



**April  
2014**

**Volume 21  
Issue 4**

**RICK'S RAMBLIN'S**



There is a lot of good horsemanship advice on the internet and on Facebook these days. Below is some advice from Julie Goodnight, a highly respected horsewoman and clinician. In my opinion, she is well worth checking out on the internet or 'liking' her on Facebook, as she frequently posts a lot of very practical and helpful articles. Below she gives some excellent advice on controlling one's horse.

**I am a novice rider and am having troubles controlling my horse. This makes me very anxious and frustrated which I know doesn't help in my ability to be the leader with this horse. What can I do to get over this so I can progress with my riding?**

Without fail, the biggest mistakes I see people make when having control issues with a horse is two things that come instinctively to the rider but are the worst things you could do for the horse and only exacerbates the problem. The mistakes are:

1. Pulling back with both reins at the same time
2. Turning the horse in the direction he wants to go and then circling him back

When the rider feels like she is losing control of the horse, she instinctively pulls back with both reins, sometimes with a turning motion. When the horse feels that much pressure on his mouth, he locks up, leans into the bit and generally does the opposite of what you want-- if you want him to slow down, he speeds up, if you want him to turn right, he turns left. It is known as "running through the bridle" or "running through the shoulder" and are common responses of the horse when he feels steady and unrelenting pressure on both sides of his mouth at the same time. This horse becomes very defensive of his mouth and sticks his nose out and begins to feel to the rider like he has a steel pipe down the middle of his neck.

Sadly, this horse is often labeled "hard mouthed," like it is his fault. In my opinion there is no such thing as a hard mouthed horse and I have never yet found a horse that could not be rehabilitated to become a very light and responsive horse, and we get a lot of these horses in training. Also, I have seen many school horses learn that all they need to do is get the rider riled up emotionally so she freezes up with both reins and then the horse knows he can have his way with the rider and go

where he wants. When you lock up into a tug o' war with the horse, he will always win because it becomes a pound-for-pound race.

Always try to use your reins one at a time and in rhythm with the horse, in a pulsating or dynamic fashion, not a static white-knuckle pull; always be quick to offer the release. Learn to ride through problems, not lock up on the reins. Your horse mirrors your emotions so when you feel frustrated, your horse is feeling the same thing. Try to keep your emotions in check. Some horses learn that all they have to do is challenge you a little so that you get emotional and lock up and then they know they can do anything they want.

When turning right, first slide your hand down the right rein, then slowly pick up on the rein toward your chest, releasing with the opposite rein. The slower you move your hands, the softer the horse will become. The outside rein should be totally slack-- do not try to turn with that rein too, because as soon as you start pulling with both reins, the horse stiffens and you lock up. Keep the horse moving forward in the turn by reaching forward with your hands and closing both your legs on the horse's barrel in a pulsating fashion. Don't pull BACK on the rein to turn, that will interfere with his forward motion; gently lift the rein up or to the side.

The second problem is that when the horse becomes nappy and will not turn in the direction you are asking, most riders will give up before the horse does and turn the horse the other way, planning to circle back around to that spot you wanted to go to begin with. Although it often works long enough for you to get the horse positioned where you wanted him to begin with, you have just trained your horse to be disobedient by letting him turn the way he wanted to go and he most certainly will do it again. In the horse's mind, he only knows he got to turn the way he wanted; he will not make the association of having to go back to where you wanted because too much time has elapsed in his brain. He was rewarded for refusing the rider.

The other problem you mention is with confidence on your part, which exacerbates the control problems that you have with your horse. This is a huge issue and I guarantee there are thousands of people out there that know exactly how you feel. There is an article on my website on dealing with fear that should be helpful for anyone. There is also a book coming out soon called "Ride with Confidence!" in which I am one of five contributing authors. The book is being published in England and should be out this fall and I think it is going to be a good one. I'll be sure to publish it in my newsletter when the book is available.



One of the most important components when dealing with fear is to surround yourself with understanding, empathetic and supportive people that can help you reach your goals. Also, you should pick the company that you ride with carefully. If you do, you'll gain confidence more quickly, with more good experiences. I hope you can find a riding instructor or friend to help you work through this control problem. Don't worry, you'll get there, just be persistent.

*Courtesy of Julie Goodnight.. All Rights Reserved. (Contributed by Rick Balthaser)*

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



## GOODBYE WINTER,

## HELLO PLAYDAY IN THE CANYON

*By James M. Iacono*

It wasn't much of a winter to bid adieu, but that didn't stop ETI 357 from awakening the Canyon from hibernation into its first club competition of the year in a way that said "Wow!"

Twenty competitors broke into 2 Divisions and kicked up some newly-dragged-Jeff Kelly-dirt in a way that hadn't been seen Patti Gretzler left the boys in the dust at last October Buckle Day- and by the way, she was wearing her spoils like a girl who may even know how to sort a cow or two.

Many of the competitors had a jumpstart to their tool box by partaking in the Greg Canfield Clinic two weeks prior. New Activity Co-Directors Tracey Tuttle and Evelyn Ortega brought that event to fruition in the hopes that it would generate some excitement for the scheduled March 15<sup>th</sup> Playday. Which it did! The twenty equestrians who competed was the most the Club has had for a March Playday in several years.

There were 5 timed speed events, and in the Adult Division, the Teacher himself, Greg Canfield, dominated, but in all honesty folks, the aforementioned Patti Gretzler came within tenths of seconds on 4 of the 5 events. An over the hill Jimmy I swept up 3<sup>rd</sup> on most games with Kristina Stuckey surging like a girl who could get serious if she wanted too. It was great to see a respectable number of Adults competing! That's what makes this fun.... To push yourself at something in life you really LIKE to do rather than HAVE to do.

In the Junior Division, there were some very formidable future cowgirls, but some real cream rose to the top with the duo of Abby Klimisch, and her born-to-do-this-Arabian Iggy. Abby, under the

tutelage of Professor Canfield swept all 5 events. And they looked really good doing it! Savannah Stuckey was a respectable second in all 5 events, with Amanda Tuttle and Noelle Childs not far behind. Also putting in strong efforts were Carrie Tuttle and Jewell Sinkinson.

But what a great day! Everyone stayed safe and we had a tasty barbecue lunch afterwards with Jeff Kelly pulling the normal "Dave Seroski double" of dragging and cooking. Dave has taken over a lot of what a now retired Bob Wilks used to contribute. Those are big shoes to fill! Thanks Dave for taking care of the sound and buying and bringing in the new grill- officially broken in now like a leather glove. And with Rich Gomez being tied up for the day, your cuter sidekick Kristen Holden score kept and did color commentary on occasion, and kept the day on pace so that all five events were completed at noon.... With 20 competitors no less!

Many of the 12 beaten down adult competitors got together later that evening and proposed a "50 and older division". When I pointed out that we would still get a Patti Gretzler butt-kickin' it was determined that we needed a "50 and older MALE division".

Thanks again to all of you who not only volunteered but talked up the event so the Community came out in force. It was a busy month for our new Coordinators Evelyn and Tracy, and we want to thank them for stepping up to volunteer and lead a group of cowboys and cowgirls, young and old, who just have something in them that connects to a life from days gone by. If March 15<sup>th</sup> is any indication, buckle up, cuz we're in for a heck of a ride in 2014!

Play Day Pictures- March 2014







**TREASURER'S OFFICE...**

**ETI - CORRAL 357 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING  
February 28, 2014**

Ending Bank Balance (Bank of America) \$10,820.73

**DEPOSITS:**

Deposits Made After Closing: February \$0.00 \$0.00

Sub-Total for beginning Balance + Deposits \$ 10,820.73

**EXPENSES:**

<u>Ck#</u>	<u>Source:</u>	<u>Reason:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>	<u>Ck #</u>	<u>Source:</u>	<u>Reason:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
1613	ETI	membership	\$ 148.00	1614	ETI	membership	\$ 28.00
1621	ETI	membership	\$ 96.00	1623	K Hopkins	bd dinner	\$ 30.00
1624	V Iacono	spkr dinners	\$ 52.28	1625	T Tuttle	clinic food	\$ 145.40
1626	G Canfield	clinic	\$500.00				

Total expenses paid in – February 2014 (\$1099.68)

**UNPAID CHECKS ISSUED IN THIS PERIOD**

<u>Ck#</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Amount</u>
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Total Outstanding Checks February 28-2014 - i.e. Spending: (\$ 0.00)

Funds on hand in checking as of 2-28-2014 \$10,820.73

Petty Cash on Hand as of 2-28-2014 \$ 400.00

Corral FUNDS On Hand at 2-28-2014  
\$11,220.73

**SUBTOTAL CORRAL FUNDS:**

**Less Reserves:**

1.-ERT as of 2-28-2014 (\$ 476.73)

Total Corral Funds Committed To Reserve: (\$476.73)

NET - NET - NET Funds on Hand in Checking, Petty Cash to credit of : Corral 357 \$10,744.00



## Safety Tips and thoughts from your Trail Boss

By Terry Roberts

I was thinking about Horseback Riding as a sport in comparison to the other sports I participate in, I myself also participate in Motocross, Mountain Biking, Surfing and Stand Up Jet Skiing, all sports with an elements of risk and injury and I have the scars to prove it. Over the years I have had more than one comment about how dangerous they are. While it is true that these sports are dangerous at times most injuries and or accidents are due to me as the rider making a mistake , a bad decision or miscalculation and I am OK with this, it is what I signed up for going in and determined the risk is worth it for me personally.

The one missing component in these other activities is that the Motorcycle, Surfboard , Bike and Jet Ski are inanimate objects that become extensions of me the rider and all movements and actions are dictated by me the rider, good or bad decisions on my part determine the success and or failure of the ride.

This is also true when riding a horse you as the rider making **good** and or **bad** decisions will help determine the success and or failure of the ride, but the added element of a Horse that is a living , breathing , thinking , many times unpredictable creature, and his decisions good and bad have and significant role in the safety and success of your ride.

To help control this added Living Creature Element to your sport you need to help yourself and the horse to be prepared for whatever event you may participate in. You should ask yourself is your horse really ready for a long trail ride? A ride in a trailer? A day at the arena with other horses doing events? A Parade where anything from a plastic bag blowing in the wind will be encountered to a Marching Band belting out the Star Spangled Banner. And the other big question are your prepared, do you have the skills to be able to react to the many different situations that you may encounter?

We as a club were fortunate to make it through the Swallows day parade safely we had a bit of a scare for a moment but we were able to regroup and move on. As you may have heard other participants had some serious issues, the last thing we would want is to do is injure our horses and a spectator , so my long winded point is to continue to work on a regular basis with your horses to make sure they are prepared for whatever event you want to enjoy with them, get them the exposure they need, the training they need such as the Gymkhana training day we had with Greg Canfield, and the sorting Clinic we had with Cory at Circle S Ranch or just many hours of trail riding and time in the arena, get help from a trainer if needed.

Be Safe and enjoy the amazing animals God has blessed us to care for.



Trail boss continued....

I came across these tips recently and most will apply to our group, and with our recent Play Day and the Swallows Day Parade and just trail riding a review of these tips would be in order.

1. Desensitize your horse to scary situations you may encounter on the trail in a safe environment, such as an arena.
2. Gradually introduce him to traffic where you can control the situation.
3. Before you even think of hitting the trail, you and your horse should have mastery of basic skills in the arena. You should have whoa and go, steering, and control at all gaits.
4. If your horse isn't used to riding alone, build up his confidence by going out for short jaunts frequently, working up to longer rides as his confidence grows.
5. Don't tailgate! Maintain one horse length between horses.
6. Before you trot or canter on the trail, check with the other riders in your group.
7. In a mixed-levels group ride, put an experienced rider in the lead and another at the end.
8. If your group is well matched in skill level, take turns riding in the lead, middle and end positions.
9. Negotiate road crossings as a group so that no horse is left behind on the other side of a busy roadway.
10. Horses feel safest in a herd, and some may panic if they feel deserted. It's best to keep all riders in your group together, although experienced horses and riders may be fine venturing off alone.
11. At water stops, wait until all horses are done drinking before leaving the watering place. Some horses won't drink if they are distracted by the fear of being left behind.
12. If your horse tries to hurry home, refocus his attention by asking him to ride in serpentines along the trail, or flex to give his shoulder.
13. Rather than pulling straight back on the reins when your horse dives for a bite of grass along the trail, try pulling him left or right while you encourage him to move out.
14. Mind your multi-use manners: Show courtesy to hikers, bikers and others sharing the trail. You are an ambassador for equestrians!
15. If you crave competition, consider participating in a judged trail ride (trail trial), endurance ride or competitive trail ride.
16. Looking for adventure with your friends or family? Some camping facilities, state and national parks offer amenities to accommodate horses, including corrals.
17. Approach slippery, slick or rocky trail conditions slowly. Keep yourself centered in the saddle, so you don't throw your horse off balance.
18. Clean up after yourself: If you parked your rig at a trailhead, don't leave piles of manure and other mess behind.

19. Save our trails—join the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource to work for land access and preservation on a local or national level. [www.elcr.org](http://www.elcr.org)

20. Wear a helmet with an extended visor for added sun protection.

21. Be seen: If you ride out at night, reflective tack and clothing is a must. Wear dayglo orange in hunting territory.

22. Keep your tack in good repair. You don't want a cinch or bridle to break out on the trail.

23. If you only trail ride on the weekends, make sure the ride you choose is within your horse's current fitness level.

24. When you set out, always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to be back.

25. Carry a cell phone on your body, rather than in a saddlebag, in the event that you and your horse part company. Attach an ID tag somewhere on your horse's gear as well.

26. Pack a basic [first-aid kit for horses and humans](#).

27. Don't let your horse choose to charge up hills—a change in pace should be decided by you.

28. Reevaluate your horse's saddle fit on trail. A good arena saddle doesn't always make a good trail saddle.

29. If you use protective legwear for your horse, make sure it can withstand the rigors of trail riding. You shouldn't come home with burrs and/or sand in your horse's boots or wraps.

30. Insect populations can increase on the trails. [Protect yourself and your horse from pests, including gnats and ticks](#).

*Next Corral Meeting Thursday,  
April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2014  
San Giovanni's Restorante  
31931 Dove Canyon Dr. Trabuco  
Canyon, Ca 92679 at 7:00 pm*

*Come on over and enjoy a delicious  
dinner, good friends, and find out what  
the club has planned for April.  
Hope to see you all there!*

Missouri Fox Trotter "Pepper" for adoption to good home. Very sweet boy.



Contact Kristen @ (949-444-1990)

**2014 Board of Directors:**

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**Social Media:** Robby Stuckey  
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**April 2014 Events:**

Thursday April 3<sup>rd</sup>- Member's Meeting at San Giovanni's 7:00 pm

Saturday April 5<sup>th</sup> Trail Maintenance O'Neill Park 9:00 am  
Jeff Kelly 351-5791

Wednesday April 9<sup>th</sup>. Meeting with the park rangers at 7:30 am.  
Contact Rick 709-2359

Thursday April 10<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting 7:00 pm Location is TBA

Saturday April 26 – "Month End Event" Cowboy Festival in Santa Clarita



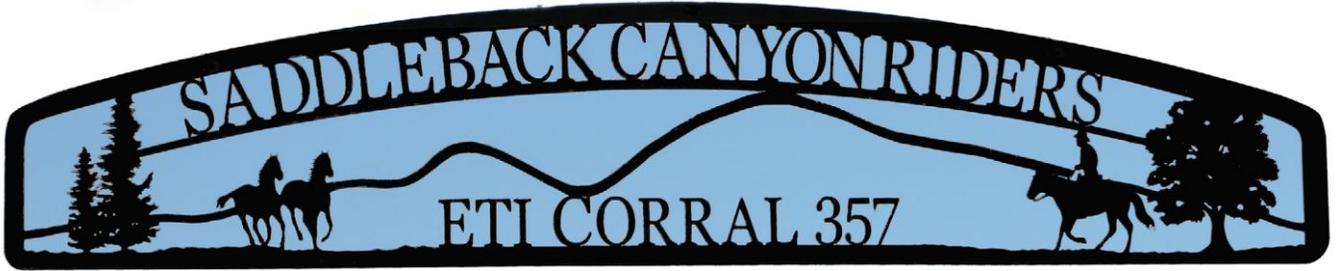
*Come on out and enjoy fun and family friendly events!*



*Swallows Day Parade, wow! This year's theme was "New Trails West". We packed our horses with ropes, bedrolls, slickers, guns, canteens, and a chicken. We had twelve people on horses, and one on the ground walking. Way to go Sydnee! I think I can speak on behalf of everyone when I say it was very interesting. Please ask any of the members who participated for an exciting one on one story.*

*I would like to thank Morey Levitt, Jimmy I, Amber, Terry Roberts, and Robby Stuckey for trailering our horses to the parade. Our riders were Me, Kristina, Robby, Jim, Jimmy, Terry, Susan, Pam, Amber and Bob, Kristen, and Kevin.*

*We did win 1<sup>st</sup> place in Class 42 "Mounted Group" (family).  
Congratulations everyone!  
by Evelyn Ortega*



### What is ETI?

Equestrian Trails, Incorporated is a family oriented riding club established as a nonprofit corporation in 1944 with the Charter to be "Dedicated to the Acquisition and Preservation of Trails, Good Horsemanship, and Equine Legislation",

With its combined membership, ETI has successfully worked to keep our trails open and add more equestrian facilities. The more members we have backing equine legislation and trail preservation, the more likely the State, County and City Officials will be to comply with our needs.

### Who are the Saddleback Canyon Riders?

The Saddleback Canyon Riders are ETI Corral 357. Established in 1991, we are one of the largest ETI corrals in California with members from South Orange County and points beyond. We are a family-friendly equestrian group based in Trabuco Canyon at the foot of the majestic Saddleback Mountains. Our Corral is committed to supporting and helping maintain O'Neill Regional Park and other local riding trails.

ETI Corral 357  
PO Box 1026  
Trabuco Canyon, CA 92678