



## RICK'S 'RAMBLINS'

BY RICK BALTHASER

### BUILDING MEMBERSHIP IN 2012

Happy February all!

On Saturday, January 21st, I had the honor and pleasure of attending ETI National's Corral President Luncheon at the Rose Bowl Riders clubhouse in Pasadena. It was a great opportunity to learn from and brainstorm with our National Board of Directors and other Corral Presidents and their guests on important ETI topics and opportunities.

It was a fast-paced and fun four hours that covered topics including:

- Membership and Associate Membership
- Insurance
- The National Magazine
- Convention
- High Point Gymkhana
- High Point Horse Show Circuit
- National Trail Coordination
- National Rides
- Trail Riding and Camping
- Trail Trials
- GPS
- The Jr. Ambassador Program

This meeting re-instilled the tremendous respect I have for ETI National. ETI has over 1,500

members in 33 different corrals spread throughout California. The National Board of Directors is a wonderful group of extremely dedicated, hard working and fun-loving folks that are the backbone and heart and soul of ETI. Simply put, our corral would not exist without this great governing body.

And ETI National doesn't just govern ... they ride! ETI National sponsors three great rides throughout the year. Those of us who have not yet participated learned about the 'Jim Hester Ride' in Yucca Valley on the last weekend of April, the 'Spring Ride' during the first week in June in Lockwood Valley, and the 'Death Valley Ride', an epic week-long ride the first full week of November. All three rides sound like great ridin' and good clean fun!

At about the midway point in the meeting, after a yummy lunch of homemade lasagna, salad, garlic bread and carrot cake, we formed small 'brainstorming' groups that discussed the theme of the Luncheon: 'Building Our Membership'. Our groups then shared our thoughts and ideas with the general meeting. This fun and lively 'group brain trust' approach proved to be an educational and motivating experience for all. I'll be able to share some of these ideas in more detail at our Member and Board Meetings. *(continued on page 5)*



## IN THE SADDLE WITH KAREN BALTHASER

BY JAMES M. IACONO

She opened the door for me, and I was not surprised to be welcomed by a breath of fresh air. Anyone who has spent any time with Karen Hopkins-Balthaser knows what I am talking about. Many of you know Karen as the “organizer extraordinaire” as she fulfills her duties and more as the Club Secretary. But spend a little time with her and you will be infected with her joie de vie, and marvel at that feature she wears so well despite the journey that has led her to our grateful community. I spent some time with her after work one day last week and received some insights into this extraordinary human being that I am honored to share with all of you. No newsletter article can truly describe the depth and breadth of our 2011 ETI Presidential Award recipient, but I will humbly do my best to give you a flavor that will leave your mouth watered for more.

Karen Bradley was born “several” years ago (the same year Disneyland opened) in Tacoma Washington with a hint of Blackfoot Indian in her blood. Her earliest photograph on a horse was taken at the age of 2 on Billy, her Grandpa George’s ride (below) who was a real cowboy from the Big Sky state of Montana. She knew at an early age that she had an affinity for animals, and being the older sister of

three brothers, she got a lot of practice in the “caring for” department. By the time their fourth child came along, her parents, bored with the tedium of raising toddlers, delegated Karen as the surrogate parent of their youngest son. After all, she was mature for her age (five). The family migrated South, first to Las Vegas, then Brea, California, where she would settle in for the next long



chapters of her life. She graduated a Lady Wildcat from Brea Olinda high school, and after 4 years of being a part time college student and a rising star in JC Penney’s fash-

ion department, she married David, her high school sweetheart. David was an architect and they began building their life together in Brea. Karen continued to get promoted at JC Penney’s and had her first son Nicholas at the age of 25. Now that she was home, she began fulfilling a life-long dream- having a mini-farm right there in the suburb of Brea. I will get into the cavalcade of varmints that began then later, but nothing could have prepared her for what next happened, as Nicholas was diagnosed with leukemia at 2 ½. Being a parent, I can only imagine what it would be like to have a child with a life-threatening disease. *(continued on page 3)*

## IN THE SADDLE WITH KAREN BALTHASER (CONTINUED)

Karen felt helpless and drained during the initial treatments, and at times wanted the same fate dealt to her that was being dealt to her baby boy. He was a fighter, and survived the initial grueling treatments, and then battled another relapse at the age of 5. By then, Karen had her hands full with two more little girls, Kirsten and Natalie, and when Nicholas went into remission a second time, she felt they were out of the woods and life could go as planned, and as she always imagined. She always stayed busy, working at her brother's hardware store, tutoring on the side, and offering day care to others in the neighborhood. The mini-farm went into full swing with cats, dogs, rabbits, iguanas, chickens, cockatiels, and even a pot belly pig. The school would have class field trips to her HOUSE. She became a President in the PTA, was a Boy Scout leader, Girl Scout Leader, and a Team Mom (surprise, surprise). She always managed her life so that there were just enough hours in the day.

But life dealt her another blow when Nicholas turned 17. The leukemia resurfaced and the treatments stepped up. He needed a bone marrow transplant, and after a long search, a donor was found out of state. But even after this complicated procedure, Nicholas' body could not fight the cancer as well as the effects of the bone marrow transplant, and he succumbed to their effects 3 years later at the age of 20. Karen says he will

always help identify who she is, as he was one special son whose imprint on her and every one he came in contact with was indelible.

Karen returned to college in her forties and received her Bachelor's Degree in English, and then a teaching credential. Her life experiences led her on a path of yearning to help people, especially children. She currently works for Tustin Unified School District as a Para Educator in Behavioral Interventions specializing in Children with Autism. I marvel at people who choose to work with people who are faced



with difficult challenges for those challenges then become theirs also to face and conquer. Without selfless people like Karen, so many in our world would face a lonely hopelessness that would overwhelm them. I salute you Karen Hopkins for doing what you do! Before she landed her current job, she tutored "at risk" kids, taught kids who were under house arrest for *(continued on page 4)*

## IN THE SADDLE WITH KAREN BALTHASER (CONTINUED)

various infractions, and also was a teacher at College Hospital for kids dealing with abuse and addictions. You see a common theme here? Karen is one of those special individuals who is willing to be there for those facing all sorts of unfortunate circumstances- an American Mother Teresa! (I know she'll cringe at that reference, but that's my impression and I'm sticking to it.)

Karen met Rick Balthaser in 2000 after her marriage with David ended but Karen and Rick decided to wait to get together until their kids (besides Karen's two girls, Rick has two boys) were on their way with their individual lives out of the house. When it comes to bringing together a blended family, I can't think of a better "stir stick" than Karen! Karen says she loves Rick's spontaneity and easy-going ways, and the fact that he has given her two additional sons. It was Rick's spontaneity that jelled with Karen's life-long love for animals that sent them looking for a rural setting out Trabuco Canyon way. She and Rick had gone riding together in Catalina and in Mexico, and Karen longed for the feelings and smells she remembered from her Grandpa's farm in Tacoma as a child.



She loved the pheromone of a horse. (doing this interview I learned a new word from the teacher!) After they bought their current home on Adkinson Lane (named for the man who shot the last grizzly bear in Orange County), Rick found A Missouri Fox Trotter named Stormy, and soon after, the neighbors "found" the perfect Fox Trotter for her. His name was Red Touch of Velvet, now known as Sunny. She says that teaching kids with special needs

and working with the horses is interchangeable, and she can apply methods learned in each to the other. She does feel that Sunny has an innate sense of wanting to take care of her. Karen had fallen off a horse several years back, and it took awhile to get back on. She feels that Sunny assures her that things will be alright when they go out on trail. And for all the loving assurances she gives to family, friends, students, and club members, it's nice to know that God, after all she has been through, has balanced nature by giving her a "sunny" future. She loves living in Trabuco Canyon, and feels that this is now her home for the long haul. And for all of us who know her, that too, is like a welcome forecast...clear and sunny with lots of fresh air!

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONTINUED)

After the meeting, with a smile on my face and new ideas racing through my head I drove off with a couple of really great 'take-aways'.

First, was the reminder that ETI was created for our different corrals to interact and take part in each others other rides, camping trips, Trail Trials, clinics, gym-khanas, play days, shows, as well as the three great ETI National sponsored rides.

And second, that 'Building Membership', will be critically important to the continued health and success of our corrals and the entire ETI organization. For me, it's a no-brainer ... ETI

is way too fun and way too cool ... so why not pro-actively share it with as many like-minded

horse lovers as possible. By doing this, we'll be bigger, stronger and together we'll help ensure the preservation of our trails and the equestrian life-style that we all cherish.

I'll wrap 'er up with this quote that I



enjoyed stumbling upon:

"If lawyers are disbarred and clergymen are defrocked, shouldn't it follow that cowboys would be deranged?"

I hope to see ya' out on the trails!



## TRAIL BOSS TIDBITS BY JIM SCHICHT

The month end/year end ride was well attended by eight happy riders gearing up for their New Years Eve Celebrations. What a way to end the year end the year for our Saddleback Canyon Riders. Your trail boss was finally able to lead this merry band of riders, we split into two groups on Live Oak Trail, one group went for the long

ride while I lead the shorter ride.

We look forward to 2012 for great riding and trail maintenance. Thanks to all for the increase in our park hours.

Just a reminder watch your riding partner for running noses or not as spunky as they should be with this nasty virus floating around.



## HORSE SENSE

BY DEBBIE KELLY

This article was sent to me by another ETI member. I did not recognize the name of the writer and googled his name; Martin Black. His methods parallel many of the modern day horse training disciplines where a gentle method of horse handling partnered with a mutual respect between man and horse; has touched the hearts of so many students and equestrians. Martin Black was also a student of the late Ray Hunt whose methods described on Martin's website were cutting edge and led the way for a new culture of starting young horses free of pain and fear. We know of so many iconic names out there that we can draw so much from; including Pat Parrelli, Monte Roberts, Buck Brannaman, and so many more. We may not embrace all the methods attached to these great trainers; but the common thread that raises the relationship with our equine partners to another level cannot be ignored. I hope you enjoy Martins article on "Separating Disrespect from the Unknown". I pulled this from his website and have and in the interest of space have abbreviated it. You can go to his website [www.martinblack.net](http://www.martinblack.net) to read it in its entirety.

### Separating Disrespect From Unknowing

Written by Martin Black

*In general, this is probably the most misidentified problem horsemen on varying levels deal with. The big problem for the horse is, many of the handlers are unaware and want to "dis-*

*cipline" the horse for not performing to their expectations. If the person is open-minded enough to consider where the horse may be coming from and reevaluate the line of communication, life might be easier for both of them.*

*Often the horse may be responding to some discomfort the person is imposing; this could be physical or mental, and the horse is only trying to get away from the pressure or seek relief. It is important for the person to realize the cause of a problem in order to find the proper solution. The more aware the person is of what is causing the actions of the horse, the easier it is to deal with the problem. Many times the solution doesn't mean putting the horse in a*



*pressure situation to get what you want; it is as easy as removing the cause. If it's not something the person is doing, it may be environmental; in either case the situation may allow removing the cause to get the desired results.*

*Excluding the hormonal influences, horses will generally try to please people. They don't want conflict. Even with a certain amount of hormonal influence, (Continued on page 7)*

## HORSE SENSE (CONTINUED)

*if the situation is that the easy way out for the horse is to comply with our desire, the horse may willingly do what we want.*

*Disrespect is something people teach horses. It's hard for people to set their egos aside to see this, but if you watch someone that is having a conflict with a horse ask yourself two questions:*

- 1. Is the person taking the horse's actions personal, and wanting revenge?*
- 2. Is the person trying to discipline the horse after the fact; in other words, are the pressures coming at a later time than when the action took place?*

*In either case, it is unlikely the horse is going to relate the person's reaction to his action and will therefore just resent the person or respond with fear. Many times if the horse is afraid,*

*the person feels like they have accomplished something because the horse is distracted with fear and may not think about whatever it was that caused him to get in trouble. Whether it is fear or disrespect, the horse is not in a frame of mind to willingly do what we would like to get done with them.*

*The reactions of the horse are going to be based on experience and instinct. Instinct can tell him to be cautious or curious. Self-preservation is always strong in a horse that doesn't have confidence in something. This is where an inexperienced horse could get in trouble if the person reacts with too much pressure.*

*If we don't trigger their flight instinct or expose them to bad experiences, they can learn in a respectful, interested manner and be, in my opinion, a pleasure to work with.*



## LIKE US ON FACEBOOK BY DON SEGIEN

Well, it's official, our corral has moved into the 21st

century. We've got a Facebook page. That's no small thing. Well, it might be if you're viewing it on your iPhone. Privacy issues aside - privacy is a concern for old people anyhow - There are lot's of fun and helpful things you can do with our page. You can upload photographs, create events, read our newsletter and see what's

new on the page. You can peruse the calendar. One of the most popular Facebook activities

is to "like" things. That's a very neighborly thing to do. You can also write on the wall. That's a good thing, not at all like graffiti. Remember, Facebook is like a clothes dryer; you only get out of it what you put into it. If you haven't



done so, go like our page on Facebook. Visit early and visit often. I'm Don Segien, I'm from Chatsworth, and I like you.



# CORRAL CALENDAR

Date			Event	Time	Location	Contact
Feb.	2	Thursday	Members Meeting	7:00 PM	Friends	Karen (714) 458-7772
	4	Saturday	Trail Maintenance	9:00AM	O'Neill Park T.C.	Jim S (949) 677-5200
	9	Thursday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	TBA	Karen (714) 458-7772
	25	Saturday	Month End Ride	10:00AM	O'Neill Park T.C.	Jim S (949) 677-5200
March	1	Thursday	Members Meeting	7:00 PM	Friends	Karen (714) 458-7772
	3	Saturday	Play Day	8:00 AM	O'Neill Park T.C.	Jim (949) 459-7742
	8	Thursday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	TBA	Karen (714) 458-7772
	24	Saturday	Swallows Day Parade	6:00AM	Capistrano, Ca.	Jim (949) 459-7742



## PARTICIPATE AND WIN (PAW) SADDLEBACK CANYON RIDER'S CONTEST

Because, we want to **REWARD and RECOGNIZE** our Members for their participation, dedication and support of our great club!

### **OFFICIAL Git-R-Done! RULES:**

**Who is eligible?** :Members of ETI 357 – Saddleback Canyon Riders that are in good standing!

(Note: Board Members of ETI 357 are not eligible for this contest)

**How does it work?** When you attend any ETI 357 - Saddleback Canyon Rider's Event in any capacity, whether it's as a participant, a volunteer, or even a spectator you get a POINT for your participation. Just sign in at the event and your point will be recorded!

These will include ALL of our GREAT sanctioned and even non-sanctioned club-related events: Members Meetings, Month End Trail Rides, Trail Maintenance Days, Play Days, Parades, Santa Clarita Cowboy Festival 'Field Trip', Camping Trips, Special Events, Volunteer Events like Equifest, ETI 357 Clinics, etc!

#### **Prizes:**

**There will be an AWESOME GRAND PRIZE for FIRST PLACE!**

**AMAZING PRIZES for SECOND and THIRD PLACES**

And even special prizes at our Members Meetings for those who rack up FIVE points and TEN points!

**So, show up at our great events! ... Have FUN with your club! .... Rack up some points, and we'll see ya' at the AWARDS CEREMONIES at our Christmas Party in December!**



# TREASURER'S REPORT

BY VICKI IACONO

ETI - CORRAL 357 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR PERIOD ENDING November 30,2011

Ending Bank Balance (Bank of America) \$10,365.11

DEPOSITS:

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

Sub-Total for beginning Balance + Deposits \$10,365.11

EXPENSES:

Ck#	Source:	Reason:	Amount:	Ck #	Source:	Reason:	Amount:
1484	Sue Corley	Costume winner	\$50.00	1485	ETI	membership	\$84.00
1487	D Kelly	playday supplies	\$45.00	1488	J Iacono	newsletter	\$20.00

Total expenses paid in – November 2011 (\$199.00)

UNPAID CHECKS ISSUED IN THIS PERIOD

Ck#	Source	Reason	Amount
1490	ETI	membership	\$28.00

Total Outstanding Checks November 2011 - i.e. Spending: (\$ 28.00)

Funds on hand in checking as of 11-30-2011 \$10,337.11

Petty Cash on Hand as of 11-30-2011 \$ 400.00

Corral FUNDS On Hand at 11-30-2011: \$10,737.11

SUBTOTAL CORRAL FUNDS:

Less Reserves:

1.- MAU as of 11-30-2011 (\$ 779.89)

Total Corral Funds Committed To Reserve: \$( 779.89)

NET - NET - NET Funds on Hand in Checking, Petty Cash to credit of : Corral 357 **\$ 9,957.22**



## **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.

## **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.

ETI Corral 357  
PO Box 1026  
Trabuco Canyon, CA 92678