



**Alexandria Equestrian Association
RIDER's DIGEST**

May 2008

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CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.aeanj.com

**THE NEXT GENERAL MEMBERSHIP
MEETING OF THE AEA WILL BE:**

To Be Announced

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring Fever

Spring has sprung, and for horse folks, it's a wonderful time of the year. It's time to get your horse out and about, and perhaps with enough work, ready for some serious trail rides. Some AEA members have been bit by the "trail/hunter pace" bug of late. To the point where they have compiled a list of rides in the area and put them on our web site, for easy access on a beautiful Saturday or

NEWSLETTER

Sunday. If you have never done one, try it. Riding on a new trail, usually in a beautiful location, with other horse lovers is a great way to enjoy a spring day.

Spring means another thing to people – spring cleaning. I am not talking about your house, I am talking about our township barn. Yes, the barn needs some TLC from time to time, and it's been a while since we worked on it. Recently a few of us walked around with a pad and pencil and made of list of improvements to be done. Hence, our spring cleaning day will be Saturday May 17th starting at 8:30am. We will concentrate most of our efforts in the foaling stalls portion of the barn, but there are a few other spots that need attention as well. We have doors to rebuild or repair, junk to haul away, stalls to strengthen, etc. We have carefully chosen the 3rd Saturday in May, as it is also dumpster day. So if you have a vehicle that can haul away junk to the dumpster, by all means join in the fun. If you are interested in helping out that day, please email me at tuckaway-farm@earthlink.net. If that day is not good for you, hark you have a second chance. After all those doors get repaired or replaced, they will need some paint. We will set up another day – to the determined by the "paint crew" we have, to paint any new doors or touch up any old ones. If you would prefer to paint, please sign up by contacting me with available dates.

As you look at your busy schedule, remember this is an opportunity to work off some of those 5 volunteer hours and get your work bond back in your wallet. Besides, it's a lot of fun to get out there with other volunteers on a Saturday morning and make some needed improvements that will help maintain our valuable asset. Did I mention that we are the only township in NJ with a municipal barn? Aren't we lucky!

Judy

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Mailbox

Horse racing enthusiasts will immediately recognize “The Call to the Post”, the bugler’s alarm to riders that it’s time to take position at the gate. This writer is an enthusiast to the point that when my cell phone rings what is heard is that proverbial bugle call. Sometimes when I’ve mistakenly pushed the wrong button and turned the ringer volume to high, you might think that you’re standing at trackside right there at Saratoga!

Tuck that away for a minute and let’s go back into time a bit... maybe 40 or 45 years. The more senior AEA members might remember on their black and white TV’s a comedian and pantomime artist named Red Skelton. He was hysterical.

My mind works in quizzical ways so I was recently reminded of an old Red Skelton skit by an incident with my cell phone. Picture a farmer toiling in the soil. While he kneels over, his old transistor radio falls out of his pocket and there it stays while pumpkin plants grow up around it. Months later, while harvesting, the farmer discovers that the slight jarring of a certain pumpkin causes it to play music! One can imagine the comedy surrounding his musical pumpkin.

Now fast forward to this past winter. While taking mail from my mail box, my cell phone (unbeknownst to me) slips off my belt into a snow bank and off I go, none- the-wiser. A day goes by and my astute wife remembers that we had stopped at the mail box before heading down the lane. The plan was for me to go up to the mailbox and listen for a ring while she called from the house. But, wouldn’t you know? The snowplow had gone by leaving a substantial row of snow at roadside in front of the boxes. Certainly my cell phone was nowhere to be seen!

I stood there at this desolate scene when what to my wondering ears there came a distant, but familiar sound. Deep under the snow bank there it was sounding.... A muffled “Call ToThe Post”!

I bristled like a three year old ready to spring from the gate! My furious digging soon yielded my phone from this magical, musical snow bank and I was off to the races!! Still works, that cell phone!

Next time I want to get rid of the damned thing, I better try a little harder!

Pete Tucker

HORSE THOUGHTS:

What You Need

When you have a horse, you need things. There’s no getting around it. You need a saddle and a bridle if you are going to ride him. You need a barn. You need a pasture or a pen to keep him in. You need hay and grain and medical equipment, a vet on call and a farrier who comes every month or so. And you need a lot of money to pay for it all. But what you also need, what is sometimes in short supply, but crucial to your horse’s well-being, is patience.

A horse is an amazing creature. He is 1200 pounds of muscle and power that allows us to sit on his back and control him in any way we want. Think about that. Think about the miracle it is that we are able to control such an animal. But sometimes we can’t control him. Many times this is because of the rider’s lack of patience. He gets frustrated because the horse won’t do what he wants or the rider doesn’t know how to ask the horse to do what he wants. When riders run into problems, they sometimes lose patience. But patience is the key to horse ownership.

Every horse is different and every horse needs to be treated as a unique individual. Some horses take longer to train than other horses. This will require more patience on your part. This does not mean the horse is dumb or stubborn—it just means that you need to be patient. For example, I have one horse that tends to get frustrated very easily. He will actually stop in his tracks, stomp his foot and shake his head no when he doesn’t understand something. Some people would get mad and force him to do what they want him to do. What I do with this particular horse is, just stop. I stop doing what I am teaching him and go on to something else that he knows. When I feel he has calmed down and is ready to try it again, then I will go back and attempt it another time. 99% of the time he will get it the second time around and I have a happy horse that has learned something without being forced with negativity from me. You

cannot fight a horse—he will always win. If you think you have won because you have forced him to do something, you haven't. All you really have done is make the horse hate what he is doing and you've taken away his willingness to be your partner.

Now don't get this mixed up with spoiling your horse. You don't want to let him walk all over you and get away with misbehavior. You need to keep yourself at the top of the pecking order. What you want to do is teach him to *want* to please you, like a wild horse wants to please the herd leader. You want to make the right thing easy and the wrong thing hard. I will discuss this at length in my next article.

When you are handling your horse, think about why he does or doesn't do something. Put yourself in his shoes, so to speak. My friend got a new pony for her daughter. She had him on the cross-ties while she was brushing his face. He didn't like it and was moving his head away. Her first inclination was to hold him still and force him to let her brush him. But instead, she stopped and thought about why he was doing that. Normally he doesn't resist anything so it made her wonder what was up. She got a softer brush and he was a different pony. His head dropped, his eyes got soft and he then loved being brushed. Something as simple as using a different brush can change the way your horse acts.

Here is an example of how losing your patience not only doesn't work, but can make things worse. This same friend looked at a horse for sale. The seller put him on the lunge line. This was a nervous, sensitive horse. Because the seller didn't communicate his cues effectively, the horse didn't understand what direction the seller wanted him to go in and he picked the wrong direction. The seller got after him with the lunge whip and reprimanded him. This caused the horse to become confused and then more nervous. He ended up getting tangled in the lunge line and being reprimanded further. He was scared out of his wits and after that, he couldn't do anything right. He was lost. And he certainly didn't want to please the person who was confusing him and upsetting him. Luckily, my friend saw through all this and bought him anyway. She brought him home and treated him with consistency and patience. That was 7 years ago. He's her favorite horse and he seems to love her. And he never does anything wrong. Because she's patient with him.

If you are having problems with your horse,

ask for help. It does not mean you are any less of a rider or handler. I still ask for help when I am stumped. Someone else might have a different idea, something that never occurred to you and it just might work. With horses, there are some basics you can go by, but beyond that, it's a lot of trial and error.

And always remember, the second you lose your patience, is the second you lose your horse.

Micaela Zanat has been riding and training horses in Texas and New Jersey using resistance-free training and natural horsemanship methods since 1995. She recently relocated to Califon where she specializes in western riding and barrel racing.

By
Micaela Zanat

RIDING WITH THE ALEXISES ----- **ALWAYS A TRIP**

Horseback riding poses the occasional precarious situation. Anyone who denies that hasn't ridden enough! One of those "funny, but not so funny" situations occurred recently while Jude and I were riding with John and Maxine Alexis.

The setting was superb... far at the back of the sprawling township- owned farm on Rt.513. We had just paused to watch a Northern Harrier swoop on its prey in the near field. A magnificent wingspan and an endangered specie. Now we were in the ravine by the rushing water, the woods checkered with sycamore trees... one of Alexandria's more beautiful spots. To think that most residents will never even see it! Ah, the advantages of horseback!

John, in the lead, reached up to nix a twig out of the way. Turns out the twig was attached to a whole tree that leaned over his horse. Funny how some things just hang in the balance! Tugging at the twig was all the tree needed to bring it down onto the horses withers. As Marlin Perkins used to say on Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, "I could tell John was in trouble!"

Now, mind you, this was no huge tree... thankfully. Maybe three or four inches in diameter, it still called for an immediate reaction from the rider who

needed to summon some instant adrenaline, some capable muscle and deft reflexes! But, Hark! The name is Alexis. There's a reason they held the first Olympics in Greece!

How often have you heard someone's description of their car accident? "It just happened so fast"! Well, John's encounter with the tree happened faster than that! And yet it was like viewing action suspended in time. While his horse was still moving forward, just how was he going to get out of this one? Ever hear of the Limbo?

While lying flat on his back on the horse's rump, John curled his hands under the tree, muscled it up over his face and thrust the timber to a crash behind the horse's back end. The horse didn't really break stride! John was slightly ruffled but didn't even near leave the saddle. The rest of us just watched, our collective mouths agape with amazement! Little did we know at the time that we had just witnessed the world's first performance of the newest Olympic event... Tree Curling on Horseback!

All judges gave John a 9.9. And, the AEA board is pondering the erection of a granite statue of Alexis the Greek on the grounds at Alexandria Park.

By Pete Tucker

TID-BITS

The American Saddlebred Horse Association of New Jersey recently held their first show at the indoor. Joan Booth, ASHA of NJ President wrote this note to AEA: "Thank you to the members of AEA for all your help in making it possible for us to hold our first Academy Horse Show at Alexandria Township Park. Although on the small side, it went smoothly, it was a success and a lot of fun. We would like to show our appreciation in some way for all the assistance you gave us by donating \$100 to your stable/stall restoration fund!"

Thank you, Joan. And what a sweet little show it was. All horses are beautiful, but there is something singularly gracious and lovely about American Saddlebreds. We hope that we can host the show again next year.

By Pete Tucker

Barrel Racing:

Anyone looking to get barrel racing started at the Alexandria Indoor please contact Micaela 732-673-4825 mzanat02@comcast.net.

Web Site:

Have you seen the classified section on our website, www.aeanj.com ? There's some mighty nice horses for sale. Other stuff too.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST:

Barn Clean Up: May 17th

Alexandria Twp Barn Clean Up/Repair Day
Saturday May 17th – Volunteers needed, please
contact: Judy at tuckaway-farm@earthlink.net.

Community Day:

September 20, 2008

Looking for volunteers to work with the following committee chairs: contact if interested in volunteering!

Food Chairperson – Sandy Howell
showell456@yahoo.com or 908-996-1081

Parking Chairperson – Barbara Nolan
BAN414@aol.com or 908-996-7489

NJ Horse Expo:

Get ready for the third annual 2008 New Jersey HorseXpo, the only one of its kind in the state!

This year the equine industry-wide HorseXpo will be held on **May 17 (9 am - 5 pm) and May 18 (9 am - 4 pm) at South County Park in Ringoes.**

South County Park
Route 179 at Route 202
Ringoes, NJ

For more information, please contact:

908.735.5955

info@hunterdon-chamber.org

VOLUNTEER WORK BOND:

If you have completed 5 hours of volunteer service, you are eligible for a refund of the \$50 work bond. Please contact Larry Shepard: navionflyer@aol.com or 908-996-5216 in order to report hours/duty. Checks will be issued at the general membership meetings.

AEA T-SHIRTS ARE STILL AVAILALBE

There are still some AEA t-shirts available at a discounted price \$2 a shirt! For more information contact Sandy Howell-showell456@yahoo.com or Barbara Nolan - BAN414@aol.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS:

AEA is accepting classified ads free of charge for AEA members. There is a \$25 fee per ad for non-members. These ads will be put on the AEA web site (text and pictures)! These ads will also be put in the newsletter if the next newsletter distribution schedule coincides with the ad date (text only). These ads will be on the web site for 60 days.

If you have an ad for the web site, contact Judy: tuckaway-farm@earthlink.net.

Horses For Sale:

Jet is a great horse that is broke walk/trot/canter. He is 14.2 hands, 4 yrs old. He needs finishing. He is extremely quiet for his age. Lowest horse in the herd. Possible trade for a SOUND COMPLETELY BOMB proof horse for extremely nervous begginer. Please e-mail or call for pictures and more information.

Micaela 732-673-4825 mzanat102@comcast.net

9 yr old Registered Rocky Mountain gelding.

Flashy Chocolate w/Flax Mane & Tail with a great personality, Good trail horse. Asking \$6500.

Contact Barbara @ Rocken Horse Farm 908-996-7489

4 yr old registered Kentucky Mountain Bay gelding. Stands for vet and farrier. Great ground manners and trailers well. Has some trail miles and basic driving training. Would make a good driving horse or trail horse. Asking \$5500. Contact Barbara @ Rocken Horse Farm 908-996-7489

Registered Paint. 9 year old Gelding, white/brown and black. "Buster" started his life as a barrel racer and was later converted to Hunter Jumper which he did for many years. He is a nice quiet horse who has been on a lot of trails. He is currently being ridden by me and my 13 year old daughter. Must go to a good home. Buy him sound. Will take back if unhappy! You won't be! View pictures on line on website. \$5500.00 with papers. Call or email Jeff Smith at beprop@earthlink.net or cell, 908-500-1640.

Three aged Tennessee Walking Horses. All good pleasure horses, all well bred and all registered. 1 black gelding, age 19 – 1 chestnut gelding, age 17 – 1 bay mare, age 20. Owners health necessitates a reduction in work load, Priced to sell between \$1000 and \$1400 per. Call Pete Tucker 908-735-9453 or at tuckawaypete@earthlink.net.

QH cross gelding, 15.1 hands, green broke a few years ago, has had time off
Needs someone experienced to re-start him, sweet personality and handled daily stocky build, good conformation, sound without shoes reasonably priced –call Julie Lyons for more info. (908)319-5409

Bay TB gelding, 16.2 hands, perfect 2'6" – 3 hunter/eq horse. Honest, safe and FUN!!! will be trainer's favorite! Good mover, easy changes, has won year-end awards in Hunters and Jumpers 10 yrs.old, ready to show this weekend \$25,000 Julie Lyons (908)319-5409

For Sale or Lease:

Cute Dressage Horse. 15.2H Dark Bay Gelding. 12yr. Good ground manners, nice mover, sound and easy keeper. \$5000 or \$325 per month includes 2 lessons per month less than 1 mile from Township indoor. Photos and video available upon request. Call Sandy at (908)996-1081 or showell456@yahoo.com.

Horse for Lease:

Horse for free lease has done it all, must be great home, you assume all financial responsibility, and he cannot leave NJ. Has been there done that, English, jumps (loves it!), team penned (did great), western pleasure (tolerates it), gymkhana (his favorite) 16 yr. old paint/pinto, 15 hands great opportunity for someone. Call Becky, we'll talk at 908- 268-6026

Stalls Available:

Boarding stalls available, 12 x 12 matted, individual turn out daily. Call Becky 908-268-6026.

Saddle for Sale:

Child's Wintex western saddle and girth. Used 3 times, like brand new asking \$100. Call Sandy at 908-996-1081 or showell456@yahoo.com.

Trailer for Sale

1993 Sundowner two horse bumper tailer, good condition. \$2,500 OBO. Contact Mike @ Rocken Horse Farm 908-996-7489

BUSINESS AD SPACE:

AEA is accepting business ad space in the newsletter. ¼ page or business cards for \$25, ½ for \$50 or full sheet for \$95/issue. Available to members/non-members: Contact Barbara Nolan 908-996-7489 or BAN414@aol.com.



For the Love of your horse

Tune-ups
Western riding lessons
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Micaela Zanat
732-673-4825
brrlracinqueen1@aol.com



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