Riding for the Disabled Association NSW

"Bits 'n' Pieces"

Spring/Summer 2011

Season’s Greetings
From the editor...

Another year is coming to a close and I hope everyone, including our four legged friends, enjoys a much deserved rest after a busy year of providing horse related activities for those with a disability.

This year Margaret Norman and Ian Ramsay were honoured with an OAM – congratulations!

As usual, some Centres made the local newspapers with articles and photos which keep RDA “out there” in the public domain. RDA Ryde Centre has gone ahead in leaps and bounds this year and is now operational - congratulations to Gerard Murphy and all the hard workers who made it possible.

“Equitana” and “Return 2 Sport” saw RDANSW make an appearance with a booth at both events. Two new pull-up banners made their debut at “Equitana” and they certainly brightened up our space.

Over the last months, new horses have been made welcome and sadly, some have departed to the big paddock in the sky.

“Thank you” Lucy in the RDANSW State Office for being so patient in dealing with the many requests that come your way...

I would also like to thank all the Centres and individuals who contributed to “Bits ‘n’ Pieces” over the last year and I wish you all a

Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year

Lyn Lazarus
I was asked to write an article about my Investiture at Government House……

It took a few days to come back down to earth after receiving the formal letter from Government House informing me I was in the Queen’s Birthday Honors List and had been awarded the Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia for my services to people with a disability, through RDA. Barry and I had a wonderful time celebrating with our family including lots of champagne!!!.

Driving into Government House for the Investiture on Friday 16th September, receiving the Order of Australia Medal from Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales was a tremendous honor. Visitors were ushered into the ball room and award recipients into an adjoining room where we were advised of the procedure required when receiving our awards from Her Excellency.

36 award recipients came from all walks of life. Professors for their service to medicine, engineering, social welfare in the not for profit sector and nursing, also from the Army, Fire, Public Services. There were also Bravery awards. The youngest was a 12 year old Master Sandon Neil Small, who in January 2010, rescued a man caught in a rip at Berrara Beach near Sussex Inlet.

After the formalities, everyone mingled on the lawn where light refreshments were served including champagne!!. Recipients and visitors who knew of RDA came up and congratulated me for the work we do in RDA. Yes…. A day I will never forget.

Over the past 40 years RDA has given me the opportunity to work with some amazing, dedicated people but the support from my family is the reason I am able to work with a charity that I love.

Now it’s back to reality!!

Margaret Norman OAM
Director of Marketing/Promotions
Regional Rep Liaison Officer
RDA(NSW)
NEWS FROM THE CENTRES

As a volunteer, Warren’s one of the Hunter’s best....

Warren Cohen has happily combined his love of horses and the joy of helping children with a disability for the past 17 years.

The Thornton retiree’s efforts as Riding for the Disabled volunteer were honoured yesterday when he was named 2011 Hunter Senior Volunteer of the year award.

It’s a great honour, but Mr Cohen quickly turns the attention away from himself to the children he teaches to ride and the horses he looks after and the need to raise more funds to keep the volunteer program running.

“I do a lot with the horses’ health,” he said.

“I used to be an apprentice jockey to Tommy Smith.”

As well as sharing his riding knowledge, he helps with fundraising, working bees, representing the organisation at displays and much more.

“I get a great thrill out of it, to be able to help the kids,” he said.

“When they first come to you, they can’t do much, and you get to see them improve.”

Mr Cohen has been involved with horses all his life and got involved with Riding For the Disabled when he retired.

“I saw it on TV that they needed volunteers and I thought, I’ll do that when I finish up with work,” he said.

Mr Cohen helps organise the group’s major fund-raiser, the Bushies’ Ball, which is coming up on October 22 (tickets are available by phoning 4987 1402).

Greg Queenan, of Rutherford, was highly commended for his volunteer work for the Starlight Foundation, the Lions Club and the City of Maitland Pipes and Drums Band, as was Daniel Lewis, of Weston, for his work with St John Ambulance and the Uniting Church.

Neither fire nor wind, birth nor death, can erase our good deeds...

Buddha
Still on the helping trail

By STEPHEN BISSET

AFTER more than 10 years of helping put smiles on the faces of disabled children, Riding for the Disabled (RDA) volunteer Penny Abbott was named as RDA Raymond Terrace and Lower Hunter volunteer of the year at the organisations’ annual awards last month.

The Branxton resident said the award came as a complete surprise.

“It was just fabulous,” she said.

“I had absolutely no idea. I was sitting at my table and they announced my name and all I could do was yell ‘what?’ at the top of my lungs. It was a complete surprise.”

Mrs Abbott said she started volunteering with RDA in 1999 out of a desire to give something back to the community.

“I’ve been with RDA for 12 years,” she said.

“I was out of work and decided that I wanted to give something back and I had spent a lot of time around horses, so I thought this would be a great fit.

“I started off helping out with organising the horses and the children and then the coach needed someone to co-ordinate our Tuesday program, so I was basically helping the coach in order to give her a bit of a breather.

“Nowadays, I spend my time volunteering in the office and helping out the dedicated admin staff.”

For Penny Abbott, it is both the friendship and the reactions she gets from the grateful children that has kept her coming back to the organisation year after year.

“Seeing a child that has never spoken before utter something is just wonderful,” she said.

“Also, seeing their faces just light up when they sit on a horse is beautiful. Everyone is all so happy and there is never a complaint or a whinge.”

Riding for the Disabled is a charitable organisation which provides therapeutic and educational horse riding programs for people with a disability.
Jack’s story...

Jack has been riding with Riding for the Disabled Association NSW Griffith/Leeton Centre since the beginning of May 2011. When Jack first started, we were at a loss as to how to continue strengthening his core muscles. We had done lots of physical therapy and we were making progress but this progress was slow. Jack required two side walkers when he started at RDA and he was very unstable on his horse. He was keen to ride but reluctant to move about in the saddle and did not like bending or stretching in the saddle. On September 18, just four months after starting at RDA, Jack competed in the Fun Day Competitions. He had no side walkers. He came second in the flag race, first in the bending race, first in the keyhole race and third in the barrel race. Not only did Jack have this success, he is also now able to trot on his horse “Danny” and he is almost able to execute a complete rising trot—a huge improvement in his core strength. He does not fall over when walking anymore and is able to run with a steady gait and, on a good day, Jack can now walk down steps with minimal support.

Jack is only 2 1/2 years old.

by
Ondria,
Jack’s mum

Griffith
Early Intervention Service Newsletter
Tamworth Centre volunteers, clients and carers were very sad and shocked at the beginning of term 4 at the sudden death of one of our volunteers. Mrs Jenny Taylor was a whip and volunteer at our Centre for many years. Jenny was a wonderful lady who had been involved with horses all her life. She had a great love for horses and very much enjoyed all the activities she did with our clients. Her husband Bob was a past President.

Jenny and four other of our volunteers attended a senior and Junior Driver and Development School in conjunction with the Australian Carriage Driving Society at Meldorn near Tamworth in late August. All those attending the weekend enjoyed it very much. Our great pony “Simon” and our sulky were there too. “Simon” gave a demonstration and performed at his best. Our volunteers were proud of him.

Our 2011 year is almost over and all our clients have greatly enjoyed their horse activities.
Riders are happily back in the saddle as the new Riding for
the Disabled Association Ryde Centre prepares for its official
opening at Marsfield Park.

The centre had to be relocated from the Royal Rehabilitation
Centre Sydney because of re-
development at the Ryde site.

Funding for the new all-
weather riding centre in
Culloden Rd, Marsfield, came
from Ryde Council, the federal
government, a grant from Epping
State Liberal MP Greg Smith and
community organisations.

“It’s been a long journey over
three years,” Gerard Murphy, the
Ryde centre’s president, said.

“The dedication and tireless
efforts of our many volunteers is
a testament to the value our
community places on the
centre,” he said.

More than 130 children and
adult riders with a disability
have had to wait for the con-
struction to be completed.

The riders now have a dedi-
cated place for exercise and re-
habilitation that is managed by a
group of volunteers.

There are six qualified riding
coaches and a team that feeds and
exercises the horses every day.

The centre accommodates up
to 30 riders each week, with a
waiting list of more than 150.

The complex includes stables
and exercise yards for seven
horses on the lower part of the
park and saddling stalls and a
mounting area as part of the
large covered arena.

Jaci Armstrong is the coaching
co-ordinator and has been at the
centre for six years.

“Coaches work with the horses
and volunteers to provide suit-
able programs and activities that
provide a therapeutic value to
our participants,” she said.

“For some riders it’s the oppor-
tunity just to pet and feed a horse
while for others the sense of
achievement is in sitting up high
on a horse, being taller than the
volunteers walking with them.

“It gives them a sense of power
in working with a strong, trust-
worthy animal.”

That was no more evident than
when Jessica was aboard a huge
horse named Kade.

As she rode around the arena,
her minders reaching up to keep
her steady, Jessica’s face lit
up with a huge smile.

A car-boot sale and pony rides
will be held at the Marsfield Park
facility on Sunday, September 18
from 8am-1pm — to raise much-
needed funding for the centre’s
therapy programs.
OFFICIAL OPENING OF RDA, RYDE CENTRE
“Marsfield Park” Marsfield

Saturday morning 26th November saw the volunteers at Ryde finishing off the final touches before the guests arrived for the inspection and opening of the new Centre.

This new Centre continues the marvellous work that started in May 1984 on a site within the Ryde Rehabilitation Centre Sydney at Putney. Originally there were just two horses and classes were held on two days a week. By 1986 the Centre was operating five mornings a week with seven horses. There was a move ‘up the hill’ in 1994 and then in 2007 the Centre was advised that the land they occupied was to be sold for development and a new site would have to be found. In August 2007 with negotiations for a new site underway the Equine Influenza epidemic hit and all riding ceased and the existing horses went into retirement.

Now four years later, we are sharing “Marsfield Park” with Ryde Pony Club, the Centre is complete and once again Ryde is able to offer classes to riders. A little bit of the old Putney Centre has come with us - the rails on the horse yards are again being used, for the third time.

The new Centre is the result of a lot of extremely hard work, fund raising, donations of time and money and mainly construction grants received from the Federal and State Governments.

Federal, State and Local Government were represented by John Alexander, MP for Bennelong, Victor Dominello MP for Ryde, Greg Smith MP for Epping, Councillor Artin Etmekdjian the Mayor of Ryde and the local service Clubs all had representatives present.

There was a ‘demonstration’ class held using volunteers, riders and coaches but unfortunately due to the pouring rain, no horses. Although the two mounted police did make use of the obstacles and completed the course.

Jan Pike, a Para Olympian, spoke about the way Riding for the Disabled had made her life so very different and had given her the opportunity to represent Australia on many occasions.

Janine Pitt, representing Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Kate Ellis, MP for Adelaide and Victor Dominello unveiled the plaques and the Centre was declared OPEN.

At the conclusion of the formalities Hannah Dodd gave a great display of dressage competency and left everyone with lots to talk about while they enjoyed the refreshments.

So, RDA Ryde now starts on its next journey providing riding opportunities to young and old in the years to come.

Carol Lycett, Secretary
On behalf of RDA Ryde
Riding for the Disabled Association NSW “Bits ‘n’ Pieces” Spring/Summer 2011

Gerard Murphy, President of RDANSW Ryde Centre & Master of Ceremonies

from left: Kevin Corcoran (rider), Victor Dominello MP for Ryde, Greg Smith (MP for Epping), John Alexander (MP for Bennelong), Janine Pitt (representing Minister for Education, Employment & Workplace Relations, Kate Ellis, MP for Adelaide), Michael West (Cultural Representative of Metropolitan Local Land Council), Artin Etmekjian (Mayor of Ryde) & Jan Pike (former RDANSW Ryde rider and paralympian)
Wendy Torr, RDANSW Ryde Centre Coach, told the story of the history of Ryde

Janine Pitt & Victor Dominello unveiled the plaques

Jan making friends with the police horse
The police horses and their riders were made very welcome

Hannah Dodd on her new New Zealand bred horse Waikiwi” rode her freestyle dressage test (put together for the London Paralympics)

Our best wishes go to both Hannah and Jan in their quest to be selected as part of the team to go to London
To Whom It May Concern

As you may have heard there has been an outbreak of Hendra Virus in Queensland and Northern NSW last week. A horse from a property at Wollongbar (midway between Ballina and Lismore) had to be euthanized and nine people including a vet are being closely monitored as is the companion horse to the one that died. There has been great concern and anxiety about this and on Wednesday 6 July 2011 the Department of Primary Industry held a seminar at which DPI Regional Veterinary Officer Paul Freeman and the North Coast Public Health Unit’s Acting Director Greg Bell presented and provided written information.

While these outbreaks have been in Queensland and Northern NSW the risk is apparent wherever there are flying foxes. Flying foxes congregate wherever there is a food source such as fruit and flowering trees. It is estimated that 50% of flying foxes carry this virus.

The virus does not affect the flying fox but it can be transmitted to horses by the horses grazing where there could be droppings, urine or uterine discharge during birthing. It can be transmitted to humans by the horses body fluids entering the human through the skin, eyes, mouth etc.

I feel it is important that this information is conveyed to all centres in RDANSW to help protect their horses and themselves.

The following is information to reduce the risk to humans and horses:

**For humans :-**
- Cover any cuts on exposed skin before handling horses.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water especially after handling your horses mouth or nose (fitting or removing a bridle) and before eating, smoking or touching your eyes. nose or mouth.
- Don’t kiss horses on the muzzle (especially if the horse is sick)
- Use personal protective equipment to protect yourself from the body fluids of horses.
For horses:-
- Place feed and water containers under cover
- Do not place feed and water under trees especially trees with fruit
- Do not use feed that could attract flying foxes such as apples, carrots or molasses
- If possible remove horses from paddocks where there are fruiting trees temporarily attracting flying foxes.
- If not possible erect a temporary fence around the tree.

Please note the following as it is relevant information for Coaches, Helpers, Participants, Parents and visitors at this Centre
- While we do have a fig tree the horses do not have access to that paddock. The gate into that paddock has been shut and must remain so until further notice.
- All the horses appear in good health – they are fed and checked each day
- There is no feed or water under trees
- There are no other trees attractive to flying foxes
- Macadamia nut trees do not attract flying foxes
- There are no apples, carrots or molasses in feed uncovered
- Horses are fed under cover and water is in troughs in open paddocks (not under any trees)

Kerry Johnston
Senior Coach RDANSW
Horse Manager Ballina and District RDA Centre
Horse Welfare Committee member RDANSW

If you see the soul in every living being, you see truly.
—The Bhagavad Gita
“Monty” offered his assistance but Jenny politely turned him down...

Not easily deterred, “Monty” snuk along behind.....
A battle of sorts followed, each declaring that they were the better equipped to do the necessary job......

Jenny was accosted and her tool of trade was lost......
The closing date for qualifying for the RDANSW State Mounted Games championships has been reached.

The event will be held at the **Sydney Royal Easter Show in 2012** on a date yet to be confirmed.

Centres who have had riders qualify are:

Wagga Wagga, Blue Mountains, Manning Great Lakes, “Tall Timbers”, Nepean, Tumut, Snowy Mountains, Kempsey/Macleay and Raymond Terrace & Lower Hunter.

Riders will compete in flag, bending, keyhole and barrel competitions.
“RETURN 2 SPORT” FORUM

The Royal Rehabilitation Centre Sydney conducted a forum at the State Sports Centre on Thursday 3rd November with a view to encouraging people with a disability to return to sport.

The Association of Disability Sports of whom RDANSW is a member, was invited to participate, as were many other sporting bodies.

Forty sports were represented with some being able to invite people to “have a try” at their sport in a special dedicated area.

This proved quite popular with many of the visitors.

Unfortunately not the place to take a horse - however RDANSW did participate with an information booth and static display.

Thanks to the volunteers from “Tall Timbers” and Ryde Centres for mansing the booth.

Wendy Torr
What a great four days at Equitana, for it was not only a major promotional event, but also a magnificent opportunity for our Volunteers to showcase RDA.

EQUITANA supplied RDANSW with a 3 x 2mts stand in the large Exhibition Hall, well lit with two spotlights and a 2.4 mtr velcro walling for the many photos that showcased our riders, coaches and volunteers in action!! A stand of this size is usually hired out at nearly $2,000, but was free of charge to RDANSW!!!

The stand was open from 9am to 7pm Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and 9am to 4pm Sunday. There were seven sessions over this time with three volunteers per session giving us a total of 21 volunteers who generously donated their time over the four days. The team of Volunteers eager to hop on board this exciting event came from the following six Centres; Central Coast, Manning Great Lakes, Nepean, Ryde, “Tall Timbers” and Tamworth.

The great thing was, that when the vollies arrived at the stand, it was completely set up ready for action. This was due to the great effort of Nicole who arranged for Dinah Barron and Joan Grant to take the banners, counter, brochures (lots of them!!), information sheets, our donation tin, pens and badges to sell. Special thanks to Lyn Lazarus and Wendy Torr for preparing the great photos that were displayed on the walls. Due to an urgent family commitment, I was unable to assist and sincerely thank Nicole and her vollies for stepping in and preparing the stand.

Each session completed a spreadsheet for sales & donations and Lucy was able to bank $1588.30 made up of sales and donations. All funds raised will be banked into the new “Rider Support Fund”. This fund was developed to assist our Riders.

Big thanks to Louise Campbell for all her time and expertise given to producing the graphics for our two Banners and Counter - many people commented on them.

Hearty Congratulations to Nicole King (“Tall timbers”) for after many weeks preparing horses, riders, coaches and volunteers, the displays organised for Saturday and Sunday were enthusiastically appreciated with people coming to the stand to voice their congratulations of the work that Nicole put in to organise the displays.

Many questionnaires were completed and will be acknowledged by the appropriate departments. There were donations of DVDs “Brett Parbery The Professionals’ System” and the Tuff Rock stall donated a Horse Care Kit containing 1 Litre Conditioner Plus, 1,8Kg Tuff Rock Poultice, 1 Litre G.I 600 gram EJF (Equine Joint Formulae).

Words cannot express my appreciation to the wonderful Volunteers who made my job so much easier with their enthusiasm and ease of fitting into the scheduled arrangements.
Central Coast: Chris Gorman and Kim Hogbin
Ryde: Wendy Torr, Lyn Lazarus, Joan Grant and Dinah Barron
Tamworth: Jennifer Whiteford
“Tall Timbers”: Joan Edwards, Sandra Wright, John Wright and Virginia Knott
Manning Great Lakes: Diana Sky, Alannah Norman and Margaret Norman (Representing MGL)
Nepean: Anita Goddard, Ralph Grinly, Peter Haggarty.

A very special thanks to the Nepean Volunteers for not only working Sunday 9am to 4pm on the stand but stayed to help pack up all the equipment and helped Lucy and I take it to the car. Lucy was a treasure for making herself available at the end of the day, enabling us to deliver all equipment and money safely to State Office.

Margaret Norman,
Director,
Promotion/Development
and RR Liaison Officer
Hello RDA 'Over East'!

I am an RDA coach from WA, (non practising at the moment), so there is a connection...!

I owned a lovely mare called “Northern Lydia”, (now very sadly deceased). It is a long shot, but I researched similar blood lines to hers and came up with “Northern Griffin”. The pedigree is almost identical. Could it be a most amazing stroke of luck that “Griffin” would have a store of frozen semen anywhere?

I would be very, very keen indeed if this was the case. “Lydia” was a horse in a million, as is “Griffin”, I think.

Many thanks in advance for your help

Lynn Boon
Congratulations

To the following placegetters in our

Musical Ride Competition 2011

Musical Ride with a Theme or Story - led

1st place        Manning Great Lakes
                 “Sleeping Beauty”

2nd place        Manning Great Lakes
                 “A Trip to Frangipani bay”

3rd place        Coffs Harbour & District
                 “Tie Me Kangaroo Down”

Drill Ride - led

1st place        Wauchope/ PortMacquarie
                 “The Sensational Six”

Drill Ride - unled

1st place        Wagga
                 “2011 Musical Ride”

2nd place        Coffs Harbour and Districts
                 “Sweet Home Alabama”
Paddock Injuries
- a high risk problem

Horses are naturally free roaming, gregarious and inquisitive animals and fences are necessary to keep them confined. Horses rely on speed to get away when frightened. This survival instinct of fright and flight triggered by adrenaline release, can result in the horse being oblivious to any barriers and obstructions, such as fences, eroded ground and other obstacles in its path as it attempts to escape. This can result in serious wounds and in some cases, fatal injuries. Good quality, durable well sited, safely constructed and maintained fencing is one of the most valued assets on a horse-keeping property. Although it is not statistically proven, anecdotal observations by many horse owners links the risk of injury on fences to be directly related to the value of a horse, with well bred horses suffering a higher incidence of injury. The type of injury is relative to the type of fence construction and its state of repair. However, horses which become accustomed to the confines of a fence, even if it is ‘tatty’ and falling down, are less likely to sustain fence injuries than horses introduced to an unfamiliar paddock.

Safety is Essential
The safety of fencing is influenced by the type of fence construction and its state of repair.

1. Multiple strand wire fencing is likely to cause the highest risk of injury, particularly if it is not maintained in a straight line or a tensioned state. Having first-hand experience of injuries to horses caused by barbed wire, as a vet, I would concur with most horse owners that barbed wire and horses are not compatible. Barbed wire is dangerous and should not be used as fencing for horses. Cattle which share horse pastures also place more ‘pressure’ on a fence, even a barbed wire top-strand, because cattle have thicker skin and a tendency to lean over or push through fences to graze higher grass on the other side.

2. Fences with steel droppers have the potential to increase the risk of skin wounds at fence height level, unless the tops are covered by protective caps or overlaid piping.

3. Post and rail fencing is credited by many as having the least risk of injury, although maintenance can be higher if preserved timber is not used initially. White modular plastic post and rail fencing has become popular on many boutique properties, but UV stabilised plastic is essential to reduce deterioration in sunlight.

4. Electric strands placed along the line of any fence at mid body height can reduce the risk of fence related injury by 60-70%. Wide 45mm white electric woven tape increases the visibility of a fence line compared to a thin “hot” wire, but UV deterioration of the plastic weave can occur in the longer term. Thin woven ‘hot’ wire has a high risk of severe traumatic and strangulation injury if a horse becomes entangled in a broken or loose wire. ‘Hot’ wires placed just above the ground are extremely dangerous from being caught in shoes and can cause severe ligature injuries in young horses trying to get to neighbouring horses. The lower wires of a plain wire fence can be caught on the front heel of a shod horse, which on pulling back to escape, can tear tendon fibres in a ‘passive’ loading effect and result in long-term
tendon damage. However, it is universally accepted that horses quickly learn to respect electric fencing or a ‘hot wire’ if the voltage pulse is maintained and the voltage and earth return is adequate to provide a strong ‘shock’ when touched. Horses with thick quilted rugs soon learn that they can touch electric tape or wire without being ‘shocked’ and they develop less respect for an electric top wire on a fence. Lower limb injuries to the outside coronary band, pasterns and fetlocks are a problem in sandy soils where horse traffic erodes the soil along the fence line. Because of the flexion of the fetlock, often these wounds take longer to heal with more proud flesh and scar formation, creating a blemish and sometimes restricting joint movement. Years ago, chain mesh fencing was popular on stud farms because it was neat, could be tensioned and provided a ‘spring’ mattress effect if a horse ran into the fence, which can absorb concussion and minimise skin abrasion and tear. However, erosion at the bottom edge, combined with a billowing out or outward curvature of the fence base between the posts increases the risk of laceration to the lower limb as horses move along the fence line.

Facts and Stats
1. Fences can contribute up to 60% of the lower limb injuries, 80% of the wounds, and up to 90% of accidental fatalities in pastured horses.
2. Risk of injury from running into fences, especially at night, can be reduced by up to 70% by making the fence visible using white ‘sight’ raling, piping or wide electric fence tape.
3. Fence line erosion and risk of injury is lower in a square paddock as compared to a rectangular paddock of the same area. Horses in a square paddock spend more time grazing and congregating in the central area of the paddock with less activity along the fence line.
4. Fencing a square paddock uses 5-10% less length of fencing as compared to the same type of fencing to form a rectangular paddock of the same area. The majority of injuries occur in the corners and around heavy traffic areas, such as gateways.
5. Horses walk from between 12-18 kilometres per day in a 10 hectare (25acre) paddock as they graze, with up to 60% of this grazing movement along fence lines.
6. Young horses up to yearling age have 3-4 times the risk of sustaining an injury from fences, even when they are well maintained, as compared to older, mature horses.
7. A young horse in a paddock by itself will spend up to 80% of its time along the fence line of a paddock seeking contact with neighbouring horses. This can increase the risk of fence injury, particularly in young colts or stallions seeking companionship of neighbouring fillies and mares.

Did You Know that...
Skin wounds on the upper body heal with a tissue growth rate 5 times faster as compared to wounds on the lower limbs of horses due to the differences in blood flow between the upper body and the limbs. The lower limb has a higher risk of laceration because the skin is under a greater tension as it stretches over the hard bone. This leads to a longer healing time as there is naturally slower epithelial cell division. Injuries on the lower limb can also become more easily contaminated with soil, bacteria and pasture moisture from dew on pasture and abrasion from grasses which can further delay healing and encourage the development of ‘proud flesh’.

Maintenance of Fencing is Paramount
Even if a fence is well designed and constructed to be safe and durable, horse ‘pressure’, environmental weathering and general ‘stress’ will influence its long term barrier function and safety. Regular maintenance and tightening of wires, checking for bent steel droppers and loose wobbly posts, especially in sandy soil, is an essential maintenance job on both perimeter and internal fencing. Major increases in the risk of injury are often caused by loss of tension in wire fences, as horses lean on fences to graze adjacent pasture, deterioration by
weathering, erosion by heavy rain and destructive damage by wind-sucking and chewing on wooden rails and posts. In areas prone to white ants, non-treated wooden posts can be quickly eaten out, or in water logged areas, the ground portion of posts can develop dry rot from moulds in the adjacent soil, or be pushed out of alignment by horses seeking greener grass on the other side. Fences which are “tatty” but still retain their line without leaning inwards into a paddock, often have a lower risk of injury compared to fences which ‘wobble’ and lean inward to catch the skin as a horse brushes along the fence.

**Safe Electric Fence Construction**

On our own horse property, I used 2 strands placed 500mm apart of white 45mm tape electric fences around the inside of the perimeter fence and internal dividing fences to increase the safety of the fencing. Over the 20 years since installing the 2 strand woven tape electric fences, our horses did not suffer any fence related injuries, even when confined to their small overnight holding yards. I further increased the safety aspect by using plastic ‘star’ droppers (1650mm long). I cut a small 3mm deep groove with a hack saw on each of the 3 ‘star’ edges at ground level after the fence was installed. On one occasion, when a thunderstorm frightened one of the Warmbloods and she failed to apply her brakes in an oblivious downhill gallop on the wet grass, she skidded through the fence as it snapped off at ground level and laid over, only to get up and continue grazing on the other side! The 8 droppers snapped off without any sharp edges or spikes and were easily replaced and the fence repaired in 30 minutes after a 30 metre long section was flattened by the stampeding Warmblood. The fences were cheap, easy to install, convenient to shift and virtually maintenance free over the 20 years. One particular brand of horse tape deteriorated in the sunlight, but the original Gallagher brand of red line ‘Turbo’ tape lasted for 20 years.

**Beware of Protruding Gate Latches**

The weight of gates can also cause movement of fence-lines, with increased risk of injury. In my own experience gate chain ‘knobs’ can be a danger. Whilst careful placement of the knob on the curvature of a post outside the paddock is the safest position for the anchor and latch bolts, movement of posts, especially rotation of round posts under the tension of wires wrapped around the post, can result in the latch ‘knob’ being turned around to project into the gate opening - a waiting disaster! As a vet, the largest wound I have ever had to suture was caused by a protruding gate latch ‘knob’. The laceration required over 200 sutures over the length of the body from the shoulder, along the depth of ribs to the buttocks when a mare was ‘squeezed’ in a gateway as she entered with a group of other mares eager to return to their paddock after worming. Check the gate latches regularly, and any movement or protrusion into the gate opening should be rectified immediately.

**Yard Fencing**

The incidence of fence related injuries is increased in holding yards and small paddocks. Most horse owners would agree that well constructed post and rail fencing, protected from horse ‘pressure’ by an electrified border tape, is probably the most durable and safest type of fencing for yards. Wire fencing unless it is welded as ‘weldmesh’ panels onto sturdy posts and rails, is likely to deteriorate more quickly and increase the risk of injury. It is very unwise to use ‘ring lock’ type fencing for horse paddocks and especially around yards as the risk of snaring a hoof or limb in the fence is very high, particularly in foals.

**Did You Know That...**

Weeds often establish along fence lines of yards and small paddocks because small seeds can be harboured in the gut of horses and spread in their manure. Some weeds, especially succulents, are attractive to horses, including small flowered mallow, Paterson’s Curse (Salvation Jane), Fireweed, Thistles, Flat weed, and Turnip weed and these are common along fence lines. The seeds of these plants are less than 1.5mm in size and miss being crushed up by a
horse’s teeth, with 95% passing through the digestive system retaining their viability. Horses can harbour weed seeds for up to 14 days after eating seeding plants, with the highest numbers being passed out 3-4 days after ingestion. Increase in organic matter from dung and water retained in fence line ‘tracks’ or ‘ruts’ encourages the establishment of weeds.

from
“Talking Horses”
Equestrian
Issue 26
2011

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Avocado Poisoning

Over the last 20 years, avocados have become a cheap, nutritious fruit which is popular as a sandwich filler and salad constituent to add flavour to meals for humans. Many people like to have an avocado tree for shade and the delicious avocado fruit. The trees grow to 15 metres in height under suitable conditions, although they are evergreen in most cases, they shed excess leaves during the full year, depending on the variety.

All parts of an avocado tree, especially the leaves which contain the highest concentration of toxins, either as fresh leaves, fallen leaves and dried leaves, can be toxic to horses. The toxin, called persin, when ingested from nibbling green or dry, fallen leaves which horses find particularly attractive, can result in nervous and colic signs. The exact mechanism of action of the persin toxin is not known, but it can result in severe reaction or death from sudden heart failure. As southern Australia has become warmer, wetter and more sub-tropical, with avocado trees thriving in house gardens, the number of cases of avocado poisoning in horses has increased, with a number reported already in 2011. Under these conditions, the trees become semi-deciduous during the winter and horses gaining access to orchards or gardens or fed from bins into which avocado leaves have fallen, can develop symptoms.

Symptoms of Avocado Poisoning in Horses - The major symptoms are associated with direct contact of the persin as an irritant to the mouth and mucous membranes, with swelling of the lips, muzzle, head, neck and chest. Lactating mares develop non-infectious mastitis and reduced milk production, often with their foals losing weight and developing diarrhoea. The majority of horses develop colic, diarrhoea, depression and a loss of appetite after ingesting fresh or dried, fallen avocado leaves or fruit. Extreme cases may become short in the breath and develop
heart abnormalities due to the effect of the toxin, often after 6-12 hours.

Reference: Offord, M, Plants
Poisonous to Horses An
Australian Field Guide
Published by RIRDC,
Canberra 2006 Page 76.

Managing a Horse with Avocado Poisoning
The symptoms are best treated as they affect the horse, with nervous signs and diarrhoea being the most common, with mild sedatives and anti-inflammatories if the mouth or head are swollen due to contact allergic reactions. If the horse has ingested enough to cause heart abnormalities, then monitoring the animal until it recovers is essential to avoid further complications or death. Most affected horses will recover without complications, even in cases where mares suffer a temporary reduction in milk production. If you have an avocado tree, or a grove as shade trees, along a fence line, or for garden fruit, then it is important to fence them off to prevent access by horses. Do not offer horses or ponies clippings from avocado trees, and in common with oleander leaves, do not offer horses lawn clippings contaminated with avocado leaves. It is unwise to feed any horse or pony lawn clippings, even when they are fresh and not contaminated with poisonous leaves, as they can ferment in the stomach and large bowel and lead to severe colic.

from
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Equestrian
Issue 26
2011

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## 2011 RDANSW State Dressage Championship Results
incorporating Pony Club NSW members

### Section C – RDANSW Unclassified Riders and Pony Club NSW members

#### Grade 1A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hamish Wilkinson</td>
<td>Avondale P/C</td>
<td>Farleigh Havanna</td>
<td>Test 3</td>
<td>54.375%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hamish Wilkinson</td>
<td>Avondale P/C</td>
<td>Farleigh Havanna</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>50.263%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hamish Wilkinson</td>
<td>Avondale P/C</td>
<td>Farleigh Havanna</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>48.125%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 1B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Tammin Glover</td>
<td>Maitland P/C</td>
<td>Coco</td>
<td>Test 13</td>
<td>67.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Tammin Glover</td>
<td>Maitland P/C</td>
<td>Coco</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>63.095%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Tammin Glover</td>
<td>Maitland P/C</td>
<td>Coco</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>50.625%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Horse</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Zoe Walker</td>
<td>Bellinger River P/C</td>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>Test 22</td>
<td>62.368%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Erin Christie</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Hannibal</td>
<td>Test 22</td>
<td>59.737%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Natalie Gross</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Ishmar</td>
<td>Test 22</td>
<td>58.947%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Erin Christie</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Hannibal</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>57.619%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Natalie Gross</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Ishmar</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>56.667%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Zoe Walker</td>
<td>Bellinger River P/C</td>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>58.947%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Erin Christie</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Hannibal</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>58.750%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Zoe Walker</td>
<td>Bellinger River P/C</td>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>55.875%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Natalie Gross</td>
<td>Tall Timbers RDA</td>
<td>Ishmar</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>52.125%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section C Champion:** Erin Christie “Hannibal” RDA “Tall Timbers”

**Section C Reserve Champion:** Zoe Walker “Jake” Bellinger River P/C

**Junior Champion:** Tammin Glover “Coco” Maitland P/C
### Section A & B – RDANSW Classified Riders – Grade 3

#### Grade 3 – Section B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Horse Name</th>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Jessica Storey</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp; LH</td>
<td>Nirvana</td>
<td>Test 33</td>
<td>57.174%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Samantha Hawes</td>
<td>RDA Associate</td>
<td>Lord Baxter</td>
<td>Test 33</td>
<td>56.522%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Team Competition</td>
<td></td>
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#### Grade 3 – Section B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Horse Name</th>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Samantha Hawes</td>
<td>RDA Associate</td>
<td>Lord Baxter</td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td>58.182%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Novice Test Championship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Jessica Storey</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp; LH</td>
<td>Nirvana</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>52.875%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
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</tr>
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#### Grade 3 – Section B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Horse Name</th>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Jessica Storey</td>
<td>RDA Associate</td>
<td>Lord Baxter</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>52.875%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
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#### Grade 3 – Section A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Horse Name</th>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Danielle Weymark</td>
<td>RDA Associate</td>
<td>Michadot</td>
<td>Team Competition</td>
<td>59.815%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Team Competition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Victoria Gaunt-Burns</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp;LH</td>
<td>Suzie</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>52.833%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Michelle Dalmazzo</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp;LH</td>
<td>Aria</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>52.667%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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#### Grade 3 – Section A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider Name</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Horse Name</th>
<th>Test Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Danielle Weymark</td>
<td>RDA Associate</td>
<td>Michadot</td>
<td>Championship Test</td>
<td>63.167%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Championship Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Michelle Dalmazzo</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp;LH</td>
<td>Aria</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>54.875%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Victoria Gaunt-Burns</td>
<td>RDA RT&amp;LH</td>
<td>Suzie</td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td>48.250%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Freestyle Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 3 Champion: Danielle Weymark “Michadot” RDA Associate

#### Grade 3 Reserve Champion: Michelle Dalmazzo “Aria” RT&LH RDA

#### Overall Grade 3 Champion: Danielle Weymark” Michadot” RDA Associate

#### Overall Grade 3 Reserve Champion: Jessica Storey “Nirvana” RT&LH RDA
### Section A & B – RDANSW Classified Riders – Grade 4

#### Grade 4 – Section A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Waikiwi FE Team</td>
<td>68.594%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Nova Carbon Team</td>
<td>63.906%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Sui Watts</td>
<td>RDA Manning Great Lakes Accession Team</td>
<td>60.313%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 4 – Section A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Waikiwi FE Championship Test</td>
<td>66.774%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Nova Carbon Championship Test</td>
<td>60.000%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Sui Watts</td>
<td>RDA Manning Great Lakes Accession Championship Test</td>
<td>52.258%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Grade 4 – Section A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Waikiwi FE Freestyle Test</td>
<td>70.500%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Hannah Dodd</td>
<td>RDA Associate Nova Carbon Freestyle Test</td>
<td>65.625%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Sui Watts</td>
<td>RDA Manning Great Lakes Accession Freestyle Test</td>
<td>45.875%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grade 4 Champion:** Hannah Dodd “Waikiwi” FE RDA Associate

**Grade 4 Reserve Champion:** Hannah Dodd “Nova Carbon” RDA Ass.

**Overall Grade 4 Champion:** Hannah Dodd “Waikiwi” FE RDA Associate

**Overall Grade 4 Res Champion:** Hannah Dodd “Nova Carbon” RDA Ass.

### Open Rider Section – RDANSW Associate - Unclassified riders

#### Grade 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Rider</th>
<th>Club</th>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Kaye Hannan</td>
<td>RDA Associate Lundstrom Team</td>
<td>67.031%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Kaye Hannan</td>
<td>RDA Associate Lundstrom Championship Test</td>
<td>63.710%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Kaye Hannan</td>
<td>RDA Associate Lundstrom Freestyle Test</td>
<td>64.125%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Open Rider Champion:** Kaye Hannan “Lundstrom” RDA Associate

**SIEC Trophy – Best performance by an RDA Centre Horse and Rider combination:** “Hannibal” Erin Christie RDA “Tall Timbers” Centre
**Team Competition**

First: “Team Sizzle” - Hannah Dodd, Sui Watts, Zoe Walker, Samantha Hawes  
Second: “Tall Timbers” - Erin Christie, Natalie Gross, Danielle Weymark, Kaye Hannan  
Third: RT& LH - Leah Harker, Michelle Dalmazzo, Jessica Storey, Victoria Gaunt-Burns

**Stable Competition – sponsored by Better Produce, Terry Hills**

1st  Tammin Glover Maitland Pony Club  
2nd  Erin Christie Tall Timbers RDA  
3rd  Jessica Storey RT&LH RDA  
4th  Natalie Gross Tall Timbers RDA

*Thank you to the Judges for the 2011 RDANSW State Dressage Champs.*  
Team Competition: Sue Cunningham, Sue Lewis  
Freestyle Tests: Carolyn Lieutenant, Sue Cunningham  
Championship Tests: 
Grade 1A, 1B & 2: Joy Charlton, Pip Tonkin  
Grade 3 & 4: Sue Cunningham Joy Charlton

*Thank you to the Supporters of the 2011 RDANSW State Dressage Champs.*  
Sydney International Equestrian Centre  
Horseland, Dural  
Lockworx, Dural  
Better Produce, Terry Hills  
Pymble Ladies College Dressage Day

**2011 Video Competition Results**

| Grade 1A | First Place: | Hannah Moore, “Tall Timbers” RDA  
| Second Place: | Mikaela Worth, Manning Great Lakes RDA  
| Third Place: | Mikaela Worth, Manning Great Lakes RDA  
| Grade 2 | First Place: | Erin Christie, “Tall Timbers” RDA  
| Second Place: | Natalie Gross, Tall Timbers RDA  
| Third Place: | Zoe Walker, Coffs Harbour RDA  
| Grade 3 | First Place: | Rhiannon Gilles, Coffs Harbour RDA  
| Second Place: | Samantha Hawes, RDA Associate  
| Third Place: | Belinda Dawson, Coffs Harbour RDA  
| Grade 4 | First Place: | Sui Watts, Manning Great Lakes RDA |