
4 Feb QSER Banquet  
23/24 Feb AERC Convention (Jacksonville)  
8 Jul QS Support to Fireworks Ride  
11 Jul "Go Live" for QS Ride Entries  
29 Jul QS Support to Tevis Cup – Finish Line Team

xx Aug QS Camping at Santa Cruz Horsemen's  
10 Sep Kick-off Board Search Committee.  
30 Sept QS Fall Classic Endurance Ride  
15 Nov All Awards Nominations Due  
18 Jan Election of **2024** Officers

**From Beverley Kane:** Dear QSER Friends,

Our Webb Ranch Library needs donations of equine- and equestrian-related books, DVDs, and magazines, especially back issues of the San Mateo County Horseman. (Magazines are given away free.) Genres include, but are not limited to, Riding, Horse Care, Horse Training, General and Natural Horsemanship, Fiction, History, Memoir, Veterinary Medicine, Psychology & Spirituality, Equine-Assisted Learning & Therapy, Breeds. Please e-mail or txt me to arrange delivery or pick up.

Thank you!  
Beverley Kane  
650-868-3379  
bkane1@stanford.edu

***MICHELLE HERRERA has moved to the Auburn area. Her new phone number is 916-521-0164 - Please reach out and give her a call!***

#### **Breaking news:**

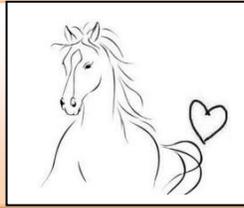
The Pity Train has just derailed at the intersection of Suck it Up and Move on, and crashed into We All Have Problems, before coming to a complete stop at Get the Heck Over it. Any complaints about how we operate can be forwarded to 1-800-waa-waaa.

This is Dr. Sniffle reporting LIVE from Quitcur Fussin'.

(Sorry, I just HAD to post this!!)

## JUST FOR FUN...

*In the end people will judge you anyway...  
so don't live your life trying to make others  
happy. Get yourself those 15 horses you  
always wanted!*



**Person:**  
**What's the  
dumbest thing  
you've ever  
done?**

**Me: Awfully  
bold of you to  
assume I've  
peaked.**

**Word Porn**

Be careful with your  
words, they can only be  
forgiven, not forgotten...

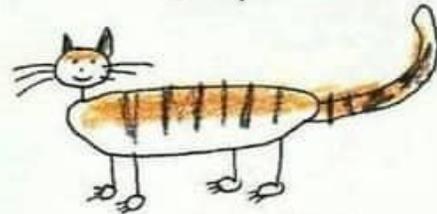


**I don't have my ducks  
in a row...  
I have horses, and  
they are everywhere  
...and I have alfalfa  
stuck in my hair.**

[www.nbha.com](http://www.nbha.com)



A Poem from the  
Cat



I thank you for the food  
you bring,  
and for my little squeaky thing.

I thank you for your friendly talks,  
and when you change my litter box.

I thank you for the naps we share,  
and putting up with tufts of hair.

I thank you for these things you do...

enjoy this mouse I caught for you

*Remember the days before  
Political Correctness  
When We Played*



**Livestock Management  
Technicians and  
Indigenous Peoples**

*Bill Manns*

*Ring the bells that still can ring, forget  
your perfect offering, there is a crack in  
everything...*

*That's how the light gets in!*

*Leonard Cohen*

**Open your eyes and see what you can with them before they close forever.**

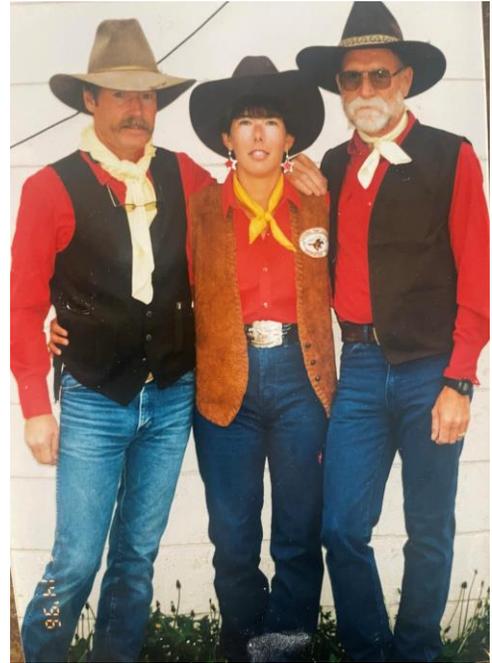
## ***Blast from the past....***

Tom Sherwood, Bonnie Way & Dave Rabe, Pony Express riders on the 1996 OLYMPIC TORCH RIDE.

The news that the National Pony Express Association had been approached about the possibility of carrying the Olympic Flame on horseback on its journey to the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia, was greeted with enthusiasm and excitement. The NPEA's portion of the route would be from Julesburg, Colorado to St. Joseph, Missouri, along the Pony Express National Historic Trail and the route of the annual re-ride of the original Pony Express. The Divisions in Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri opened their ranks to include riders from the four other western Divisions.

The Torch Relay began in Olympia Greece when the Olympic Flame was lit. It was relayed through Greece, birthplace of the modern Olympics. It was then flown to Los Angeles and after a celebration ceremony the torch began its 15,000 mile journey. Over the next 9 days, it traveled by runner, bicycle, canoe, train and motorcycle to northeast Colorado. There on Monday, May 13th it began its journey by horseback. The Torch arrived in St. Joseph by Pony Express on May 16, through streets lined with banners and well-wishers. One cannot put into words the thrill and honor of carrying the Olympic Torch and its flame.

***- Note that Dave recently received his 77,000 miles patch from the AERC... that does not include any miles he has ridden just for fun!!***



***I found this in my "random" stuff file. I have no information as to the author. Too good not to share. Elisabet***

### **"MY SOUL HAS A HAT"**

I counted my years and realized that I have less time to live by, than I have lived so far.

I feel like a child who won a pack of candies: at first he ate them with pleasure, but when he realized that there was little left, he began to taste them intensely.

I have no time for endless meetings where the statutes, rules, procedures & internal regulations are discussed, knowing that nothing will be done.

I no longer have the patience to stand absurd people who, despite their chronological age, have not grown up.

My time is too short: I want the essence, my spirit is in a hurry.  
I do not have much candy in the package anymore.

I want to live next to humans, very realistic people who know how to laugh at their mistakes, who are not inflated by their own triumphs and who take responsibility for their actions.  
In this way, human dignity is defended and we live in truth and honesty.

It is the essentials that make life useful. I want to surround myself with people who know how to touch the hearts of those whom through hard strokes of life have learned to grow, with sweet touches of the soul.

Yes, I'm in a hurry. I'm in a hurry to live with the intensity that only maturity can give.  
I do not intend to waste any of the remaining desserts.

I am sure they will be exquisite, much more than those eaten so far.  
My goal is to reach the end satisfied and at peace with my loved ones and my conscience.

We have two lives and the second begins when you realize you only have one.

**Trail Report - Raining cats and dogs?** Check out Salinas River Beach, Fort Ord or Szmudowsky  
by E. Hiatt

What do you do when it's been raining for EVER and all the trails are either closed or too muddy to safely ride?? You go to the beach or to Fort Ord National Monument, of course!!

We are so lucky in the Santa Cruz area to have an amazing variety of trails to ride! All we need is a sunny day and off we go!



With the recent rains, seems like pretty much everything in the Bay Area is closed, so our options have been reduced to the Salinas River beach, which is just South of Moss Landing on Highway 1, or Fort Ord, which is in Marina, about 15 minutes south of Moss Landing. Recently, some friends and I have taken good advantage of both places!

Salinas River beach is a nice, long, out and back. If the tide is high, not so much, but when it's low, there is plenty of "real estate" for a big group to have some fun. I was there last week, and even with the "king tide" we were able to ride quite a long way and not worry about waves. If your horse hates the ocean, this is a GREAT place to go to during low tide... a safe and reasonable way to introduce your horse to the sounds and smells of the ocean without having to get close to the water.

Fort Ord has a TON of trails (I always carry a map!!) and the ground is sandy, so even after a good rain you can have a lovely ride with plenty of puddles for your horse to drink from. The Equestrian Center at Fort Ord (off of California Street) has been shut down, but the parking lot area for visitors belongs to the City of Marina, so that is still open. You can park quite a few rigs there with no problem, and trail access is just across the street. The only bummer is that the bathroom at the Equestrian Center is no longer available for us "guests" so if you don't have a toilet in your rig, be prepared to go potty in the back of your trailer!



A third riding option is Szmudowsky beach, which is off Hwy 1 just before you get to Moss Landing. It's very nice, long and not as visited as Salinas River, but the drawback for me is the access. The parking there is kind of "iffy" for a rig, to say the least. The official parking lot is pretty small and the parking area on the side of the road pretty mucky, so if you have never been there, I'd suggest you explore it in the summer, when it's dry and at least you'll know you can get out. I don't have 4 wheel drive and I know I would get stuck if I tried going there after a rain. **Shannon Thomas** goes there often with her 4WD vehicle, and as far as I know, she has not had any problems getting out.

If you know of other places that are OK to ride after a rain, let me know and I'll put them in the Quips for others to explore. I think we have a couple more rainy months to deal with, so I'm sure the information will be appreciated!

## Ride report: Fire Mountain

by Lori Oleson



Fire Mt was quite the ride to start out the new endurance season. Fargo and I arrived early to perfect weather and trail conditions.

Friday's 50 was beautiful. Because of flooding rain on Tuesday, the washes were firmly packed and smooth. We finished 3rd.

Saturday's 55 took riders to the Trona Pinnacles. The day started out very nice but we all knew weather was blowing in. None of us had any idea just how bad the weather would be!

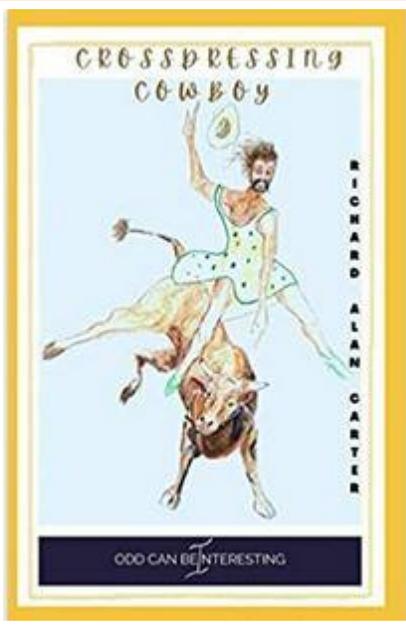
The rain and wind started after I left the lunch stop. Water was making the washes a soupy, slippery, wet mess. The wind was really cold. At the 3rd vet check, I was helped to fashion a fancy garbage bag raincoat. It worked great!

After the 3rd vet check, we had several miles of uphill, strong headwinds and pelting rain. It was brutal! We finished in 2nd and Fargo looked great at the end with a very low heart rate.

The picture was taken by Mary Anderson back at camp on Saturday.

Trail conditions continued to get worse because of the rain so Sunday's ride was cancelled.

Ride Manager, Gretchen Montgomery and supporting staff of Quicksilver members, Nick Warhol, Brian and Val Reeves, Mary Anderson were fabulous!



Have you read **Dick Carter's** fun little book "Cross Dressing Cowboy?" If not, you are missing out. Here's a sample of some of his wit and somewhat questionable wisdom. Elisabet

### SOUND WITH NO NAME

There are names for most of the sounds that horses make: the whinny, the nicker, the snort, and the grunt. As well as the groan. And then there are the many humorous pet names for the passing of gas.

However, there is one sound that horses make that seems to be nameless. It is a sound that all horsemen are familiar with. It is the only sound in the barn after feeding the horses that you may hear, other than an occasional stomp of a hoof to shake away a fly or the rustling and munching of hay.

The horses are content, and you know it by the neglected and unnamed sound.... *continued on next page....*

This sound is made by the horse's flapping of his lips and tongue as he exhales, usually while he is eating. I am troubled that this expression of blissful, serene well-being has no title. The noise needs a name. It seems that no one who speaks the English language has bothered to give it one. I, as a dedicated horseman and patriarch, have decided to take on this awesome responsibility. After much deliberation, I have chosen filabbering as the most appropriate word. (Filabber: a verb, expressing contentment).

I don't know why horses filabber, but they seem to do it when they are most relaxed.

Most of us who enjoy watching our horses eat have experienced the situation where the horse will pause from his meal, and with a look of satisfaction, express his contentment by filabbering, occasionally spewing fragments of his dinner on you. But you forgive him because you understand that his action is a natural act.

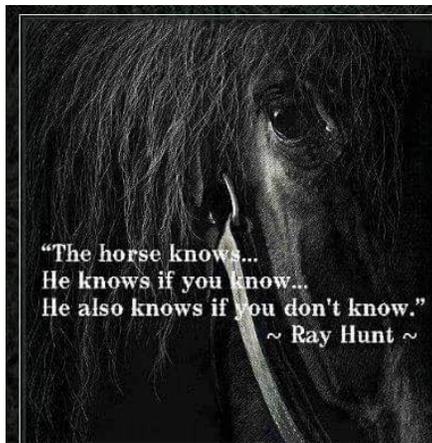
Well, now that I have made my contribution to society, I would like to say that you are welcome. (Filabber: a verb describing the sound horses make when they are content.) If you need it, use it. It's free.

*Dick's book is available on Amazon.*

Random wisdom from Warwick Schiller:

The 4 awareness channels:

1. What's going on with you?
2. What's going on with your horse?
3. What's going on between the two of you?
4. What's going on in the environment?



I don't get nearly enough credit in life for the things I manage not to say.

Meo Rosoff

~~~~~  
***Now, for something completely different. (I hope no one gets offended... after all, this actually IS on a famous cathedral! - Elisabet)***

Freiburg Minster is the cathedral in Freiburg, Germany. The last duke of Zähringen started the building around 1200 in Romanesque style and the construction continued in 1230 in Gothic style.

According to local legends, during the construction of the Freiburger Münster, city council members commissioned a stonemason to design some of the stonework and sculptures on the building. They also demanded that gargoyles were crafted for the cathedral.

Once complete, the stonemason was not paid for his services... As the story goes, he positioned one of the gargoyles to appear as if it were defecating in the direction of the city council building, now forever visible on one of the city's most religious structures.



## News From Rachel Miura:

There haven't been many rides this year for us due to the weather, but Elaine and I did go to Alameda Creek to ride the levee!

Theo and I did make it down to **Fire Mountain** -- getting to see the Trona Pinnacles was a treat!



This was our first trip to the desert, and our first winter endurance event. We were due to ride Saturday and Sunday, but ended up just doing Saturday in light of Sunday being cancelled. Saturday started off cold and windy, and we knew that some rain was probably going to come through in the

afternoon. We got to the vet check at the halfway point around 11AM, and just as we were leaving it started to rain. It was windy, too, and the second half of the ride really turned into a long slog, and there were some points that it was hard to get Theo to walk, let alone trot. He was done with this whole ride thing! But, we persevered, and eventually caught up to Lori and Fargo and then everyone was feeling like we were finally going to finish. We boogied down the hill and back to camp, getting in about 10 mins past 4PM. The conditions made it a really tough ride, but we're so glad we made the trip and had the experience. And, now we have a better idea of what to expect at Twenty Mule Team, which is - expect the unexpected :)

I have also attached a photo of the sunset in a brief break between the storms. Taken at Ciara West Equestrian in Woodside. Yipes!



100 years ago everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars.

Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.

The stables have turned.

## Unique California Equine Liability Laws

*Are we better?!*

*Thoughts shared by Sandy Holder*

I'm hopeful by now you know I'm not a lawyer; however, I do enjoy researching answers to puzzling questions. After being asked to provide (my and my horse's) vaccination status/records to a place I would be camping in 2021 during the pandemic. . . but (interestingly) not asked to sign any type of "Waiver and Release of Liability", juxtaposed with AERC canceling (after publishing) 3 rides in early 2021, negating the 450 miles I'd done in the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 months, all supposedly due to "Equine Liability during the Pandemic", I found myself pretty darn confused. Couple that with shoulder surgery immediately after the American River Ride, 6+ months healing then ACL replacement in my knee this April. Well, I obviously didn't do any rides this year so found myself revisiting last year's curiosities and deciding to actually quench my thirst for **WHY** the statutes in California regarding equines were not consistent one organization to the other . . . .

For reference, I did send detailed requests to AERC's Directors and Board Members appealing their decision to cancel the January, February and March XP Rides with much more detailed information than contained here, even before that 2<sup>nd</sup> ride date, so timing wasn't the issue. Unfortunately, I was rebuked. Regardless, the gist of what I found might be of interest to you, albeit there's a bit of 'diving into the details' – feel free to skip the rest if that's not of interest! 😊

By way of background, I was told repeatedly that sanctioning was cancelled for all 3 of the Duck's 2021 rides advertised in AERC, due to **a local California official not willing to sign-off the Liability**. The 1<sup>st</sup> ride was cancelled just before it was to happen. So, while technically no longer sanctioned, Dave & Ann Nicholson still held the rides, taking incredible precautions to prevent spread of 'the Vid'. Both my boys (Q & Bolt) along with Michelle King finished all 3 endurance days on all 3 rides. In retrospect, I believe each of the rides were even harder than previous years (technical, trail length, severity of elevation, etc.). After Michelle and I being **the only 2** 'same horse/rider combination' to finish all 3 days of Cuyama, I asked the Duck about the rides. In typical response, he said something akin to 'you showed up for a reason – not for AERC glory (mileage, rewards, and glamour). . . preparing for the 'ultimate one' didn't you'?! YEP, I can honestly say he did his best to prepare us for Tevis! LOL . . . cause YEP, all three definitely were TOUGHER than ever, especially Cuyama!!

What I found, which I'm fairly confident AERC's Directors or Board members didn't take into consideration, before, during or after cancelling the XP Rides sanctioning – the disparity in approaches to Pandemic Liability. The inconsistency, I believe, all boils down to this – California is only **one of four states** that **have NOT adopted an equine activity liability act**.

Why is this important? Equine Legal defense involves the **assumption of risk** in the state of California (as well as New York, Maryland and Nevada). The other 46 states have statutes addressing liability issues involving horse activities. Since California has not enacted an equine activity liability act, the courts look to the doctrine of **assumption of risk** when a defendant raises this as a defense to a plaintiff's claim.

I can quote case law, but the bottom line is California appellate courts have defined horses as "inherently dangerous". This includes horseback riding and the knowledge of the inherent risk that people are regularly thrown off horses during any equine riding activity. If a person is injured in connection with horse riding activities, whether for pleasure or for business such as horse racing, the court first determines whether a duty exists between the plaintiff and the defendant. If no duty exists, the plaintiff will have no liability to the defendant for any injuries suffered by the defendant by reason of the horse-riding activity (including work performed by veterinarians, farriers and others who may be providing services to the defendant) which caused the injury, including for sickness or health. WOW!!!

Notwithstanding this general rule, there are exceptions. If a defendant acts “intentionally or with gross negligence” in such cases the court may reject any assumption of risk defense in California. An example is, if a trainer causes a student’s injury and if the trainer acted “totally outside the range of the ordinary activity” involved in teaching or coaching the equine sport (such as jumping), then, the court (California Supreme Court) may disregard the assumption of risk defense. I’m not a trainer or charge anyone that rides (or has ridden) my horses, so there’s some extra defense allowed for people like me.

Equally important, the assumption of risk defense arises in two contexts, the first is deemed ‘express assumption of risk’ and the second is deemed ‘primary assumption of risk’. An express assumption of risk arises when a written waiver or release is used in the activity. An example would include a trainer asking for a signed release agreement from a student prior to instructing the student in riding lessons. So long as the written agreement was not procured by fraud and where the agreement is clear, unambiguous and explicit in expressing the intent of the trainer and the rider (or the parties) the court will normally enforce the release which eliminates the liability of the defendant. The primary assumption of risk doctrine eliminates a duty between the plaintiff and the defendant where the plaintiff is injured while participating in a dangerous sport such as horseback riding or horse sporting events. Again, the trial court will review the facts to determine if the defendant acted intentionally to cause injury to the plaintiff or acted recklessly in the facts and circumstances in the case. In short, a defendant has no legal duty to eliminate or protect a plaintiff from risk inherent to the equine sport itself, but the defendant must use due care not to increase the risk to the participant over and above those inherent in the sport.

Why is this important to me (e.g. I’m not a trainer, etc.)? Well, I need to exercise “due care” with respect to my property, and although my horses are considered by me to be my family, California law considers them “personal property”. . . meaning I have the duty to repair and fix known dangers, AND an obligation to reasonably inspect for, discover, and fix unknown hazards in those areas of the property including fences, etc. A trespasser who enters my property without permission (except a child) is only an issue if I have a known hazardous condition likely to cause death or serious bodily harm (e.g. a deep hole from an abandoned oil well).

Further, punitive damages, in our oft litigious state, will only be assessed if someone injured proves by clear and convincing evidence that I engaged in that conduct with **malice, oppression, or fraud**. Clearly managing a ride, with effective mitigation strategies (no one at these specific rides were known to have acquired COVID at the ride), much less the organization sanctioning it, could or would be held liable.

Did the volunteer AERC Directors and Board Members lack this knowledge? Once I shared with them the full text and court citations, their response was I should have taken it up with my Regional Director 1<sup>st</sup> (which I had) and subsequently changed the protocol for communicating these types of issues. <Sigh>

Regardless, what I found useful to me personally is that if any of us living in California are engaged in equine activities as a rider, ride manager, casual participant or a committed participant, we must take care to understand our rights and responsibilities with respect to other parties. My belief is that the California government, where there is currently no need for Equine Liability Laws, was never in a position to have to “sign-off” a Liability waiver involving equines. Moreover, once a written release of liability and waiver is signed, which we do at all Duck Rides, California puts the costs and burden of **malice, oppression or fraud** on the knowing participant.

Why did this become such an impactful situation to me? Well, while I did technically achieve over 6,000 endurance miles for AERC in 2021, Q should have been considered a 3,000 mile Endurance horse, but was not. . . AND, unfortunately, both of us suffered injuries (broken coffin bone for Q) preventing us from doing any AERC Rides in 2022, so your guess is as good as mine if the future will bring that incredible milestone to him. I’m sure hoping so. In the meantime, I hope you, your family, particularly your four-legged ones, stay healthy and able to enjoy the New Year!

Cheers... Sandy



(Jan '23) Breaking . . . Members in the News: Rachel Miura

by Jerry Wittenauer

Congratulations to the multi-faceted / multi-talented **Rachel Miura** and her trusted steed "Theodore the Wonderhorse". The local equestrian eventing center – the Woodside Horse Park – hosts a series of schooling shows during the year in various disciplines. Last year, Rachel and Theodore were recognized as **Season Champions – Hunters – age 18 and Over!** Says Rachel "As far as we know it was Theo's first time being in a horse show, and our trainer wanted to see what he'd do before we had my daughter Brynn show him. Theo was totally fine and I think he found the work of being a show pony "easy" compared to going to an endurance event! Although it was a fun experience, I found the time spent waiting to ride compared to how much I actually got to ride way out of whack. I plan to stick with doing endurance because you get to do SO MUCH riding!"



**Memory corner:** Jimmy and Jack aka Damon and Pythias

By Julie Suhr



Two of my father's college friends remained his best friends throughout his life. In 1912, about five years after their University of California graduation, the three of them set forth with a mule drawn wagon for a week's journey from the Bay area across the San Joaquin Valley and into the high country north of Yosemite and a bit south of Lake Tahoe. The mules, named Jimmy and Jack, were renamed Damon and Pythias for the journey. The Greek story of Damon and Pythias has been a symbol for trust and loyalty in true friendship.

As my father traveled behind their adequate rumps with his two best friends, Jimmy and Jack were best friends, having no other of their own kind with which to consort.

Mules live to riper old ages than horses. I remember as a youngster going behind the Weston Ranch barn to look at them. They were old and shaggy and possessed of little natural beauty, but I thought them wonderful. I was not allowed to go in the corral, and my outstretched arms, hoping that they would come to me, never elicited the slightest interest on their part.

Perhaps they were lost in their own dreams as the noble Damon and Pythias...

## Fire Mountain 3 day ride, January 13/15, 2023

*By Nick Warhol*

The annual Fire Mountain ride in Ridgecrest, Ca, was a different animal this year. For those of you who know (and love) the desert, you know it can be fickle. Sometimes very fickle. Sometimes REALLY fickle! In the summer, it's pretty straightforward: it's just hot. The winter, however, can give you any weather there is. It can range from 70 degrees and sunny in the dead of winter, to, well, like it was for part of the ride week.

California has been blessed/suffering with crazy rain this winter, which is a good thing, and really sucks at the same time. We have had about a foot of rain so far at home this year. I got a break in the rain to drive my dirt bike, Sorsha, and Ines's horse Rayos down to Ridgecrest on Sunday a week before the ride. It was a beautiful, pleasant, calm drive down. Monday morning did not help as the rain started. It was light to mild, and no wind, so Brian and I spent the day in the side by side marking the trail. We got about 35 miles done, which was good, but we were very wet and very cold for a long time.

Tuesday hit with a vengeance! Big wind, pouring rain, and a thunder clap that was so close it shook the big metal cover at the arena enough to scare me. This was not weather to go out and mark trail, so we switched to the truck and tried to do water troughs. That mostly worked until we were driving up a wash/road that had water coming down it. This is not safe! We got most of the water troughs out, but the intense rain and wind pretty much killed the day. It was serious rain: flash-flood caliber rain.

The weather broke Tuesday night and the rain slowed down, so we got started again on Wednesday. The first thing we noticed was the rain had of course wiped out the chalk arrows on the ground. 35 miles of arrows gone! Great! We had 70 more miles to mark. We got about 60 done, but the sun was setting as we finished in the freezing cold. Lucky for me "Sandwash" Ali Woodward and her husband Dan came with the dirt bikes to help. They spent Thursday riding and re-chalking the 35 miles we had done before the big rain. I went back out on the bike and finished up the remaining 15 miles or so and checked part of the trail we did on Wednesday. I also had to go put up all the road crossing signs as well as some key trail split signs. I was not able to switch to horse rider until Thursday afternoon when Ines and I went for our pre-ride ride on the horses. On Friday morning, for day one, the desert was our friend. Perfect weather- low in the low 40s, highs in the high 50s. Bright sun, zero breeze, perfect, wet desert. It was just glorious! The riders who got to ride Friday had a real treat. I rode Sorsha along with Ines on the fifty to sixth place. The conditions were stunning! The Tuesday rain floods had wiped the desert clean, and all the slop had soaked in. The roads with the huge bumps and ruts were as flat as a freeway with perfect footing. You can't buy footing this good. There was so much water out there that we did not really need a single trough. It was a perfect day with one exception- my lower left leg hurt. It's one of my same old injuries that I just deal with, but this was different. It hurt a lot while riding, and I could barely get off the horse without collapsing to the ground. When this happens, I usually get off and walk it off, which usually helps, but I could not really walk. I could not trot the horse in the vet checks either. At the end of the fifty I could barely walk. Okay, Okay, my body was telling me something. I limped around that evening and knew I was not riding Saturday to the Pinnacles. I opted to sit it out and help with the ride. Which turned out to be a good thing, sort of.

Saturday morning was pretty nice. The forecast called for some light rain in the afternoon, but nothing serious like on Tuesday. The ride was special- it was going to the Trona Pinnacles which has never been done in a ride before. The 25 ended right there and the riders were trailered back, while it was the lunch stop for the 55-mile riders. I went out to the away vet check to help out. All the LD and 55's came through on their way out, in nice weather and all in good spirits. It was a little breezy, and overcast, and a little cold, but not too bad, and certainly good riding weather. I left around 2 pm to get back to camp so I could go out on the trail backwards in the side by side to hang glow bars on the last 13 miles or so of the trail for the 55s. It was on the way back in the car that it started. The wind picked up, the sky got dark, the temperature dropped, and the rain started. Lightly at first, but then it started coming down. The hard stuff, with about 40 degrees and 30 plus MPH of wind. It was MISERABLE in the side by side as I went backwards on the trail. I was soaked, cold, freezing, but kept thinking about those riders out there. Yeah. I came across the leader, Jessica Black, at about 4pm and it was almost dark. She said she was so ready for this to

be over. I could not agree more. Lori Oleson came by in second on Fargo- she said it was hell. They were slogging through water in the desert! Rachael Miura came by next and said it was ugly! The next group was Carolyn Hock and her group of three. All were walking through the slop in the howling, 30 MPH wind with the rain coming down sideways, in 40 degrees, with wind chill factor, by the way, is 18 degrees Fahrenheit! I said hi, how are you, etc, etc, and there was silence. Carolyn said, and I quote, "this is endurance!" You got that right, Carolyn.

I made it back to the vet check just before dark, where I immediately got into Gretchen's truck and turned on the heater up high. Those riders out there were not getting that luxury! After a while I got out as Ines, Ali, and Vanessa arrived. They were soaked, freezing, and in good spirits, but did not want to hang around. The vets wisely shortened the hold to "Get out of here!" so the horses would not have to stand around in that freezing slop. All of the blankets everyone brought were soaked. We hung around until the last of the riders on the 55 arrived as it was getting dark. We got them



through and back into the miserable conditions. It's a good thing I put up the glow bars! Brian drove the side by side back a while ago, so I happily drove the warm truck back to camp and tried to continue to dry out by the fire, under the big metal awning, in the pouring rain. The riders were trickling in and were really, really glad to be done. I got a call from Lynn Marks, who finished in 11th place, that they were at one intersection that was missing a glow bar and it took them a while to figure it out. I donned the wet jacket and hopped back in to the side by side and went back out there to fix it. Sure enough, there was a turn split that if you went left it was wrong, and the correct way had the glow bar too far down the trail. I missed that one having marked it going backwards. I fixed it and kept going a bit and finally ran into the last group of riders who were just trudging down the river that used to be a road. They thanked me for being out there to help them. I said you guys are the tough ones.

The roads were washes with water running down them, and there was standing water everywhere. I finally got turned around and had a hard time seeing due to how hard it was raining. I crossed a wash that crossed the trail that was not there on my way up. This is nuts. I stopped and called Gretchen and Brian and suggested we best cancel the third day. It was insane out here, and we could not guarantee the trail was safe for the next day. The decision was made to cancel day three

since the rain was supposed to let up, but it was also supposed to be light all day today. I got back to camp just before the final riders made it in. I don't remember a hot shower ever feeling that good.

**Congratulations** to the 20 riders who finished the 55 in some of the worst horse-riding conditions I have ever seen in the desert. The riders had to slog through a mile and a half of an alkali road that went from soft, perfect footing, to paste that the poor horses sunk into. That cost everyone an hour or more. Not one of those guys pulled a rider option out at the last vet check in the miserable conditions. They all soldered on to the finish. I'm listing them all here, and am also sending them each a special "I survived the 2023 Fire Mountain Pinnacles ride from hell!" award. They earned it. Most everyone enjoyed the new ride, and the reviews were great for the Pinnacles. Until all hell broke loose with the weather for those guys on the 55. The trailering back the horses from the finish worked out well, no one got lost, and my 3-mile section of virgin trail was pretty cool. The Ride With GPS demo/trial worked well on Friday- Ines and I used it and I was quite happy with how it worked. Several people tried it and gave me positive feedback. I'll continue to support it going forward. Of course it was not very valuable on Saturday. You could not hear the voice cues from the wind. And who in their right mind is going to pull out their phone when they are freezing in the pouring rain? It would be a valuable aid in the event of getting lost.

Also, a special **congratulations** to Molly Farkas. Can you believe she survived this 55-mile ride from hell to become the newest Century club rider? She's 80 and her horse is 20. There are no words for this accomplishment. Hat's off, Molly. You are amazing.

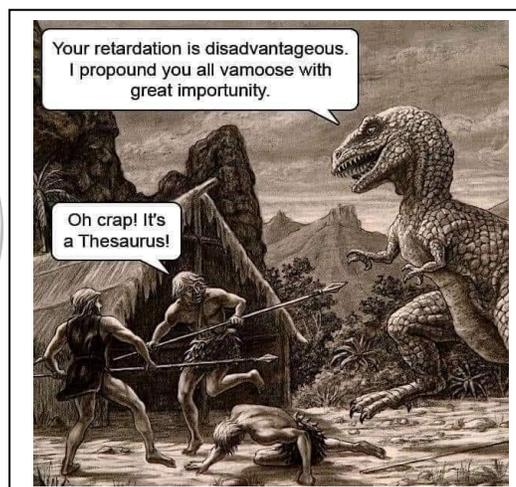
PS: I FINALLY went to the doctor this week and it looks like I have a pretty bad shin splint in my lower left leg. Figures, but I deserve it for being a guy and ignoring it for a couple of years. I'll be off the horse till spring, but will certainly be at 20 Mule Team helping. It better not rain, or I'll probably hang out in a hotel!

PSS: While taking the trail down on Sunday I found lots of trail damage, all the chalk arrows were of course gone, and the trail spilt signs were down. I was bummed about having to cancel the night before, but not the day after. There is always next year!

*Congratulations to all  
the participants  
and finishers of this  
epic ride!*

- |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Jessica Black          | 11. Lynn Marks          |
| 2. Lori Oleson            | 12. Berit Meyer         |
| 3. Rachel Miura           | 13. Alex Collier        |
| 4. Mary Becraft           | 14. Valerie Jacques     |
| 5. Rachell Hamby          | 15. Molly Farkas        |
| 6. Carolyn Hock           | 16. Callie Thornburgh   |
| 7. Alyse Yeargen          | 17. Marci<br>Cunningham |
| 8. Vanessa Erickson       | 18. Seth Murray         |
| 9. Ali Woodward           | 19. Rafe Pery           |
| 10. Ines Hofman-<br>Kanna | 20. Angela Murray       |

*When someone tells  
me they aren't a  
horse person, all I  
hear is blah, blah,  
blah, I'm a  
psychopath...*



## One Mule for Sister Bev - Desert Dude Ride

By Beverley Kane

I have always loved riding in the Eastern Sierra and adjacent deserts like Death Valley. The grueling multi-day trips with Rock Creek Pack Station—a horse drive and the UC Davis-accredited mule packing trip—were among the peak experiences of my life. But for immediate and less strenuous gratification, I adore the dude rides during the Lone Pine Film Festival.

Held the first week of October, the annual Festival is a celebration of the more than 400 TV shows and movies that were shot in and around the Eastern Sierra, especially the Alabama Hills. Most of the films were Westerns, with such greats as John Wayne, Randolph Scott, and Anne Baxter. But the venue also doubled as the desert locale of *Tremors* and as the 24<sup>th</sup> century shore leave land for the crew of *Star Trek V*. The Sierra range, with towering Mt. McKinley, stood in for the Himalayas in *Gunga Din*.



The high point of the film festivals has been the dude ride in the desert, visiting some of the iconic scenes on and off Movie Road. This year, I was delighted to find that the host outfit, McGee Creek Pack Station, had been bought by my favorite wrangler from Rock Creek, Tyler, and his partner Carissa, who were our guides for the ride.

On a 90° day, twelve of us headed out with a movie docent across the hot sands with spectacular views of the Sierra in the background. I was surprised at how technical the ride was for dudes who were on equine-back for the first time. But the McGee Creek horses and mules took care of everyone with their mountain-bred trail savvy, surefootedness, and quiet temperaments. One unusually large, wide dude had several pieces of camera equipment slung over his back. Never having ridden, he was understandably slightly terrified of the steep sandy washes and the narrow passages between boulders. In his fright, he kept yelling “Whoa! Whoa!”—not the thing to do with so many other riders in your string—while his huge, heavy telephoto lens pounded the rump of his forgiving horse. Reminded me of the Dave Stamey song, *Dude String Trail*, with the lines:

*They show up in skirts 'n sandals  
And shorts way up on their thighs  
And they thump 'em with their heels  
And they jerk on the reins  
And them ponies just roll their eyes*

New since when I had ridden there before the pandemic, the Bureau of Land Management and the Alabama Hills Stewardship Group have mounted a more visible campaign to protect the fragile desert. We were issued these stickers to inspire environmental mindfulness.



Having asked Carissa for a mule months ahead of time—Tyler had outfitted his red mule, Cindy, for the steep descent down the 11,000-foot Cottonwood Pass trail in 2017—I was thrilled with Snoopy, my assigned paint molly. When Snoopy isn't packing dudes in the desert, she gives dressage lessons back at the pack station in Mammoth Lakes. Snoopy could deftly side pass, handily avoiding the broken glass some brush-crusher had left in the bushes, and turn narrowly on her haunches and forehand for our group shot.

All too soon, the 2.5-hour ride was over and I reluctantly turned Snoopy back to her peeps rather than be hung for rustling.

The Hollywood history was for me secondary to the joy of riding Snoopy in the wide open spaces with sage scented air.



*Horses hear what is not spoken...*

## Quicksilver Endurance Riders (QSER) Club January 18, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

The Board meeting was held via Zoom on January 18, 2023, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance: Jerry Wittenauer, Nick Warhol, Rachel Miura, Magda Bartilsson, Carolyn Tucker, Mary Anderson, and Brian Reeves.

- Annual Election of Officers: After some discussion among the Board, the following were elected to serve as the QSER Officers for 2023: Jerry Wittenauer (President), Magda Bartilsson (Vice-President), Nick Warhol (Treasurer), and Elaine Elbizri (Secretary).
- Annual Banquet Status: Mary Anderson called for more action to drum up attendance for our upcoming Club Banquet (4 Feb, 5:00 to 9:00, Westside Grill, Gilroy). Mary reported that party favors had been purchased and that a commitment on head-count was due on Monday 23 Jan. The annual Club Awards are prepped and ready for presentation.
- Review of Committees/Reports:
  - A. Technical: Website/QUIPS/Other:
    - Nick is proposing to create a repository of GPS files for Ride Routes in our Western Region. More to be discussed at an upcoming meeting.
  - B. Membership – RachelM reports that members continue to renew for 2023, the \$50 gift card drawing was held (a renewal incentive), congratulations to Michelle King!
  - C. Goodwill – No activity in the past month.
  - D. Financial – Recent expense has been the printing costs for the annual yearbook (\$534.29) to be reimbursed to JerryW. Upcoming expenses will be the Banquet, and mailing expenses for the Annual Yearbook.
  - E. Ride Committee Reports
    - QS Fall Classic – Our ride date for this year is 30 Sept, the event is sanctioned and now appears in the AERC Calendar. Next step is applying for the use permit with County Parks in March.
    - Santa Cruz Fireworks Ride – Board Member Carolyn Tucker is agreeing to serve as our liaison for this event and keep us all posted on what the QSER can do to help out. Carolyn is also agreeing to champion our “weekend getaway” at the Santa Cruz Horsemen’s facility for a camping weekend in August.
  - F. Recent/Upcoming Events:
    - 4 Feb – Annual Club Banquet
    - 24 Feb – QSER Social event (Hosted Bar) at the AERC Convention in Jacksonville
  - G. Trails – Carolyn reports that all is quiet and mostly “closed” due to wet conditions or storm damage.
  - H. Awards Ctte Status
    - Club awards nominees have been selected, physical awards are ready for the Banquet
    - The Annual Yearbook has been prepared (Lori Oleson) and printed (JerryW) and will be available for distro at the Banquet.
- The next Board meeting will be at a brief tag-up preceeding the Banquet on 4 February, and then our regularly-scheduled meeting on Wednesday 15 March, 6:30 pm, via ZOOM.
- The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 pm.

*Jerry Wittenauer*

### **Treasurer's report:**

Checking \$ 12,565

Savings (trails fund) \$1,075

41 members paid through 2023

1 new member joined



## February Birthdays

2/12 - Becky Hart. 2/21 - Steve Lenheim.  
2/26 - Maryben Stover & Chuck Kessinger DVM,  
Pat Verheul, 2/27



**BIRTHDAYS, Y'ALL....** I don't have everyone's birthdays and we want to wish you well! If you are not listed, please send me the day and month! Elisabet

## Market Place

### HORSE BOARDING FACILITY

20535 Rome Drive, San Jose, California. **Stalls: \$400.00, pasture \$330.00.**

Fed twice a day high-quality orchard-alfalfa mix hay.

96' X 48' uncovered outdoor arena. We clean. Shavings available.

1.25 miles to entrance to the Quicksilver County Park (3600 acres and 19.2 miles of manicured trails).

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<http://equine-imity.com>

**Illustrations by Judith Ogas**

**Books by Julie Suhr --- Ten Feet Tall, Still and ...but it wasn't the horse's fault!** are available for sale. All proceeds go to AERC Trails Fund and Center for Equine Health at UC Davis. Please contact Julie Suhr at:  
**(831) 335-5933**

### **CENTERED RIDING® LESSONS**

Help your horse use him/herself effectively while going down the trail. Take the stress out of your body and your horse's body. Find out how to have a better seat and make your horse more comfortable.

Centered Riding® lessons available with Level 3 Centered Riding instructor. Clinics available upon request. **Becky Hart (408) 425-5860**

**Books by Lori Oleson --- Enduring Memories and Endurance... Years Gone By** are available for sale. Re-live the adventures that tell the stories of horses and riders who made their way down the trail in the 1960s through the 1990's. Books are available by contacting Lori at **(408) 710-5651** or [lorioleson@alumni.cpp.edu](mailto:lorioleson@alumni.cpp.edu)

**Michelle Herrera** is offering this Scotts Flat Ride jacket for **free** to anyone who would like to have it. It's an XL size, but must be women's size, since it fits my "medium" size husband fine. It's in great condition.

If you are in the Santa Cruz area, you can get it from me. Out of the area folks, if you pay shipping, I will ship it to you.

*Elisabet*



### Specialized Trailmaster Saddle for Sale:

The Trailmaster is a lightweight performance based trail saddle. This one is 15lbs, with a 15" seat, and a wide tree. It is all black and has a custom fleece seat cover over the leather seat. I'm including endurance stirrups and a Specialized girth. The billets are new but no leathers are included. Great condition - just needs to be fitted to your horse. \$1399 plus shipping if necessary.

[debbieboscoe@gmail.com](mailto:debbieboscoe@gmail.com) (Santa Cruz)



*Old age comes at a bad time! When you finally know everything,  
you start to forget everything you know!*

"...And after a long time the boy came back again.

"I am sorry, Boy," said the tree,  
"but I have nothing left to give you-  
My apples are gone."

"My teeth are too weak for apples," said the boy.

"My branches are gone," said the tree.

"You cannot swing on them-"

"I am too old to swing on branches," said the boy.

"My trunk is gone," said the tree.

"You cannot climb-"

"I am too tired to climb," said the boy.

"I am sorry," sighed the tree.

"I wish that I could give you something...  
but I have nothing left. I am an old stump.

I am sorry..."

"I don't need very much now," said the boy,

"just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired."

"Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as she could,

"an old stump is a good for sitting and resting. Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest."

And the boy did.

And the tree was happy."

*Shel Silverstein - The Giving Tree, 1964.*



# IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO JOIN THE QUICKSILVER RIDERS!!!!

**Club Mission** - Quicksilver exists to promote the sport of endurance riding by conducting endurance rides and advocating for equestrian trails. It seeks to provide a model for the highest level of sportsmanship and horsemanship within the context of this sport. It supports and provides educational events and leadership in each of these areas.

FIRST: We need your name \_\_\_\_\_

And then your address \_\_\_\_\_

And your phone number and e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

And then we need your money! Senior membership is \$ 30 \_\_\_\_\_

Junior membership is \$ 20 \_\_\_\_\_

(a junior is under 16 years of age)

Family Membership is \$45 \_\_\_\_\_

Mailed Quips (paper copy) \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

You can go to our website at : [www.qser.net](http://www.qser.net) to join, OR send a check made out to: **Quicksilver Endurance Riders, Inc.** to: Nick Warhol, 3664 Old Quarry Road, Hayward CA 94541

**THANK YOU!!**

