

Savvy Times

Parelli International Savvy Club Magazine

Welcome to the Journey! Issue 29, November 2010



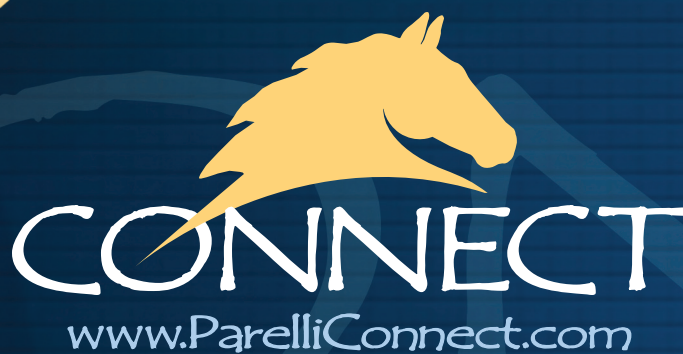
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Launching
soon!



Introducing Parelli Connect *our new online campus!*

We are really excited to announce this new interactive customer site will be available to all Savvy Club Members as an additional benefit to your membership! Here's how this new site will keep you connected:

- ▶ **Connect your horse(s)** -- Social walls for both you and your horse to share your horsemanship progress updates with others. Choose the humans and horses you want to follow, including Pat and Linda's horses!
- ▶ **Connect with Parelli people** -- Effortlessly discover other members in your area and around the world
- ▶ **Connect with success** -- Succeed in progressing through each of the four levels of the Parelli home study program by completing tasks provided for you and your horses based upon the Parelli Pathways DVDs. Achieve automatic self-certification as you complete each level of detailed tasks.
- ▶ **Connect with motivation** -- Share your horsemanship journey with like minded friends. Enjoy encouragement and support from posts and comments and your horses social wall for your achievements together.
- ▶ **Connect with inspiration** -- See the updates from everyone around the world or just the people you are following. Gain insights from following other members and horses updates.
- ▶ **Connect with fun** -- Use your personal wall to share social updates and pictures. Keep up with what other people write for you on your wall too.
- ▶ **Connect with learning** -- Watch Parelli educational videos, curated and provided to suit your level.

Stay tuned for more details!

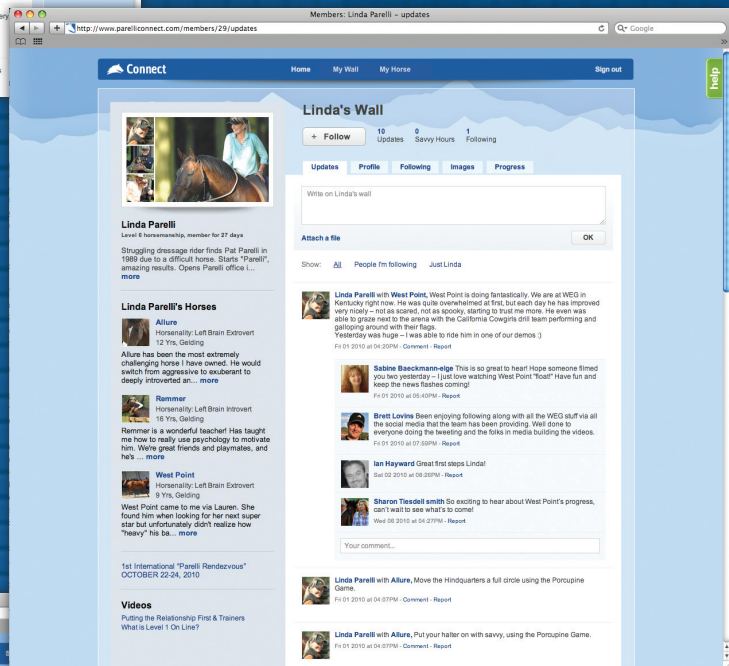


Everyone's Updates

Find other Parel practitioners by level and/or location and keep up with what's happening with other members and their horses!

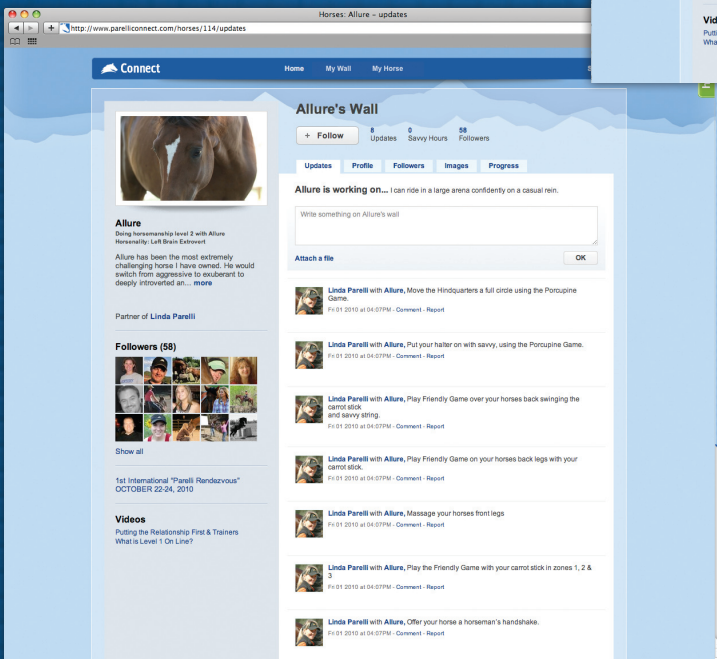
Your Wall

Post your updates and enjoy social conversations with other Parel customers. Upload your pictures to share with others and keep up to date with posts from other people posting on your wall!



Your Horses Wall

A companion set of tasks for each of the Levels Pathways DVDs is provided for you to tick as you complete them with your horse, in addition to posting your horse's updates associated with a particular savvy and time spent training. Its the perfect companion to help direct your horsemanship journey while sharing the experience with others.





Dear Friends,

When Linda and I joined together in 1993 we were committed to do more than train horses or run clinics. We focused all our energy on a very big goal—to change the world for horses and the people who love them. We set about to cause the level of horsemanship to rise and to change industry standards.

Rather than fight against injustice and ignorance, we chose to demonstrate another way—one based on the principles of love, language and leadership—to put the relationship first, develop a balanced foundation through Four Savvys and commit to never-ending self-improvement.

Along the way many people have joined the cause and helped us to share the Parelli message, taking us from humble beginnings to being the number one horsemanship program in the world. Today almost every horse discipline at every level has been touched in some way by Parelli, and many horses have been saved from being sold or destroyed by our teaching humans how to understand things from the horse's point of view. We gave life to a movement we named Natural Horsemanship, and it is now accepted as its own discipline.

The Savvy Club is about building a culture of dedicated students who join together to empower this cause. By being successful with your horse you will live your dream and at the same time help make the world a better place for horses and the people who love them.

Through horsemanship you learn to master the principles of relationships, which goes on to impact almost every other area of your life and the people you connect with.

Thank you for being part of helping us to change the world.

Yours naturally,

Pat Parelli

Linda Parelli



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Huge thanks to all the members of our worldwide team, who do their best to be “the best me that they can be” every day. We value their commitment to supporting horse lovers worldwide in whatever way they can.

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PHOTO BY COCO

Correction: In our August issue (*The Last Lonely Barn*, p. 35), we erroneously stated that 1-Star Licensed Parelli Professionals are not permitted to charge students for lessons, and are only allowed to teach Level 1 On Line. We were referring to 1-Star *trainee* instructors, who must complete 50 hours of free lessons before being certified as 1-Star instructors. Fully certified 1-Star instructors may charge for lessons and are authorized to teach up to Level 3 On Line.



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PHOTO BY COCO

Dear FRIENDS,

by Linda Parelli



The smile says it all — riding my new horse West Point in a lesson with Walter Zettl.

As I write to you, we're driving through Kansas on our way to WEG (World Equestrian Games) in Lexington, Kentucky. Should be very exciting — we have sixteen daily demos and lectures in the Equine Village, and we have sixteen horses with us!

So looking back at these last few months, there have been some "interesting" events as well as some great happenings on all fronts.

At our tour event in Ohio, my lesson with Savvy Club member Fran and her horse Crest was quite a challenge. She had trouble cantering her horse because he would blow up quite dangerously. Having been bucked off pretty hard and gotten rather hurt, she was understandably worried about it. "Perfect," I thought. Lots of people and horses deal with confidence issues around the canter, and this will be a great way to show how to overcome the difficulties.

Well, as usual, it wasn't about the.... I discovered some issues that ran very deep and that Crest — a Left-Brain Extrovert — would get very Right-Brain Introvert about,

to the point that he couldn't move. So the session kept changing from one thing to the next as he would drop one mask and expose another. Having that one chance to profoundly make a difference for the two of them, I found that the lesson got rather deep, and I'm sure I didn't explain some things well enough for some. However, the result with Fran and Crest was wonderful, especially in the days and weeks that followed. You can read the details in my blog if you like: <http://bit.ly/bArFJL>

Spain and the UK

Right after Ohio I flew to Spain to have a few days with Luis Lucio, our Spanish Dressage Team friend in Barcelona. When he picked me up at the airport he said, "Linda! We ride five horses tomorrow morning, is okay with you?" Well, at that time I was lucky to be riding five times in two weeks! But I sucked it up and said, "Sure, sounds great," and all night willed my body to make itself fit enough by the morning. Thankfully it wasn't too horrid, no aching muscles (well, not much, anyway!), and I learned a lot. We discussed my Game of Contact, and I got to ride his top horses, working on cantering on the spot. Don't you just love Principle #7, horses teach humans? As Luis coached me, the fabulous Nervi taught me the feelings and helped me advance my skills. The thing I found the hardest was to totally give the reins while maintaining a totally engaged seat! Finally I got it; it felt a bit like patting my head and rubbing my stomach at the same time. It's hard to do!

Then I flew to England to meet up with Pat for our seminars held in conjunction with the Festival of the Horse. Unfortunately the event was not well attended, but



Getting coached by Luis Lucio, on his fabulous Andalusian, Nervi.



Pat and Catwalk share lunch during their second session.

our seminars were packed. We had three, culminating in Savvy Club Sunday, just as we do at our tour events.

Each of the two demos featured a problem horse, one of them causing quite a stir for us. This horse, Catwalk, was quite something. A five-year-old Warmblood stallion jumper brimming with talent, Catwalk possessed a most perplexing problem: He was hard to bridle. Not just hard, but impossible. And the new owner of Catwalk just happens to be Robert Whitaker, an accomplished international champion and show jumper from the famous Whitaker family, so he knows when a problem is really tough.

Now let's add to the cocktail that this horse is a Left Brain Introvert, confident, dominant, and has basically decided he will never allow himself to be bridled again. It was taking ten minutes to bridle him — the grooms were building the bridle piece by piece onto Catwalk's head.

Having seen thousands of sessions with difficult horses, I quickly saw that this ranked near the top. In fact, Pat said that this is the most difficult horse he has ever had in public. (Casper is still number one overall.) When Pat says that, I'm humbled. I know what that means. I've seen it!

Things went pretty well, although not easily, and Pat was able to pass a bareback pad over Catwalk's head without the horse worrying or feeling the need to defend himself. Then the bridle came out, and boy, did he react. The moment he smelled it and saw the bit, the game was on. His head thrashed violently to the side (it would have knocked you out if you were on his right) as he made it clear that he did not trust Pat now that he had a bridle in his hands. Pat stayed passively persistent in the proper position, matching the energy but not forcing him to be still, and at one time using a lip rope and lowering Catwalk's head to try to get him off the adrenaline and induce

endorphins. He ended up putting the rope under Catwalk's leg to reduce the violence of his head swinging, but not to stop it. It's important that the horse doesn't feel trapped, and in this serious of a situation, the potential for Pat to get hurt or the horse to get mad was very high. Pat was balancing on the edge and doing it masterfully.

After another hour or so Pat got to a spot where there was some improvement, but he knew it was not over. Catwalk was not yet trusting, and he still could not be bridled. As Pat finished the seminar he walked out with Catwalk (who was calm, not a drop of sweat on him; Pat was soaked!) and was accosted by some women who accused Pat of wrongdoing. They even attacked poor Robert. They lodged an official complaint the next morning, and the vet was sent out to examine the horse because they claimed he was abused and hurt.

At that time, Pat was in session two with Catwalk (not in a demo; there was a different demo horse lined up for that day). The vet arrived and not only was able to examine a calm Catwalk's mouth (good job, he said!) but found nothing out of order. The authorities were very apologetic, but we understood what was going on and had nothing to hide anyway.

It still took hours of passive persistence before Catwalk finally decided he was not going to be killed or lose his dignity, and he allowed Pat to bridle him. Halfway through Pat grabbed a burger, and Catwalk stood next to him, had a drink and tried to share the snack! It was so interesting to watch this horse with Pat. It was as though they were having a debate, but there was neither anger nor hard feelings. "Let's have a bite and then get back to our discussion!"

The breakthrough came. Suddenly, Catwalk gave permission to be bridled. Pat took Catwalk back to the stall, and James Roberts (Parelli professional) was instructed to resume some of the desensitization to take him a little further. Again, no sweat on Catwalk. Talk about left-brain! Pat has often said that you just need to be able to out-fumble the horse and have more persistence than he does. Well, Catwalk has a very high spirit, and he persisted more than almost any horse I've seen.

Even better news: Two days later Robert competed on Catwalk and placed fifth. His grooms were shocked to watch the horse calmly bridle and asked Robert if he was sedated. Not only that—a couple of months down the track, Catwalk bridles better than any horse in the barn!

So what was “interesting” about this event? The fact that someone took some photos and video, posted it on the net and claimed that Pat was being cruel. This attracted some Parelli detractors, and they blew it out of proportion, making claims that were not at all factual. So there was an Internet storm for a while; it may come up again somewhere, and if it does, now you know the story! We have devoted our lives to making the world a better place for horses and humans, and for people to think that we would be cruel to horses is just absurd! Thank you to all of you who maintained your support for us and the program throughout, and we’re sorry if you got attacked in the process of trying to defend or explain. Some people just don’t want to know the truth.

The Sunday lessons went super. Pat worked with Laura and her gorgeous Warmblood gelding (purchased from projecthorse.com!), who would flap his lips on the Circling Game. Pat quickly pointed out that things were too boring for this magnificent Left-Brain Extrovert, and as he got Laura to be more provocative the behavior disappeared and the horse lit up.



Coaching British eventer Georgie Spence at the Festival of the Horse.

My lesson was with Georgie Spence, a promising young rider for the British Eventing Team. Her horse was a Left-Brain Introvert and had previously been quite challenging, except that James Roberts had helped out quite a bit. Now it was about his being more in harmony, and Georgie had a lot of trouble going to neutral once she asked him to. Instead of holding him responsible to maintain gait, she kept egging him on. He was also spooking at first, but we quickly changed that by spooking with him. It was a lot of fun coaching a rider of this capacity, but halfway through the session, Georgie was called to the jump-off

(on her other horse) and had to leave. So I took over with her horse... then five minutes later they came to get the saddle, too! Never had that happen.

Pretty soon one of my saddles was strapped on, I mounted and then it was much like watching paint dry. He stayed by the gate and didn’t want to leave! So I just played the game. Asked him to go, rewarded the slightest try, and finally he walked around the arena without being pushed to do so.

Back in the US

Fast-forward and we’re back in the US. Courses going full blast at the Pagosa campus, instructors coming in for training and then Fresno for our final tour event. It was a great crowd, intimate arena (we love it when the audience is so close!), and the show went great. Super spotlights, and lessons on Savvy Club Sunday were a treat. Pat’s student needed to learn how to get more assertive and provocative with her left-brain horse, and mine had a horse that went Right-Brain Extrovert in front of the crowd. I showed my student how to urge her horse faster on the Circling Game to support its need to run and get rid of adrenaline. It didn’t take long, and no matter what the audience did, the horse stayed calm. I love this stuff!

Late in September we conducted a six-day rescue-horse training course for the Humane Society of the United States. Eight staff members from the Equine Protection department, including Director Keith Dane and Chief Innovations Officer Holly Hazard, invested their time to learn the Parelli approach. It was an intensive week that finished up with a field trip to the local Pagosa horse rescue, LASSO, where they got to test their new skills. Not only did they do fantastically, but we had a couple of Right-Brain Introvert horses that were really tough to halter (which means you couldn’t get near them). Using lots of retreat and reap-approach, we finally convinced the horses that they were safe with us. Not long after, Keith had the mustang following him all around the arena. It was a beautiful demonstration of growing trust.

Check out their blog here: <http://bit.ly/aPC6OM>

Walter Zettl

And of course Walter Zettl was here to give us our dose of classical training. It’s a privilege to be coached by such a master and horse lover; our principles are totally congruent when it comes to training horses. This time I had not only Remmer in my lessons, but West Point, too. West Point

is the horse Lauren Barwick bought almost two years ago, a seriously talented Hannoverian who had been pushed too hard as a youngster and came with some baggage. I had been helping him overcome his issues with the bit using the Game of Contact, which was proving very successful, but Lauren was deeply concerned by how much emotional baggage he had; it was way more baggage than she had originally thought. After taking him through the foundation and restoring lots of trust and confidence, Lauren still found that his emotions were not strong enough to deal with the competition environment, let alone at international level, and she offered him to me as my next super horse. What a dream come true! I remember back when she showed me the video of him and I told her, "You have to have him. He's incredible! And if you don't buy him, I will!" I know it was a really tough decision for Lauren because West Point was her dream, and what a great demonstration of putting the horse first. She said to me, "I want him to be in the arena with me, not because of me." Huge. Lauren is now looking for her next superstar.

Performance Summit

Our first Performance Summit at the Pagosa Springs campus was a great success. The weather was stunning, people were smiling and the horses were top-notch. The new three-day format proved very pleasing because it gave people all Friday morning to turn up, get to the horsemanship courses and demonstrations taking place and just generally ease into an afternoon of learning.

Day one was about purpose. Featuring draft horses, working cattle, packing, *toreador* games and roping simulators, Pat's purpose was to impress on everyone just how important putting your principles to purpose is for your horsemanship. When all you do is "principle" (Seven Games), it can stifle your progress and bore your horse. Think of the Seven Games as your language; it enables you to communicate with your horse and teach him anything you want him to be able to do. Having purpose develops your partnership with your horse, increases responsibility, focus and motivation and relieves boredom. Even trail riding is a purpose! It was a lot of fun and a lot of learning, and even the Savvy Team was focused on purpose-oriented demonstrations.

Day two was about competition and specialization. The Savvy Team was comprised of both English and Western riders from our Competition Team doing dressage, jumping and reining. The rest of the day featured subjects

such as the talent quotient, testing your principles, putting the relationship before the goal, how to deal with nerves, the Fluidity difference between English and Western, fun with poles, balls and barrels, and how everything you need to know as your foundation is in the Seven Games and Patterns—just taken to a new level of advancement. As an example, Walter Zettl put me through some paces while Pat translated what he meant into simple-to-understand versions of the Seven Games; and Pat and his Mastery students put on some sizzling displays of cutting and cow working, including a face-off between Ryan Rose and Pat on his two top Atwood stallions, Skyline and Peppy. Ryan won the vote!

Then we danced through the night to Tim Sullivan and his band, Narrow Gauge, an essential event attraction throughout the years!

Day three was about performance. We talked about the essential elements of doing demos and spotlights, and I told my secrets for putting on an inspirational demo, from the design and setup to handling "mistakes" and choosing music. Lots of fun! Then we watched all manner of spotlights including quadrilles, miniatures with carts, whip cracking to the poem "The Man from Snowy River," and the beautiful, inspiring Atwood yearlings.

Next year the Summit will be different: all about bridleless riding and Liberty! Tickets were already on sale, so be prepared and get yours now. While we would love to have you all at our place, there is limited room, and this event will remain more intimate and casual in its nature.

Vinny and Moxie

It's such fun having these two little dogs. Vinny is now 15 months old, and Moxie is 5 months. They are great friends and playmates, and great company for me as I sit in my office and write to you all.

We hope to see you all at our exciting events next year, so do come up and say hi!

Yours naturally,
Linda





Clinic in the

RED CENTRE

by Nicky Ripley

If you're having difficulties in Level 3, then revisit the Level 1-2 concepts. Never have these words rung clearer than after a two day Level 1-2 clinic and individual lesson with Rob McAuliffe in Alice Springs, Central Australia.

During the two-hour drive home I realised how I often forget to take the time it takes, be particular and remember whose responsibility it is in every moment with my horses. (The irony of this is that I forget because I perceive that I don't have much time to play!) As a Level 3 student, the clinic was a timely reminder and a humbling experience.

Rob started us thinking about the 8 Responsibilities during the first morning. The resounding question throughout the weekend seemed to be, "What is the horse's and human's responsibility in this situation?" Coming to terms with new ideas and changing old patterns was challenging for us all and the amount of information learned seemed to be overwhelming at times. Every one of us left feeling committed to give back responsibility to our horses and make this journey into a partnership with our horses.

Simulations had us expressing our Horsenalities and doing a lot of thinking about aspects of our horsemanship, such as amount of energy we put into a send, being particular about directing zones or whether we really are being friendly. This in turn caused us to be more aware of how we played with our horses. The principle games built

to purpose games as our understanding, trust, respect and responsibilities grew.

Through playing and stretching the Friendly Game boundaries with my young colt, we "found" the principle and purpose games which has added another layer to everything I do while with both my horses. Not only do I view them with new eyes, but they now look at me with new eyes and questions.

It seems to be the apparently simple things that we horsemanship students have taken for granted that we now are really focused on such as where I focus when I ask my horse to back out online or allowing our horses to make mistakes rather than micromanaging to stop them from making mistakes. Just having the opportunity to practice skills and ask questions to get the help benefited all the partnerships. As an instructor, Rob has a keen eye for detail and his honest feedback and teaching were welcomed by this group of desert women and horses. By Sunday morning he commented that we weren't raising any dust which gave us as students a real boost in confidence that we had made progress.

I have realised that I had let a few aspects of my horsemanship slip; I was less particular in how and what I did. There was also a realisation that I had left some holes and made some mistakes with my horse Charm that I haven't



corrected over the years I've spent with her. So now is the time to correct and improve the relationship and make sure that I don't make those same mistakes with Stardust.

Probably having the two-hour lesson with Ziggy Stardust on the Monday after the clinic made the most profound changes to my thinking about how and what I'm doing. I really took on board the idea that the message has to get to the feet and they must move. We are all making such progress and having more fun in the couple of weeks since the clinic. I decided to find out how good Charm's extreme Friendly Game was, only to find that she's not that confident in some areas, so we had some online bucking and less than pretty sights, but these were soon replaced with calm confidence. The greatest breakthrough was probably our flank rope leading.

After I found a rope around the flank to be an area of discomfort for Stardust, I wondered about my trouble with flank rope leading with Charm. I found a gaping hole in our confidence development. After a couple of sessions of Charm kicking, trying to bite me and bucking, I was able to lead her from far back in the flank quite calmly at walk, trot and backwards as well as very responsive leading backward and forward by the hind legs. So we now play with that every session for a short while. And there are great improvements after about four sessions with Stardust. He now accepts the rope rubbing and tightening far back round his flank with only a little fussing or moving. This is a huge change from kicking, bucking, turning circles and rearing.

Everything we now do, I make into confidence-building and Friendly Game; this has also caused both horses to be more interested, less pushy at mealtimes and more responsive in all I ask. I've especially noticed that with Charm, who has had difficulty with the Squeeze Game over in Zones 3, 4 and 5. By just playing in a friendly manner with all the obstacles in our playground, she is more confident and athletic to jump, squeeze sideways over and go between things. She is discovering these obstacles anew and has a much more inquisitive look about her as well as asking questions.

We have been playing with riding circles (perfect circles) and I made a very interesting discovery. While working on making no corrections and becoming a little frustrated that I was still making a few, I remembered what a beautiful place I live in, started singing and looking at the distant hills. Funny thing was, that as soon as I stopped looking at the cones on the ground, we got circles without me making corrections. This made me ask myself "what do you think is going to happen to the cones if you don't look right at them?"

I realise that if I just focus above them, but can still see them in my peripheral vision, that my weight shifts back a bit and Charm is able to make circles! That was quite an inspirational moment. So we got circles with folded arms, hands on head and sticks held high. All the while, Stardust came in and out of our circles, sometimes trotting along with us and sometimes grazing. He quite likes to follow the rail with us, either leading or following, so I guess must be learning these patterns as well.

So all in all, the lessons and reminders of our human and horse responsibilities have been revisited and a new layer of learning has taken shape and still continues for me and hopefully my horses. I am again learning to trust and believe in myself to move forward with my horsemanship and horses. 🐾





On Track AT STONELEIGH PARK

by Beth Barling

The Parelli campus in Stoneleigh Park made history this year with the first-ever UK fast track course. The course was led by 3-Star Parelli instructor Carmen Smith, and was supported by instructors Julia Ryman (US), Jarno De Smet (Belgium), Larisa Tasker (UK) and Jody Ruysen (UK). Attending the course were twenty-four students and their horses from six European countries: Belgium, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

"The Fast Track course is very progressive, with a 'hands on' curriculum," explains Carmen. "Students usually come with a goal or outcome they want to reach: to be a Parelli instructor, advance their horsemanship or enter the competition world."

The course began with two days of testing. "Most people are quite nervous about this," said Carmen. "It really opens your mind and shows you where you're truly at and what you need to do over the next few weeks to make progress for the testing at the end of the course."

Alison Wheatley, a student from the UK, agreed: "The testing was very intense, but we were so focused and busy that it was also quite fun, and there was a real buzz to it. We weren't given time to worry about it! We also knew that we had four whole weeks to make improvements."

Each day was long, starting with a daily update meeting for the instructors at 7:30 a.m. For students the course started at 8 a.m. "Usually we met first thing in the playground with our horses," explained Alison. "Compared to other courses I've done at Stoneleigh, we didn't spend as much time in the classroom. We had horsemanship demonstrations every day and were given plenty of information and explanation, so we got used to carrying our notebooks in our pockets most of the time."



Each day typically ended around 6 p.m. “After sorting our horses out we had time to get some food, grab a shower and catch up on some theory or knot-tying practice — but we’d all be falling into bed by 9 p.m. to be ready for the next day,” said Alison.

And there was no letup for one weekend in August as the playground came alive with activity for the Parelli Games. Another eighteen horses and humans travelled to Stoneleigh to join the twenty-four horses already at the campus for two hours of challenges and fun. Cheered on by a large crowd of spectators, the participants had the opportunity to try out a range of tournament games On Line, at Liberty, or Freestyle, as well as a gaits and distance test plus timed events. The games ended with some spectacular and inspirational Savvy Spotlights. “It was a perfect day,” said Carmen. “There was a lovely, relaxed atmosphere with lots of fun and savvy. It was great to see the playground so full and active — it gave us a real picture of where the Parelli Games could go.”

On Monday morning it was business as usual at the Fast Track course. Although the course was quite demanding, there was plenty of support. Each student was allocated a coach for the week, and together they looked at goals for the week and how they were going to achieve them. Although there was an overall theme for each week (e.g., On Line, Freestyle, Liberty or Finesse), students could choose from a number of focus stations depending on their own personal progress and goals. Alison liked this style of teaching a lot: “The focus stations were brilliant. It was my responsibility to manage my own goals, but I could ask for advice anytime, and my coach helped me plan my goals and helped me break them down. It was a very supportive environment.”

At the end of the course the students were tested again. “This time I did feel the pressure a bit more,” said Alison. “But after four weeks together we were a real team out there. Everyone was rooting for each other — it was a wonderful feeling.” In the office, UK campus manager Laura Aitken and course coordinator Jenny Beynon were uniquely positioned to watch the students grow in themselves and as a team over the course of the Fast Track.

“We’re fortunate that at the UK campus the classroom is based in the same place as the office, so we had close contact with the students every day,” said Laura. “They often popped in to say hi, and we were always invited to take part in their barbecues and fish-and-chip suppers. These are twenty-four people who are likely to be instructors in



the next twelve months. It’s exciting to see future team members and get to know them.”

So what advice is there for students preparing for or thinking of doing a Fast Track course?

“Prepare to work hard and prepare to mingle,” says Jenny. “This course really focuses on self-development, which can be pretty tough. It’s not just about horsemanship — it’s also about being part of a team and working better as a group. It’s way more than riding!”

“Take your best horse and make sure that you’re both fit,” advises Alison. “Although the course is all about development, it’s mostly about developing you, not your horse. So make sure that your horse is up to all the things you’re going to ask of it.”

Carmen Smith remembers the advice she was given as a student by one of her instructors, Kaffa Martignier, who reminded her of one of Pat’s recommendations: Take care your horsemanship, and it will take care of you.

“The Fast Track course really lives that quote,” said Carmen, “It will help you reach your goals, whatever they are, and it’s something that we should always remember as students and as instructors.”

This sentiment is certainly reflected in Alison’s personal highlight of the course. “As students we were being observed and graded all the time. It really made me realize that it’s one thing to know something, but quite another to live it. As a future Parelli instructor, I know I need to be an example to my students all the time. I really learned the importance of taking the time it takes and doing things properly. It was the experience of a lifetime.” 🐾

Levels Pathway

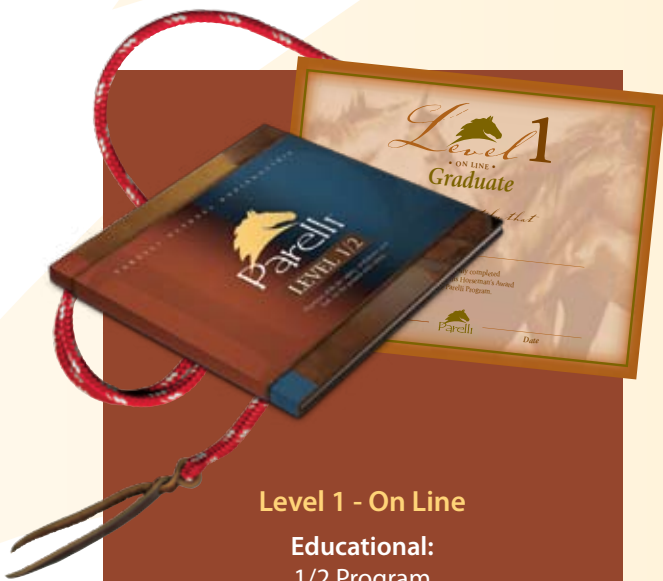
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Level 3 - FreeStyle

Educational:
Level 3 Program

Equipment:
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Educational:
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Equipment:
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Educational:
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Level 4 - Liberty

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Level 4 - FreeStyle

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PHOTO BY MACKENZIE KINCAID

REINVENTING *the Rope*

by Mackenzie Kincaid

Pat's barn may not look much like an inventor's workshop, but over the years it's been home to an abundance of innovation. Whether training horses or teaching humans, new ideas (and old ideas made new again) are at the heart of the Parelli philosophy, and teaching students to be effective with their horses often means creating new tools to help them do just that.

With his own rope-tying skills — and the Parelli manufacturing department at his disposal for more ambitious experiments — Pat has often had custom ropes made for his own use. These proved useful enough that soon his students began asking for those products to use with their own horses.

"I realized if it's good enough for me," Pat says, "if it's something that I use on a regular basis, why not make it available to everyone?"

The first of these new products — recently released as a preview at the 2010 Performance Summit, and available online beginning November 25th — are the 22-foot Feather

Lines. Essentially a pair of long Savvy Strings, and made of the same lightweight yacht rope, the 22-foot Feather Lines make excellent driving lines with the addition of a couple of small snaps. They can also be used for handling foals, allowing plenty of room for drift.

"I'm a 'do more with less' kind of person, so I'll often times just take my lariat rope out and use it to drive horses," Pat says. "I had one student here that bruised her hip pretty good one time; she was driving in Zone 5, had that loop [in the lariat], and then the horse bolted, and as the horse went past her it tripped her up. So I started suggesting people use two 22-foot ropes, but then people have got to buy another rope, and they're heavy."

The 22-foot Feather Lines offered an ideal solution; where Pat's students used to create makeshift Feather Lines by tying several Savvy Strings together, they can now simply add the Feather Lines to their equipment collections.

"They're light as a feather but they're strong as you'd ever need," Pat says. "They've got that life in them, they've got that feel."

Also among the new products is a 9-foot Savvy String, useful for handling foals or as a pocket neck-rope for catching horses. Pat often uses his for tying horses, as an alternative to keeping a halter on underneath the bridle.

"I put a little nosepiece or bosalito on underneath [the bridle]," Pat explains. "It's an old buckaroo tradition."

These are also the primary uses of the final new product, the 9-foot Lead and Tie Rope. Designed for more utilitarian purposes than the standard 12-foot Line, the 9-foot



Lead and Tie Rope is designed for everyday handling of horses, rather than training, and offers a shorter alternative in situations — such as handling multiple horses or ponying horses — when a full twelve feet might just get in the way.

The 12-, 22- and 45-foot Lines that students are already familiar with have been improved, and have been renamed “Seven Games Ropes” to emphasize their use for training. The first of the improvements to the 12- and 22-foot Seven Games Ropes is an eye-splice at the snap end, so that broken snaps can be easily replaced.



“The more you use these ropes,” Pat explains, “the better they get, instead of the other way around. I started having people that would go, ‘My snap broke!’ And I’d go, ‘Okay, we’ll send you a new rope.’ So we’d send them a new rope, and then they’d be going, ‘Yeah, but it doesn’t feel as good as my old one!’ Because the old one’s like a good set of shoes; they’re broke in. It was frustrating for everybody. So we experimented around with a different way to attach the snap, and basically you just put an eye in the end of the rope and are able to change the snap out.”

There are other benefits to removing the snap as well. With the snap taken off and the rope itself threaded through the eye, it makes for a much safer and easier tool when using the rope to handle a horse’s feet. In the past Pat had wrapped bandages around the snap, worried about having abrasive metal scraping against the horse’s ankle. Now the snap can be removed entirely to make the horse much more comfortable.

An additional change to the 22-foot Seven Games Rope is the replacement of the popper with a loop handle. “The 22-foot rope is hard to have a popper [on]; it’s hard to use the popper on it for anything,” Pat says. “It’s mostly something that you use the Carrot Stick™ and string for anyway.”

The 45-foot Seven Games Rope now has a new honda, which makes it more useful, both as a training rope and for roping cattle.

As Pat explains, “My 45-foot ropes were bought from King’s Saddlery up in Wyoming, and I put a honda on it, and the honda — it was either rawhide or metal — was almost as expensive as the rope. And I go, ‘Well, I’m not trying to sell people a rope that you can rope with.’ My ropes that I would use are a rope that I could rope with, that I could also undo, and put a carabiner on, and use as a long-distance rope to play with horses on.”



Parelli students didn’t generally need a lariat for roping cattle; they would only be playing with their horses, and that required an attachment that would swivel, that could have a snap added, that would allow them the versatility they needed with their horses. An expensive honda would only drive up the product’s price for a function most students wouldn’t be using anyway. The immediate solution was a makeshift honda built from the swiveling part of a standard snap, but a swiveling brass honda is terrible for roping, and students had use carabiner snaps to attach the rope to the halter, which had caused problems as the carabiners had a tendency to snag on objects, ropes and even tendons when the horses rubbed against them.

For inspiration to solve the persistent honda problem, Pat looked to the traditions of Mexican cowboys, who often create their own honda by taking the end of the rope and braiding in an eye.

“Down in Mexico this is a very common thing; this is how the charros do a lot of their trick ropes, and they teach it to the kids. I braided this back like they do in Mexico, down back through, made this eye. If I want to put the snap on it, [to get] the aspects of a swivel, I can just do that, or if I want to use it for roping now I’ve got a honda that actually is way more functional.”

Along with these revisions of basic equipment, some older favorites are back by popular demand: the Natural West and Country snaffle bridles are once more available. And Pat hints at more new products on the way: perhaps reins, hackamores, and even a Carrot Stick for kids. There’s no telling what may be in store when Pat straps on his spurs and puts on his inventor’s cap. 🐾

I grew up with horses and have always loved them.

The horse industry has been part of my entire life: riding, driving, training, showing, and breeding. I was taught the "normal" way of horsemanship... the "kick them to go and pull the reins to stop" philosophy. I later discovered Parelli. WOW! Forget all you have ever learned and start all over again. The journey had begun!

The journey has been:

All about equal doses of love, language, and leadership.

Rhythm, relaxation, retreat.

Letting my idea become my horse's idea.

Putting the relationship first.

Foundation before specialization.

Feel, timing, and balance.

Approach and retreat.

Putting your heart in your hand.

*A horse doesn't care about how much you know,
until he knows how much you care!*

*To be understood, one must be effective and to
be effective, one must be understood.*

I love it when my 17-hand Friesian "monsters" come to me from out in the pasture when I stand waiting with halters. They lower their heads for me. They tell me that we have rapport! I now have fun with my horses and they have fun with me. I am a true advocate for natural horsemanship...totally committed and loving it!

*Thank you to all with Parelli Natural Horsemanship who have given me a new lease on life and inspiration to be the best I can be. I shall be forever grateful. Thank you, GinnySue, for the absolutely beautiful presentation creation of my Level 2 award!
What creativity!*

—Paula K. NV



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PHOTO BY KIT KARSON



Where Did Our **RAPPORT GO?**

by Marta Sobczak

My natural journey with my off-track thoroughbred gelding Juliano began four years ago. In that time we went from total disaster to Level 3/4. We overcame Juliano's aggression towards people, and dealt with his impulsiveness and fear of everything. Juliano revealed himself and now is a very dominant Left-Brain Extrovert. The change in my horse happened so quickly that he soon started to out-think me. Luckily, I was recently asked to look after a 5 year-old dressage horse, an Arabian-cross stallion called



Ben. It turns out that this little stallion gave me an answer to my rapport trouble with Juliano.

It was my second On Line session with Ben. I got his focus right away: hide your hiney, and voila, I had both eyes, both ears, and Ben's full concentration. We started playing the Seven Games. It was going so great that I started thinking about Juliano and how difficult our first sessions had been. I realized that I'd had no experience at all when I'd started with Juliano, but something else was missing — something else was different about me when I was working with Ben. Ben was keeping up with his responsibilities, maintaining gait and direction on a circle. I was standing on a tire, and he was going around beautifully; then he wanted to come in, so I accepted his idea, rubbed him and sent him off again. He went back out onto the a circle and I drifted back to Juliano in my thoughts.

What were we missing? Our Friendly Game was fine, Juliano was very obedient when we rode... everything seemed to be fine, but the spark in Juliano's eyes was missing and he was becoming disinterested in me. He was not asking me questions any more, and this gray horse I had going around me now was asking and asking.

Then it struck me: I'm not being assertive and provocative enough with Juliano, and this is making our rapport go up in flames. Ben is a stallion, so I automatically have a different approach to him. When I ask him to back up he'd better back up; if I ask him to go onto a circle he'd better go

onto the circle. I'm being assertive because I know that if I hesitate and 'maybe' ask him to 'maybe' move away he won't; what's more, he will be more than happy to move me.

With Juliano, I'm different. I'm overprotective and obsessed. Juliano doesn't want to back up at Phase 1? Oh, I'm sure he has a good reason for that; I'm not going to up my phases because I'm sure I will offend him. With Juliano our relationship lately looks like this:

Me: Son, I've made you soup, good soup. Eat it, it's healthy for you. Come on son, eat it while it's hot. Soup, good, hot!

Juliano: Are you crazy, woman? What do you want? Can't you see I'm hanging out with the guys?

All that time I was thinking that the nicer I was to my horse, the more he would like me.

There is a great thought in Mastery Manual #10: "A worried leader is not going to win horses' rapport and respect." Juliano was very right-brain when I met him, that's true. But now I'm sure that me worrying about his feelings is driving him crazy. He needs a cool, confident leader, not an overprotective mum with a bowl of soup following him around the pasture. I didn't know when to quit doing what I was doing. I was calming Juliano down all the time and what he needed was for me to use his energy in a creative way. He is a Left-Brain Extrovert! He needs a challenge!

Ben was getting bored with circling. I invited him in (don't worry, he wasn't going round for ages, my thought process was quick; I'm a Left-Brain Extrovert, too). Ben desperately wanted to roll in the mud. I drove him away from me and allowed him to roll. When he was done, he got up, put in a small rear and a buck, than started walking directly at me tossing his head. The stallion finally showed his true



colors and now I was in trouble! Thank God I found my hidden layers of assertiveness that day. I looked at Ben and wiggled the rope. You'd better... ah yes, back-up, good boy. I took Ben back to the stables and I didn't feel like I was leading a stallion any more: he was walking with me, and when I stopped, he would do the same. I had established my leadership.

Now it was time for Juliano. I wanted to be the same assertive person with Juliano as I was with Ben few minutes ago. I have a weakness for Juliano and I've let a lot of things slide with him. I had decided now to ask more from Juliano, and make things happen by being persistent. If things went wrong, I could always play the Friendly Game. So I asked Juliano to back up. What I got from him was, "In a minute."

I asked him again but this time I was imagining Ben was standing in front of me.

Juliano backed up, stopped and looked at me. His ears were forward and the sparkle in his eyes was back.



From that point on, our session went great. Juliano changed directions with a flying lead change; he did a canter sideways and other fancy things. Every time I invited him in he would run back to me with a face saying, "What's next, what's next?" It was an amazing session with an amazing ending. We walked home at liberty, and Juliano was so stuck to me that he didn't even think of eating grass or running back to the stables, where supper was just being served. I tested the bond by turning back to the play field. Juliano didn't follow the road home on his own: he turned with me. I was finally worth following.

I tested the bond by turning back to the play field. Juliano didn't follow the road home on his own: he turned with me. I was finally worth following.

From Ben and Juliano, I learned a life-changing lesson. All that time I was thinking that the nicer I was to my horse, the more he would like me. This is a human way of thinking and I followed this path because Juliano had plenty of bad human experiences before. I thought this is the right way to handle him. Horses need so much more than just

kindness: they need a good leader. A leader who is fair and knows how to balance the carrot and the stick. We have to adapt to the changes we've made in our horses. Juliano needed me to be calm and patient some time ago, now he is ready to go further and I have to match him.

I watched Juliano with his pasture mates before we played. There were six horses standing by the fence when Juliano decided to go between the horses and the fence. He moved all six horses with just a look on his face, and they didn't just "kind of" move — they would run back when my horse was approaching them. So how can I be a good leader for a horse that all the other horses answer to? Now I know, I have to be more assertive and provocative. I always thought I was putting just enough pressure on Juliano, but it turns out I was nagging.

I'm glad I had a chance to learn how assertive I should be from Ben; now I can take that lesson and work on it with Juliano. Ben is dominant because he is a stallion. Juliano is dominant because he is Juliano, and treating him like a horse lower down the herd hierarchy is insulting to him. Acknowledging and accepting his strength of will is essential in preserving Juliano's dignity. 🐾

Marta Sobczak is a freelance graphic designer and Parelli student living in Poland. She is a contributing blogger at Parelli Central (central.parelli.com); her personal blog can be found at martaandjuliano.blogspot.com.



It was really the missing piece for us.

The Cradle Bridle is revolutionary. I bought one for Maggie, my willful Left-Brain Introvert Swedish Warmblood mare, but was very hesitant about using it. I was afraid that she might just rip it off and stomp it on the ground or something. Anyway, when I began to put it on she immediately jerked her head up, but I got it on her after a little approach and retreat. When she finally took it in her mouth she immediately relaxed and dropped her head to my knees, and I easily put the headpiece over her ears (a first). To be honest, I haven't used the snaffle on her in over a year because she was so awful in it. I played with her on the ground in the Cradle, and she was completely relaxed and accepting of it. Ordinarily, when I get on her she turns to the right and looks at me as if she is sticking her tongue out at me, and sometimes she acts as though she is going to bite. She didn't do that at all this time. Her head was dropped, and she was relaxed.

I rode her in it, and she was amazing. Two of my students were there and saw me ask her up into the canter, and I thought that she was getting ready to buck the whole time, but she was actually just very round and collected (I have never felt that much collection before). I have been working a lot on collection On Line, at Liberty and while riding but never had that much success riding her. It was really the missing piece for us. I thought she was pretty powerful before, but wow! She even offered a passage while I was riding her. When I took the saddle off I noticed that her sweat pattern was completely even, whereas before she typically had a little dry spot on her left shoulder. I think that was because she was not completely using herself, and the bridle has allowed her to do that by helping her collect herself that bit more. All of my students are really excited about the Cradle as well. I had a student try it in her lesson yesterday, and her crabby Left-Brain horse was completely different—soft and forward, no resistance. —Kelly

For more information visit www.parelli.com



Big Rings give you more direct contact with the bit.



Small Rings reduce the direct contact of the bit and engage the noseband more.

Your horse will tell you which ring position he prefers (Big or Small Rings), and it's easy to switch from one ring to the other as you experiment or the situation changes.

Cradle Bridle

Member PROFILES



Sofie Svensson

Halmstad, Sweden

How did you find Parelli?

A friend told me about this great way to train your horse, and it just sounded so right. I purchased Level 1 right away.

How long have you been playing with your horse?

Since September 2007.

Describe the horse in your life.

Panter is an 11-year-old Right-Brain/Left-Brain Extrovert Standardbred gelding. He raced in harness racing until the summer of 2007 when he got a leg injury and wasn't able to train for a year. I started to do Parelli with him instead and the owners let me borrow him. He is a horse with high spirit and lots of go. We are having so much fun! I have had him for two years now and hopefully his racing days are over.

What level are you playing in?

We just passed Level 2.

What are your horse dreams/goals?

To have a lot of fun with horses, to get lots of experience. To go to Colorado and learn even more.

What has your horse taught you?

To be patient and to be particular without being mean or mad. To accept him for who he is and for what he is bred for.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

Oh we have had lots of fun moments, he always makes me laugh. Now when he starts to ask questions he has found out that there is something in it for him but at the same time he doesn't want to put too much effort in.

One great moment was last summer when we had a Parelli clinic and I was riding him bareback and he started to canter and I felt really safe and balanced, that was so much fun. And of course the days when he comes running to me in the pasture.

Sherry Duke

Ione, California, U.S.

How did you find Parelli?

On a whim. A friend invited me to go to the Western States Horse Expo. I didn't even know who Pat and Linda Parelli were. I was blown away with what I saw.

How long have you been playing with your horse?

Almost 6 years. I owned him for a year before I started him as my levels partner.

Describe the horse in your life.

My horse is a 16-year-old Left/Right-Brain Extrovert Arabian gelding, named O'Acres Outragius (betterknown as Raige).



What level are you playing in?

Level 3.

What are your horse dreams/goals?

I just want a good — no, a *great* trail partner. I want to dance with my horse both on the ground and in the saddle. I want to be able to fly with eagles.

What has your horse taught you?

My horse has taught me patience and acceptance. Expect a lot, accept a little, reward the slightest try. My horse has taught me how to embrace his unconditional love (I'm getting teary-eyed as I'm writing this). My horse has taught me the truth.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

A couple that stand out in my mind are a time when, at the end of a trail ride, he walked at liberty by my side and didn't leave me to go with the other horse that was with us. Another best moment was when he offered traveling circles at liberty with me.

Beth Russ

Auckland, New Zealand

How did you find Parelli?

I met some great people on a horse trek in early 2007 and joined an adult riding club that some of them belonged to. One of the ladies in the club was working on her Level 2 and held some Parelli play days at the club grounds.

How long have you been playing with your horse?

Since about mid-2007. After going to a few play days at the riding club, I was hooked and was very fortunate to have had a private lesson with Jackie Chant. I joined the Savvy Club in late 2007 and have been to another clinic with Jackie last year. The DVDs are invaluable for helping me stay creative and motivated!

Describe the horse in your life.

My darling "Jacko" is approximately 9, a Clydesdale cross of unknown measures, gelding, Left-Brain Introvert. I bought Jacko three years ago and it's been one of the best decisions I have ever made. He has carried me over beautiful farms, beaches and forests. We have had fantastic fun and we have made some wonderful friends along the way.

What level are you playing in?

I am playing On Line in Level 1 and 2, ticking my way through the self-assessment list.

What are your horse dreams/goals?

"He's perfect... but...he can be a little hard to catch sometimes..." My main dream is to have Jacko gallop up to me in the paddock with as much joy in his heart as I have every time I see him. "He's perfect... but...he is only happy in the front of the group and not being left behind..." My goal is to ride Jacko in the Great New Zealand horse trek amongst hundreds of riders and not have Jacko pulling and fighting to be in front or go crazy when others canter past.

**What has your horse taught you?**

That looks can be deceiving and practice with patience brings great rewards. He seems like a tough little dude and can be very confident and dominant, but he has quite a sensitive and gentle nature. I have to be very careful not to push him too far when we ride or play and allow his Left-Brain Introvert Horsenality™ to work through things.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

There have been so many! Every time I take him to the beach and it's just the two of us – we just chill out and soak in the beautiful scenery. People I see riding out are often amazed that I ride safely in the halter (and sometimes bareback). Recently a very special moment was when Jacko finally figured out that he could play "stick to me" On Line at the canter without pulling away and running off. I cherish these moments of trust and progress.

Member profiles highlight a handful of Savvy Club members each month, allowing them to share their stories with the Parelli community. If you would like your profile to appear in Savvy Times, email your responses to these questions and a picture of yourself with your horse to savvytimes@parelli.com



GLOBAL Community

Reader submissions from around the world

My 40th Birthday

Julia Hollyoak, Australia

Recently I had the privilege of celebrating my 40th birthday, a significant event that I thought warranted something to mark the occasion. I have always wanted to ride my horse at the beach — I currently live in the country and grew up in the mountains, so the beach is a real novelty for me. I also wanted to share the experience with like-minded people. So I hired a beach house for a week that had horse facilities and direct access to 10 km of beach; then I gave five friends four months notice of this pending event. In early March, six people, seven horses and two dogs descended to a beach house to have the holiday of a lifetime. Not everybody knew each other, but what they did have in common was Parelli Natural Horsemanship and me.

My objective for the week was safety, comfort and play. We erected a 90-foot round yard in one of the paddocks with portable posts and tape. This allowed us to settle into a routine of a game of “stick to me” followed by big Squeeze Game through the sand dune, and then off to play on the beach. There was lots of “advance and retreat” until everybody (horse and human) was comfortable with their environment. We played On Line, rode bareback, and frolicked in sand, sea weed and waves. Confidence was rebuilt, curiosity was created and fun was had. After a pattern of doing this for 6 days, we happily rode for four hours along the beach, played Circle Game around us, point to point between two mobs of horses a couple of hundred meters apart, and the list goes on. When we spelled the horses in the afternoon, we fished and built sand (horse) castles and

had “cheeky wee scotches.” The home cooked meals and company was amazing, recipes were swapped, friendships forged, invitations to homes given out and memories made that will last forever.

Thank you Pat and Linda. You haven’t given me a riding program, but a way of life and an extended family.



Little Grey Teapot Wins by Two Lengths!

Meaghan Dwyer-Davies, Australia

“Little Grey Teapot wins by two lengths!” Hearing that was a dream realised — part of a dream, that is — to win three Melbourne Cups with three different horses. And in the same way it’s not about the trailer... it’s not about the Cups!

Little Grey Teapot was a weanling when I first fell in love with her: grey, female, sassy and from staying bloodlines, she was perfect! I had to wait another year to see her at the

Yearling Sales and she had made her better best: dominant, uncooperative and totally indifferent to me! She was a whole lot of horse and I was in love. It was Valentine's Day, 2007, and my husband surprised me by saying he had a bonus cheque from work and that I could have it for her; my final bid was exactly that amount!

My learning curve has been steep and not always pleasant — especially having experienced horseman, trainers and instructors tell me things my horse needed me to hear about who I needed to be and become. It has been an incredible adventure! I have had the opportunity to study at both the Florida and Colorado campus and also learn from Western Australia's most successful Thoroughbred Race Horse Trainers! I have met the most awesome horse people and very talented instructors, who have shown me how good you can really be with horses, and more importantly, how to get there!

What I have had to find in me and what I have to be and become so I can be the leader Little Grey Teapot needs me to be to realise her potential is very challenging and disheartening, or could be if it wasn't for the inspiration of the Parelli Programme.

Taking LGT into the world of Thoroughbred Horse Racing with all that it involves still makes me feel like I am battling out of my league, but I have come to realise I have the skills and knowledge to rise to the occasion and my time spent with Parelli Professional Instructors has given me know-how, and a license to experiment and know it's okay to not always get it right.

It's not about the Cups, it's about the skills and knowledge I will have to learn, acquire and master in so many different areas to have an equine athlete perform at that level happily and successfully. It's about the people I will meet and the laughs and adventures I will have with them. It's about the constant self-improvement that will make me a better leader for my horses and a happier person!

Like Pat says, "If you want to soar like an eagle, don't fly with turkeys," and I am very lucky to have 3-Star instructors Kristi Smith, Rob McAuliffe and Carmen Smith coming to hold clinics at my property Terrabulla in Western Australia this year. Thanks guys, you are awesome for helping make my dreams come true!

Parelli in Sweden

Karin Pettersson, Sweden

After spending about 9 months at the Parelli campuses, taking the next step in my Parelli journey to become a Parelli Professional, I was delighted to see all the enthusiasm over Parelli when I got home! I invited people to my place to inform them of what Parelli activities will take place over the summer and answer questions about the Mastery Program and such. Even though this was an event without horses, over 30 people came and some had traveled quite far! We have come a long way since Pat & Linda were here in 1999 and I arranged the first Parelli clinic in Halmstad in 2000.

Thanks to everyone involved one way or another — the future for Parelli in Sweden is looking bright! 🐾





MY HORSES WEAR Pink Ribbons

by Janice Woods-Allen

There are colored ribbons for everything. You see them hanging on trees and automobile bumpers, on t-shirts, sweat shirts, baseball caps, pinned onto clothing and anywhere else available. Yellow welcomes a loved one home. Red reminds us that AIDS is still killing millions and has no cure. Pink reminds us that women are still dying from breast cancer and there is no cure. Yellow, red, green, pink, whatever - the color doesn't matter. They all are meant to give hope when the other choice is despair. My horses wear pink ribbons.

In 2006, I learned that I had cancer in my right breast. My annual mammogram caught it early and a biopsy confirmed it. I was shocked, terrified, and the doctor must be talking about someone else. I could die. It was the first time I ever really confronted my own mortality. In 2008, I was diagnosed again with cancer, this time in the left breast. During those years, I was in and out of the hospital for twelve surgical procedures: biopsies, lumpectomies, mastectomies, several reconstructive surgeries, and a hysterectomy. Before each surgery I would always ask the

same question: “How long before I can ride my horse?” I would take out my calendar, count the weeks, and mark the dates.

I made more time for those precious to me: my husband Eric, our three Scotties, three cats, and our four incredible Icelandic ponies. In between surgeries as I healed, I took whatever time I had and packed it full of horses. Our horses live in our backyard, so when I was in bed or couch-ridden, I watched them play and observed their herd dynamics and their games. They really do play the Seven Games! Icelandic horses play rough and tough like feral horses: they rear, buck, get down on their knees to bite one another’s legs, and put their front legs around and on top of each other. I never tire of watching their mock-battles.

I always assumed that Rothasson was going to challenge me, and treated him accordingly. I never really gave him a chance.

When I was sick from my treatments and recovering from surgeries, it was all I could do to walk. The horses and I visited together in the corral, ate treats, and drank wine. (My horse Leif likes white wine; I personally prefer a red.) I hadn’t realized that this was ‘undemanding time,’ and that it would so positively impact our relationship. When I could do more, we played On Line , and spent even more time at liberty, since it was physically easier for me.

It became very important to me to have fun between all that hospital stuff. A simple car ride left me exhausted and I lost my physical strength. I could no longer swing the saddle onto my horse’s back or mount from the ground (and Icelandic horses aren’t exactly the giants of the equine world!). I was on an emotional rollercoaster ride of surgery, recovery and setbacks. I needed a way to cope not only physically but also mentally and emotionally. My horses gave me that, and so much more. My horses gave me hope.

When my first bout with breast cancer hit, I was working on my Level 2. I am a Type A personality, extremely competitive, and will push myself hard to succeed. Breast cancer caused my plans to come screeching to a halt. But I wanted my Level 2. A blue string would look sexy hanging out of my back pocket, and at my age, I can’t ignore anything that makes me look sexy! Life has a funny way of kicking your

butt and setting you straight... and if necessary, it will do it over and over again until you get the message. My horses deserved the best horse-person I could be. The string was only for me, and my horses were not going to let me pass until they thought I was ready.

My Left-Brain Introvert, Rothasson, is the alpha of our herd; he is smart, confident, and he tests me every day on absolutely everything. He was my first horse, and at the time he was five years old, gorgeous, and just gelded. I was 54, had essentially bought a stallion, and knew nothing about horses... but didn’t all horses come trained? My other horse, Leif, is a red dun with a hairdo that could get him a job in any punk rock band. He is easy going, loving, extremely independent, polite, and unfortunately an extreme Right-Brain Introvert, catatonic. We spend most of our time hanging out together and doing things to help build his confidence and trust.

During recovery, I had time to think about a lot of things, especially my relationship with my horses. I realized that I wasn’t ready for a blue string, and that I wasn’t fair to my horses: I always assumed that Rothasson was going to



challenge me and treated him accordingly. I never really gave him a chance. However during my recoveries, I had to be soft and polite for fear that I would hurt myself. Surprise! Rothasson liked it and responded like a partner. I learned to slow down and let my horses be my teachers. Rothasson taught me to become a stronger leader but fair, and Leif taught me to be more patient and polite.

When my husband first met me, he fondly described me as “severely independent.” I always did things myself and never ever asked for help. But when I was sick, I had no choice but to ask for help and then simply say “Thank you.” I also became aware of the little extras my horses did for me – come visit me when I was at the corral, put their heads down asking to be haltered, show me their sweet spots, and stand next to the fence asking me to get on them.

With the new insights that my convalescence had offered me, my horses decided I was ready for a blue string. I passed my Level 2 on February 15th, 2008, the Friday before my second mastectomy and the start of my next set of surgeries.



PHOTO BY COCO



PHOTO BY ERIC ALLEN

Once the mastectomies removed the cancers and I was no longer terrified of dying, I took more control of my schedule. I planned my surgeries around my horse schedule and trips to the Parelli campus in Pagosa Springs. I purposely scheduled big time gaps to recover, get my energy back, and ride Rothasson. FreeStyle riding has always been the most difficult Savvy for me to master. And even though I knew delaying surgeries would cause physical discomfort, I was determined to improve my riding. So between 2006 and 2008, Rothasson and I, and Eric and his horse Lupor, traveled to Colorado to attend the Liberty & Horse Behavior, Fluidity 1 and Fluidity 2 courses. My riding confidence improved so much that Rothasson and I were able to participate in the ‘lead change ladder’ lesson. Rothasson was magnificent and I was the leader. He got lots of rubs that day.

Liberty is a showcase for our relationship. We don't just play, we dance... we're partners.

I guess all that time in the corral drinking wine paid off: the bond I have with my horses can only be described as incredible. So when the 2009 Savvy Spotlights were announced, I jumped at the chance to participate. When I first got Rothasson, he ran me over, dragged me around and dumped me onto the ground. I was too terrified to do anything else but stay On Line and in the corral. Maybe that's why Liberty has always been my favorite Savvy... at first because I was afraid to do anything else but now because it's absolutely amazing. Liberty is a showcase for our relationship. We don't just play, we dance... we're partners. And I wanted to dance with Rothasson in Reno.

On May 15, 2009 we danced in front of an audience of over 2,000 people and received a standing ovation. The people weren't just applauding, they were crying,



PHOTO BY COCO

including Pat. Wow! We received a Black & Blue ribbon. I was so proud that I wore it every day. Pat told the audience that he wished everyone treated their horses like I did and that I “had my heart in my hand.” I felt so proud. Pat also invited us to ride with him for a week at his barn; I felt like I’d just won a gold medal.

My week with Pat was absolutely amazing. I was born and raised in New York City and had no idea what happens on a working ranch. It was so much fun to be a part of it all. During my visit I followed the ranch routine and concentrated on developing Rothasson. Every morning I would attach myself to one of Pat’s students either to just observe or to mimic what they did. I had more than twenty teachers available to help me; I couldn’t ask for more. I learned how to put a round pen together, rode in a hay wagon pulled by Thunder and Lightning during feeding rounds, watched Pat being filmed for a new video, and my very favorite was chasing cows.

It’s now 2010, four years after my first cancer and two years after my second one. The cancer is gone, but what an adventure I had! My energy level and physical strength get better every day, though I still need help saddling, and must climb a fence to mount my giant steed. But there are always people to help me, and I’ve learned how to say “thank you” — for my husband, for Pat and Linda, for Leif and Rothasson, for my life. 🐾

Janice Woods-Allen lives with her husband and animals in California. She is working on Level 3 and expects to live for a very long time.

One in every eight women in the United States will get breast cancer.

Currently there is no cure. Early detection and treatment of breast cancer greatly increases the chance for survival.

The first sign of breast cancer usually shows up on a woman’s mammogram before it can be felt, or any other symptoms are present.

Breast cancer kills more women in the United States than any cancer except lung cancer.

Two-thirds of women with breast cancer are over 50.

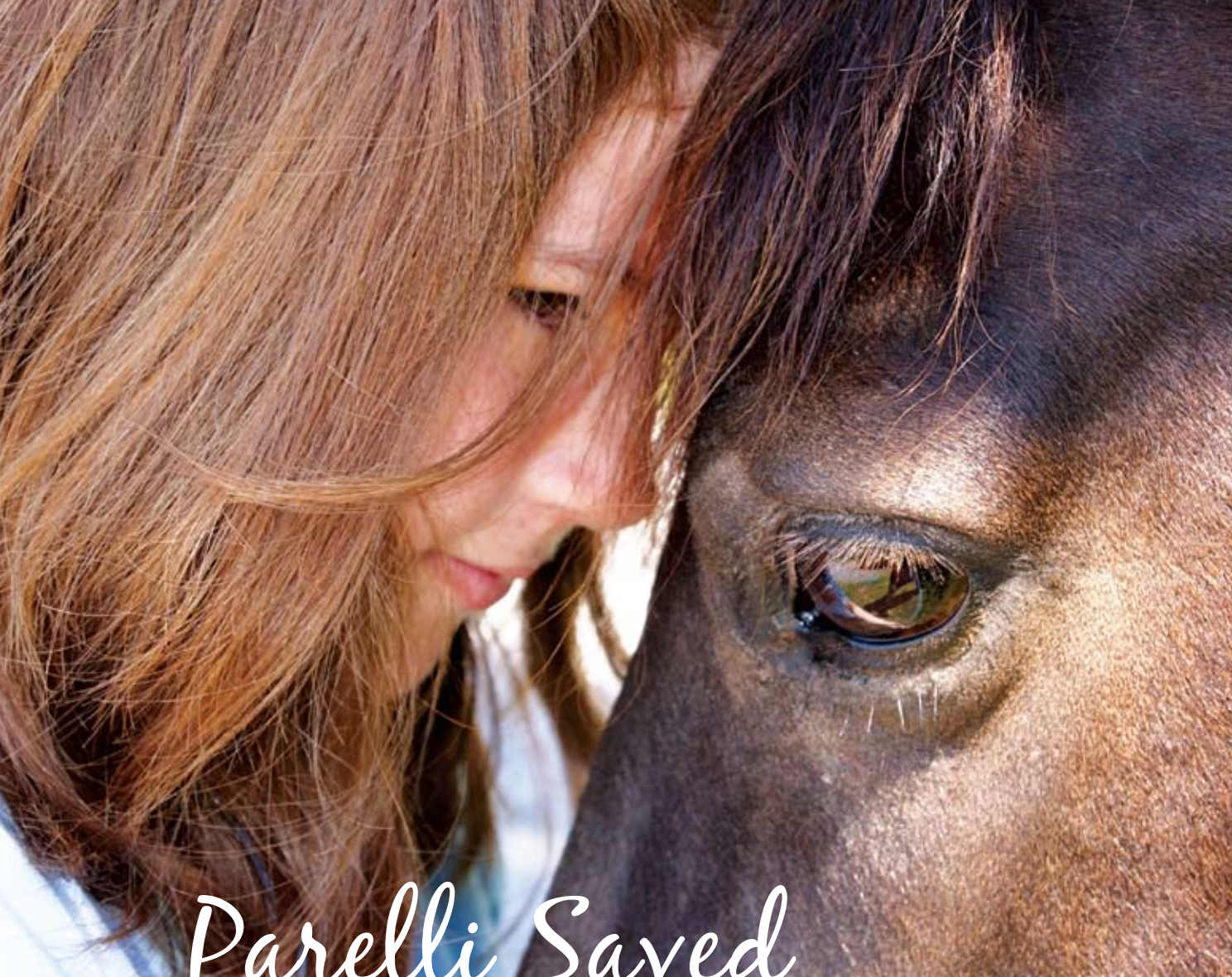
More than 1.7 million women who have had breast cancer are still alive in the United States.

It takes at least a full year from her last surgery for a woman to recover completely from breast cancer.

Breast cancer effects a woman emotionally, mentally and physically. It affects her in ways she never imagined. Therefore a woman must heal emotionally, mentally and physically.

Women with breast cancer are at a higher risk for ovarian cancer.

Men can also get breast cancer, though it is much less common than breast cancer among women.



Parelli Saved

by Carla Kalogeridis

OUR PONY

Without one ounce of pushing, prodding, or influencing from me, my young daughter decided she loved horses. I swear I had nothing to do with it.

I had “discovered” Parelli Natural Horsemanship and was working through the Levels with my off-the-track, 16.2 hand thoroughbred, Link. He was doing great and had a good head on his shoulders, but was obviously not the right mount for a six-year-old, red-headed girl.

So my daughter Angelica took lessons at the local boarding facility. Each week, I’d write them a check for \$50 for a private lesson and then spend the hour after the lesson “unteaching” Angelica everything they’d taught her. What she was learning from the highly successful hunter-jumper instructor was not in line with what I was learning through the Parelli program. After a month of lessons, I knew we were headed in the wrong direction.

We started scavenging the barn where I boarded Link for suitable mounts for my daughter, and I decided I would teach her myself. For the next several years, we begged, borrowed, and leased anything over 15 years old that was dead-quiet and whose owners were open to letting us play with their horses with “that weird-looking orange stick.” Most of the time, it worked out okay. But some of the time, it didn’t. Sometimes, the horses were sold out from under us just when we were getting somewhere. Sometimes, they turned out to be too spooky. And always, it was slow going because the horses weren’t fully immersed in the Parelli program.

I cried the day I watched the owner of a 22-year-old half-Arab pony we had been working with for several months, show up to ride with an unnecessarily strong bit, draw reins, and a long whip. On his way to the arena, the little

guy looked at us and seemed to say, “What did I do to deserve this?”

I couldn’t take it anymore. My daughter was 9 years old and ready for her own horse. Shortly after that, we moved to a new boarding facility. Weeks passed and my daughter was begging to ride. Occasionally, I would put her up on Link and keep her on the 12- or 22-foot line, walking and jogging beside her. Link was a saint but he was big and still learning. I was nervous as an alley cat. It was a recipe for disaster.

Then, one day, a flyer went up on the bulletin board. A 10-year-old Morgan mare was for sale. “Successfully shown and always in the ribbons,” it said. Good, she had experience. “Stands 14.1 hands tall.” Great, she’s the perfect size for a 9-year-old kid to ride and grow into. “Owner must sell—make offer.” Even better—I could negotiate a good bargain with someone anxious to sell. The mare’s name was Daisy, and she looked beautiful in the photo. I couldn’t wait to call and learn more about her. Shamelessly, I removed the only copy of the flyer from the bulletin board and took it home with me so no one else would know about the mare—hey, all’s fair in love, war, and horse-hunting.

That night, after tucking Angelica in bed, I closed my bedroom door, settled into a comfy chair, and called about Daisy. I wasn’t prepared for the tale I was going to hear over the next hour. The name and number on the flyer was that of a professional Morgan horse trainer. I explained what I was looking for and held my breath.

Strike one: Daisy was a carriage-driving show horse. In fact, her owner had never ridden her. With few exceptions, Daisy had only been ridden by professional trainers. She had limited mileage under saddle.

Strike two: No experience around kids.

And strike three: Recently, Daisy had been diagnosed with “head-shakers” disease.

I listened as the trainer relayed the story of how Daisy started shaking her head about two years prior. At first, it had seemed like a nervous tick or even insect-related. Over the weeks and months, her head-shaking got worse and worse. Recently, she had shaken her head so violently that the headstall and half her harness had come off.

Daisy had been seen by numerous vets and equine chiropractors. She had even been to Michigan State University to have her ears “scoped.” They had shaved her long, Morgan mane off half-way down her neck to see if maybe removing everything from around her ears would help. Lately, she had to be twitched to be clipped.

The owner showed carriage-driving horses. As much as she loved Daisy, she was now unshowable. The trainer had tried everything she knew to do—medically and otherwise. They had changed her tack, her bit, her stall, her feed, her hay, her bedding, her turnout pasture. Nothing helped. Numerous people had looked at Daisy and no one was willing to take her on.

Was she gentle, I asked? The trainer answered truthfully: “I have no idea how she would be around kids. But she is very smart and used to be very willing. If you want to come look at her, it’s up to you.” I could hear it in her voice. Everyone had given up on Daisy.

At first, it had seemed like a nervous tick or even insect-related. Over the weeks and months, her head-shaking got worse and worse.

That weekend, I drove a little more than an hour to go see Daisy. She was a deep chocolate brown with a white diamond on her head. She was small and strong with a beautiful head and neck. Daisy was the “old style” Lippit Morgan and looked like a miniature warmblood to me. When I entered the barn, she was cross-tied very tightly in the aisle way. Her head was up and as I approached her from behind, I saw the whites of her eyes as she strained to see me. The saddle was already on. It took both the trainer and the owner together to bridle her.

The trainer put her on the longe line. Sure enough, Daisy would do a little left-right shake of her head every three to five strides. The trainer gave stern voice commands to which Daisy always responded, but as she went round and round, her head remained tipped toward the outside of the circle looking off into the distance. She was a nice mover and had charisma, but the constant head-shaking was obviously going to keep her out of the show ring.

After 20 minutes or so, the trainer rode her around the arena at a walk, trot, and canter. She rode with spurs, a dressage whip, and a very tight rein. Daisy was quiet and obedient, but the head-shaking never stopped.

The owner commented how ironic it was that Daisy’s head-shaking seemed to get better during the grey, Michigan winter months when she wasn’t worked much,



and then when spring came and they started preparing for the shows, the head-shaking came back with a vengeance. The vet had explained that horses with head-shakers' disease were often irritated by the sunlight.

They asked if I wanted to ride, and I declined. Better not to get attached—this horse made no kind of sense for my daughter. They untacked her and I watched as they led Daisy out to pasture. It was a small herd of about 8 to 10 horses. I followed along, curious to see the other horses. They turned Daisy loose and she trotted off to join her buddies.

Wait a minute... where was the head shaking? We leaned against the fence and chatted about Daisy and what was to become of her. The prospects were bleak. However, I barely paid attention to the conversation. I was watching Daisy walk, trot, canter, leap, and play with her pasture mates—and not once did she shake her head. Hmmmm, as Linda Parelli would say. How interesting!

How could this be a medical condition? How could Daisy turn her head-shakers disease "off" and "on" depending on where she was, what she was doing, and what time of the year it was? Was it possible that the head-shaking was purely emotional?

On the drive home, I thought about it, and I prayed about it. Could Parelli Natural Horsemanship save this horse? I went back to see Daisy the next weekend, along with Angelica and a trusted friend and fellow Parelli student. I

told my friend, "Tell me what you honestly think, and don't let me do anything stupid."

I think the owner and trainer were surprised I had made a second appointment to see Daisy. I told them I was studying Parelli Natural Horsemanship and asked permission to play with Daisy with my Parelli equipment. I asked them to leave her in the pasture until I arrived.

So, the second visit we did Parelli-style. We introduced ourselves slowly in the pasture, waiting for Daisy to get curious and approach us. We played Friendly Game with the halter and rope before putting it on her. We played on the 12-foot and 22-foot Lines, introducing her to the Seven Games. Daisy continued her head-shaking throughout the session, but you could tell she was really curious about what we were asking of her and totally into it. Angelica was dying to ride.

The trainer insisted on tacking Daisy up and riding her first "for safety reasons." At one point, my Parelli friend asked the trainer, "Can you ride her on a loose rein?"

The trainer responded: "Yeah, but she will look like crap." We watched her go round a few times at the trot on a casual rein. At first nothing changed. Her head and neck were high and brace. But there were moments when she stretched down just for a few seconds. And when she did, the head-shaking was just a tiny bit less.

I rode Daisy next. She was quiet and obedient. I stayed on a casual rein the whole time. A litter of kittens darted across the arena—nearly under Daisy's feet—and she barely flicked an ear. She was straight and sound and comfortable to ride. By this time, Angelica was bouncing up and down at the arena gate. I could see it in her eyes; they were saying, "My turn, my turn, my turn!"

Was I out of my mind to put my 9-year-old daughter on this head-shaking, carriage-driving horse that had no exposure to kids?

Was I out of my mind to put my 9-year-old daughter on this head-shaking, carriage-driving horse that had no exposure to kids? I nodded and Angelica entered the arena. She played with Daisy a little on the 12-foot Line, talking to her in a running stream-of-consciousness. "And this is how you do Yo-Yo, Daisy. And this is Porcupine Game. That's a good girl. Next time I'll teach you Sideways."



Angelica rode Daisy at a walk, trot, and canter, connected to the 22-foot Line and me holding my breath at the other end. They looked wonderful together.

"Will you let us have her on a two-week trial?" I asked the owner.

"That's not a good idea," said the trainer.

"Yes," said the owner, touching my arm. A big tear rolled down her cheek. She had had Daisy since she was two years old and loved her. In our playing with Daisy that afternoon, she had seen a glimmer of hope for the horse.

During the two-week trial period, we immersed Daisy into the Parelli program. The head-shaking was still there, but it got a tiny bit better each day. Our vet came out and did a very basic pre-purchase exam. "She's a nice horse. It's definitely not head-shakers' disease. If you can get her at a bargain, it might be worth the try."

Before the two-week trial period was up, we made an offer and bought Daisy. That was four years ago. Today, 13-year-old Angelica and Daisy are solid Level 2 students. There have been Parelli clinics, trail rides, and a few horse shows. The head-shaking completely disappeared after about three months. Daisy and Angelica are deeply in love with each other.

We've come to the conclusion that Daisy's head-shaking was an emotional response to the training she was under with the previous owner. Being ridden forward into a strong bit with spurs and a whip — but simultaneously held back with a strong hand and rein — was frustrating and confusing to her. All that driving energy coming from Zones 3 and 4 had nowhere to go except out through Zone 1 in the form of a shaking head. And the reason it got better in the winter months was because Daisy wasn't worked much during that time. When it was time to prepare for show season and the training started again, back came the head shaking.

Angelica rode Daisy at a walk, trot, and canter, connected to the 22-foot Line and me holding my breath at the other end. They looked wonderful together.

In addition, as we continued to play with her and work the Parelli program, we realized that when Daisy shook her head, it was a sign of unconfidence, much the way other horses might swish their tails. When we learned to recognize and respect her thresholds — and once we had her trust and she and Angelica had formed a partnership based on love — the head-shaking just melted away. Now, Angelica rides Daisy at all paces bareback and in the hackamore with a lovely casual rein — and you've never seen a happier horse.

Lately, Daisy and Link have been having jumping lessons. As Angelica watched Link sail over several jumps beautifully, I told her, "Just think, one day, you and I will trade horses. I'll be ready for something short and calm, and you will be ready for something big and fancy."

Angelica looked at me with the unfettered disdain that only a 13-year-old girl can muster, leaned over the saddle and wrapped her arms around Daisy's neck and said: "You're joking—right?"

My little girl has found her Parelli partner for life. 🐾

Carla Kalogeridis and Link have passed Level 3 and are now Level 4 students. Angelica and Daisy are working in Levels 2 and 3. They board at a Parelli-friendly barn in Columbus, Michigan, and are immeasurably happy.



PHOTOS BY ISABELLE PERSYN. WWW.ISABELLEPERSYN.COM

GATHERING *Honey*

by Eddy Modde

When solicitor Anthony Wittesaele of Knokke-Heist, Belgium, was asked to arrange the sale of a piece of land, he didn't expect to find the property still occupied by a huge Belgian draft horse named Honey.

Despite her champion bloodlines, Honey was neglected for the first six years of her life, and her experience with humans had been a series of unpleasant encounters with vets, farriers and transporters. Passersby would feed her tidbits over the fence of foods that are not necessarily healthy for horses. To save Honey from the butcher and give her the future that her situation so far had deprived her of, Anthony decided to take her home himself.

The transport to her new home didn't go very well, and Anthony knew he needed help. He had a beautiful horse in the pasture behind his house, but he could only rub her head over the fence, and nothing more. In my neighborhood there is always somebody who knows about me and my professional experience with Parelli Natural Horsemanship, so it didn't take them long to find me.

When Anthony called, I went to have a look, and was immediately taken by the look on Honey's face and the loving care of the family: a cry for help. I remember thinking, "I hope I can do this," with a 2,400-pound, scared, neglected

horse. There were no training facilities and with a horse of this size, I would need leverage.

The first session was a lot of approach and retreat, with no luck in coming any closer than ten feet. One step too close and she would take off at a canter, seeking safety and comfort with the two cows that accompanied her in the pasture. It was time to form a plan.

I loaded some 9-foot panels in my trailer and built a little paddock in the corner of the field near the house, where she had grown accustomed to coming for a scratch on the head and some food. It took the help of three other people to drive her towards the corner. Unfortunately, this is how the previous owners used to catch her, so it wasn't easy. When she did make it to the paddock, I took as much time as I needed to gain some trust. I used enough Friendly Game that she would be a little easier to catch when I arrived the next Saturday.

In the game of getting her to 'catch me,' there was a lot of Right-Brain Extrovert behavior. I haven't seen many big drafts like this canter away a few laps around a little pasture. On the other hand, she wouldn't stay right-brained long. But she would decide in a left-brained manner, "Oh no, I know this cartoon. Humans wanting to catch me doesn't

bring back good memories.” This is where I could approach pretty close, but at the last moment, she would just turn and walk away. It was a learned behavior.

When running or walking away was no longer an appealing option, she would actually look ‘through’ me and just walk my direction to push on my personal space. So the next thing after Friendly Game was to use the Porcupine Game, Driving Game and Yo-Yo Game to get her backing up and yielding to pressure, so I could defend my personal space when needed. This is when she made the biggest shift. You can use Friendly Game to get horses used to commotion and rhythmic motion, but when you can teach them that you can move their feet with rhythmic pressure (the Driving Game), they really get a better understanding and also become less afraid of the stick. It’s no longer a threat; instead it becomes a communication tool. Honey started to pay more attention to my body language: my body relaxed and stick moving means she can be safe and comfortable. When my energy comes up and the stick moves, that means she has to move her feet, and she comes to understand that she will live through it. She began to feel safe even when I asked her to move.

Slowly but surely she gained confidence with each step...

It was time to push Honey’s envelope and step out of the comfort zone — and the small paddock. I lost her a few times; with a big and strong horse like this, you learn to calculate your next move, which sometimes means going back to the paddock or moving close to a big tree, and being quick to wrap the 22-foot Line around the tree when the horse thinks about leaving.

All of Pat’s teachings about the power position, hands that close slowly and open quickly, and knowing what rope to use when, really paid off in playing with a big strong horse like this. I was already thinking about strategies for when Honey would come to my place for some more intensive sessions every day. The next challenge would be to load her into a trailer.

I did as much preparation as I thought I would need and the day came that Anthony arranged for a big horse truck. While backing up the truck to the little paddock in her safe corner, Honey started to panic a little, but the use of some Yo-Yo Game to control her feet helped her hold herself together. When the ramp was down and the gates open,

peace and quiet returned. The owner and driver of the truck were not familiar with Parelli; they were expecting a difficult load, as that was Honey’s history. She took every step very consciously with her big hooves. Slowly but surely she gained confidence with each step, and within ten minutes she was all the way in her slant on the truck. With every step she yielded from a little feel on the halter and a very gentle support from the stick. We were all so proud of Honey and I remember thinking what a brilliant program Parelli is. Even the driver and owner of the truck were impressed.

Through the trailer ride, she stood calm and patient, and in the same manner she came off the truck into our indoor arena. She felt at home immediately. Peace, quiet, green pastures and other horses... what more could she want?

We are all amazed at how quickly Honey changed when I could play with her every day. She now comes towards me in the pasture and she has become very light to lead. She still has a long way to go, but with love, language and leadership, Honey and humanity are finally finding common ground. 🐾

Eddy Modde is a 3-Star Licensed Parelli Professional (on sabbatical) and lives in the Netherlands, where he specializes in assisting horses and humans with trailer-loading problems. For more information and to read Eddy’s blog, visit www.horsetrailerloading.info.



JUNIOR SAVVY

by Sabine Baeckmann

My Special Partner

This month we'd like to invite you to share your special partner with us — and your artistic skills! You can either color this picture or trace it onto another sheet of paper as a template. Tracing it will allow you to change the mane and customize your masterpiece! While you're drawing, you may even think about all the things that make your partner so special to you. If you don't have a horse of

your own, just create the dream horse you want to own someday! When you're done, you can frame your masterpiece and hang it where you'll always be able to see your special partner. Have fun!

Oh, and one more thing. If you feel adventurous enough to share, scan your masterpiece and email it to us at savvytimes@parelli.com. We'd love to see your creations!

The actual sounds made by a newborn baby are about survival needs



photo by Katie Drake

...and is expressive of the mitochondrial states. Babies convey 5 such sounds (and more) about...

1. Sleep;
2. Body temperature (wet/hot-cold);
3. Hunger/thirst;
4. Digestion: upper gas; and,
5. Digestion: lower gas.

Even newborns can convey an awareness of what is happening in their bodies. Actually, babies give up trying to communicate because most do not listen to what they are saying.

"I felt so much more confident that I could meet his needs when he was communicating them to me. It empowers you to be the best parent you can be." —Catherine McNiel, mother of Asher – 5 weeks.

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ON THE *Fast Track*

by Cryshtal Avera

I attended the Fast Track Course in April, and months later I'm still processing all I experienced. I went into the course after having had to cancel a course two years earlier and being determined to get to the Parelli campus at some point. To be honest, I think I knew somewhere deep down that once I went to the Parelli Center, my life would be changed and I'd be motivated to get involved more deeply and go back more often, which would be a challenge to accomplish. I have a marriage and a business, and I live across an ocean. Maybe I was avoiding that challenge, and knew there would be no turning back once I got a taste of how great it could be in the "Parelli bubble."

I have a new view of what it really means to be progressive. Every day should look different based on the previous day.

Well, it was true. I am now motivated to get back and get more involved in the organization, as I am inspired to help spread the message and the incredible atmosphere Parelli creates. If all people could experience what I did,

regardless of whether they have horses, the world would truly be a different and better place.

One key aspect of the course that affected me was the set up being that we, as students, were completely responsible for our individual experience and this was a consistent piece of the pie. Our coaches told us this from day one and lived the strategy. This turned into a major growth opportunity for me. I felt I had achieved substantial personal growth and awareness before I attended the course, and discovered that the journey truly is always evolving and I



can always grow as a person. The best gift was that without all the “noise” of the normal world (no judgment and no other people projecting into my experience), I was left with only me. When I saw my lease horse responding like my own horse — though they had different Horsenalities — I had to see that I was the constant in the equation. I backed away from putting myself in a public situation, yet there was nothing but constant support all around me; I had to admit to myself that I’m the only one who thought that I’ll seem stupid, or be judged in some way if I put myself in the spotlight.

I completely changed my view on some key aspects of my approach with my horse.

I am the one responsible for not achieving everything I’ve always wanted with horses, because I’ve been telling myself I’m not good enough, not skilled enough, and not smart enough. The reason this was such a light bulb experience for me is that I thought I had achieved personal awareness and was just working on dealing with my issues and making the changes. Nope. I knew my overall challenge in life was not believing in myself enough, which creates fear and an inability to be in situations (like clinics and events) where others might judge me. However, I now see that I hadn’t really experienced it with clarity. Being at the Parelli campus and surrounded by such positive, supportive people in a world where I could have accomplished absolutely anything and no one would get in my way, I realized I truly am the only one who *ever* gets in my way. It’s up to me to let go of the stories I tell myself, to stop making assumptions, to stop worrying what others think of me. Whew! To sit with that for four weeks was such an amazing gift and truly transformational. The theories Pat teaches are so great for all aspects of life and have become key in helping me make changes in my approach to the world.

This was a place where people were very obviously dedicated and serious about their work and a well thought-out system was obviously in place, but everyone had an attitude of play and endless possibilities, as well as no rules or judgments.

The Fast Track was set up to teach us to be puzzle solvers and I am so very grateful for this. I completely changed my view on some key aspects of my approach with my horse. I



hadn’t played with a horse other than my own in a couple years, thinking I needed to focus on my Levels progression. Currently, I’m playing with two other horses after realizing all the benefits of spending time with different horses. Having a lease horse that I rode from the first day I arrived just completely changed my perspective. I have a new view of what it really means to be progressive. Every day should look different based on the previous day.

Memorizing the theory, like the 8 Principles, 7 Keys to Success, and 10 Qualities of a Horseman made such a difference. I hadn’t committed those to memory before the course so I wasn’t able to live them. Now that I have, I truly benefit, as they are becoming a part of my actions now that I don’t have to think about them to know them.

Pat spoke to us during our first week and, of course, was so very inspiring. The thing he said that really stood out to me was that we’d become empowered in this course. I held onto that from that day, realizing that was something I really needed. I did feel empowered throughout the course and now realize it is up to me every day to make choices that empower me and to choose my attitude on how I live. I no longer believe that one day I’ll finally get some secret to being empowered and all will be perfect from then on. I realize it is a process and each day of my life will offer another opportunity to live the way I want to, to choose to make decisions that help me live my dreams.

So, if today isn’t perfect, or doesn’t go the way I’d hoped, what can I do different tomorrow? Isolate, separate and recombine. 🐾



"I am more aware of my journey in life and my journey with my horse. It has relit the light and passion in me to progress and be a better person for my horse and my family."

— Diane Netherton, South Carolina, USA

"Your program is a role model for teaching environments, as well as for organizations who want to foster confidence, curiosity, and a thinking mind. Your staff are all trained to affirm, encourage independence and offer support."

— Linda Weinbaum, Florida, USA



"By the second day, my horse was acting more like a partner and so was I. I learned so much which has made me desperate to learn more, and I have to urge myself to slow down. We left an exhausted — but very satisfied and far more confident — pair."

— Katherine, Australia



2011 COURSES



Florida

4-Week Courses:

Fast-Track Feb 14-Mar 11, Mar 12-Apr 15,
Oct 31-Nov 25



Colorado

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU Jun 6-17

Moving into Level 3 Aug 15-26

4-Week Courses:

Fast Track Jul 4-29



Australia

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU Oct 3-14

Moving into Level 3 Oct 17-28

4-Week Courses:

Fast Track Feb 28-Mar 25



United Kingdom

2-Week Courses:

Horse Behavior and YOU May 9-20

Moving into Level 3 May 23-Jun 3

4-Week Courses:

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"I only use and recommend professional grade because horsemanship is my art."

- Pat Parelli



I began making my own "natural" equipment in the early 1980s because most horse-training gear is designed for restraint and force rather than teaching. It promotes predatory, hard, quick hands—the opposite of what a sensitive prey animal needs.

All my ropes, reins, halters and sticks have been developed to improve the flow in your handling skills and communication with horses.

It all supports what I need to teach you about "feel": hands that close slowly and open quickly...it's the release that teaches and the drift that builds confidence.

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9-foot Lead & Tie Rope • Snaffle Bridles

Professional Grade



EDUCATION

50 A Solid Foundation / 54 Natural Horsemanship: A Progress Report

with Pat

PHOTO BY COCO



PHOTOS BY COCO

A Solid

FOUNDATION

by Mackenzie Kincaid

Pat Parelli has a provocative vision for the future of his educational programs: that students who have a desire to study at the international campuses should be able to do so regardless of economics. The goal for the Parelli Foundation, Pat says, is for all students to study on scholarship, so that money is no barrier.

This ambition captured the attention of Tim Sullivan, a local musician in Pagosa Springs and long-time friend of Pat's who has a degree in social work. Sullivan's is a familiar face to many Parelli students; he has been playing at events and campfires at the Pagosa Springs campus for

fifteen years. When he heard about the Parelli Foundation and its mission, he knew he needed to get involved.

"I heard Sue [Shoemark] and Neil [Pye] talk about a foundation for scholarships, and that really got my attention," Sullivan says. "Charity work is something that's always been really close to my heart. They were talking about wanting to set this up, and I said, 'That's something I'd like to do.'"

Sullivan found himself settling into a new role as director of the foundation's board. He hit the ground running, with plans for new fundraising programs and development of infrastructure.

The foundation's scholarship program is currently available to students seeking to study or currently studying as instructors, externs, interns and protégés, but the goal is to make funds available to students at all levels. Most of Pat's current Mastery students have received at least a partial scholarship enabling them to stay on campus longer, study to higher levels and worry less about how they'll afford their continuing education.

For Lauren Barwick, 4-Star Instructor and Paraequestrian Olympic gold medalist, "Being awarded scholarships and being sponsored was the difference between getting a medal and not getting a medal." Barwick had struggled to find time for her horsemanship while working as a bank teller; now she's able to dedicate herself to learning, teaching and competing.

"Being awarded scholarships and being sponsored was the difference between getting a medal and not getting a medal."

Mastery student Tanya Bennett, from Australia, agrees. "The scholarship program changed my life," she says. "With the financial stress eased, I'm following my dreams and focusing on my horsemanship."

The same is true for Jason Zulli from Pennsylvania. "If it weren't for the scholarship program, I would not have been able to progress through my externship and now into the Mastery program," Zulli says. "Because of that, I want to give back to Parelli what they gave to me, with the love, language and leadership that I learned."

The funds that drive this scholarship program come from a variety of sources. A restructuring of Savvy Club membership levels is in the works, which will enable members to contribute directly to the foundation: any amount paid over the basic \$20 membership fee will go directly toward the scholarship fund.

"Our mission is to help make the world a better place for horses and humans, and the way to do that is to get more people involved," Sullivan says. "I'm not looking for two or three rich guys to step up and write big checks. I want thousands of people involved writing very small checks."

Pat's Dream Horse program is a major contributor to the fund. Promising young horses are donated to the program,



The foundation's scholarship program allows students like Jason Zulli of Pennsylvania to travel to the Parelli campuses to study with Pat.

usually by Atwood Ranch, and are trained by Pat and his Mastery students, then offered for sale to the public.

"After a year, sometimes two years, these horses are 'finished products,'" Sullivan says. "There's always something more the horse can learn, but [the students] take them to shows, competitions, cutting, so they've really been finished. With new horses coming in, the experienced horses are ready to go, so we're finding them homes; they're available for public sale."

Trained Dream Horses are sold for \$1,000, and the purchaser makes an additional donation to the foundation to help fund the scholarship program.

"One of the horses [at the Performance Summit] sold for \$1,000, and the person who bought the horse donated \$59,000 to the organization," Sullivan says. "He was tickled to death and thought it was a great deal."

The Dream Horse program has plenty to offer to prospective buyers. Aside from a finished horse ready to hit the show ring or the trails — Pat had personally put at least 80 hours of training into a recently-sold Atwood Dream



Pat congratulates Carlos Osorio of the Horse First Farm in Wisconsin on his new Dream Horse partner, Especial. Purchase of horses like Especial from the Dream Horse program helps to fund the foundation's scholarship program.

Horse, Especial — buyers receive support and instruction from Pat and his students. The program offers up to twenty days of partnership consulting at the Parelli campus, over the course of five years, to help owners keep their Dream Horse in top form and keep the relationship growing between horse and human.

The Dream Horse program is one of many avenues for fundraising. Donors can bequeath funds from life insurance policies and estates, contribute money directly and get involved locally with Parelli professionals by attending fundraising clinics, play days and events.

"I will be contacting all of the Parelli professional instructors," Sullivan says. "There were 98 present at the Performance Summit, and every one of them volunteered to do one fundraiser a year for the foundation."

For those who want to support local talent, earmarked fundraising is also available. "If you have a friend who would like do Parelli and they need money you can write [your check] to the foundation," Sullivan explains. "You'll get a tax write-off, and we'll make sure that the money is spent on that person. And of course you can even start a

fund for yourself; it's another way to encourage people to give. If you do a fundraiser in your neck of the woods — say there's a person who rides at your stable, everybody loves them, and they'd like to come to the campus to study — you can do a fundraiser right there for that person."

The popularity and success of the Parelli program has allowed for significant changes in the equine industry, and Pat and Linda remain dedicated to improving the lives of horses and creating opportunities for people who love them. In the future, Parelli is focused on developing youth programs, horse rescue initiatives, scholarships for talented and underprivileged students, para-equestrian pursuits and Paralympic contenders.

Sullivan says, "We want to make sure that the people who are qualified and best suited to help make the world a better place for horses and humans get a chance to study with Pat." 🐾

Tim Sullivan is the director of the Parelli Foundation. He welcomes your input on raising funds for student education. To offer ideas or find out more about how you can help, email edfoundation@parelli.com.

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And I promise to help you put the relationship with your horse first.
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NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP

A Progress Report

by Sabine Baeckmann

When Pat Parelli first started talking about “life from the horse’s point of view” the concept had a certain attraction right off the bat. Maybe it was his theatrical style, or maybe it was just his *avant-garde* way of thinking, but it was hard not to take notice of the cowboy who was working to start a revolution in horsemanship.

But Pat wasn’t alone in his approach to working with horses. Ray Hunt, who was largely responsible for popularizing natural methods, had been doing his own clinics on large ranches in Nevada for years. Ray was attracting ranchers, cowboys and buckaroos to his clinics, featuring bridle horses and reined cow horses.

During that time Pat was studying with Troy Henry and also riding reined cow horses while still active in rodeo. The usual attendees were the reined cowboys and the rodeo cowboys—not the ranching cowboys. Pat was definitely a rodeo cowboy at that time, but that only seemed to reinforce his unique way of handling horses.

Taking what he learned from Henry, Hunt and others, like the legendary horseman Tom Dorrance, Pat started conducting clinics and performances, which quickly became more and more popular. He started attracting people who needed to have a colt started, who had problem horses and who just needed some tips.

“Horsemanship is the habits and skills that both horses and humans need to become partners.”

As the crowds grew it became more obvious that the public had a yardstick for how one becomes famous and respected, and it was measured by adding up how many awards you’d won from local to regional to championship levels.

For Pat, using someone else’s yardstick to measure what he was doing didn’t seem to work. He remembered making a promise to himself at the age of ten that he was going to



PHOTO BY COCO



Pat riding with Ray Hunt, one of the fathers of natural horsemanship.

make a living with horses somehow, and he was successfully establishing his credibility on his own merits, on his ability to entertain, and on his excellent understanding of horses—on his “horsemanship.”

After using the term “horsemanship” for over three decades, Pat realized that he needed to clarify and refine its definition: “Horsemanship is the habits and skills that both horses and humans need to become partners.”

Pat also describes horsemanship as the “cake.” Further training for a specific event, sport or specialty is the “icing.”

“Without the cake, the icing has no foundation,” he says. “Admittedly, there are—and I have met—a few people who are born natural horsemen. They just have an innate ability with and understanding of horses. Over the years, however, I’ve seen the majority of horse owners needing to hire a trainer for their horse and get lessons in some specialty or other. What’s interesting is that within six months or so they actually go out and compete with that horse! Whoa! That’s just the icing! The cake—the partnership, relationship—is missing!”

He soon realized that through teaching and sharing his beliefs he had launched an endeavor that challenged the status quo but had no definition—and it was drawing a lot of attention. Pat began to see himself as a “horsemanship life coach,” and he was doing a great job of teaching and motivating his students; but once the clinics were over, students didn’t continue growing in their horsemanship.

“I was actually motivating them,” says Pat, “but not inspiring them.”

Pat realized that as a “horsemanship life coach” he needed to keep his connection to his students consistent—he was a coach for a way of life, not just a class. That’s how the Savvy Club came to be. The training CDs and DVDs, *Savvy*

Times magazine, Horsenality™ Report, home-study courses, as well as special events and conferences soon became integral to maintaining that bond with his students.

So what exactly defines “natural horsemanship,” and where is it today?

According to Pat, “The Parelli method of horse training teaches expertise and success with horses based on the way horses relate and communicate in their natural world—hence the term ‘natural horsemanship.’ Today natural horsemanship has a name. It is a culture—a way of life practiced by people who do believe that you should treat your horse with reverence and respect.”

“Today natural horsemanship has a name. It is a culture—a way of life practiced by people who do believe that you should treat your horse with reverence and respect.”



PHOTO BY COCO

And how can the benefit of natural horsemanship be measured?

Today one of the most progressive examples would be Winstar Farms in Versailles, Kentucky. Winstar horses have recently won millions in high-stakes races: Super Saver won this year's Kentucky Derby, Drosselmeyer dominated the Belmont Stakes, and Well-Armed won the Dubai Cup. What do these horses have in common besides their Winstar breeding? A Parelli training team started them, along with a number of other horses including American thoroughbred Any Given Saturday, who went on to win several multimillion-dollar races.

Though natural horsemanship is often associated with cowboy clinicians, its influence and appeal extends beyond western riding disciplines, and its reach is expanding worldwide.

Canadian para-dressage rider Lauren Barwick approached Pat in her wheelchair in 2007, and told him she wanted to win a gold medal in the 2008 Para-Olympics in

Beijing. Always up for a new challenge, Pat invited her to audition with him for two weeks so he could evaluate her. According to Pat, "Lauren had the attitude and the propensity, and she proved she had what it takes." Lauren trained with Pat, went to the 2008 Olympic Games and won both the gold medal in Freestyle Para-Dressage and the silver medal in the Individual Championship Grade II Test with her horse Maile.

And speaking of Olympians, for the last six years Spanish Olympian Luis Lucio has officially been heading the education for Spain's young rider education program. He uses Parelli Natural Horsemanship methods, teaching the Parelli Seven Games, the eight principles of natural horsemanship and the concepts of Horsenality™.

The French Equestrian Federation (FFE) has adopted Parelli methods in their standards testing. Using the term *éthologie équestre*, or equestrian ethology, they require Parelli Level 1 training and ground skills testing in order to become a horse "professional."



PHOTO BY MACKENZIE KINGAID

Canadian para-dressage rider and Parelli instructor Lauren Barwick on Maile at the 2010 Performance Summit.

Australian Hall of Famer and cutting horse trainer Darren Simpkins, who has won over \$1 million on cutting horses, seeks out Parelli grads to work with him.

The internationally renowned equine entertainment extravaganza Cavalia pays homage to the poignant history and bond between human beings and horses. Cavalia seeks out Parelli graduates and instructors to train, work with and perform with their horses.

Pat's dream is for horse lovers to enjoy their horses, to be safe and have fun, to know the fundamentals of performance and do it all in a way that nature intended.

International show jumping champion Robert Whitaker has been applying Parelli Natural Horsemanship methods with great success to solve behavioral issues that were affecting some of his performance horses.

Pat's dream is for horse lovers to enjoy their horses, to be safe and have fun, to know the fundamentals of performance and do it all in a way that nature intended. These ideas seem to be taking hold, and natural horsemanship is taking hold across the globe, thanks to what Pat calls the most effective marketing campaign: word of mouth.

But there are still impediments. After all, natural horsemanship is not "traditional" and therefore does not adhere to the traditional yardstick used to determine merit, respect or reputation. It's also non-aristocratic: it's not governed by any regulations or guidelines.

Then there's semantics. Actually, Pat suggests that "natural horsemanship" shouldn't even have the word "natural" in it. "Horsemanship," he says, "is a natural phenomenon. If it's not natural, it's subjugation and therefore not horsemanship."

A final detractor may indeed be Pat's own personality and showmanship, and the perception that his method of presenting and teaching is "just a marketing machine."

"We're here to help create a better world for horses and humans, period," says Pat. "And the way you do that is you give people an education, give them a culture and a community they can rely on, and you give them concepts, philosophies and guidance they can adhere to.



"The future is looking good. People are starting to see our benevolence. They're seeing that we're helping those who can help themselves, and even those who can't. All of these things help to balance out the detractors."

The Humane Society of the United States has recognized Parelli Natural Horsemanship as the program they'll put their stamp on. In 2009, they named Pat Parelli the Humane Horseman of the Year, an annual award presented to an equestrian who has committed himself to improving the welfare of America's horses.

"I think the world is not only starting to 'get it'—it was wanting to go this way anyway," says Pat. "I'm excited about the future. It's time." 🐾

Parelli Essentials

Before... After

Having had so many comments about how different my horse Allure looks these days, I thought it was about time to show the before and after transformation of his physical health.

The 'before' is from five years ago when I first got him. Notice that Allure's mane is coarse, dry and frizzy, and quite bleached out. His coat is an odd orangey-brown-red and he would bleach blond in the summer.

Some of you may also notice the bulge at his throat, this is an enlarged thyroid gland (goiter) and is a contributor to some of his extreme behavior.

The 'after' photo was taken at the 2007 Savvy Conference last September. As you can see his color has changed dramatically and the goiter is virtually gone. His coat is soft and shiny all year long (even winter) and his mane is almost straight.

When I first got Allure we didn't have Essentials. He was on vitamins, minerals and our feeding program. But when I started him on Essentials about 18 months later I saw changes within a week, and every year he just looks and feels better and better. This summer he only had a few bleached hairs on his shoulders and tail instead of over his whole body, and his hormonal stability has also changed. This amazing formula of amino acids and herbs is alchemy at its finest. (By the way, Essentials was formulated by the same man who inspired my research on Horsenality.)

Essentials makes you realize that it's not about the nutrition... unless you can utilize those nutrients! Make sure your horse is able to digest the nutrients you're giving him. Learn about the Parelli feeding program by using the Savvy Club website search. *Essentials - way more than a supplement.*

Late last spring we adopted a rescue horse we named Champ. Champ is a handsome Saddlebred who had been neglected and starved prior to being rescued. Coming as he did from such a horrible experience, he had a coarse, dry coat of a funny, washed-out orange color. His mane and tail were coarse, dry and brittle. His hooves were in really bad shape and, besides not having been trimmed very well, they had the telltale markings of an animal that was starving.

After we had his teeth floated and added Essentials to his grain mixture, Champ is like a new horse! His coat has turned a magnificent color of red and is soft to the touch. His mane and tail are also tame! The flaring of his hooves has stopped, and they are looking very healthy. We sometimes turn him out in the big arena at the barn where he is being boarded, and he loves to run and prance, tossing his head and kicking up his heels! He has beautiful feet and sometimes leaps in the air like a deer. At 16.2 he is so graceful; it is just amazing to watch him.

Champ and I cannot thank you enough for this product. He's a whole different horse in less than one year! —Jeri, Eddie and Champ



BEFORE:
Allure in 2003

AFTER:
Allure in 2007



EDUCATION

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74 Second Hand Gold: The "X" Task

with Linda

PHOTO BY COCO



The Power

OF NEUTRAL

by Linda Parelli

One of the most powerful demonstrations of partnership between a horse and a human is when you, the leader, assign your horse responsibility. Here are some examples of ways you would do that:

- Keep your feet still while staying relaxed, in neutral, as your horse circles you in the Circling Game.
- Keep your feet still in the “allow” part of the Squeeze Game.
- Do Parelli Patterns on the ground without constantly coaxing your horse along.
- Ride Parelli Patterns on a loose rein, hand down or with your arms folded.
- Offer a consistent, dependable feel when riding with contact.
- Have a neutral seat when your horse is using the gait and speed that you want.

All these things prove to your horse that you are a 51:49 leader in this partnership. Rather than micromanaging and keeping at your horse every step of the way, you show him what to do and then let him do it. At that moment you are in neutral—not relaxed, not active, “neutral”—a definition of which is: with no motion transmitted. When in neutral you are not adding energy or taking it away; you are both allowing and supporting.

Here are some examples of the opposite of neutral. Notice how in some way it is interfering with the horse’s process:

- You walk circles while circling your horse, pivot or watch him go around as if you don’t trust him or need to keep urging him forward.
- You pull or push your horse through the squeeze—for example, unnecessarily using your Carrot Stick™ as your horse takes the jump—as if you are preventing him from stopping.
- You constantly coax your horse forward on the Patterns because he’d stop if you didn’t.
- You constantly micromanage your horse’s direction of travel, steering every step with your reins.
- You constantly mess with the bit, moving your hands one after the other to get him to flex, etc.
- You hold your horse back to control his speed or repeatedly nag with your seat and legs to keep him going.

The Parelli program teaches you to teach your horse to be a partner—to do his share and not just be a mindless puppet. That’s one of the reason it changes lives: You learn to be a better leader and partner, and your horse is happier

because he's treated with the respect he deserves, as a partner and not a slave.

Hold your horse accountable

What do I do if he doesn't act like a partner and doesn't do what I've asked him to do? This is where you need to hold your horse accountable, just as a manager or parent would do if he asked someone to do something and the person didn't. What should the consequence be? How should you do it with a horse?

Principle #5 of Pat Parelli's Eight Principles is "The attitude of justice is effective." This means that the consequence has to be in direct proportion to the fault—too much and you'll frighten or discourage the horse from trying; too little and you will not be effective at causing the desired change. You need to be effective, and sometimes this takes a little trial and error. If anything, err on the soft side and take a little longer! Know, too, that we are not talking about punishment here. Horses do not understand punishment. We are talking about some kind of correction, preferably using psychology, to get to his mind rather than his body. Here are some examples.

- In the Circling Game, if he breaks gait, encourage it and then start again, or use change of direction (which is like a resend — and the quality of your send affects the allow). Don't "up your phases" in Zone 5; that usually results in you doing more and your horse doing less. Look at the game from your horse's point of view: How can I keep my human standing still, one leg cocked, relaxed and in neutral?!
- In the Squeeze Game: If your horse stalls at the jump or in front of the trailer, draw him backward a few steps with a firm, steady feel on the rope, then release and tap. Pretty soon, as you draw him backward, he'll want to push forward! That's when you know it's his idea and you're not pushing him against his will. Keep your feet still while you do this.
- If he keeps slowing down or changing gait while riding, use transitions. Ask him to change gait before he wants to and encourage him to be more responsive to lighter aids when you ask him to go faster again (phases). Reward often. You can also ask him to go slower than he wants to, but only in walk or trot. This is reverse psychology, and pretty soon the horse starts wanting to go more forward.
- If he changes direction while riding or strays off the pattern, pick up your reins and use your reins and legs to put



him back on the pattern. Don't be rough, but be focused and particular about it. The moment he's back on, smile and go to neutral again right away. If you're having a lot of trouble, you may need to slow down.

- When your horse goes into the contact, hold steady. Don't repeatedly squeeze your knuckles or move your hands; stay in neutral so he can depend on it and shape himself. If he gets heavy, do transitions. If he gets fast or impulsive, stop trying to ride with contact and work on his emotional confidence (disengagement, partial disengagement or get off and help him from the ground). If he goes above the bit, use a Suspension Rein, and if he is crooked or comes behind the bit, use a Following Rein — one or two, depending on the situation. (For more on the Game of Contact, see page 66.) Above all, make sure any movement you make in his mouth is slow so he doesn't feel the need to brace and defend himself.

Neutral exposes your level of savvy

The quality of your neutral will also make your horse more sensitive and perceptive to the slightest changes and signals. The more "noise" you make with unnecessary movement, the more you actually desensitize and dull your horse. Do less, achieve more. Pretty soon your horse will be figuring out how to keep you in neutral, and that's when things get really lovely—you can feel the mental connection, and your horse is really in harmony with you.

Of course, this varies with the Level you are studying — you learn about it in Levels 1 and 2. You achieve it in Levels 3 and 4. Search for and discover the power of neutral. 🐾

CONTROLLING YOUR *Predator Muscles*

by Janice Dulak

We all know that humans are predators. This is a scary thought considering that we are trying to be partners with our (prey animal) horses. As a devotee of Parelli Natural Horsemanship, you are dedicated to becoming a better partner for your horse. You spend hours reflecting and working on your mental and emotional fitness so that you are more keenly aware of how to develop yourself as the leader your horse wants you to be. There is, however, another component to consider in how you develop yourself in relationship with your horse. Have you thought about what your body may be saying to your horse without you really knowing about it?

I have trained bodies for over 30 years, first as a teacher of dance and now as a Master Instructor Pilates Trainer. For the most part, in dance as well as in Pilates, what I first consider in a client is posture. Proper posture results in a neutral center of balance that is helpful for all physical endeavors. How the skeleton is held by the musculature of the body is key, not only to looking better, but also to a better and more efficient use of the body without undue tension. A balanced musculoskeletal system that holds

the dancer's posture with grace and ease is essential as a basis for the non-verbal art form of dance. If you think about natural horsemanship as a non-verbal form of communication, you will readily understand that if you are not considering your posture, you may be saying things to your horse that you are not intending!

As predators, we naturally hold ourselves in ways that actually can be affecting our posture, and hence, our non-verbal communication with our horse.

Where do you hurt?

The interesting thing about posture is that, unless your posture has deteriorated to the point where your lower back hurts or your shoulders and neck are in pain or you develop discomfort in any part of your body, you may not

even know that you have what I call postural deviations. A postural deviation can be defined as any imbalance in the musculature that surrounds a joint that leads to undesirable carriage or use of the body. When you think about joints, you have to consider not only your hips, knees, shoulders, and elbows; you also have to understand that your spine consists of multiple joints. Each segment is a movable part! Improving posture then, is much more complicated than just “standing up straight.” (In fact, if you do that, you are most likely to tense up even more!) Rather, it involves looking at each joint in the body, exploring the imbalances to find sources of unwanted tension, and then readjusting the musculature that surrounds the joint for better use.

The joints in the human body have at least two opposing muscle groups: one that flexes (or closes) the joints, and one that extends (or opens) the joints. A simple example of this is the musculature around the elbow: the biceps and triceps. The bicep (flexor) closes the elbow joint, and the triceps (extensor) opens the elbow. A common imbalance at this joint occurs when the biceps is stronger than the triceps. (There is much more complexity of joint action—but we won’t go into a kinesiology lesson right now!) When you think of all these joints, you can see how each one of these can affect posture, and with every person, there are different postural deviations. However, as predators, we naturally hold ourselves in ways that actually can be affecting our posture, and hence, our non-verbal communication with our horse.

Predator muscles

If you consider a predator on the prowl, you will observe a certain posture. The neck is tight, the lower back arched, the hip flexors and shoulders tense. Holding the tension in these muscles is paramount for quick movement, allowing for the predator to make a huge leap at its prey at any second. Given that a predator relies on these muscles for its livelihood, it is natural that these muscles — the neck, lower back, and hip flexors — would be stronger than their opposing muscles. It is necessary for their survival.

Now let’s consider human posture. I find that most people have the same postural deviations all stemming from over-developed — you guessed it — predator muscles! In general, most people carry tension in the neck and shoulders, and the pelvis is tipped so the lower back is in an arched or swayed position causing the hip flexors to be tense and tight. Unless you are having pain or discomfort



Improving posture is more complicated than just standing up straight: At left, Gina takes a “military posture” which tenses the posture; at right, Gina demonstrates a more balanced use of muscles for good posture.

in your body, you may not even know you are tighter and stronger in these predatory muscles. Nonetheless, because they are naturally stronger and tighter, your posture may be giving your horse a little scare even if your mental and emotional being is calm and relaxed.

You can see why it is important for us as predators to take stock of posture. Not only is it going to be helpful for the way you feel and look, it is going to help you gain control over your non-verbal communication with your horse. It also will help you find a better neutral place to live in your body. Think about the fact that muscles are working when we move even if we do not feel them. This is because the muscles are so conditioned to working for us that we don’t even notice they are working. For example, we don’t feel our biceps when we eat! But they have to work in order for us to bring food to our mouths. Well, it is the same for all the predatory muscles in the body. We often don’t feel that these muscles are working because they are so conditioned to supporting our skeleton. However, once you find the opposing muscles it will become clear that a true



Taking control over your predator muscles will help you gain a clearer non-verbal communication with your horse: At left, Gina backs her horse up with predatory muscles; at right, Gina commands respect by balancing her musculature to communicate to her horse.

balance and a true neutral posture will not only help you communicate more clearly to your horse on the ground; more importantly, it will be key to how your body communicates when you are riding your horse.

Start training your core muscles

What can you do about it right now? Simple! Find your transversus abdominus! In Pilates, I simply refer to this as “pulling your stomach in,” and it is the first exercise or concept I give to any new client. For most people, this is as easy as pulling your belly button to your backbone. It is exactly what you would do if while pulling your jeans on, they feel especially tight. You would have to pull your stomach in to zip them up! It is what most every woman has learned to do while wearing a bikini! However, men will need to gain control over this muscle also. This is not for sake of better posture in order to look better. Gaining control over your core muscles balances your naturally over-tight predatory lower back and spinal muscles.

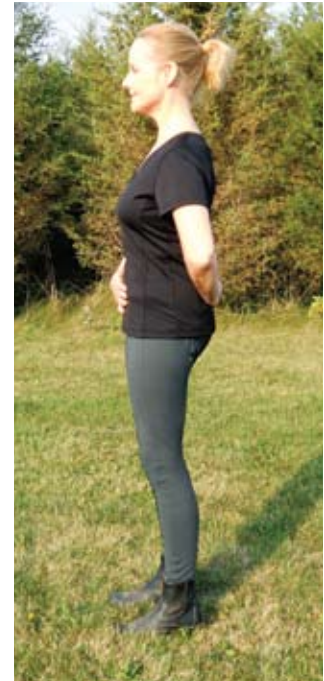
Try this experiment. Standing or sitting, put a hand on your stomach and one on your lower back. Notice that there is a hollow in your spine at the top of your pelvis and below your rib cage. Feel the convex nature of the front of the waistline. Now, pull your belly button in and up towards your backbone. When you do this, notice that the lower back gets longer and less “toned.” If you are really tight, you will probably even feel a stretch as the back muscles lengthen. Now keep it there and exhale and pull your stomach in further! You cannot underestimate how much having complete control of this muscle — being able to use it as much as you want at will — can do for you in beginning to correct your posture.

The best thing about this experiment or exercise is that you can do this anywhere at any time! Often when I am driving long distances I play a game: I pull my stomach in from mile marker to mile marker. I began with pulling it in (to the max!) for one mile. When I began this game, I would find that before the next mile marker my mind had already

begun to wander and I had allowed my predatory lower back muscles to hold my spine. Now in my long drives to Florida to visit Pat and Linda, I can naturally hold my stomach in for five miles at a time, and now I am shooting for 10! Make this a game for yourself — you can do it while brushing your teeth, drying your hair, grooming your horse... anywhere!

This is the first step to affecting your posture and will become a key muscle when you ride. Although it may feel completely unnatural, think about the first time you had a Carrot Stick™ and lead rope in your hand. If you were anything like I was, you probably felt that it was impossible to come out of the play session without getting completely tangled in the Savvy String. I still feel that way with the 45-Foot rope! Soon, as with Parelli, you will find that having control over your posture becomes natural, and you will begin communicating even better with your horse. 🐾

Janice Dulak is the author of Pilates for the Dressage Rider and is a Master Instructor Trainer for Romana's Pilates®. She has been instructing Linda in how to improve her posture and ability to naturally engage her body when riding in collection.



Start Training your Core Muscles with this experiment. Left: Put your hands on your stomach and on your back. Right: Pull your stomach in and up to locate your core muscle, the transversus abdominus.



It's not so much about where you're going as who your partner is for the journey.

PHOTO BY MOLLY MOORE

Atwood Ranch Naturally

Young Horse Development Program

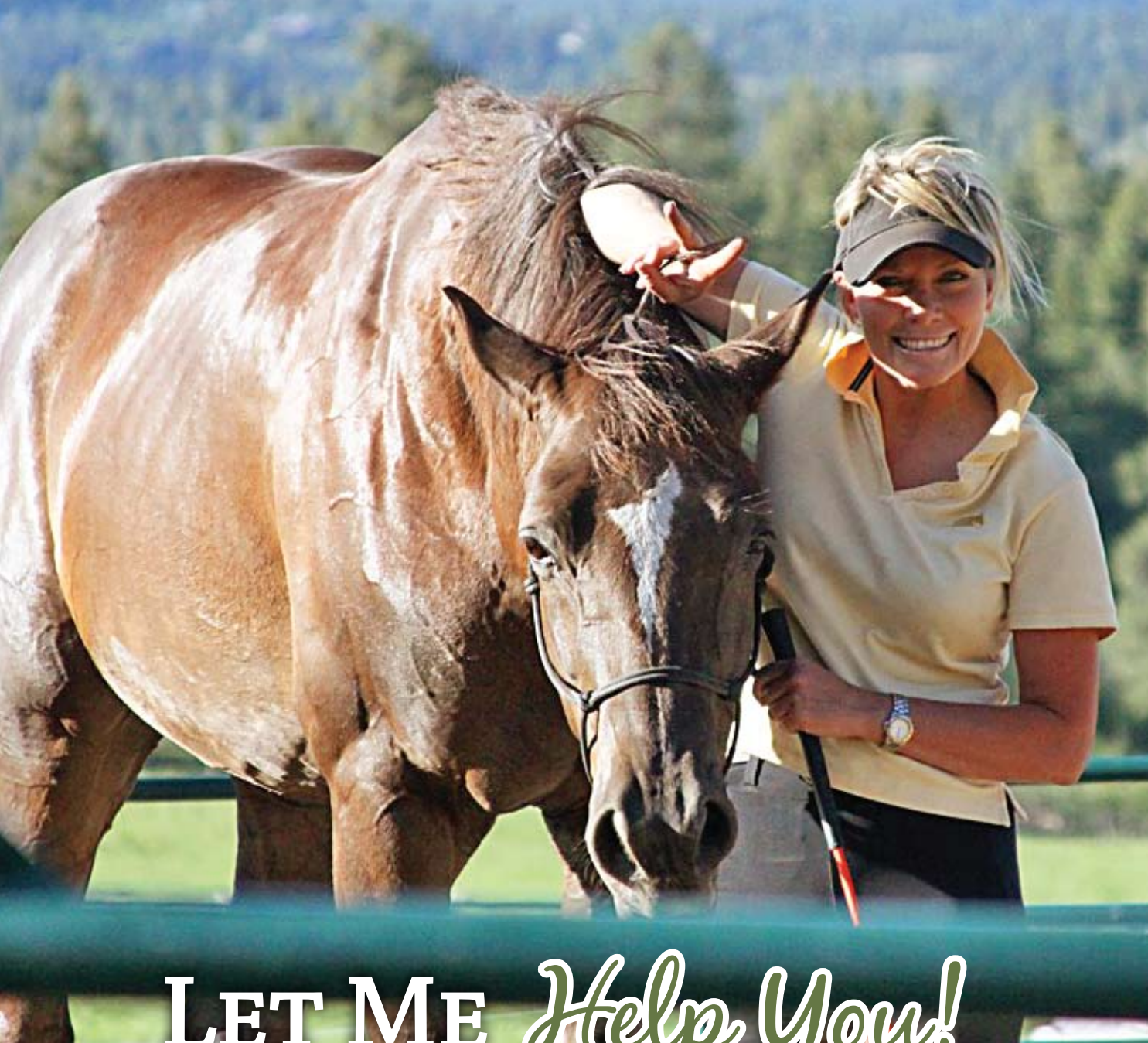
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from the brands you trust.*





LET ME *Help You!*

by Linda Parelli

How often have you found yourself counteracting something your horse does? It's natural for us humans to exert our will (direct line thinking) rather than take the horse's idea and cause him to turn it around (lateral thinking).

For as long as I can remember, Pat has been saying, "Cause your idea to become the horse's idea, but understand the horse's idea first." Well, isn't it interesting how long something apparently simple like that can take to sink in? I'm finally starting to understand how to truly do that and it has led to a major breakthrough with my horse, Allure.

Many of you have followed his journey with me over the past five years and know how challenging he has been because of his extreme Left-Brain Extrovert Horsenality, and his tendency to go extreme Right-Brain Introvert as

a learner. Here's what I love about it: because of those challenges, Allure has made me a better horseman and teacher. The best thing he helped me come up with is the Horsenality Profile, a major breakthrough in reading, understanding and becoming more effective with horses.

In this article, I want to share with you how I used the principle of understanding Allure's idea when riding to not only get him to want to go straight, but be more relaxed and not feel like bucking. It's a great lesson in reverse psychology because you do the opposite of what the horse expects (and what you want to do!). Lucky for us, Amy Book (now Bowers) was visiting and just happened to have her camera with her!



Unhappy walk.



Helping Allure be crooked to the right.



Short, tense, crooked trot - note displaced behavior in the mouth.



Helping Allure be crooked to the left.



Success! Mouth closed, forward, straight, round... and it is his ideal!

Day 1

Usually when I begin to ride Allure, he's a bit tight (1). He doesn't want to go straight and if I push him he'll buck. So I spend a lot of time in walk until he relaxes and then try to do some trot. It kind of works, but it takes a lot of time and I don't feel like we've really made any progress because the next time it's no better. He also doesn't like going into anything that looks like a dressage arena and gets quite shut down — Right-Brain Introvert. Then when he comes out of it, he goes Left-Brain Extrovert and is very challenging to ride!

I decided to use the Game of Contact because of the great success I'd been experiencing with it helping horses to get more confident and more forward. As I picked up the reins, he started fussing with the bit, shortened his neck, body and stride.

As we inched forward, he started to go crooked. At first I tried to straighten him, and then I thought of the principles of the Game of Contact, so I changed my approach and encouraged him to go more crooked: "You want to be crooked, let me help you!" (2) So I drew on the right rein a little more, causing his head to come even more to the right. We did a couple of laps like this and I could feel his mind getting active (usually it is shut down or arguing) so that was good!

All of the sudden, he wanted to go straight. He tugged on that right rein (whose contact he was avoiding) and as I allowed the rein to slip slowly through my hand, he straightened his neck, stretched his topline and lengthened his stride. I was shocked! After several strides, he shortened and started to go crooked again, so I did the same thing. This time it worked even quicker. Pretty soon I could pick up the reins and he stayed straight and forward, taking the contact. It was really cool.

As soon as it started to go well at the walk, I moved on to the trot. Same thing happened: he went short, bunched up and crooked (3). Once again I said, "Let me help you!" and I helped him to be more crooked (4). This was such fun.

Again, a couple of laps and all of the sudden he wanted to go straight. I allowed the rein to slip through my fingers as he stretched his top line and lengthened his stride. This time he started blowing out. Success! (5) Tension was leaving, understanding was growing.

We made half a lap and I stopped him, got off and praised the heck out of him. It was hard to stop just when it was starting to work, but I knew it was the best thing. Remember, we are not riding for today, we are riding for tomorrow!



Allure enters the arena willing, relaxed and confident.

6



How crooked do you want to be?

7



Nice trot.

8



Riding the dolphin!

9

Day 2

Walking into the arena today was completely different. Instead of having thresholds, he strode willingly and confidently into the arena (6). In this photo you can see the look on his face, he wanted to be there. It was a great sign.

It took about two minutes for him to be straight at the walk, so I began the trot. The first few strides were great, then he went crooked again. "Let me help you!" (7) This time I needed to have him be even more uncomfortably crooked before he wanted to go straight, but the good part was that there was no stress for him (remember, it was his idea!) and it was still simple, fun and interesting for me.

"I wanna be straight!" said Allure. "Sure!" I responded. And it was amazing (8). Lovely, forward, relaxed trot. I couldn't believe it could be that simple.

After a couple of laps of walking and petting, I went for the canter. It was a little difficult at first, he didn't want to canter, and put in a few little bucks – tiny compared to what they used to be... more like riding a dolphin (9).

Then he stopped, pooped, and as I gathered my reins when walking off, he lifted into this beautiful, soft canter (10). Wow. We cantered half a lap, I stopped and then got off and praised him. End of session! I was so thrilled and excited.



Nice canter!

10

Moving Forward

Since that day, Allure has been amazingly calm. Playing the Game of Contact for straightness and relaxation has led to being able to ride him FreeStyle – I’ve waited years for this moment! And on one day, I was cantering him around the Big Top and he got a little over-stimulated by something going on up there. As he waddled up I quickly did the opposite of what I would have usually done: instead of bending him, I helped him wad up. I remember thinking, “Either this is going to work, or I’m going to help him do the biggest buck ever!” We waddled up together for a few strides and then I felt him ask to go forward instead of up. “Sure!” I said, as I allowed the reins to lengthen. And that was the last time he thought about bucking.

So why is this so effective? I think it is because you’re giving the horse nothing to argue with, nothing to brace against. As a result, emotions de-escalate and trust and harmony grows.

I hope you find a lot of “aha” moments as you read this story and, like me, that you will now understand what it means to truly understand your horse’s idea and use lateral thinking to cause him to want to follow your idea.



Best of all, it takes all the stress and frustration away... it’s fun saying “Let me help you!”

PS: I would not recommend using the Let Me Help You approach when riding a horse that wants to run off! Instead, use Partial Disengagement or get off and encourage your horse to go faster when you’re on the ground. For more information on this, refer to the article “The Ambassador of Yes” in the August 2010 issue of *Savvy Times*. 🐾



What is your horse telling you about how it feels when you ride?

We don’t judge how good a saddle is...OUR HORSES TELL US!

Linda asked some Mastery students to experiment with what horses feel underneath “other” saddles, and then compare that with Parelli Saddles.

Every student groaned under a variety of saddles, saying that they felt pain and restriction, even with only the *saddle* on their backs...let alone when a “rider” sat in it! They reflexively wanted to hollow their backs away from the discomfort. They couldn’t move their shoulders, swing their arms, use their legs, nor bring their knees forward without pain.

When they tried all of this with each model of the Parelli Saddles, they said: “Wow...I feel SO much more room under there!”

“When I push my back up into the saddle more and more, I feel more and more comfort!”

“Look how I can swing my arms, reach forward with my knees...I don’t feel trapped and I don’t hurt!”

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LEVEL *With Me*

by Linda Parelli

Liberty Level 3: Lead with your hands on neck/jaw

Place your hands under your horse's cheek bone and teach him to follow the feel and lead with you.

It is common for horses to toss their heads and escape the feel, so make sure you are gentle rather than sudden with your request, and put your other hand on his nose to keep him connected to you. Rather than fight with him if he resists, simply bring his head to the side and draw him towards you, and remember to reward the slightest try with a release and a little rub. This will cause him to take a step to the side and you can release and reward him. Once this becomes easy, you'll do a step or two, then two or more and pretty soon be leading in a straight line or anywhere you want to go. At that point you will no longer need your hand on the nose and just a feather light feel behind his jaw.

Once you can do this, experiment with being able to lead him by the neck or the mane.

Purpose

Learning to lead your horse without anything on his head is a wonderful exercise. It exposes trust, respect and Porcupine Game issues!

It is a great way to improve your feel and develop lightness of response in your horse, not to mention a handy skill to have if you don't have your tools with you!

Level of Quality

Be happy to be able to do this at the walk, in a straight line, circle, and even test yourself on the Patterns, such as in a Figure 8 or Weave! If you get really skilled, you could do it at the trot, too.

Level

This is a Level 3 skill. You'll be playing at Liberty more and more, and this task helps you develop feel, and to elevate the trust and respect you have from your horse.

Finesse Level 4: 1/8th turns on the haunches, forward and back

Pick a focus, back up a few steps and make a one-eighth turn as you do it. As you back, change your focus slightly to the right, turning on the haunches as you do it. Stop, and then do the next one, then stop and repeat... and repeat until you have done a complete 360 and are facing the same direction as when you started.

You want the front to turn, not the back, so it's important to keep the following in mind:

- Have your reins nice and short.
- Use a refined Direct and Supporting rein to bring the shoulders across.
- Make sure you focus with all your eyes, not just the ones on your head! Pretend you have eyes on your shoulders, hands and knees as well. This will help keep your body posture aligned and communicate more effectively with your horse.
- Be on your balance point, commit to the hindquarters.
- Engage your hindquarters by pulling your belly button back and tipping your pelvis up towards your ribs!

- Remember that this is only 1/8th of a turn, just a step or two to one side as you back.

Purpose

One-eighth turns really help you to get your horse's weight more on his hindquarters, to lighten the forehand and increase maneuverability.

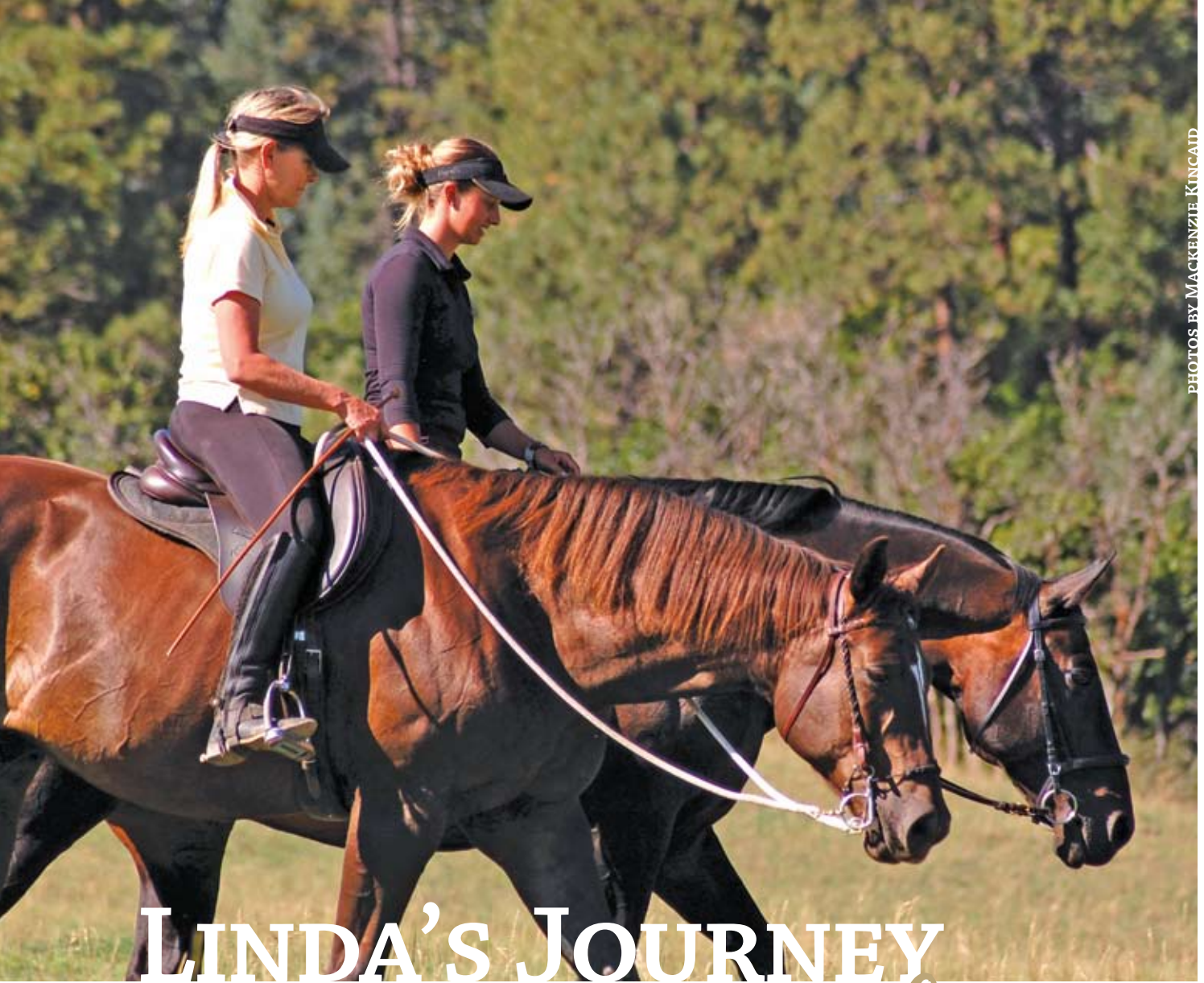
Level of Quality

At first you'll stop after every 1/8th turn, but pretty soon you'll be able to do 45 degrees, then 90, then 180 and finally 360 degree turns on the haunches with your horse engaged in the hindquarters and light on the forehand.

Level

This is a Level 4 maneuver. You'll want your horse to be trusting, responsive and confident with contact through the reins, not to mention being able to use your body effectively and fluidly. 🐾





LINDA'S JOURNEY

by Linda Parelli

New Layers

Well, I finally caved in. For all these years, I've mostly taken care of my own horses, except of course when I'm away or on tour. But I love the feeding and getting and grooming and preparing because that's how I keep the relationship going in terms of balance: I do undemanding things with my horses as well as advancing our horsemanship skills.

I'm a terrible delegator. I'm terribly particular about my horses, and I really don't have other people ride my horses except on special occasions where I might learn something: say from our Spanish dressage friend, Luis Lucio, or when I want to demonstrate something, as when Amy rides Remmer in a lesson with me at some of our shows. And, of course, Pat is the only other one I had ride Allure, for obvious reasons. Even then, I wanted to be the one learning from him and not have Pat train him for me!

So what happened? Why am I writing about this? I made a breakthrough in terms of the best use of my time. It was tough; I decided that unless I got some help, Allure would be twenty before we got anywhere and Remmer would stay on the bad side of fat. And I want to get a lot more done with the two of them, preferably every day. I sent Pat a position description for "Linda's Intern" and the person he assigned to me was exactly who I was hoping for: Lyndsey Fitch.

I wanted someone I could trust, could relate to, and felt would dote on my horses the way I do! No offence to anyone else in the Mastery Program... but I do know Lyndsey better, and we go back a long way. There's a photo of Pat with baby Lynz lying on his chest, both of them asleep! Lyndsey's father is a superb equine vet in Boulder,



Colorado, and hosted many Parelli clinics in the early days, before I even met Pat.

What's occurred since then has exceeded my expectations. I knew that my horses would love Lynz and that I would feel really confident in her approach to them when feeding and preparing them for our session. What I didn't expect is how quickly she would catch on to how I wanted them played with in the warm up (at first only Remmer, I did Allure!), how I would swap horses after riding Allure (getting on Remmer and her getting on Allure for his "cool down" and ride home), and how quickly it felt good and natural for me to work with her and give her increasingly more responsibility – she even kept things up when I was traveling.

And of course, "it's not about the..." It really has nothing to do with my horses, or Lyndsey. It has everything to do with me. As much as I hate to admit it, there was this little chauvinistic part of me that felt no one could make my horses happy like me. Yeesh. Tough lesson.

I love how sometimes goals and time lines cause important and sometimes life-changing decisions. This has changed life for me, and for my horses too. And here's the next piece of the evolution – I don't want to play with my horses by myself so much any more! Lyndsey is a great assistant for me with my horses. We get together almost

every morning and she feels like "me" to me so we have a fun and interesting time. I don't say that with a puffed-out chest; I say it with great respect, because she's a learn-aholic and tries harder than almost anyone I know... a lot like me.

Being the super student she is, Lyndsey is learning to prepare Allure on the ground and to ride him from the start when I want to begin with Remmer.

What have I learned? To not be so chauvinistic. Much as I like to think my personal growth is amazing, there are always new layers that keep me humble! 🐾





SECOND HAND GOLD

The "X" Task

by Teri Sprague

Second hand gold is as good as new. What I have learned I can share with you. If you bank it deep within your heart, your horsemanship will soar off the chart.

One of the most valuable things I learned at the very first Parelli Natural Horsemanship clinic I ever attended was a little task Pat called the "X." It is an ingenious way to play all Seven Games with nothing but two lines in the ground. It teaches the human a lot about focus, feel, and timing. And it develops the three L's—love, language, and leadership—in equal doses. It also teaches the horse to look at you with two eyes, a very valuable skill. Try it for yourself:



Draw an "X" on the ground about seven or eight steps long. You can drag your foot in the dirt or use spray paint or marking chalk. (Photo 1)



With the human standing where the lines cross and while keeping at least one foot there at all times, cause your horse to straddle a line. (Note feet positions in pictures.)

After the horse straddles the first line, pause.

Then send him to another line passing at least one other line in the process. In other words, you could go half a circle to the line opposite the first one or you could go three quarters of a lap or more and land on one of the adjacent lines. (Photo 2)



Straddle the new line. Pause.

Send the horse to another new line, passing at least one line. Straddle the third line. Pause.

Finally using your Carrot Stick, cause your horse to go sideways to straddle the final unused line. Pause. (Photo 3) 🐾

Can you identify each of the Seven Games within the "X" task? Match the situation to the game it represents.

1. Standing with the line between the horse's legs
2. Moving the hindquarters with the Carrot Stick™
3. Horse pushes into you so you back him up
4. Moving the forequarters with the halter
5. Sending the horse from line to line in an arc
6. Moving the horse to the last spoke
7. Pausing

Answers: 1. Squeeze Game 2. Driving Game 3. Yo-Yo Game (an Porcupine Game) 4. Porcupine Game 5. Circling Game 6. Sideways Game 7. Friendly Game

Photos by Teri Sprague with special thanks to Emma and Gina Olberding and their little mare "Big."

Teri Sprague is a Licensed 4-Star Senior Instructor and has been teaching Parelli since 1995. She is available for Level 1-4 Clinics around the nation as well as lessons at her headquarters near Ft. Collins, CO. She specializes in building confidence in riders and horses using imaginative applications of the empowering psychology, principles and techniques of Parelli Natural Horsemanship. Contact her at ts4pnh@yahoo.com or www.terisprague.com.

Tips:

- Focus on the line where you want the horse to stand.
- Use the halter to position the front end of the horse (Photo 4) and the Carrot Stick to position the hind end of the horse. (Photo 5)



- Position the front then the back. If the horse moves the front while you ask for the back, reposition the front again, pause, then ask for the hindquarter again.
- Hold the rope loosely just below or above the clip. (Photo 6) Grip it and use a straight elbow to prevent forward motion (Photo 7) but release when the horse acts like a partner. Once you and the horse have the idea, try greater distances with longer lines.
- It is not uncommon for it to take 5-15 minutes for the horse to "find" the line and straddle it the first time. But each time the horse will get quicker. By the time you have played this three or four days, the horse will follow your focus and line right up.





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Congratulations to the new Levels Pathway Graduates!

June 3, 2010 – September 20, 2010

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(On Line + FreeStyle + Liberty + Finesse)

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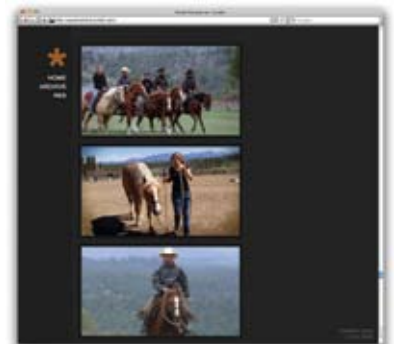


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Linda's Blog

Connect with Linda for discussions of horsemanship, answers to your questions, updates on Linda's horses, photos, news from the homefront (and the road) and much more!
linda.parellinaturalhorsetraining.com

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This community movement site is a collaboration tool for like minded people to share ideas, start projects and take action together.
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