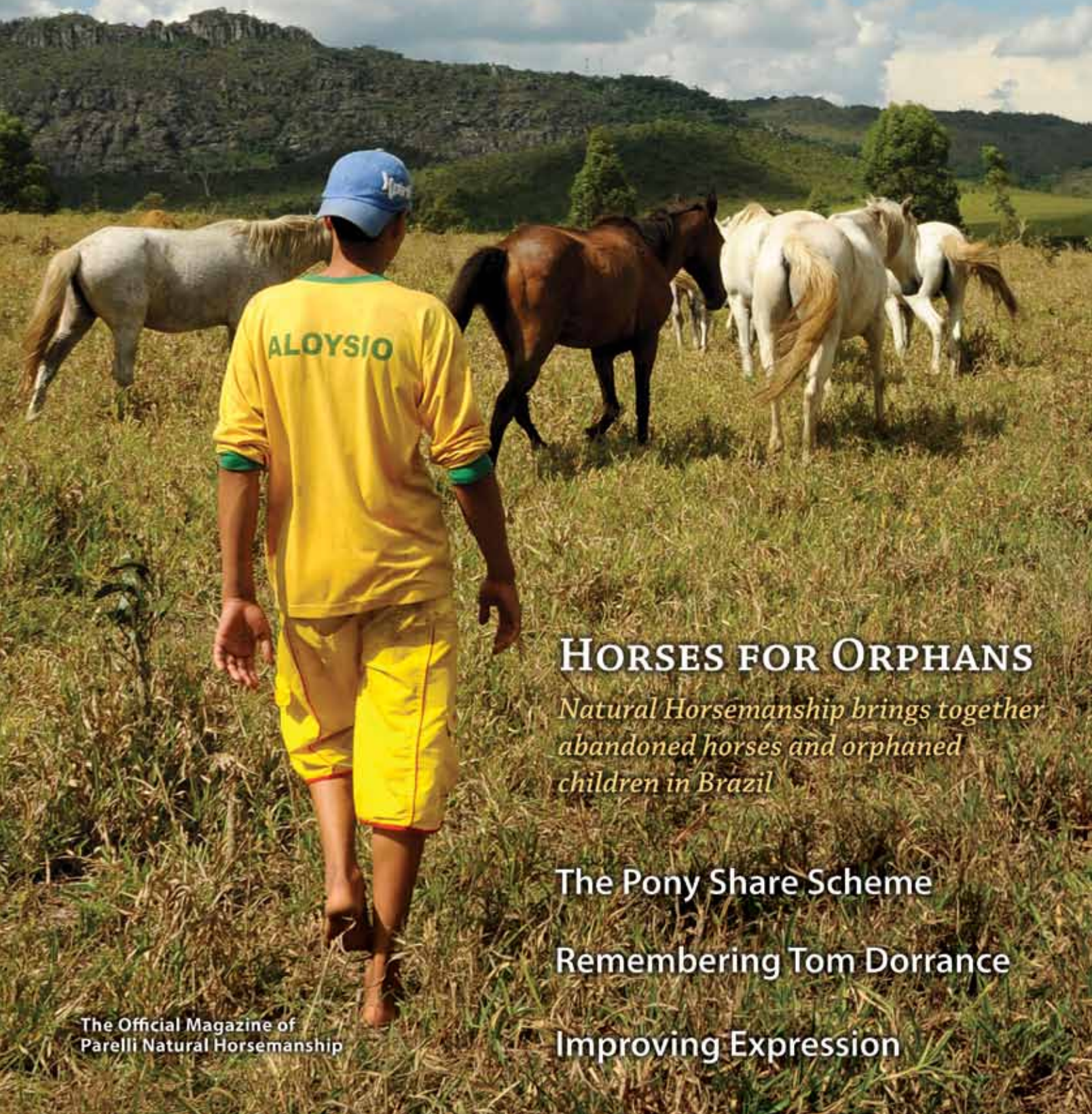


Savvy Times™

ISSUE 32, AUG 2011



HORSES FOR ORPHANS

Natural Horsemanship brings together abandoned horses and orphaned children in Brazil

The Pony Share Scheme

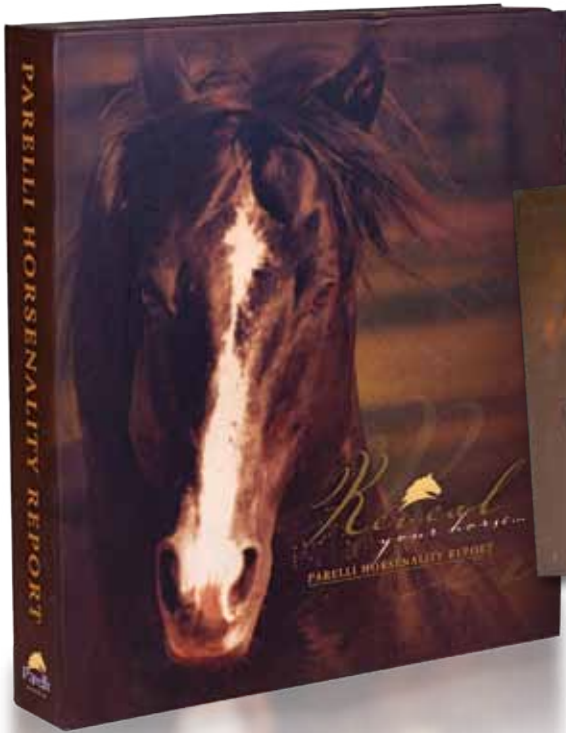
Remembering Tom Dorrance

Improving Expression

The Official Magazine of
Parelli Natural Horsemanship

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Patrick Handley, Ph.D.
Humanality™ Co-Creator
Licensed Psychologist and Personality Assessment Expert



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



PHOTO BY SHARON TIESDELL SMITH

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We Are 
Parelli
WORLDWIDE

Just as we began to adjust to springtime (better known as “mud season”) here in the beautiful San Juan mountains, summer has already arrived. The days are hot and the afternoons are typically marked by spectacular thunderstorms. Each day we’re reminded that we live in intensely beautiful and wild country here in southwestern Colorado.

Pagosa Springs is horse country too, so the summer season is always a busy one, with a rodeo, team sorting, roping practice, clinic or club meeting happening practically every day in town. Everyone’s out exploring the area on horseback — it’s the best vantage point for taking in a little natural splendor, in my experience — and putting principles to purpose on the trail.

Things are buzzing on the Parelli campus here too, with students arriving for courses and plenty of instructors on hand ready to help them take that next step in their horsemanship journey. We’re keeping you updated on the latest activity on campus on Facebook, so make sure you stop in and take a look: www.facebook.com/ParelliNaturalHorseTraining

Here in Parelli Central, we’ve been shaking things up a bit. For the first time in our history we’re offering our rope products in a range of new colors, and there are more new products on the way. Meanwhile, we’ve been working on course schedules for our international campuses, and we’ve added entirely new courses for both 2011 and 2012. Our media team has been busy filming fantastic new footage that for the moment is top secret... but we hope to bring you news on that soon!

We’re now over 25% of the way toward our goal of 10,000 new members and our \$1 million educational giveaway with the Parelli Horsemanship Fund. (For more on the Fund and our pledge, see page 8.) Every day we hear new exciting stories about people who are already helping to create a better world for horses and humans. (Look for the “creating a better world” icon on stories in this issue that relate to our four main causes of horsemanship for kids, therapeutic and para-equestrian riding, horse rescues, and scholarships for future instructors.) What are you doing to build a better world? We want to hear your stories; write us at savvytimes@parelli.com.



Mack

Mackenzie Kincaid



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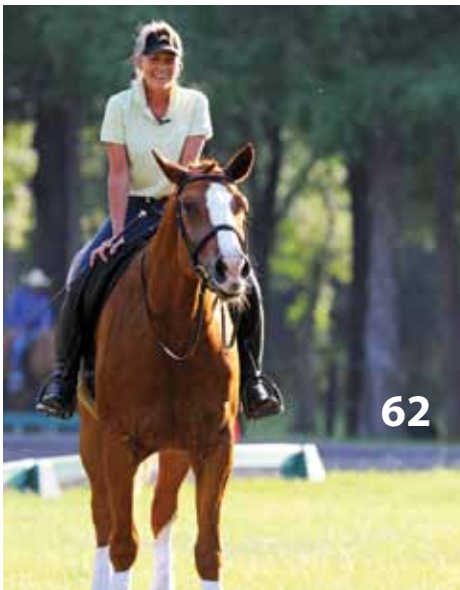
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Cover photo by Ingela Larsson Smith from “Horses for Orphans,” pg 24

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FOUNDERS Linda & Pat Parelli

Coco, Official Parelli Photographer

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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



DEAR FRIENDS,

by Linda Parelli

As I write to you I am traveling home from an intense but wonderful five days of teaching the Game of Contact in the U.K. There were eight selected riders and close to a hundred auditors, plus many instructors from both U.K. and Europe. The weather was gorgeous, and the results were, once again, astonishing. The thing I love the most about this concept is how much it improves the relationship, the overall trust and the rider's quality of feel. Pat was so right in identifying the Four Savvys — and this fourth one, Finesse, is definitely the key to polishing your skill as both a rider and a trainer.

The first three days were about the students, and the following two days were especially for coaching instructors, many of whom brought their horses. I think there were over 40! And every one of them discovered how valuable it is to teach a horse to understand what the bit is all about, to really play the game so the horse wants to take the contact, not to mention a host of information and feedback on how to improve their riding posture. I also got to coach a few of them in Stage 4, beginning collection.

A particular highlight for me was reuniting with Bagheera, Stephanie Gaunt's magnificent black Warmblood who was a star at the Celebration in April. With his high spirit and tormented background, Bagheera is not an easy horse to progress with, but Steph has done an awesome job with him. Contact is the last missing piece. He was my demo horse each day, and it wasn't always easy, but the results were fantastic.

It was a fun and friendly atmosphere, and there were many times when you could have heard a pin drop — the auditors were riveted as they studied the action in the arena. My thanks go especially to our team there in the U.K., and especially to Laura and Carmen, who took care of me when I lost my voice! Laura kept me supplied with hot lemon and honey drinks while Carmen was my voice, doing simultaneous translation of my croaky, squeaky whispering. (No hoarse whisperer jokes, please!)

Of course, I traveled first to Sydney to teach the Game of Contact in May, experiencing much the same — great results with the riders and intense auditors. It's really fun teaching courses again, and I also got to see my parents, sisters, niece and nephew for a few days. That's always a bonus.

Next course is at the Colorado campus, five days purely for the students, and then in October I head to Zürich to teach there, too. I am so passionate about getting these courses started! The Game of Contact is without a doubt the missing link in our Finesse program.

It's been a very full few months with a bit more travel than we've done in the past few years. The Celebration event in Birmingham, U.K. drew 6,000 horse lovers, and we had fabulous weather, great horses for our demos, and over thirty Parelli Professionals in attendance. The crowd was phenomenal!

After the Celebration I spent a little time in Europe. I stopped in to visit Parelli Professional Marie Calire deSellier at her center in France; what a beautiful place and such dedicated teaching and learning! It was on to Spain, where I spent two days riding with Luis Lucio. He is a phenomenal trainer and rider — he rides for the Spanish team — and he uses Parelli ground skills and solves problems quickly. He taught me a lot about higher levels of self-carriage and collection, especially at the canter. I also had the pleasure of watching him teach a clinic in Switzerland, where he made huge changes with both riders and horses.

My next stop was Klaus Balkenhol's stables in Germany. What an honor to be invited there (by his daughter, Anabel)

to help with some behavioral issues. Of course it all went very well, and I was very impressed with their attitude toward training horses. They take their time, they're gentle, and watching Klaus ride was a real treat.

Back in the States, Pat and I headed out for our Colt Starting Naturally event in Fort Worth, Texas. It was an amazing weekend and wonderful to see Pat and his team giving the horses such a natural start. From there we headed back to our campus in Pagosa Springs, Colorado for the summer season. The courses are now in full swing for the summer and it's wonderful to see the campus busy with students again.

So it's been a very full few months with a bit more travel than the past couple of years. It's funny, because when we got Vinny I was reluctant to have another dog based on our travel history, but Pat said, "We don't travel that much anymore!" Famous last words, and of course we now have two doggies.

I look forward to seeing you at one of my courses, on campus, at the Summit or on Parelli Connect. Here's to never-ending savvy!

Yours naturally,
Linda






Every day, we hear from students whose lives – and horses – have been transformed using the Parelli Program. But just as Parelli is way more than riding, it's also more than just horsemanship techniques. What makes this program truly unique is the sense of community and camaraderie that exists among Parelli students. This all began with Pat and Linda, but it's become so much more. It's about you and your growth; it's about your horses and their stories; it's about where you've been and where you're going; it's about all the people who are walking alongside you, sharing the journey. Everyone who studies, teaches and promotes Parelli principles worldwide is an important part of what "Parelli" means. We are more than the sum of our parts – together WE ARE PARELLI and we believe WE can create a better world for horses and humans.

THIS IS OUR MISSION:

With your help, to create a better world for horses and humans.

THIS IS HOW WE WILL MAKE IT HAPPEN:

In helping the world become a better place for horses and humans, we are proud to officially announce the long-awaited launch of the Parelli Horsemanship Fund. It is our vision that it will help take our combined efforts for Parelli to the next level of influencing how horses are respected, trained and treated by donating significant funds into a vehicle by which we can all "give back."

The Parelli Horsemanship Fund pledges to sponsor and support four main causes:

- 1. Youth Programs**
- 2. Educational Scholarships for students and aspiring Parelli Professionals**
- 3. Horse Rescue Centers**
- 4. Therapeutic Horsemanship & ParaEquestrian Riding**

It is our wish for the Parelli Horsemanship Fund to help expand and perpetuate the philanthropic work we have been doing for years behind the scenes by providing valuable, education-based support for others to benefit from. In this way we can empower people to make a difference both for themselves and for horses and humans all over the world.

**We estimate that currently approximately
1 in 200 horse people do Parelli worldwide.**

Our goal is to work with you to grow that number to 1 in 10.

And we believe that, together, we can achieve that goal and in the process we will give generously of our time and resources to enhance the lives of horses and the people who love them and are helped by them.

Read the Entire Parelli Horsemanship Fund White Paper at: www.parellihorsemanshipfund.org

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The Community votes and chooses who benefits worldwide.



You Spread the Word. We Donate.
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If you could change a friend's life by sharing the story of your horsemanship journey and inviting them to take the first step of their own journey for FREE and for a good cause, why wouldn't you?!

Here's how you can help support horses and humans in need:

*Helping change the world for horses and humans is as simple as....
telling three people about how Parelli has worked for you and your horse.*

- 1. Encourage your friends to sign up for the FREE 30 Day Trial Membership on ParelliConnect.com.*
- 2. As soon as they sign on, your friends will have FREE streaming access to the complete Level 1 Educational Program so they can begin their own horsemanship journey.*
- 3. Together, we'll be one step closer to this amazing Educational Giveaway and YOU will be helping to create a better world for horses and humans alike.*



HORSE

PARELLI HORSEMANSHIP FUND BENEFIT

Parelli Professionals Tina Giordano and Lori Northrup hosted a Parelli Horsemanship Fund benefit event on March 26th in Fountain Hills, Arizona. They had a full-size arena decked out to match the Monopoly board game, with thirteen obstacles. In the morning, twelve players moved around the “board” On Line to a roll of the dice. Each obstacle had a money value for three tasks that could be performed at each stop. All of the challenges were fun and whimsical, allowing for a challenge and success.





OPOLY!

FUNDRAISER REPORT & PHOTOS BY COCO

In the afternoon, players headed out to the board again on horseback, with the option of bartering up the level of tasks for more “money,” by adding difficulty. It was great fun to see participants thinking up things to do to stuff their pouch with extra Monopoly money. With all tasks completed, everyone received commemorative ribbons and delicious chocolates.

Hats off and high-fives to Lori and Tina for their creativity, generosity and savvy! — Coco 🐾





RETURNING TO

the Road to the Horse

by Scott Teigen

For the second year in a row, Pat Parelli will bring his renowned natural horsemanship methods to the Road to the Horse colt-starting competition. Pat joins friend and 2010 Road to the Horse winner Craig Cameron to represent the USA in the 2012 international competition.

"We'll be representing the grandpas, the old troubadours," says Pat. "Craig and I go way back; we're going to have a lot of fun there."

The event, which takes place from March 9-11 in Murfreesboro, TN, will showcase six of the world's best horsemen in a breathtaking display of elite natural horsemanship. Road to the Horse 2012 will feature three international teams: Team Australia, made up of Guy McLean and Dan James; Team Canada, made up of Jonathan Field and Glenn Stewart; and Team USA.

Jonathan Field and Glenn Stewart have both been involved in the Parelli Program, and Pat is eager to see two of his close friends showcasing their expertise in the same arena.

"They're both really good friends of mine," he says. "I'm very proud of them, and very excited that they've been asked to represent their country."

Road to the Horse 2012 is a team event, and the teammates' rapport will be vital to their success before the

competition even begins. The competitors will walk amongst the remuda, two by two, to observe each horse's behavior. With the help of his teammate, each competitor will select a colt to work with for the remainder of the competition.

Though Team USA would love to bring home a Road to the Horse victory, Pat has a bigger goal in mind:

"I'm not really going to be competing against anybody," he says. "I'm there to win the heart of whatever colt I start."

Pat is certainly speaking from experience, having won the heart of his colt from last year's Road to the Horse, Troubadour. In fact, Troubadour will be making the trip back to Tennessee with Pat, to assist in Pat's seminar on Saturday morning.

"I feel like Troubadour and I were invited back," he says. "We're going to be right there together, to share with everybody how to start a relationship and develop a partnership."

If you'd like to purchase tickets to watch Pat and Troubadour in person, call 1-877-772-5425 or 1-888-695-0888, or visit www.roadtothehorse.com. If you'd like to witness the event from home, keep an eye on the Road to the Horse official site for webcast information. 🐾

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Photos by Jo Danehy



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PHOTOS BY CLARE SEEBLING

FUN AND GAMES IN the United Kingdom

by Beth Barling

As I write we are barely halfway through 2011, and activities at the U.K. Parelli campus at Stoneleigh Park have been at full throttle. Following the packed Celebration at the LG Arena in Birmingham in April, there was time for a short breather to prepare the campus for the summer season of courses, with grass to cut, weeds to whack and stables to get ready.

This year the courses have once more been led by 4-Star Professional Carmen Smith, who travels from Australia to be with us. Each course has a different set of instructors, and this year Carmen has been joined by Parelli Professionals from all over Europe, as well as the U.K., including Sally Brett, who is a 3-Star Professional currently based in the U.K. office. Also in the office are Laura Aitken, Jenny Beynon and Dani Wilday, whom many of you will have spoken with if you have ever phoned the office or been to an event. This year we have also been joined by Sean Coleman, a U.K. Parelli student who has been doing a fantastic facilities support job.



Courses, Courses, Courses!

The courses began in May with the two-week Horse Behaviour and You course. This was followed by the first two-week Flex Track course, and then by the first of two four-week Fast Track courses (the second Fast Track starts in August). As part of the Parelli social media team I have had much pleasure visiting the campus during each of these courses to meet with students, watch them out with their horses and hear

about their experiences. Though I haven't made it to one myself yet, I gather that fish-and-chip suppers are also a regular and popular feature of the courses!



Fun and Games

Although learning has been at the core of the on-campus courses, there's also been time for some fun. In June 52 riders and horses (a mix of visiting horses and those on the Fast Track course), 60 spectators and 16 Parelli Professionals descended on the Parelli playground for two hours of challenges and fun. The Games include a mix of tournament challenges On Line, at Liberty and FreeStyle, as well as gait and distance tests and timed events. The morning ended with a series of inspirational Savvy Spotlights, cheered with gusto by the spectators. The weather threw all it could at us, from searing sun to torrential rain, but it didn't stop the smiles or the roaring trade in ice cream! Thank you to everyone who came along and also to those who supported the Parelli Horsemanship Fund by purchasing a Parelli Pony.

Lessons from Linda in the Game of Contact

Soon after, preparations began for another major highlight of the U.K. calendar: a three-day course with Linda Parelli on the Game of Contact. There were eight horses



and riders on the course, joined by over a hundred instructors and auditors. People traveled from near and far to be there — including Zimbabwe and the United Arab Emirates! — so there was much excitement and anticipation in the air. Linda didn't disappoint!

The course began with a morning of in-depth theory in a classroom setting, followed by the remaining two and half days outside at the large showground arena in the heart of Stoneleigh Park, where Linda combined demonstrations, Q&A sessions, simulations and coaching sessions with the riders and their horses to take us through the four stages of development in the Game of Contact.

With Bagheera's help, Linda expertly demonstrated how to play the Game of Contact and develop a horse through the four stages of the game, from confidence to collection.

For her daily demonstrations Linda rode Bagheera, a horse owned by U.K. Parelli Professional Steph Gaunt, whom attendees at the U.K. Celebration earlier this year may remember as having big problems with the bit. Steph bought Bagheera as a six-year-old who had had a traditional start in life. Together Steph and Bagheera have completed Level 4 in On Line, FreeStyle and Liberty in the Parelli program, but Bagheera really needed extra help with Finesse.

With Bagheera's help, Linda expertly demonstrated how to play the Game of Contact and develop a horse through the four stages of the game, from confidence to collection. Steph was delighted with his progress.

"Over the three days I could see Bagheera develop his confidence and trust in the bit," she said. "Linda was so patient with him and put the relationship first and made it his idea; there was no make or force. Seeing him realize that he had a choice was really emotional for me."

Course participant Sarah Dickinson's horse Woody had had a similar start in life. "When I first got him I realized that Woody had real problems with contact," she said. "I came to this course because I knew I needed to learn from the best." Over the three days Linda helped Sarah understand how to help Woody not only accept contact but also enjoy it: "On day three I could feel he had both energy and relaxation — and I could see it in his face! Today was the lesson of a lifetime."

Despite vocal problems and having Carmen Smith act as her voice, Linda displayed energy and commitment that didn't diminish one bit. At the end of the course she spent a further two days with all the Parelli Professionals, teaching them the Game of Contact and then teaching them how to teach it. In October this year European students will have one more opportunity to learn with Linda in Zürich, Switzerland — a not-to-be-missed event! Learn more about that course on our website at parelli.com.

Looking forward

There is one more Fast Track course to go at Stoneleigh this year, and preparations are already beginning for 2012 courses. We look forward to seeing many of you then! 🐾





TAKING PARTNERSHIP

by Jenna Uhlenhut

to the Next Level

It took me over a year to get to my first Parelli Clinic. I had been interested for a long time but felt I needed the help of being taught in person to get started, so I signed up for a Level 1/2 clinic in April with Parelli Professional Carmen

Smith. Before the clinic I had high hopes but was worried it would disappoint with the pedestal I had put Parelli Natural Horsemanship on. And with my horsemanship providing me with more frustration than joy in the last few years it really was the last bit of hope I had to turn things around.



It really was the last bit of hope I had to turn things around.

Day one and I couldn't have thought of a better way to start a clinic if I tried. I was nervous and my young horse had just been just pulled out of a 3-month spell. But on meeting Carmen I got an overwhelming feeling of calm and it was obvious I wasn't the only one feeling it. Everyone was relaxed and so were the horses. I could have cried with relief when our first task was to simply wander the arena letting our horses do what they felt like. No stress, no tension.



We began learning the Seven Games and to my happiness my biggest fear wasn't met: my horse wasn't petrified of the Carrot Stick™ and thought it was very handy for rump scratches in the Friendly Game!

It was interesting seeing how different horses and people handled learning the Seven Games. Most the horses seemed to have one game that was more challenging than the rest to them, but there were no huge upsets and improvement was already happening!

The second day showed everyone to have softer horses that went through the games much easier, although I found my Left-Brain Introvert to be testing me with every game. It was as if he needed proof that my newfound knowledge and leadership were around to stay and not just a passing moment. Carmen was picking up on things I

Riding in just a halter was a big step for me, and I was so surprised to find him softer to ride and picking up things that we had struggled to learn for years!

did when I thought I couldn't rely on my horse to do it for himself, even though it was his responsibility. I found once I left it with him he never let me down! I had been making negative assumptions of him which I didn't need to.

I made the transition from being on the ground to in the saddle without even a nervous thought. For the first time in two years I didn't have the sickening feeling of fear as

I hopped on, and the funniest thing is that I didn't even notice that fear wasn't there, it was so far from my mind! Riding in just a halter was a big step for me, and I was so surprised to find him softer to ride and picking up things that we had struggled to learn for years!

My highlight was at the end of the day when we played Seven Games in six minutes. We had six minutes alone with our horses to go through the Seven Games in any way we liked. Everything we had spent the day learning fell into place for me and my horse and it felt like we danced. Not only were we playing the games but merging them into one. Circle Game on a Figure 8? No problem, but hey, let's add a Squeeze in and do it against the rail! The other biggest highlight — something we all unanimously agreed on — was how nice it was to be able to get our horses to back out of our space and stay out until we wanted them back in it!

Upon the ending of the clinic I felt an immense sadness, an overwhelming feeling to hug Carmen and had a fire lit in me that I wanted to stoke even higher. The clinic blew any expectation I had out the water and has changed my life. I will never look back. 🐾





PHOTO BY SHARON TIESDELT SMITH

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT *Santana*

by Scott Teigen

Two Facebook fans, Karen Sischo Fleischman and Melody Orso, suggested "Santana," and as a result, both will receive tickets to the 2011 Parelli Performance Summit in Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

Santana is now making himself at home at the Parelli Campus in Pagosa Springs. His youthful, playful nature has made him a natural playmate for Troubadour, Pat's colt from the 2011 Road to the Horse Competition. Pat predicted that the two would get along well, and sure enough, they were strutting and playing the moment they were placed together. Santana has been thoroughly enjoying the open spaces of the Parelli Campus.

"Most stallions, like Santana, have probably had very little freedom from the time they were yearlings," says Pat. "So for the last three years, he's probably been kept in a stall, maybe lunged a little bit, ridden a little bit... but this horse can put himself anywhere he wants. He's going to be really special."

Keep an eye on Santana's progress on Parelli Connect: www.parelliconnect.com/horses/21502 and on Pat's Facebook fan page: <http://ow.ly/5EUqi> 🐾

Lusitanos have held a special place on Pat Parelli's wish list for some time now, so when a friend of Pat's showed him a video of a Lusitano stallion, she definitely had Pat's attention.

"She had wanted him but her instructor felt he was too green for her," Pat says. "She told us 'If I can't have him, nothing would make me happier than to have him here (Florida) with you and Linda.'"

"Two days later, he arrived in Ocala and joined us on our trip to Texas and then on to Colorado."

The stallion came from an Interagro Farm in Brazil, the world's largest breeder and exporter of Lusitano horses.

"He is sired by the renowned Quinio Interagro, and inherited his sire's conformation and movement," says Pat.

The only thing the beautiful stallion still needed was, of course, a new barn name. Like all purebred Lusitanos, he had already been given a registered name — Camelot Interagro — but "Camelot" wasn't a good fit in Pat's barn.

Pat admits to "not always being the best namer in the world," so he decided to take advantage of the ever-increasing popularity of the Parelli Natural Horsemanship Facebook page, and make the naming process into an interactive contest.

The contest, "Help Pat Name His Lusitano Stallion," drew an overwhelming number of responses. In one week, Parelli fans suggested 862 different names, such as "Panda," "El Dorado," and "Snicklefritz." After plenty of deliberation, Pat chose Santana.

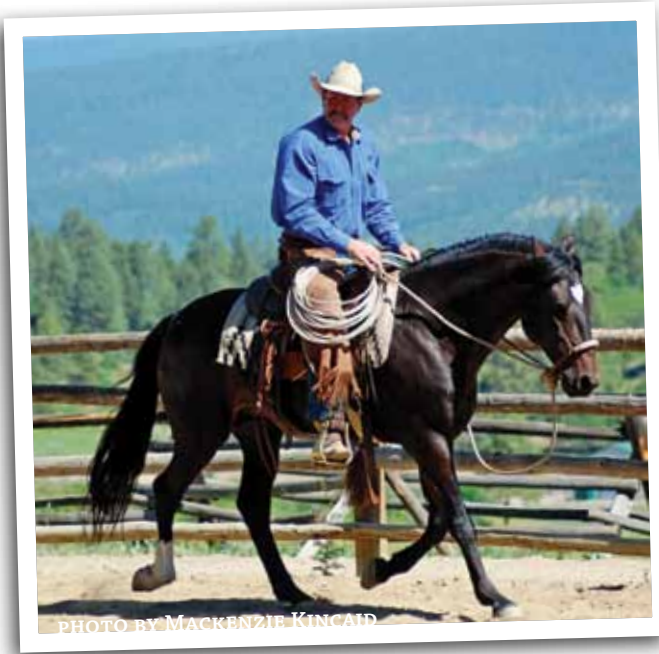
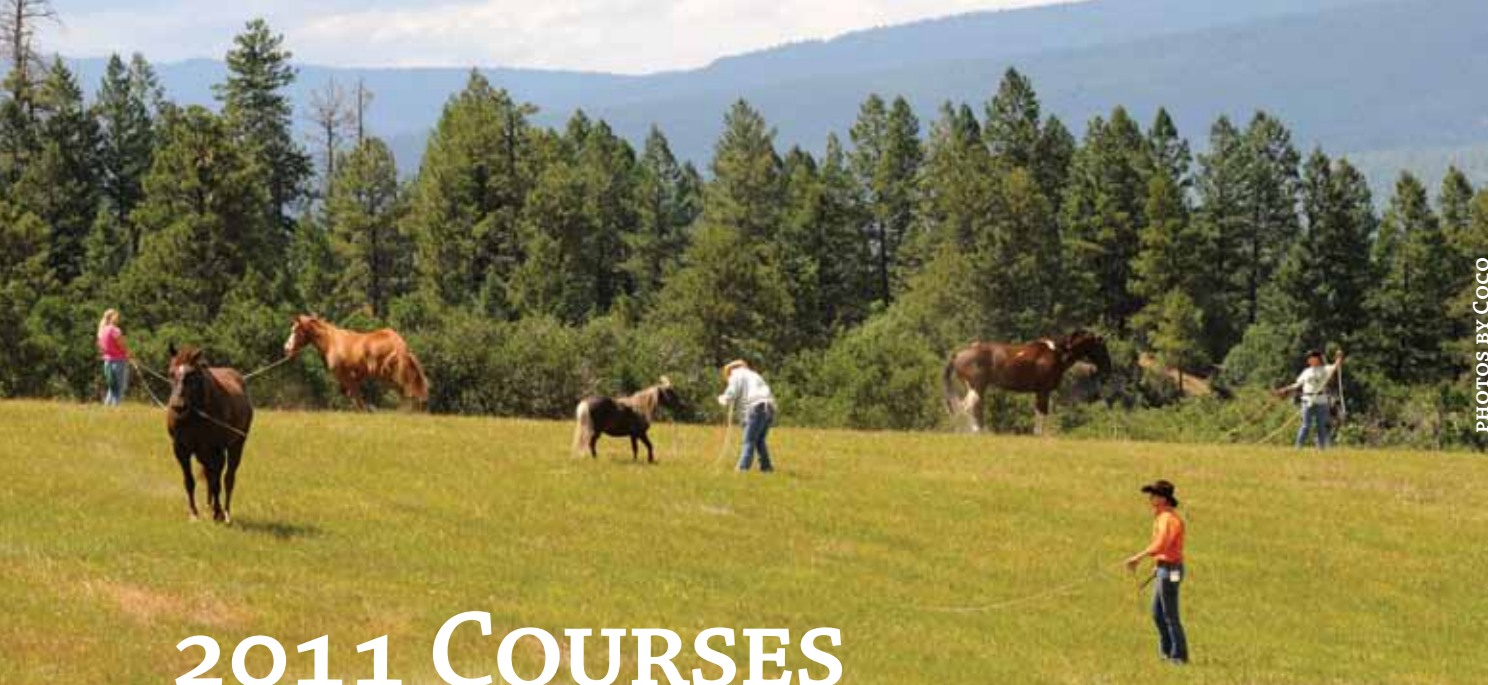


PHOTO BY MACKENZIE KINGAID



PHOTO BY SHARON TIEDELL SMITH



2011 COURSES

Join us at our international campuses in 2011 for a series of brand-new courses, and some older favorites! Advance your skills in riding, driving, Liberty and more, or embark on a course toward becoming a certified Parelli Professional!

Flex Track

Pagosa Springs, Colorado • Aug 15-26, 2011

Ocala, Florida • Oct 3-14, 2011

Wilton, NSW, Australia • Oct 17-28, 2011

Flex Tracks are two-week courses which, like the Fast Track, are intensive studies of Levels 1-4 in all four Savvys. This is ideal for people with busy schedules who can't commit to a 4-week course, but still want to advance their horsemanship, or qualify for the instructor program.

Getting Started

Ocala, Florida • Oct 3-7, 2011

Jump head first into the Parelli Program with the Getting Started course. From communication techniques to tool handling and how to become a good rider for your horse, this 5-day course will help you accomplish savvy both on the ground and in the saddle. Build your confidence while acquiring skills, overcoming challenges and most importantly, having fun!



Riding with Purpose

Ocala, Florida • Oct 8-9, 2011

This 2-day class will take the principles that you have learned through the Parelli program, and begin to put them to a purpose while riding, to allow you to further test your relationship with your horse.

Advancing Confidence

Ocala, Florida • Oct 10-14, 2011

Banish your fears and build a dream partnership with your horse! This 5-day Advancing Confidence Course features four core daily learning blocks including a lecture, demo, remuda and focus stations.

Rendez-vous Experience

Ocala, Florida • Oct 18-23, 2011

Spend 3-days prior to the Jacksonville, FL Rendez-vous, receiving coaching, tips, and problem solving help that will set you up for success to attend the Rendez-vous over the weekend and carry on to your horsemanship well beyond the event!

Introduction to Parelli

Ocala, Florida • Oct 29, 2011

You've heard about Parelli Natural Horsemanship, and now this is your chance to try it out for yourself! This one-day introduction to Parelli is the perfect class for any horse owner who would like to further their relationship with their horse through mutual communication, understanding and respect.

WOW with Cows!

Pagosa Springs, Colorado • Sep 12-17, 2011

If your heart skips a beat and you get excited at the thought of working your horse on cows, this 5-day clinic is for you! Grasp the fundamentals of cow work in a safe learning environment under the watchful eye of Pat Parelli. A once-in-a-lifetime experience, Wow With Cows provides you access to live cattle as well as several simulators. The course concludes with a National Versatility Ranch Horse Association competition! All riders must be at least Level 3 students.

Horse Behavior & YOU

Willton, NSW, Australia • Oct 3-14, 2011

A ground-skills course designed to catapult your savvy of horses, Horsenality™, rapport, respect, Seven Games, Patterns. This course is hands-down the most popular course Parelli has ever offered as it teaches you the essential skills of reading horse behavior and learning how to adjust your personality to bring out the best in your horse's Horsenality™.

Game of Contact

Zürich, Switzerland • Oct 14-16, 2011

A truly revolutionary breakthrough, successfully riding with contact is the foundation for dressage and finesse. The Game of Contact naturally solves many riding issues and helps to teach the horse to seek contact rather than avoiding it.

Fast Track

Ocala, Florida • Oct 31-Nov 25; Nov 12-Dec 7, 2011

This course is designed especially to fast-track confident Level 2+ graduates who have their sights set on achieving Level 4 and who may have professional goals as a Parelli Professional Instructor or Horse Specialist. The 4-week Fast Track program weaves all Four Savvys together and teaches you how to manage your horse's development in each area by setting daily training goals and measuring the progress.

Audition Workshop

Ocala, Florida • Nov 4-6, 2011

In order to achieve your horsemanship goals through the Parelli levels, you need to understand the audition and self-assessment processes. This workshop introduces you to the Parelli audition process — a demonstration of your overall savvy, skills and relationship with your horse in the Parelli program.

Confidence on the Trail

Ocala, Florida • Nov 11-13, 2011

Hit the trail with renewed confidence and promises of a fun and relaxing ride after taking this 3-day course. Whether your horse thinks monsters are lurking behind every tree or he's going to starve to death if he doesn't pick up snacks along the way, this Confidence on the Trail Course will prepare you with safety check lists, trail tips and exercises for success.

Liberty Workshop

Ocala, Florida • Nov 19-20, 2011

When you take off the halter, all you're left with is the truth! Discover and explore the third Savvy of Liberty in this 2-day workshop. This workshop will focus on preparation and problem solving, as well as the ability to use the power of a group situation to improve your communication with your horse at Liberty.

Driving Fundamentals with Nate Bowers

Ocala, Florida • Dec 5-9, 2011

Join us for our first ever Parelli Natural Horsemanship Driving course, taught by Nate Bowers. We will get you and your horse safely and correctly started on your driving horse journey. This 5-day course is designed to help you understand the psychology of the driven horse and how to help make it a safe, fun experience for both the horse and driver.



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COMMUNITY

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PHOTO BY INGELA LARSSON SMITH



Helping to create a better world...



PHOTOS BY INGELA LARSSON SMITH

HORSES FOR ORPHANS

Healing Young Hearts in Brazil

by Ingela Larsson Smith

“I have come to say goodbye.”

It was 7 a.m., and Fabrício was standing at the door of our bungalow. He was paler than usual, and even though he smiled with his lips, the smile never reached his eyes.

“Won’t you be here when we leave on the bus at eleven?” I asked.

“*Não, eu não possu*” (I can’t), he sighed.

Raising my eyebrows, I asked, “Why not?”

“*Eu vou chorar,*” he replied.

In broken Portuguese I told him, “I don’t understand the word *chorar.*”



He bent down and scribbled the same sentence on a piece of paper. Lifting his eyes up to mine, he said, “You can look it up in the dictionary on your way to the airport. But not now!”

My husband Richard came over, and we both put our arms around Fabrício and held him tight. This boy had become so dear to us that we now considered him a son.

“We love you, Fabrício. You are in our hearts and always will be.”

His thin arms clung to our necks, and he whispered back, “*Você está em meu coração também, agora e para sempre. Eu te amo.*” (You are in my heart, too, now and forever. I love you.)

We let each other go. He flashed a great big smile one last time, then turned and ran off.

We were at Fazenda Lar Betel near Cocalzinho, Brasília. The children’s home is a privately funded organization that houses 85–200 orphaned, abandoned or at-risk children. They come from dysfunctional family backgrounds and have extremely sad life stories.

The vision that God had given us was to take horses to orphans and give children skills that they would be able to use in their futures. This would give them tools to sustain their lives and break the cycle of poverty. Through the program they would have the opportunity to learn English;



grow in leadership, communication and team skills; and become responsible for horses.

Through amazing circumstances and many miracles, God led us to Fazenda Betel, two hours outside of the capital city of Brasilia. The children's home is situated on 2,500 acres of farmland with rolling hills, long grass and rocky plateaus. It has its own springs and small waterfalls.

Twelve mistreated, abused or barely-handled horses had been given to Betel. No one on the farm was experienced with horses, and when the staff had tried to work with the animals, both humans and horses had suffered injuries. It was decided to turn the horses loose on the property and keep the children completely separate. Since the horses had limited positive interaction with humans, they kept themselves far away. With two stallions in the free-roaming herd, foals were born wild.

It was decided to turn the horses loose on the property and keep the children completely separate.

As I watched Fabrício run off, I had no idea why he wouldn't be coming to the bus to say goodbye. All I knew was why he couldn't come to the airport.

The night before, the leadership had organized a big party for us. They had prepared a great meal, and the boys whom we spent the last few weeks training in horsemanship were invited to join us. We ate, laughed and talked until late into the night, using the little Portuguese that we knew along with a lot of hand signals.

Then the moment came when the leadership announced which of the boys would be going to the airport with us the next morning. All the horse boys desperately wanted to come, but there were only so many seats available on the bus. The list was read. The boys who had been involved in the horse project for over a year were on it, apart from Fabrício and Patrick. The news came as a shock to them, and they took it hard.

Patrick immediately got up and ran away without saying goodbye. Fabrício stayed for a while, then he disappeared, too. The reason their names were not on the list was that they had skipped school that morning. It was a high price to pay, and not a good ending to an otherwise nearly perfect trip.

At the airport we bought the boys milkshakes and headed off to the security gate. We were sad to leave. It was hard to see thirteen 15-year-old boys so upset about our departure.

Richard hugged one of the more aloof boys one last time and whispered into his ear that he loved him. Immediately the orphan boy broke down. He cried, sobbing over and over, "Please don't go." We were now late for our plane, and the rest of our team was already through security. We walked backwards, eyes stinging, waving to the boys and trying to smile.





PHOTOS BY INGELA LARSSON SMITH

Richard (left) and Ingela (right) with Reginaldo, the leader of the project. He grew up at the orphanage and this is his first job.

For the whole flight I could only think about the boys. They were stuck in my heart, and I missed them already.

My thoughts drifted back to when I first met Fabrício in November, 2009, on our first trip to Brazil. When we arrived on the farm, the leadership told us that they didn't think that anything could be done with the horses. They were too dangerous, wild and aggressive. We smiled and listened, then said that we would be happy to assess the herd.

"Okay," we were told, "but you won't be able to get near them. As soon as they see a person, they gallop clear to the other end of the property."

"Please just leave them where they are," we replied. "We will go and visit them."

Our answer must have been lost in translation, or they didn't think we could do it. Early the next morning we awoke to the hectic sound of trampling hooves and loud hollering in Portuguese. By the time we made our way to

the pasture, the horses were penned up. The neighbors had driven them into a corral.

The wide-eyed herd was scurrying around a large pen. Sweat dripping down their sides, heads held high and nostrils flared, they were unable to settle. For the foals born wild and free this was their first time in captivity.

"Which one is the most challenging horse?" I asked.

A small buckskin was pointed out to me.

The people had never heard of the language of the horse or the idea of building a partnership.

"It is difficult to get near him," I was told. "He is very aggressive. He was run into a chute once and saddled there, but it was impossible to stay on him, because he bucked so hard."





“Okay, let’s start with him,” I said.

With concerned looks on their faces they tried to convince me to pick another one. I took the time to explain how horses think and feel and what is important to them. The people had never heard of the language of the horse or the idea of building a partnership.

The horse’s name in Portuguese was *Febre*, which means “fever.” We separated him from the others by allowing the rest of the herd to go into the adjoining pen. The moment anyone tried to step closer to him, he would pin his ears and fly at the person. Everyone was afraid of him.

It was beautiful to see how children and horses from challenging backgrounds understood each other and built friendships.

I had a look at Febre and immediately knew that he was afraid. Staying at the far end of the corral and letting him have as much room as possible, I gave him time to assess me.

When he relaxed I started to advance and retreat. Sometimes he took off, and other times he threatened me. I blocked him only as much as absolutely necessary and retreated a lot. Eventually I was able to walk with him without his running away or pinning his ears at me.

The children were at school in the mornings, but in the afternoons many came to watch. They sat on top of the rails of the old cow pens, upper bodies bare, wearing shorts and flip flops, excitedly discussing what they saw happening.

That’s when I first noticed Fabrício. The short, dark-haired 14-year-old with shiny brown eyes and a huge smile wasn’t talking to the others. He intently watched every move I made, not wanting to miss anything. The orphan boy was there when Febre first reached out to sniff my hand, and later when he allowed me to put a halter on him. Fabrício watched with disbelief when the buckskin accepted me as his rider not long after that.

Fabrício was hooked. He showed up at every session we taught on horsemanship and tried very hard to build a relationship with the horses.

The next time I saw Fabrício was a few months later, on our second trip to the children’s home. The horses had not been touched since we were there last, and our aim was to gentle them so that we could de-worm them.





PHOTOS BY INGELA JARSSON SMITH

We spent two weeks with the boys, showing them how to approach the herd. Fabrício was there every day, walking through the long grass, advancing a few steps, then standing still for many minutes before continuing. He learned to read the smallest signals the horses showed and immediately retreat just before they moved their feet.

Fabrício was there every day, walking through the long grass, advancing a few steps, then standing still for many minutes before continuing.

All the boys were brilliant at gaining the herd's trust. On the ninth day their patience paid off. The horses allowed the children to walk through them while they continued to graze. A huge smile appeared on every boy's face.

The boys learned to walk the horses very slowly into the cattle pens. Once the herd was in there, we would sit on the fence and spend hours hanging out with them. Eventually we could walk through them in a much smaller area and then touch them on our way by.

I wished the children had boots instead of flip-flops, in case they needed to move away fast. The boys were amazing. They had excellent timing and no fear of the horses. Occasionally one of the older mares would pin her ears and shoot toward them, so they would just move, losing their flip-flops on the way.

About fifteen boys helped us advance and retreat on the horses and gentle them. By the end all the horses accepted the de-worming paste. We left with all the horses and boys in a much better place and our freshly-trained leader Reginaldo in charge of the horse project.

Over the next few months the boys' skill level grew. Together with our Brazilian veterinarian Fernando Rolim, who is also a natural horsemanship clinician, the children fully gentled the entire herd.

When we returned this spring twenty of the boys could play on the ground and ride. The horses would easily come in from the pasture and walk into the arena that Richard had built. All of them, apart from the foals and yearlings, could be ridden at a walk and a trot.

Fernando gave me a six-year-old Lusitano gelding called Xadrez as a present. The farm that bred him had had trouble training the horse.

Fabrício told us he had no human friends. His friends were of another kind. They were the horses.

"My mum took care of me until I was one year old," Fabrício said, "then she wasn't able to look after me anymore. She had no money, no job and no house. She





was an alcoholic and had no control over herself. The only thing I know about my father is his name. I never met him. He was shot by bandits when I was one year old.”

Because our relationship with Fabrício had deepened and his horsemanship skills had soared, we decided to put Xadrez under his care. The 14-year-old was going to be the only one handling and riding my horse until we returned. The orphaned boy, who never had to be responsible for anyone else before, rose to the occasion.

“I promise to take good care of him,” he said with a serious look on his face.

Sitting on the airplane, I thought about Fabrício. I unfolded the dirty, crumpled note he’d given me and grabbed my dictionary. I looked up what he had written when I’d asked him why he couldn’t say goodbye when we left in the bus. It said: “I am going to cry.”

Now I knew where he had gone when he ran off: down to see Xadrez. He would have buried his face in the tall gray’s mane and cried into his neck. I didn’t have a horse to cry on during my flight home, but I cried anyway.

I am grateful to Pat and Linda for giving me a wonderful natural horsemanship foundation. Though I am no longer a Parelli Professional, having been selected as Pat’s personal apprentice in 2002 and then going all over the world teaching Parelli has changed my life forever. Many lives have been impacted through what Pat and Linda have poured into me, and the transformation is continuing. 🐾

For more information on the ‘Horses for Orphans’ Projects, visit www.lostchildrenoftheearth.com or find them on Facebook.



Fabrício with Xadrez, after riding in a saddle for the first time. The program is short on tack and equipment for the boys to use, including saddles, so they typically ride bareback.



GLOBAL COMMUNITY

A COLT STARTER

Russell Higgins, 3-Star Parelli Professional
www.parelliconnect.com/members/2208

To be a colt starter you need to have a lot, but what will make you good is two things to have not.

No fear and no anger by a great horseman I was once told, to be a good colt starter these two things you must uphold.

Fear will inhibit you from doing what you must, of your skill, knowledge and decisions you must learn to trust.

Anger will not help you to do the best by the horse, actions made in anger will lead you to remorse.

Be brave but not foolhardy for it's your life that's at stake, you place your body on the line with every decision that you make.

There may be times that to help you must be quite firm, but from anger the horse will find nothing good to learn.

His acceptance is what you aim to gain in everything you do, help him find peace of mind and you'll be riding too.

For it is a great feeling to make the young horse your friend, and of your possibilities together there really is no end.

Connect with the global Parelli community!

Get to know these contributors and thousands of other Parelli students and instructors on Parelli Connect! Log your horsemanship progress and share in one another's journeys!



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LOVE, FAITH, GRACE AND A “SOUR HORSE”

Carol Covington • www.parelliconnect.com/members/20736

In September 2009, we bought a beautiful 6-year-old Palomino gelding named Tango for our 11-year-old daughter, Shannon.

Tango was a ‘puppy dog’ on the ground, very sweet and affectionate. However, as soon as anyone would ask anything of him or try to ride him, he would become sour, defiant and resentful! He would throw tantrums, swish his tail, throw his head, pin his ears, paw the ground, stop, back up, buck and rear!

We went through four different trainers, all of whom told us we should sell Tango! They all said that he was a spoiled, beligerent miserable pig who would never amount to anything.

When the last trainer quit, we were at our wits end! We loved Tango and still did not want to give up on him! In desperation, we sent up a prayer to God to lead us in the next step as we were completely lost.



We were feeling very hopeless and frustrated when we ran into our friend Kara at the barn that night. We knew Kara was an avid student of Parelli, but she didn’t train. When she asked how Tango was doing, Shannon and I just looked at each other and, with tears in our eyes, said “Not so good! Another trainer just quit and told us we should sell him!” After listening intently to our story, she told us she would love to work with Tango, and we readily agreed. She wouldn’t even let us pay her, which was perfect since my husband was unwilling at this point to invest any more money into Tango’s training.

Kara was our direct answer to prayer. In the months that followed, Tango became a completely different horse! It turns out, he is a text book Left-Brain Introvert! Kara frequently comments about how smart Tango is and how much she enjoys working and playing with him! A very refreshing change after what the previous trainers were saying!

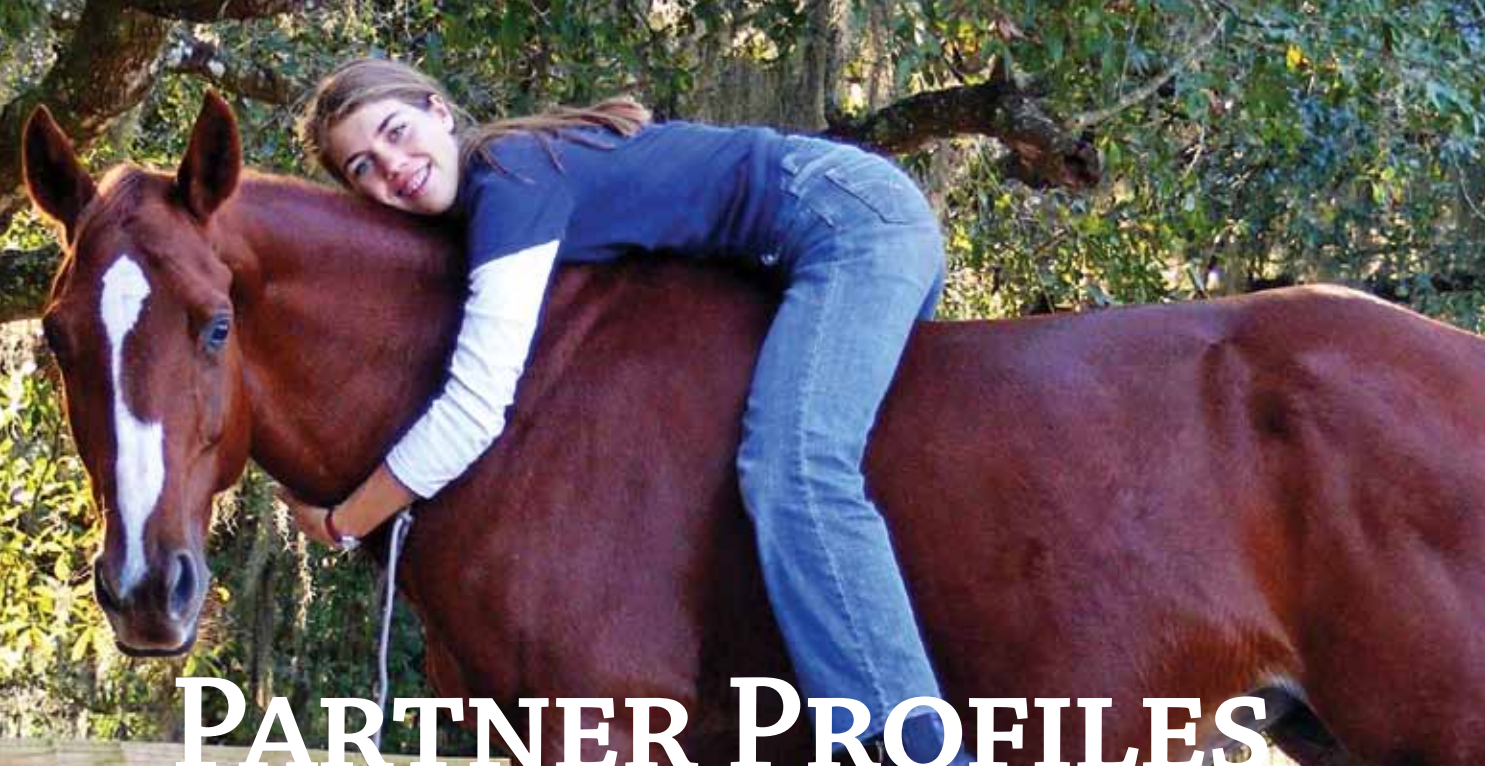


With the combination of love, relationship over agenda, patience and the proper motivation, Tango is on his way to becoming an amazing horse! He is softer, more willing and responsive!

People are continually approaching me in amazement that he’s the same horse. I must admit, it gives me great pleasure to parade Tango past all the trainers who had given up on him.

I can only imagine what would have become of Tango without Kara and Parelli Natural Horsemanship. And what must be the fate of many horses like him who don’t ever have the benefit of having someone who believes in Natural Horsemanship and relationship over agenda.

Shannon and I cannot thank Kara enough for what she has done for Tango and us. Her sincere love for horses, in addition to her knowledge of the Parelli training methods, has saved our horse and our dream! 🐾



PARTNER PROFILES

Kenya

Selle Francais / Mare / 12 Years Old / 15.2hh / Right-Brain Extrovert
Playing in Level 3 / Partner of Tana Johnson, Florida, USA

How did your horse come into your life?

When I was twelve years old, I trained at a hunter-jumper show barn. Another boarder at the barn, named Lynn, owned several horses and was looking for someone to ride her Selle Francais, whom I renamed Kenya. For a year I free-leased Kenya, rode her five times a week, and took her to hunter shows. Kenya is an extreme Right-Brain Extrovert, although I didn't know it at the time. She never seemed to run out of energy and I had to lunge her for 30-60 minutes before each ride. Sometimes my arms felt like they were being pulled out of their sockets. Once I was lunging her at a hunter show and my trainer referred to her as "that wild thing at the end of your rope." Despite all of that, I fell in love with Kenya. Lynn was planning on selling the horse for \$25,000, but after seeing what a great connection Kenya and I had she changed her mind and gifted her to me. I'd been to my first tour stop in Ocala the year before and after watching Pat play with Cowboy, I was longing to start my own Parelli journey. The only thing standing in my way was owning my own horse. When Lynn gifted Kenya to me, my horsemanship dreams were under way!

What are your dreams and goals with your horse?

My goal with Kenya is to graduate Level 4 and to continue to seek never-ending self-improvement. I plan on having her as a life long partner and my dream is to one day be a Parelli Professional.

Tell us about the best moment with your horse.

Kenya has taught me patience and self-control. I am a very impatient person and I get frustrated quite easily. Kenya has taught me how to stay calm, take a deep breath, and try to figure things out as a puzzle solver. I am now much better at controlling my emotions and energy. Kenya has also taught me determination and dedication. At age thirteen I started learning Parelli solely from my Level 1 pack. There was one point when I almost quit and gave up Parelli. I was trying to do the Yo-Yo Game and not only was Kenya not going backwards, but she was coming forwards toward me and had no respect for my personal space. No matter how hard I shook the rope she just ignored me. I was ready to quit after that, but for some reason I stuck it out and three years later I am so glad I did! I am now completely dedicated to the Parelli program and I'm so grateful to Kenya for teaching me to not give up when it gets tough because once you're through, the reward is totally worth it!

Send your partner's profile to savvytimes@parelli.com!

Please limit your submission to 500 words.

Answer any or all of the same questions you see here, and send us some high-resolution photos of your partner!

Catch up with Kenya on Parelli Connect!
www.parelliconnect.com/horses/1693



**Morgan Horse / Mare / 3 Years Old / 14hh / Right-Brain/Left-Brain Extrovert
Playing in Level 1-2 / Partner of Betsy Koncerak, Idaho, USA**

Zeta

How did your horse come into your life?

I had been a student of Parelli for six years when I met Dahlonega Zeta. I owned horses when I was a kid, but had not owned one as an adult. After being introduced to Parelli, I borrowed friend's horses so I could attend clinics and learn more. In 2010, the stars were aligning for me to again have a horse of my own. I thought awhile about what horse I would like to take on a Parelli journey: an older horse with some life experience, or a young horse?

I'd been looking for about 10 months when I saw Zeta in August 2010 in the beautiful Wallowa Valley of northeastern Oregon. When asked what I was looking for, my response was, "I would like a chestnut mare, but if I fall for a palomino colt, that's fine!" I was not so interested in the outer appearance, I wanted a horse with a spark... a connection.

Zeta was a two-year-old, and evaded capture. She would scoot behind the other horses, but was still very curious. She had a look in her eye that caught mine. To me it said, "I would like to get to know you, but not so fast!" I am not one to make a quick decision, so I appreciated this sentiment, and went home. I had considered other horses, but could not get this chestnut filly out of my mind. In November, I returned to the Wallowa Valley and played some of the Seven Games with a couple of Morgans, one of which was Zeta. She had some right-brain tendencies (I'm outta here!), but curiosity would quickly take over, and she would come back to me. I was sold!

In November we moved, so I had to wait until spring before Zeta would share our back yard. During this wait time, I had the opportunity to travel to Baltic, South Dakota and spend several weeks with Farrah Green, a 3-Star Parelli Professional who first introduced me to Natural Horsemanship back in 2004. While with Farrah, we filmed my Level 2 On Line and FreeStyle with my short-term partner, a sweet Haflinger named JoJo. I recently submitted my films and, am very proud to say, passed! Farrah also gave me many tips on what to do with my new three-year-old filly. The much-awaited day finally arrived. On May 22, 2011, Zeta came to live with us in Winchester, Idaho. The beginning of a new and exciting journey.

What are your dreams and goals with your horse?

My dream is that together we can ride, drive and pack, and both have fun doing all of these things. I passed my Level 1 and Level 2 On Line and FreeStyle with wonderful horses I borrowed from great friends. What I noticed after many years of borrowing horses was that I did not progress beyond Level 2 because I started anew with each horse. My goal is to go to Level 3/4, and to show others, especially young people, what can be done with Love, Language and Leadership.

Check out Zeta's updates on Parelli Connect!

www.parelliconnect.com/horses/4659



A SPRINGTIME SUPER CAMP

with Carol Coppinger

by John Bolt

Imagine 31 horse-human partners at liberty in a large arena. That's a priceless lesson in horse behavior! Imagine riding at a canter in an open field, rein-free disengagement, hind- and forequarter yields, young horses and seasoned veterans, a mini driven to a cart and leading the herd. With six Parelli 1-, 2- and 3-Star instructors assisting 6-Star Carol Coppinger with 30 students, there was lots of one-on-one attention. The super camp was basically the four-day horse camp format Carol has developed for her perennial students but expanded from 10 to 30 students and to five days of fun. It was full of challenges to expand our confidence, inspiring demonstrations, simulations, knots, Parelli games in the outdoor arena with coaching and gigajoules of positive energy. Robbie, the Parelli saddle representative, was there with a trailerload of knowledge and all the saddle models for us to try. Happy volunteers assisted dry-witted and gracious Les Coppinger in the logistics. In all, participants and instructors converged from 12 states.

One of the most valuable things about Carol's clinics is seeing many of the same students and their equine partners for a second, third or fourth year as they progress – being able to tell them how much they improved. Or we see the same human with a new partner. What better place could there be to accustom a young horse to other horses, new environs and new challenges to confidence in its human partner? It can be pretty hard to find a slot in Carol's clinics because the returning devotees usually sign up for next year at the end of the clinic. Seeing folks advance is valuable and inspirational. It helps us get our own journey in horsemanship into perspective. It's not competitive at all; rather, it's a support system. It lets us know we can get there, too.

Empowerment was the theme—pushing our envelopes, but not crushing them. Many of us achieved things we could hardly admit to hoping for, but somehow we had that hope and expectation.

Simulations — even ones I'd done before — provided new insight when experienced with new instructors and new participants. We had sessions on bridle wisdom and saddle fit, delving deeper into those tools, yet emerging





with the conviction that they are not complicated. One-on-one lessons for 15 minutes with a different instructor each day were a little like speed dating. Yet each provided a digestible-size morsel of knowledge or insight from a new perspective or with a different vocabulary. I would walk away from a simulation or a one-on-one lesson or a group riding session and have yet another blinding flash of the obvious. Examples: Why is my Liberty today better than my On Line? Because I was a klutz at rope handling and communication got garbled! Why were we so bracy doing those forequarter yields, but then I fed a treat and the next yield was lighter than ever? Because Horsenality™ matters, and drilling bores her!

The days were long. But on-site lunches made efficient use of time. Overall the experience was similar to the Florida campus. Yet the five days were a manageable number for arranging absence from our farm. And many of the theory discussions were during arena sessions while our partners were beside us On Line or at Liberty, or when we were astride. The non-Parelli horse people at the rented facility were all pleasant, polite and helpful. Yet some encounters provided reminders of how fortunate we are.

Perhaps the most important aspect of the Super Camp was the valuable training opportunity provided to those junior instructors. After all, it's going to take a lot of teachers to make the world a better places for horses and their humans. 🐾



The morning after the clinic my wife and I realized we would pass by a well-known tack shop with one of Tennessee's largest selection of saddles. We were hoping to find a relatively affordable transition saddle to use with my mare until she is full-grown. Haflingers mature in body size at about 6+ years. Knowing that all horses can evolve in shape regardless of age, and freshly empowered with saddle fitting savvy, we thought it worthwhile to try a few wide-tree saddles on her in person. We pulled the trailer into the store parking lot soon after opening time. Unfortunately, we were not surprised at how few wide-tree saddles were available out of the thousand they seemed to have in stock. We took three saddles out to the trailer. As I unloaded my horse by lifting a few tail hairs, the saddle guy from the tack store said he'd never seen that done before. One of the saddles seemed to fit well enough to try a short ride in the parking lot. Seeing no need to look in the trailer for a hackamore, I took up the lead rope, checked



neutral lateral flexion and mounted respectfully. As we walked out from the trailer, I flipped the rope over her head to direct our turns. The saddle guy turned to my wife, Joy, and asked, "Does he always ride one-reined?" Without realizing how flippant it might sound, she replied: "Yes, but he's beginning to be good enough to ride with two reins at times." Only after reflecting on the look this evoked did she realize how strange we might have begun to appear. After all, we'd just spent 15 minutes in the shop looking at the saddles from the bottom side first, mostly ignoring his suggestions to feel how soft the seats were or to admire the attractive leather work, and carrying on a separate conversation about balance point, stirrup position and shimming. Well, maybe in a year or two I can afford a Parelli saddle for riding my Haflinger partner!



Helping to create
a better world...

PHOTOS BY JACINTA ARMSTRONG



A SECOND CHANCE for Rescued Standardbreds

by Lillan Roquet, 2-Star Parelli Professional

When Kerryn Armstrong and I moved back to Brisbane, Australia, in December of 2010 we wanted to make sure we did two things. First, we wanted to find a well-run horse rescue and see if we could give back by volunteering our time and sharing the natural training knowledge we've learned first-hand from Pat Parelli himself, and from one of his top protégés, Kalley Krickeberg, during our time at the Atwood Ranch; and second, we wanted to continue to develop our personal horsemanship along with our Parelli Professional careers.



Meeting with Jo Schoenwald and the other amazing people running Charlie's Angels Horse Rescue in SE Queensland provided a wonderful opportunity for us to do this. We began a relationship with Charlie's Angels by attending a volunteer meeting and explaining a little bit about our knowledge and experience and also about Parelli. Jo immediately thought of two horses that she could use our help with. Enter Shona and Joleena. Kerryn and I went and met the girls to try and help them through their phobia over having their feet trimmed, and we fell in love with the idea of starting their Parelli journey.

They still knew nothing of the human world, how to respond to pressure or how to act like a partner.

Charlie's Angels had rehabilitated the horses beautifully. Physically they had filled out, grown healthy coats and begun to learn that humans could be trusted not to hurt them. But they still knew nothing of the human world, how to respond to pressure or how to act like a partner. Although they were 13, their good conformation and state

of health made Kerryn and me confident that through the Parelli program we could help them “start a relationship and develop a partnership,” then find them a forever home.

Jo, their rescuer, told us about the horses' histories.

Despite falling into wonderful, loving arms, they needed the language and leadership to learn what interacting with humans should be all about.

“Shona is a Standardbred mare, rescued from a slaughterhouse holding yard, along with her two-month-old foal, in January 2010, at the age of twelve,” Jo told us. “Shona has been in an intensive breeding program and, sadly, typifies exactly why the life of a broodmare is not one to be envied. She has had at least seven foals in her short life, being thrown away to slaughter with the last one at her side. It was clear that Shona had only ever received the bare essentials. She was very thin, and the vet said it looked as if her teeth had never been done in her life. It’s clear to us that she hadn’t had her feet trimmed, possibly for close to ten years. It’s a story we hear over and over again from racetracks and stud farms. Mares are simply used — and in Shona’s case, abused — to get a potentially valuable foal out of them, left without proper care until they cannot be useful anymore and then discarded to slaughter. Unfortunately, the life of a broodmare also means they receive little handling or training and are often only handled for invasive and painful procedures.”

Joleena’s story was much the same. She came from the same stud farm and had the same evidence of serious and prolonged trauma and neglect. Both horses were sent to slaughter when their perceived productive life was no longer useful. Under the care of Charlie’s Angels the mares were making vast changes physically, so they hired multiple people who professed to be “gentle trainers” in an effort to help them become handle-able.

“Both mares have serious trauma to do with having their legs touched,” Jo said. “We brought in specialist trainers to help them move past their blocks just so we could get their feet trimmed, but Joleena learned it was okay for her to turn her backside whenever she felt stressed.

A Bowen therapist worked on Joleena, and Joleena bit her. A barefoot trimmer tried to trim them and couldn’t get anywhere near Shona, and Joleena both bit her and threatened to kick. I then contacted a guy who came out three times and was very technique-oriented. Joleena kept trying to kick him, and he kept chasing her rump away. On the third session he lost the plot with Shona and began hitting her with the rasp.”

It’s a simple and heartbreaking story that happens often with rescue horses. Despite falling into wonderful, loving arms, they needed the language and leadership to learn what interacting with humans should be all about. Luckily, this is the point in their story where Shona and Joleena got their second second chance.

Jo says, “I decided to wait. I didn’t want to risk the wrong person coming to see them again. My priority was to keep them safe, keep them calm, treat them nicely and keep waiting for the right people to turn up.”

After meeting the mares, Kerryn and I both truly believed we could help them. Luckily, a very dedicated Parelli student, Alex Hoare, and her husband jumped at the opportunity to help and offered to foster the mares so we could play with them on a regular basis. On April 1, 2011 the mares moved to their new home just outside of Toowoomba, QLD. Through Kerryn and I volunteering our time and knowledge, Alex and Bill volunteering their land



and resources and Charlie's Angels taking the first step in saving these girls from slaughter, Shona and Joleena were now about to step out on another new journey!

Kerryn and I began by focusing on their Catching Game, evaluating their Horsenality™, and discovering that their foundation was almost nonexistent. It's incredible that a horse can go through 13 years of life without learning how to respond to pressure, but that was what we were there to teach! Joleena, the dark bay with the little white star, is actually a Left-Brain Introvert on the cusp of Right-Brain Introvert. She is a defensive mare who, after years of misunderstanding, has found that the answer to every question is either to move her feet or protect her space: flight or fight. Her main challenges are trust and appropriate response to pressure. Shona is a Left-Brain Extrovert, who becomes tolerant very quickly but has trouble moving into acceptance, probably from so many years of having her innate play drive suppressed.

The foremost goal with Shona and Joleena was to help them understand the basic difference between friendly energy and driving energy. Their lack of understanding in this area caused them to be constantly worried, not knowing if they were supposed to be moving their feet or



standing still. We began by teaching them the Seven Games so they could feel safe and confident in their relationship with us and in their responsibilities in the partnership.

Thus far they have made drastic changes. They have learned how to “appropriately respond to pressure” by being presented with comfort vs. discomfort choices — as Pat says, “cause the wrong thing to be difficult and the right thing easy.”

Instead of just reacting, they have become light, responsive and willing partners. The girls have also started to enjoy and find play within their interactions with humans. They are starting to seek attention and getting closer every day to the “Pick me!” stage of catching. Joleena's progress is gradual but more consistent, as Kerryn shows her every day that she can trust the human to be a good leader. And Shona is slowly discovering there is a way to play with humans, instead of against them. They are both steadily headed toward Level 2/3 on the ground, beginning the preparation to start under saddle. We hope to continue their development in all Four Savvys, preparing them as well as possible for finding a forever home.

The mares have been interesting, inspiring and educational. Kerryn and I get to chat and play through the challenges and celebrate the successes; and like every horse, they are helping us on our journey to be better horsewomen and instructors, just as we are helping them on theirs. We put the principles first with the girls every day, and they are learning the skills to move into the next and last phase of their journey: forever homes. We are grateful to Pat and Linda, Kalley Krickeberg and the opportunities in our lives that have led us to be able to make a life of helping horses like these to have a happy ending. 🐾

For updates on the mares' progress, visit www.wix.com/parelli/rescuehorses or visit Shona's wall on Parelli Connect at www.parelliconnect.com/horses/16534 and Joleena's wall at www.parelliconnect.com/horses/16464.



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PARELLI ON THE PENNINES

Putting Principles to Purpose

by Paula Wroath

Ordinary riders in the U.K. don't often get the chance to put their principles to any real purpose these days. We don't herd cows and don't use our horses for our jobs.

So in the interests of using our horses for transportation as well as having fun, I invited a group of six fellow Parelli students on a 100-mile ride along the Pennine Bridleway, a series of historic drovers' and packhorse trails covering the 256-mile length of the hilly and mountainous "spine of Britain." We were a mixed bunch of students, ranging from pre-Level 1 to Level 4, on green horses as well as experienced ones, with two children in the group.

The ride took us five days. Each night we stopped at a farmhouse for bed and breakfast, putting our horses in a field next to the farm.

Day One

This was mainly flat, easy terrain along routes that were used by cyclists and walkers, too. The trail was narrow, so



we had to use our Sideways Game to move over to the verge to allow the cycles to pass.

Another challenge was the gates. There were hundreds of them! I lost count at 120. We took turns and learned some good gate savvy. Some had handles, but a lot did not. Excellent Friendly Game needed here!

This day's ride was only about 14 miles long, so when we got to the farm we weren't too tired. It was lovely to look out of the window and see the horses grazing peacefully together.

Day Two

This was a very long day, with about 21 miles of hilly terrain. It also included a steep gorge and a river crossing. Our home for the night was a 16th-century manor house. They kept alpacas and pigs. Some of the horses stared anxiously at those for a while, but they were too tired to care and quickly settled down.

In the morning it was interesting to see our horses come straight over when we arrived, almost as if they wanted to get going as much as we did.

Day Three

This day we were heading further north into the Dark Peak District, much more rugged and beautiful and less farmed. We had spectacular views of the moors and heather, and the surrounding hills were stunning (and steep).



The main challenge this day was the terrain: very steep and rocky, with lots of peaty, boggy areas if you strayed off the trail. We negotiated the famous Jacob's Ladder, named for its steep angle of ascent.

My daughter was stung by a wasp, and I have never seen anyone leap on their horse and gallop away so fast! Fortunately we had insect cream in our saddlebags, and she soon forgot about it.

Our stopover for the night was a rambling farmhouse set into the hillside and surrounded by giant rocks and cliff faces.

One student had an unpleasant shock when she took her saddle off: A large saddle sore had appeared. We treated it and hoped that the morning would see an improvement.

Day Four

This day had us heading back south using a different route from the one we took on Day Three.

When the saddle sore was examined it was still looking angry. The student was not experienced enough to ride bareback. We were all concerned that she would have to abort the ride, but then a student with an amazing attitude said she would ride her horse bareback and put her Parelli saddle and pad on the other horse. We checked the positioning and were relieved to see that the width of the pad and saddle ensured that the sore was not being rubbed further.

So off we went again into stunning countryside, miles of moors all around us and no traffic! All the horses were amazing partners, and three of us were confident enough to remove our halters altogether and just ride with our strings. It's fun to do this in an arena, but out on the hills it's a special feeling — you have to trust the horses and be totally confident in your preparation. So one student was bareback and riding in just a string, and she did this for about 12 miles, including on some difficult, steep, rocky terrain. We met one

other rider coming the other way; she looked shocked to see us riding like that but made no comment.

At the stopover we had finished dinner and were relaxing with wine and chatting about the day when two students had a lovely surprise. They each received texts with their most recent Audition results and were now official Level 3 graduates. We all celebrated, and it was lovely that after riding on the trails with only a string they were officially confirmed in their savvy level!

Day Five

We were now on our way home, and it would have felt a bit flat if it were not for the lovely sunshine and scenery.

By now a gate was a non-event. What had taken us several minutes (or more) at each one on the first day now took only a few seconds.

The horses changed considerably during the ride. They learned the pattern – follow the horse in front unless told differently. We each took a turn at the front and at the back to give each horse the experience of being in front, and to give the rider a chance at being a good leader. There was no more jogging or fussing – they maintained gait and rested when we stopped.

The pre-Level one student (a 12-year-old girl!) had really progressed, and she and her pony were more of a team.

The less experienced riders who were initially shocked with the difficulty of the going were much more aware of exactly what their horses were capable of.

Are we going again next year? You bet!

Special thanks to all of our riders: Paula Wroath on Maverick, Jennifer Wroath on Sienna, Ellie Carter on Poppy, Jo Hewitt on Captain, Pete Hewitt on Aspen, Rosie Maguire on Montana, and Helen Henderson on Jasmine. 🐾





SIDESADDLE SAVVY!

by Christine Worthington

I have a goal: to achieve my Level 3 in the Parelli Program. I am close. I have passed my On Line and Liberty Savvys. I need to send in my Freestyle Audition. I have been pretty close to that for a while, but something was getting in the way—not self-belief, or ability, or my horse, but a problem with my physical self. Degenerative arthritis — in particular in my hips — meant that I was struggling to ride astride.

During 2010 I worked hard to overcome this, doing Pilates, taking supplements and resorting to strong painkillers when I went to a fantastic Parelli course with Lyla Cansfield and Rachael Morland, 3-Star Instructors at Bissell Wood. Knowing this would be very demanding, I took Tramadol, only to find I did not enjoy the side effects! Lyla and Rachael were aware of my problem and were able to support me. I was determined to do everything the course had to offer, and it was demanding but enjoyable.

As a coach I know how important attitude is; it is the first key to success in the Parelli program. I wanted to achieve my goal and needed the right attitude to get there. I had a good mindset and didn't want a physical problem to get in my way. But the mental, emotional and physical

parts of ourselves are connected, and we need all three to really take it to another level. (We know this applies to our horses, too). So I had to work hard on my mental and emotional self to enable me to be able to do what I wanted to do physically. When any one of the three isn't working for us it can lead to frustration, lack of motivation and a sense of not being able to achieve our goal.

The winter in England seemed harsher than usual, and I didn't attempt to ride much. In January 2011, however, I was determined to get going again with my riding, but I found I was in so much pain it wasn't possible. Having been told I was too young for a hip replacement some 18 months earlier, I knew that this was an option at some point in the future. But what to do now? I decided to look into riding sidesaddle.

I first tried to sit sidesaddle on a simulator (Bob the Cob, a mechanical horse) and found I could actually sit with reasonable comfort for some time. I was able to adjust my position without interfering with the horse. The feel was very good, and I was pleased that I could actually sit in the required position.



PHOTO BY CLAIRE SPELLING

Next step was to ride a real horse that was used to side-saddle, and Julia offered a ride on her horse Jake. At 17.2 hh he was much bigger than I was used to, but I did it!

Next I had help fitting a saddle to Lizzie. The Side Saddle Association was very helpful providing saddles to try and check out the fitting.

We settled on a saddle (Lizzie had stood still while we tried three different saddles, just like a perfect partner). We settled on a saddle. I moved her around on a 22-Foot Line, playing the games and doing some patterns with her wearing the saddle, including a small jump. All was good; she was happy and relaxed. A young girl then rode Lizzie (Georgina had first competed sidesaddle at the age of eight; she is, I think, 20 now, so very experienced). I put on my Parelli bridle with the Confidence snaffle and rope reins, and off she went—walk, trot and canter—no problem.

Then it was my turn. I mounted from the fence, but without having to swing my leg across her back. I did some walk and trot; I carried my Carrot Stick™ and did some lateral flexion and some sideways and backup. I was very pleased with this first ride and felt that this was definitely something we could do and have fun with!

My second ride sidesaddle with Lizzie was a quick turn around the arena and then a hack out around the block—all road work! She was a star!

My aim now is to ride more. I had a course on the beach at Ainsdale, Southport, with 3-Star Instructor Sharon Crabbe and a week-long course with 3-Star Instructor Alison Jones (at Brandy House Farm, featured in the *May Savvy Times*). I am looking forward to a two-day course with 3-Star Instructor Rachael Morland at my home in July.

I am sure all the principles I adhere to as part of the program will help me. My preparation for riding Lizzie will be the same. I will still use focus and feel and timing; it's

just that I will only have one leg on the near side of the horse and will use a stick on the off side, should I need to. Eyes, belly button, legs/stick if you need to! Maybe I can use the “fixed head” of the saddle for the reins the way Western riders use the horn! By the way, the other head on the saddle is called the “leaping head” and only comes into play when “leaping” (i.e., jumping). I will want to show jumping with two Carrot Sticks™ for my Level 3, so I need to try that one out!

Having had further x-rays and discussion with the orthopedic consultant, I am due to have a total replacement of my right hip in July, and the left sometime in the future. My goal of achieving my Level 3 may have to be put back, but that's okay. I feel I will get there eventually.

I am excited about the future now. Parelli is way more than riding, and I enjoy playing with Lizzie On Line and at Liberty. However, I still want to ride, and for now side-saddle may be my only option, so I aim to have fun with it and see where it takes me! 🐾

Christine Worthington is a Coach and NLP Practitioner in the UK, and author of How to Become a Confident Rider. Meet her on Parelli Connect: www.parelliconnect.com/members/329

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STALL CONFINEMENT

with a Right-Brain Extrovert

by Marti Regan Szczur

I knew something was amiss as soon as I spotted Toby in the field. I whistled, and he responded with his usual welcoming nicker, but he didn't come to greet me as I walked to the gate. This was during the 2010 "snowmageddon," when Virginia had two feet of snow blanketing the ground. I trudged toward the shed where he was standing. He nodded his head in greeting, yet made no effort to walk toward me. A sick feeling hit me in my gut. This was not typical Toby behavior.

Toby had slipped and fallen in the pasture, resulting in a serious injury to his hock. X-rays showed a shattered joint with several large bone chips loose in the hock. Surgery was recommended, followed by a long period of stall rest with a nine- to twelve-month recuperation period.

Bummer! Toby and I were progressing and playing at Level 3/4. I had already signed up for spring/summer clinics with Parelli instructors Kelly Sigler and Carol Coppinger. I now faced a new challenge in my life journey with Toby. How could I use my Parelli arrows to keep my Right-Brain Extrovert content in a 14' x 14' stall for several months?

I remembered some articles about stall confinement in earlier issues of *Savvy Times*, and sure enough, in the August '08 and August '09 editions I found helpful articles about life

in a stall from a horse's perspective, and some suggestions on how I could make it a better experience for him.

Initially Toby was miserable being confined. He'd lean over the door and frantically call out to his buddies or bang the stall door with his front feet in an attempt to break it down. What could I do to help him calm down?

Toby had slipped and fallen in the pasture, resulting in a serious injury to his hock. X-rays showed a shattered joint.

We spent undemanding time, and Toby gave me his undivided attention anytime I was in his stall. The Seven Games gave me the language I needed to keep Toby mentally engaged. We enjoyed a lot of Friendly Game, and dreamed up new and interesting ways to play Touch It. I made of game of trying to see how soft I could be when asking him to move away from driving pressure. I wanted to minimize stress on his hock, so I experimented with demonstrating

intent in my body language before applying direct body motion. This resulted in Toby mirroring me, and he'd respond in a slow-motion manner.

I began to hide different types of treats under buckets, cones, plastic cups and sheets of paper and have him stand still until I finished placing them. When I gave him the "go" he'd be off on a scavenger hunt around the stall. Sometimes I used targets (e.g., pieces of cardboard, a Frisbee) and asked him to put his front feet on them. He'd step on a target and stretch his neck out as if standing on a foot-high platform.

I found when Toby displayed a new behavior related to his confinement that my first thought was, "How interesting!"

A couple of weeks after the stitches were removed, I got the okay to begin short walks twice a day. At first his leg hurt, and he walked gingerly on it; control was not an issue. As the pain subsided he didn't want to walk quietly. It felt as if, given the chance, he would likely run, run, run in good Right-Brain Extrovert fashion. The challenge was that I couldn't rely on my usual techniques to calm him, because they involved actions that stressed the hock, such as matching his energy and applying frequent disengagement and transitions. Even small circles and Falling Leaf are "hock-busters."

Thank goodness Toby and I converse fairly well in Parelli. Before I even left the stall to begin our walks we played a few games, so he'd start our walk in a left-brain frame of mind. The plan was to walk quietly for increasing time each day, and my initial plan had been to walk from one grazing place to another, but of course, the right-brain horse is not food-motivated, so interest in grazing only came once he was calm. To help me out, I'd put one of his left-brain friends in the "walking field" with us. I'd lead Toby over to "the quiet one," who was totally into the grazing routine. It worked. Toby joined in, and once he was calm we'd mosey over to a different grassy area. Walking around the fields with grazing targets gave Toby the exercise he needed in a relaxed, natural manner.

During the first few weeks I felt as if I were walking a loaded spring ready to release at any moment. Despite my vet's instruction to walk him on a short lead to "keep



PHOTO BY MARTI REGAN SZCZUR

Keeping an extroverted horse like Toby (above) on stall rest can certainly be a challenge!

control," I used a 12-foot Line and kept it loose. Most of the time when he'd startle, he'd only jump a few steps and stop. The slack in the rope would let him do this without feeling trapped. But sometimes his instinct to bolt would take hold, and I knew I had to act fast. I'd use my power position and hold firm or, when needed, give a Phase 4 rope flick to get his attention, then change direction and initiate a game like Touch It.

When we started longer walks I asked a human friend to join us with her left-brain horse, giving Toby a quiet walking companion. When I was alone I'd walk next to the fields where the horses were turned out and grazing quietly. The herd frequently joined us along the fence line. I'd break up the walking with long grazing periods. Toby was part of the herd, but in a controlled way.

Toby stopped wanting to return to his stall "jail" after his walks, which I understood. I put aside some of his grain, which I gave him when he walked in to the stall, turning it into a positive destination. I used the same concept when administering his medications. First I'd offer a syringe full of molasses water, followed by the bute paste or antibiotic mix, followed by another squirt of molasses water. I

stopped putting on a halter, as he'd come over and tilt his head up waiting for the "usually yummy" syringe treatment.

I found when Toby displayed a new behavior related to his confinement that my first thought was "How interesting! Wonder what's up with that." I started conceiving of possible positive and/or corrective actions to use with him to encourage or discourage the behavior.

During the three months of confinement I learned something about myself. While I enjoyed "doing things" with Toby (e.g., grooming, playing Touch It, reading in the stall), I was not so good at "doing nothing." Grazing Toby for an hour or two was great for him, but tough for me.

So while Toby grazed, I occupied myself. I rehearsed my "power position," studied the Parelli Principles and Seven Keys to Success, and traced the Patterns in the grass. I started doing isometric exercises and stretching, and learned a few Tai Chi moves. Just because Toby was recovering didn't mean my own development had to grind to a halt!



PHOTO BY MARTI REGAN SZCZUR

After three months of stall rest, hand walking, and small-paddock turnout, Toby was reintroduced to his herd of four in the big field. The first time he came cantering and whinnying to me from the far side of the field, I cried.

Toby and I had a solid human/horse bond before the accident, but with all the time spent together during his confinement and slow recovery, our relationship strengthened and reached a higher plateau. He sticks to me like glue when we are together and watches my every move. I love his enthusiasm and eagerness to learn new things.

Flash forward to the present—one year since the accident. I have been back in the saddle for the last six months, following a slow yet progressive strengthening program. Toby is 100% sound, and although we may never jump the heights we once did, we have picked up where we left off in our Level 3/4 development.

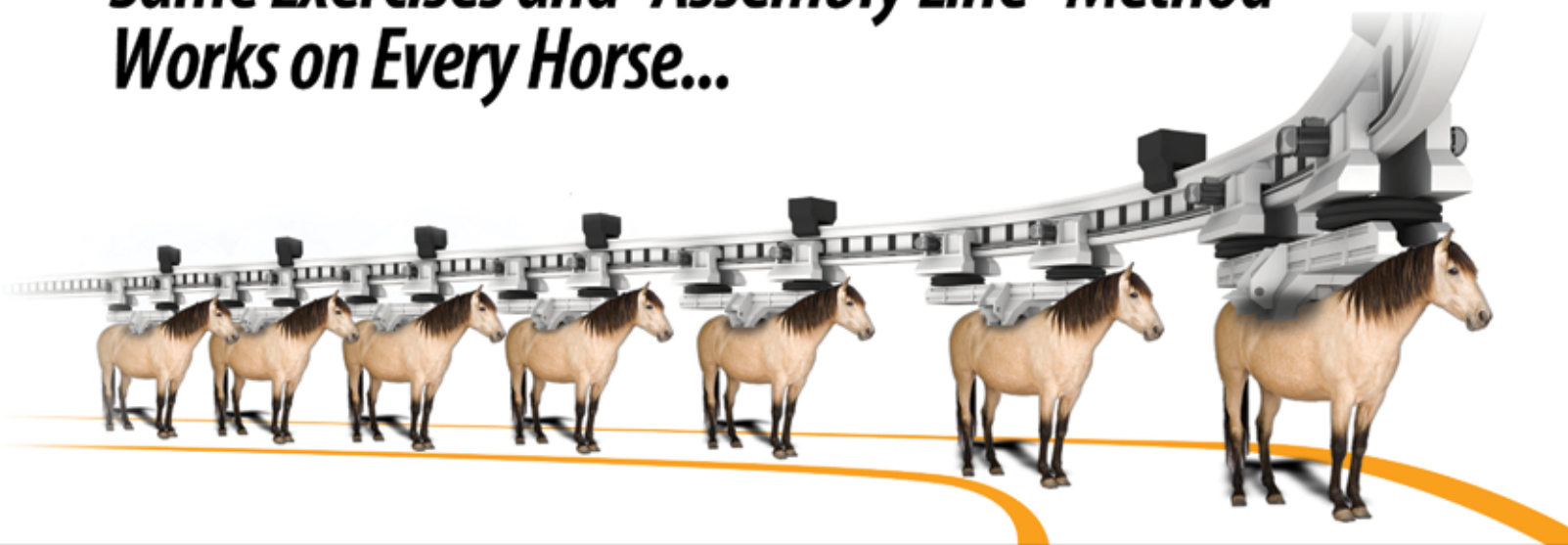
During the three months of confinement I learned something about myself. While I enjoyed "doing things" with Toby, I was not so good at "doing nothing."

My Parelli journey took a detour because of Toby's injury. While I hope we'll never have to experience another mishap requiring surgery and a long stall confinement, there have been some benefits and personal growth. From the first day I made a conscious decision to apply Pat's Seven Keys to Success—(1) approach the surgery and recuperation period with a positive, progressive and natural attitude; (2) apply what knowledge I had and get smarter; (3) use the proper tools (arrows in my quiver); (4) apply practiced techniques; (5) put the relationship first and take the time it takes; (6) exercise my imagination and "whittle new arrows" as needed; and (7) utilize the abundance of support within the Parelli community. The detour provided me with the opportunity to further develop my skills and savvy with Toby and to cultivate a shared sense of trust and rapport.

In my P.P. (pre-Parelli) days I would have been totally devastated that I couldn't even sit on my horse for six months. I so appreciate Pat and Linda for sharing their knowledge and helping me become a better and more natural horse(wo)man.

Thank goodness Parelli is way more than riding! 🐾

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PHOTOS BY BETH BARLING



PERSPECTIVES FROM THE Pony Share Scheme

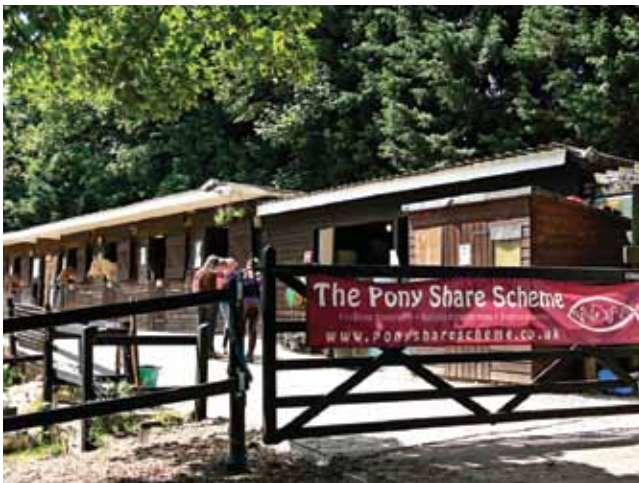
by Beth Barling

Bex David was born dreaming about horses. As she grew, so did her love of horses. At the age of 17 she opened her first livery yard. Two years later she moved to a new location near Welwyn Garden City in the leafy county of Hertfordshire, U.K., and it was there, with her dad's support, that Bex planted the seeds of a much bigger dream. Starting with just two ponies, Bex set out to fulfill her vision of enabling young people everywhere to have ownership of a horse or pony.

Fast-forward ten years, and today Bex and her husband Tony run the Pony Share Scheme, a Community Interest Company that offers young people (age eight and upwards) the chance to own a share in a horse or pony, regardless of experience or knowledge. The Pony Share Scheme also has a scholarship program to enable financial support for families

in certain circumstances, exemplifying their belief that "everyone is welcome, everyone is equal, everyone belongs."

I first stumbled across the Pony Share Scheme on the Internet about three years ago. My attention was grabbed when I read that in one weekend, sixteen young people there had achieved their Level 1 in Parelli Natural Horsemanship. Wow! If you were at this year's U.K. Celebration, you may remember seeing the Pony Schemers in the front row, wearing their bright red Pony Share Scheme T-shirts, with some of the kids even taking part in simulations in the arena on the Sunday afternoon. I was delighted to meet Bex, Tony and some of the kids at the Celebration and was determined to find out more about this wonderful scheme. So last weekend I paid the Pony Share Scheme a visit. Allow me to share what I found.



"Everyone is welcome, everyone is equal, everyone belongs" with the Pony Share Scheme

I parked my car in a narrow, leafy lane and opened the big five-bar gates to the Pony Share Scheme yard, where I was greeted by clucking chickens. It was a beautiful, sunny day, and although just the other side of the trees was the roar of a major highway, the atmosphere was one of tranquility and relaxation. The stable yard was quiet, so I made my way to the office, where I was greeted by Bex and Tony and one of their four young children. Tony began by telling



PHOTO COURTESY OF PONY SHARE SCHEME

me all about the Pony Share Scheme and their exciting plans for the future (more on that later). Bex then took me on a short walk up to the arena at the top of a long, green sweep of a valley, where what I was about to see pretty much blew my socks off!

Inside the arena was a group of young girls and their ponies. All were riding in rope halters, most with bareback pads, a couple with saddles, and one or two with nothing. With music playing in the background, they were confidently trotting and cantering around, jumping a small jump, riding onto a pedestal, hanging out with their horses, chatting and laughing with each other. Rachel, a teenager with learning difficulties, beamed down at us from her horse, Whirli, who put all four feet on the pedestal; Gabi rode confidently bareback and bridleless around the arena at a trot and canter; Phoebe squealed in delight as her little pony took the jump. Most of all, they were all having fun, without a care in the world — horses and ponies included. It was simply a delight to see. How natural kids are with horses!

What was even more heartwarming was to go inside the arena and be greeted by friendly, confident and respectful young people who clearly loved their horses and ponies and were not only talking the language of natural horsemanship, but living it.

I spoke with Gabi, a young teenager who had just been cantering bareback and bridleless around the arena.

“The Pony Share Scheme has really helped my horsemanship. I’ve become more savvy,” she said. “My confidence has grown in myself at the Pony Share Scheme. I’m so proud of what I’ve achieved!”

It was actually Gabi’s last day at the Pony Share Scheme, as she was moving on to full loan of a horse that belonged to a Parelli friend. She was visibly upset at the prospect of leaving behind Topaz, her Pony Share Scheme pony, as well as the friendship and support of many great friends. I suspect it wasn’t quite the end of the relationship, though, and that she may well be paying quite a few visits to her old friends.

Later in the day I spoke with Heidi, another talented young lady, who aspires to be a Parelli Professional. That day she was filming her Level 3 On Line and Liberty auditions, and it was clear from this and from the way she spoke that her dream would one day come true. And that is certainly another of Bex’s goals: that the young people who take part in the Scheme will go on to be Parelli Professionals, or to run Pony Share Scheme branches themselves when they’re older.

So how did this wonderful scene come to be? Bex’s vision was to create a place that would be the realization of all the dreams she had as a child: not a riding school, but a place where young people could come to be with





PHOTO BY COCO

The Pony Share Scheme group enjoyed front-row seats at this year's UK Celebration, and they got a chance to demonstrate their Conga Horse skills for the crowd!

horses, socialize, have fun, and find their identities in a warm and safe environment. They would develop the skills to be responsible horse owners in the future while acquiring a healthy sense of self-worth together with an outward consideration for others.

"We want to give young people an alternative to being inside and playing on computers," said Tony. "We want to get them outside being active."

Today 60 sharers each own a share in a horse or pony at the Scheme. Each week they have a three-hour "play and ride" session with their equine partner and are welcome

throughout the week to get involved in all aspects of their pony's care, including mucking out, feeding, worming and being present for vet, farrier and dentist visits.

But the Pony Share Scheme offers far more than this. There are annual holidays at the beach in Wales or Norfolk — a huge logistical operation! — as well as Parelli Games-style tournaments and mini-Trec competitions. There are a variety of themed campouts run throughout the year, including a recent "Eight Principles" event that involved a five-hour expedition ride followed by overnight camping that somehow managed to build Pat's Eight Principles of Natural Horsemanship into the agenda.

Although the Pony Share Scheme is run using natural horsemanship principles, it wasn't always that way. Brought up with a traditional horsemanship background, Bex was first introduced to Parelli Natural Horsemanship in 2003.

"At that point everything changed," said Bex. "I immediately knew that Parelli was the key to understanding horses and to unlocking everything I had always known was possible for the young people through them."

Since then the Scheme has been run entirely on the philosophy of natural horsemanship. Indeed, since then there have been strong links between the Pony Share Scheme and Parelli. Former Parelli professional Ingela Larsson Smith (see Ingela's story on pg. 24) was an early supporter of Bex and the Scheme, and Parelli instructors Zoe Williams, Alison Jones and David Zuend have since been frequent visitors,



PHOTO BY BETH BARLING

Bex and Tony David, left, started the Pony Share Scheme.

giving regular lessons to both the kids and the team. The Scheme recently held an open day at which Parelli instructors Hanna Walton, Zoe Williams and Rachel Mitchell gave a demonstration and held two mini workshops showing visitors what Parelli is all about. A Horsenality™ chart is pinned up outside each horse and pony's stall, and a range of Parelli DVDs are available to watch in the Sharers' Room, a cozy space decked out with sofas, a TV and a DVD library. Tony told me it's a favorite place for the sharers to huddle in during the cold winter months.

The Scheme is clearly popular, with sharers coming from as far away as London and Watford to spend time with their ponies. New people wishing to join the Scheme are invited to come along for a free trial. For the potential sharer the trial is of the horse or pony that they may one day own a share in and a snapshot of the community that they could join.

The Scheme is aimed predominantly at young people, with some sessions catering to children as young as eight years old. Although the Pony Share Scheme schedule is organized around the academic calendar, occasionally a few "oldies" have been involved too, with three generations of one family taking part at one point.

The Scheme has a very strong underlying ethos: that "everyone is welcome, everyone is equal and everyone belongs." This makes for a diverse yet inclusive group of young people, which includes a mix of ages, backgrounds, abilities, disabilities and interests. There are even a few of boys among the sea of young ladies! As with any group of young people, things don't always run smoothly, but conflicts and misunderstandings are dealt with in a calm and understanding way, with openness, respect and compassion being the order of the day. No one stays upset or misunderstood for long.

Although not overtly promoted as part of the Scheme, Bex's Christian faith provides a solid cornerstone for the venture and underlies the values on which the Scheme is run. Beyond the horsemanship activities, the kids are given the opportunity to take part in other positive community activities, including "The Big Bless," an twist on Halloween when the kids go out to give away sweets (rather than collect them for themselves) and clean up after messy and sometimes destructive trick-or-treaters, and at Christmas the Scheme runs a popular free gift-wrapping service in a local shopping mall.

Running the scheme is a full-time job for Bex, Tony and full-time assistant Laura, along with an army of part-time helpers and volunteers. With four children of their own,



PHOTO BY BETH BARLING

whom they home-educate, there's never a dull moment! But their dream doesn't stop here. Their long-term goal is to have a Pony Share Scheme within the reach of every young person across the U.K., and perhaps beyond.

Right now Bex and Tony are working on a way to best share with others not only the knowledge and details of what they've spent years building, but also the less tangible aspects of running a Pony Share Scheme, including the culture that has proved so successful, not to mention so popular with the sharers. They know that setting other people up for success involves way more than simply writing down the business model and selling a commercial franchise package. It's clear that there is much heart built into this Scheme.

I stayed at the Pony Share Scheme far longer than I intended — somehow time passes at a different speed when you're having fun. As I said my goodbyes I couldn't help thinking what I would have made of such a place as child. Simply put, I would have loved it. 🐾

For more information on the Pony Share Scheme, or supporting a young person through the scholarship program, please visit www.ponysharescheme.co.uk or call Tony David on +44 (0)1707 830024.

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PHOTO BY COCO



RED LIGHT — GREEN LIGHT

Body Language is the Universal Language

by Scott Teigen

As you're driving down a long stretch of road, there isn't a more beautiful sight than a series of green lights. The same goes for horses. In the Parelli world of Natural Horsemanship, a green light is permission to "Go!" from horse to rider. Exercises go smoothly, activities pass without incident, and horse and rider are speaking the same language. However, as Pat warns, these green lights can change just as quickly as those hanging over the roadway.

"Like any green light we've all driven up on, it can turn yellow, and then go red," Pat says, "and it's always quicker than we want."

Unfortunately, a horse's lights aren't nearly as obvious as a changing stoplight, and the consequences for misreading the signals can be just as disastrous. However, there are ways to read and interpret your horse that lower the likelihood of encountering, as Pat says, "a horse turning into a tornado."

"It's not an exact science," he says, "but in the end, you really need to pay attention to your horse's body language. Body language is the universal language. I've got it, you've got it, and your horse has got it. If we understand the body language, we understand that the eye is the window to the mind, and we find that everything means something."

"It's more a feeling than it is 'exactly this' or 'exactly that,'" he adds.

This focus on feeling is key to any good horseman's success. Noting that yellow and red lights oftentimes occur because





PHOTO BY BRITTANY WHITMYRE

the rider has been overstepping boundaries, Pat explains that putting oneself in the horse's place is essential.

"I go about things in such a way that, if I were a horse, that's how I would want it," he says.

This concept of achieving green lights should be thought of as a "skeleton." The signals for a green light vary from horse to horse, and often change depending on what the rider asks for. This "dynamic" relationship between horse and rider, once again, is based heavily on the interpretation of body language.

Though radical differences exist between various horses and their Horsenality™, the building blocks of this skeleton remain the same: rapport, respect, impulsion, and flexion.

"Rapport before respect," Pat says, "and respect before impulsion, or asking for things to either get faster or slower. The last thing I work on is the flexion — asking the horse to put his body into a certain position."

Despite the best intentions, however, a rider will likely encounter yellow and red lights on occasion. As is the case with green lights, the signals of yellow and red lights will vary greatly based on Horsenality™.

"The extroverts are going to do things faster, and the introverts are going to do things more slowly," says Pat.

Unfortunately, a horse's lights aren't nearly as obvious as a changing stoplight, and the consequences for misreading the signals can be just as disastrous.

"They're going to sort of run away inside themselves. One of the most dangerous things that you can do is get a red light from an introvert, and you think everything is okay, when really all he's done is run off inside himself, and then all of a sudden he explodes and turns into what *looks* like an extreme extrovert."

When it comes to dealing with yellow and red lights, Pat cautions against making assumptions. Though a common cause of red lights is moving too quickly and crossing thresholds the horse is uncomfortable with, that's not always the case.

"Sometimes, you get a red light because you're going too dang slow," he says.



Green lights can turn to yellow and red very quickly, as Troubadour demonstrated during the Road to the Horse 2011.

"This is why the study of Horsenality™ is such an important study," he continues, "to make some kind of inexact science out of it. The thing is, if you do it wrong a couple of times, and you go forward when you think you've got a green light and you've really got a red one, you're either going to learn or die."

It is never the horse's fault, stresses Pat, and the buck off certainly didn't damage his opinion of his colt at the Road to the Horse.

Over the years, Pat says he has learned the danger of making assumptions, including his experience at this year's Road to the Horse competition. Pat was bucked off a Quarter Horse colt whose registered name is Hey Whiskey after the colt gave him a yellow and red light in rapid fire succession. Looking back, Pat recognizes his mistake.

"I did something I don't usually do: I didn't test mounting him from both sides when we had the saddle on," says

Pat. "The reason I didn't do it was because I got on him bareback, sat on him bareback...I even stood up on his back. He showed me no signs that the right side was more questionable than the left. So, I made an assumption. I'm sure now that if I would have mounted him from the right side, he would have shown me that he was getting bothered, and I would have known to work more on things before I ever got up there."

It is never the horse's fault, stresses Pat, and the buck off certainly didn't damage his opinion of his colt at Road to the Horse. In fact, he liked the colt so much he purchased him from the Four Sixes Ranch during the event and gave him the barn name Troubadour. If you're active on Parelli Connect, you've doubtlessly followed the pair's smooth escapades in the months since working cattle and generally having a grand time as supportive partners – the direct result of being mindful of the green and yellow lights along the way.

"If you get a green light," Pat says, "go on through. When you are in tune with the signals they are giving you, it all goes smooth." 🐾

Keep up with Troubadour's progress on Parelli Connect!
www.parelliconnect.com/horses/13643



PHOTO BY BRITTANY WHITMYRE

Troubadour is giving Pat a lot of green lights these days!



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SEVEN GAMES IN THE SADDLE

The Friendly, Porcupine & Driving Games

by Scott Teigen

The first three games of the Parelli Seven Games – dubbed the “principle” games – are the basis for establishing a horse’s appropriate response to pressure and his acceptance of human as leader, not predator. Crucially, these games also teach you how to be an effective leader.

In addition to these Games’ renowned ground benefits, they can be further extrapolated in the saddle. This multi-part series will explore the ways in which the Seven Games translate to riding. This article focuses on the “principle” games: the Friendly Game, the Porcupine Game, and the Driving Game.

The Friendly Game

“If I were to rename the games, I’d call this one ‘the Confidence Game,’” says Pat, “It’s all about getting your horse confident. More self-confident, more confident in his environment, more confident in you, and more confident in his learning.”

Pat says people oftentimes don’t grasp the full scope of the Friendly Game, and what the intended result should be.

“They get the first concept,” he says, “swinging their Carrot Stick™ around and getting the horse used to all sorts of things, but there’s more to it than that. It’s really about being aware of his confidence issues and not going over thresholds.”

You can avoid crossing these thresholds by reading the horse’s body language and working at the horse’s pace. You’ll be more comfortable, your horse will be more comfortable, and the natural progression inherent in the games will make for a far smoother experience. As a result, certain riding exercises are suggested as you advance through the Parelli Program levels.

“In Levels 1 and 2, you can do the Follow the Rail Pattern,” says Pat. “This is all about getting your horse to the point where you can let the reins loose and give the horse one simple job: maintain gait and direction while looking where he’s going.”

In addition, practicing slow transitions with one rein can be a great way to build your Friendly Game in the saddle. Point to Point, which builds focus and confidence between horse and rider through the movement from a rider-designated Point A to Point B is also another great choice for riders of any level. This game emphasizes a “stop and relax” exercise, maintaining the horse’s comfort level and confidence.

“Think of the Friendly Game as the ‘rapport’ part of what you’re doing,” says Pat. “The rapport is in his heart, respect is in his head, impulsion is in his emotions, and the flexion is in his body.”

As you advance through the levels, building this rapport as you go, the Friendly Game exercises advance as well. There are many ways you can use the concept of approach and retreat, the fundamental principle of the Friendly Game, to further build your horse's confidence.

"Let's say, for example, I'm trying to get the horse to canter at a 10m circle instead of a 20m circle," says Pat. "What I'll do is go from 20m to 15m, then back out to 20m. Then I'll move from 15m to 12m, then back up to 20m. As you continue, this exercise gives him the confidence that he can canter a smaller circle."

Pat reinforces the importance of building confidence and reading the horse's body language as you advance the Friendly Game riding exercises.

"If I canter my horse on a circle to the right, then do a flying lead change and go on that circle, I'll feel if the horse starts to get tense. If he thinks, 'Oh, we're going to do another one of those flying lead changes,' what I'll do is keep cantering that same circle, until the horse goes, 'Oh, I thought you were going to lope me two circles like you did on the other side and ask me to change leads again!'"

"That's one of the ways I play the Friendly Game," he adds. "It's not just getting the horse used to noises and movement. It's about what you can do to get the horse completely trusting and confident. Convince him that everything is going to be totally fine from his perspective."

The Porcupine Game & The Driving Games

The next two games — the Porcupine Game and the Driving Game — are fundamentally linked, though it is essential to develop your skills in the intended order. The Porcupine Game is named as such because it teaches the horse to move away from a point of pressure, or a "feel."



The Driving Game, on the other hand, is about responding to the suggestion of pressure.

"The Porcupine Game is about following a feel," says Pat. "Every time I use my reins, I'm asking the horse to follow a feel. Every time I use my legs, I'm asking the horse to follow a feel!"

For your horse, developing these skills is essential, as it conditions him to understand to the different points of physical pressure he will encounter with a rider. As you and your horse advance through the Parelli Program, Pat suggests continually testing your horse's responses to pressure.

"The whole secret is to be progressive, to get to the point where you're asking your horse to give you more with less. So you use less leg, less hand, fewer phases, and more suggestion. In other words, use your willpower. An ounce in your hands, a pound in your leg, and a ton of willpower. A ton of focus."

By taking this suggestion to its endpoint, you can see the Driving Game as a logical progression from the Porcupine Game.

"Every time you're at a trot, reach down and bend your horse to a walk," he says. "This is asking him to follow a feel. If you sit down and relax and he slows down to a walk, that's the Driving Game. He's following your suggestion."

Pat cautions against interpreting these games at surface level, without understanding the important distinctions between the two.

"What happens is, people tend to take it too literally — that you're either poking or driving. But it's more than that; the horse is either following a feel, or following a feeling."

"To me, the Porcupine Game is a physical thing," he adds, "whereas the Driving Game is a mental thing."

As you advance through the Driving Game riding exercises, you will begin to employ the four remaining games, but with a subtle distinction:

"The riding exercises are simple; you ask the horse to do the four 'purpose' games — the Yo-Yo Game, the Circling Game, the Sideways Game, and the Squeeze Game — but with a suggestion."

"For example, if you ask a horse to move from a halt to a walk to a trot to a canter, all without using your legs, that would be the Driving Game," he adds. "And you can reverse it, from a canter all the way to a back-up, without using your reins. This is the point where you've gotten him to follow your suggestion."

As you continue to progress through the Seven Games, both on the ground and in the saddle, keep Pat's words of wisdom in mind: "It's all about your horse's confidence." 🐾



NO STRINGS ATTACHED

Remembering Tom Dorrance

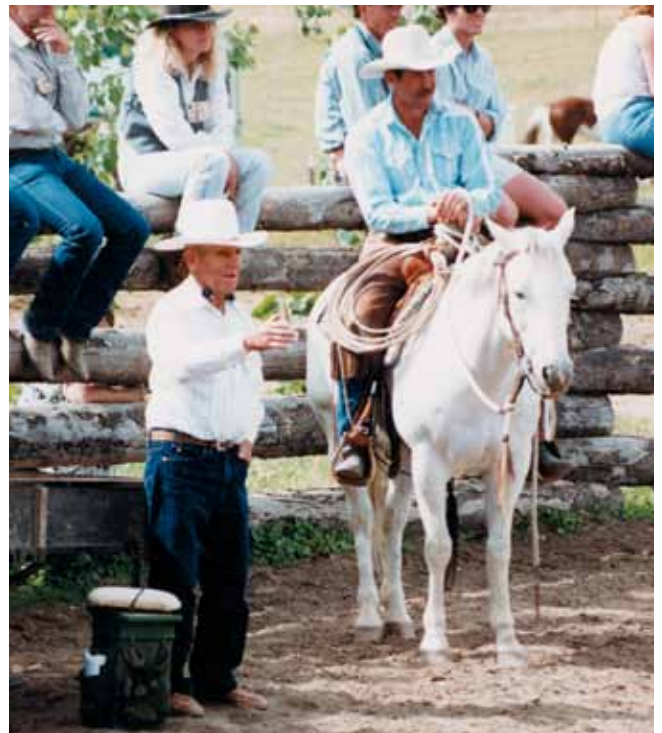
by Pat Parelli

Of all the unforgettable experiences I shared with Tom, perhaps the most memorable took place right before his eightieth birthday in 1990. In those days I was living in Clements, California, and he would come up about once a month to help me with my horses. Well, actually I was probably more of a project for him than the horses, so I should say he was helping me work on myself.

Tom put a lot of effort into guiding me on my journey toward becoming a better horseman, and one day, as I was working a clinic in southern California, it occurred to me that I'd never really thanked him for his time and wisdom. So I decided to give him a gift.

At that point I was making a lot of my own tack. I had started tying my own halters and hackamores, making my own snaffle bridles and reins. After some thought, I elected to make Tom a hackamore and a snaffle with a set of reins that had horsehair tassels. It turned out really nice, if I do say so myself.

Excited about giving Tom my gift, I called him and asked if I could come down to visit in Merced, where he and



Margaret were living in an apartment. He told me I could, so I drove over there, parked the car and knocked on their door, and Tom answered—wearing slippers. He didn't look like a rider, didn't have a hat on. It was the first time I'd seen him in casual clothes.

He let me in the apartment, and we visited a little while. Finally I said, "I've got something I want to give you as a thank you for all the time you've spent with me."

Now I don't know if you've ever seen the look on somebody's face when you're about to give a gift they're not going to accept, but that's the look Tom gave me. Still, I opened the bag I'd brought with me, reached in and retrieved the snaffle bridle, hackamore and reins. I gave them to him, and physically he took them, but he didn't really receive them.

"Don't you like it?" I asked.

"Oh, it's great," he said. "I love it. You did a nice job. But I don't think you should leave it here."

I asked him why not, to which he replied, "I won't be needing things like this anymore."

"Don't tell me you're not going to ride anymore," I said.

"Oh, no, I'll be riding," he insisted. "I just won't be needing a bridle anymore."

And that's when he pulled a little string out of his pocket.

"If I can't get it done with this," he said, referring to the string, "then I don't really want to have much to do with it."

He then took the string and threw it over in a corner.

"Actually," he continued, "I'm really looking to have a deal with my horses with no strings attached."

Well, there I was, pretty much stunned. I didn't know what to think.

"Actually, I'm really looking to have a deal with my horses with no strings attached."

I packed up my gift and headed out with a lot of thoughts swimming in my head. It took me a few hours, but I finally came to the conclusion that maybe he was, in his own distinct way, trying to tell me he wanted me to experiment more with not using a bridle. I had ridden bridleless before, but perhaps he wanted me to go down that track a little farther.

Tom's eightieth birthday came around in May. We planned a big party for him. I gathered up everybody I could find, and we all chipped in and bought him a Long Ranger microphone system for conducting clinics.



Sometimes Tom would get to working with a horse in a clinic, and it was hard to hear him, so we decided some kind of microphone/amplifier would be a useful gift.

A bunch of Tom's students showed up for the party and gave demonstrations to give thanks for all that Tom had passed onto them. Buck Brannaman did an unbelievable trick roping demonstration. He skipped through a loop that was really quite small, and it was fantastic.

Then it was my turn. I rode in on a gray horse named Sparky and performed a routine of lead changes, sliding stops and spins. I also had someone dart back and forth across the arena like a cow, and Sparky and I "cut" them this way and that way, bareback and bridleless. That performance was my real gift to Tom, one that he had inspired that day I'd talked to him in his Merced apartment, with him in his slippers.

I received two presents from Tom that year. The first was that I now always carry a string in my pocket: I call it my savvy string because it's a symbol of what I'm constantly striving for. The second is that I'm always looking for a deal with no strings attached — to have a bond with my horses that's so strong that it's really all I need for us to communicate together. Is there a greater gift than that kind of partnership? I don't think so.

For that and more, I will always be thankful to Tom. He always made me think way beyond the obvious. 🐾

IMPROVING

Expression

by Linda Parelli

How do you know if your horse is happy? He can't wag his tail like a dog, smile like a human or purr like a cat, so how can you tell?

Being a horse lover, I really care about how my horse feels in his relationship with me. Does he like to be with me, be taught by me, perform with me? So I put a lot of effort into seeing life from my horse's point of view and setting things up for success. Does that mean sometimes my horse is unhappy? I'm sure there are times, but I'm not paralyzed by that. I try to catch it early and then become more conscious of how I caused it in order to avoid it next time. Most important, I take responsibility for my horse's behavior when with me, because he was fine until I showed up!

I take responsibility for my horse's behavior when with me, because he was fine until I showed up!

Things that make horses happy

What makes one horse happy is not necessarily what makes another horse happy. Horsenality™ is going to be a huge guide for you here. For example, my horse Jazzy (Right-Brain Introvert) needs me to go slow in the warmup, waiting for him to relax and then want to offer more, whereas my horse Allure (Left-Brain Extrovert) needs me to encourage him to have fun and keep things pretty lively. I've made the mistake of going slowly with Allure, and he either takes over and takes off (doesn't want to be with me anymore) or just shuts down and resigns himself to what he knows is going to be a really boring time. So get to know your horse's Horsenality™; it's an important key. Find out what makes your horse tick — a Horsenality™ Report can help you if you're struggling with this — so you can bring out the best in him or her on a more consistent basis. Remember, most horses don't like being told "no," so learn how to become the Ambassador of Yes by taking care of his needs first.



PHOTO BY COCO



LEFT-BRAIN EXTROVERT

Encourage his ideas, use energy, be provocative, have fun.



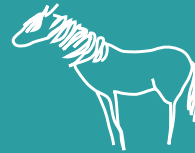
RIGHT-BRAIN EXTROVERT

Encourage your horse to move if he needs to, then give him something to focus on.



LEFT-BRAIN INTROVERT

Go with his need to be slow at first but be mentally fast. Wait for the question; get him mentally engaged.



RIGHT-BRAIN INTROVERT

Go with his need to go slow, stop or think about things; be gentle; wait for him to breathe and ask questions.

Body Language

Most people have learned that ears back means watch out, that the horse is going to bite, charge, kick... but reading a horse's body language is not something many people learn to make an art of. I think it's vital to become good at reading horses because the sooner you can tell what's going on, the sooner you can adjust your approach for more positive results.

As you learn to read horses at increasingly refined levels you start to notice the little things like the position of your horse's head and neck, ears, tail, the way he moves... and then progressively more subtle things like the eyes and nostrils.

You need to get to know and learn to read the signs of negative thoughts and emotions in your horse as well as the positive ones, both on the ground and when riding. Know that every horse is capable of having all of these emotions and behaviors given the right situation, so it's our job to bring out only the positive ones.

Unhappy, Upset, Disturbed

Horses tend to have unhappy expressions when they are afraid, bored, irritated, have lost respect for the rider/handler or feel pressured against their will, to a greater or lesser degree.



- High head
- Tight under-neck
- Wide eyes
- Staring eyes
- Inward-looking eyes
- Flared nostrils
- Wrinkled nostril(s)
- Tight mouth
- Grinding teeth
- Chomping jaw
- Foaming mouth
- Popping lips
- Drawing lips back
- Waving tongue
- Tight, tense ears
- Laid-back ears
- Ears out to the side
- Rapidly flicking ears
- Tight back
- Hollow or arched back
- Tucked, tight hindquarters
- Tight tail
- "J" tail
- High, tense tail
- Swishing tail
- Tense ribcage
- Shallow breathing
- Holding breath
- Rapid breathing
- Forceful snorts
- Can't stand still
- Quick, tense steps
- Refusing to move
- Shrinking away from you
- Turning away from you
- Want to bite or kick you
- Doesn't want to touch you, or you him



PHOTOS BY COCO

Happy, Relaxed, Willing

Horses tend to have a positive and inquisitive expression when they are doing something that is their idea. That's why the Parelli psychology of "Cause your idea to become their idea, but understand their idea first" is so powerful. It's not just about doing nothing or giving them treats. It's about how they feel about you in the relationship as their friend, partner, protector and teacher.

- Level head (withers)
- Stretched neck
- Loose under-neck muscles
- Soft eyes
- Blinking eyes
- Looks at you
- Quiet mouth
- Soft ears
- Ears forward
- Gently moving ears
- Relaxed, swinging back
- Free hindquarters
- Soft tail
- Flowing, swinging tail
- Swinging ribcage
- Regular breathing
- Wants to touch you
- Long snorts, blowing out
- Stands still
- Cocked hind leg
- Rhythmic, long stride
- Responsive
- Stays connected
- Faces you
- Comes over when he sees you

What to do

When you see your horse's expression change from positive to negative, what should you do? The first thing is not to panic! If you start to worry, you'll find yourself shrinking back and relinquishing leadership, and that brings on a whole other set of behavioral changes in your horse. Right-brain horses get more worried and distant, and left-brain horses seize the opportunity to get the better of you. You have to maintain your composure as your horse's leader, so don't worry or feel sorry for him; just change what you are doing. Know that horses are not like people; they live in the moment, so they react quickly to what they perceive as negative or positive. Although their primary emotions are a lot like ours (fear, frustration, anger), they don't get upset at themselves or feel sorry for others. Those are what humans do. Feeling any one of those negative emotions will instantly undermine your status as a leader with your horse, both in the moment and in the longer term.

Nine times out of ten, when a horse gets upset, backing off the pressure is the right thing to do. And don't let anyone tell you that the horse will think he's won. He's a prey animal, and if his safety or dignity feels threatened, he's going to run or defend himself. So back off, help him settle down, restore the trust and make a fresh start. It will work better that way. And can you see how reading the telltale signs as early as possible will help? It's easier to snuff out a little spark of trouble than a wall of flames.

But here's the real savvy: Learn to not make your horse go there! How can you keep a smile on your horse's face, have him want to engage, to communicate, to play, to perform? That's the question that keeps me fascinated with horses and completely enthralled with never-ending self-improvement. If we do what the horse needs, he'll give us what we desire. 🐾



HEALTHY HORSES

HEALTHY HUMANS



Day 1

An Accident, 7 Days, & a Photonic Light



Day 7

"After Kellie's accident, we went to the hospital and they did x-rays. Nothing was broken, but we were warned that she would scar and have permanent dirt marks. The arena rash took off quarter-sized chunks of skin. Her face was so swollen that she could hardly open her eye or talk. After we left the hospital, she used her red light consistently for seven days. We could almost see her heal before our eyes. By the seventh day, the bruising was gone and her face had healed!"

- Tricia Sybersma

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- Anti-Viral Chart
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- Instructional DVD
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- Equine Acupoint Manual
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- & much more!

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PRESSURE MOTIVATES

by Linda Parelli

Release Teaches

Many years ago, when I first heard Pat say, "Pressure motivates, but the release teaches," he made it sound so simple. And teaching and training horses really is quite simple, because it involves not much more than the appropriate application of pressure and the exquisite timing of the release. But those adjectives, "appropriate" and "exquisite," are where the real challenges lie, because these are the very things that make the difference between a horse having trouble, responding obediently, or responding with enthusiasm.

Appropriate application of pressure

There are three ways to put pressure on a horse: mentally, emotionally and physically. I think that the word "pressure" can sometimes be badly misinterpreted, but all it really means is the process of pressing steadily, or a force that pushes or urges. So the idea is learning to use a

little pressure to urge a horse to do something in response. How that pressure is applied, however, is key.

Appropriate means suitable, right, apt, correct, proper.

There are three ways to put pressure on a horse: mentally, emotionally and physically.

What is appropriate application?

- The pressure comes on very slowly and smoothly, progressing to the point at which it becomes effective and motivates the horse to try something.
- It is applied with focus, care and intention for a specific outcome.
- It is applied with love, language and leadership.

How can you tell if the pressure was applied appropriately?

The horse responds calmly, without fear and with good expression. As you progress the horse becomes more responsive and more willing.

What is inappropriate application?

- The pressure comes on too fast and too strong, with no time for mental processing.
- It is applied with an expectation that the horse must react instantly.
- There is no teaching principle behind it: Do it or else!
- Or... not enough pressure was applied, so the horse never felt the desire to try something!

How can you tell if the pressure was applied inappropriately?

The horse doesn't respond, or reacts negatively, has poor expression, is tense, stressed, fearful or fights back. As you proceed the horse gets worse, more reactive or more dull.

Exquisite Timing of the Release

When Pat says, "It's the release that teaches," this means that when you release is critical. If you release too early or too late, your horse won't do what you expected. Overall



it's about timing it to your horse's thoughts. Hmm, how do you do that?

As your sensitivity grows you will actually begin to feel when your horse gets mentally focused and is about to respond. If you can release at that moment, not only do you get better responses, you get lighter ones. Exquisite means beautiful, excellent, sensitive, discriminating.

When Pat says, "It's the release that teaches," this means that when you release is critical.



Exquisite Timing

- You release at the slightest try, when the horse begins to respond mentally, emotionally or physically.
- At first you release when the horse physically responds, but soon you learn to release when the horse mentally, emotionally and physically responds.
- Your release can be minimal or maximum—full release.

How do you know your timing is good, or even exquisite?

The quality of response increases, and the horse learns quickly with a minimum of difficulty.

Ineffective Timing

- You release after the horse has tried to respond; a second or two is way too late. Release needs to be instant.
- You release before the horse tries something.
- The horse never finds release!

Try It!

Pair up with a friend and hold reins between you, one of you being the horse and the other the rider.



SIMULATION 1: Slow and strong application of pressure

The rider takes up the reins and gradually, slowly, slowly increases the pressure, milligram by milligram, until it is very strong.

As the horse, did you notice that, even though it ended up with a lot of pressure, it didn't feel offensive or harsh?

SIMULATION 2: Fast and light pressure

The rider takes up the reins quickly and strongly and then quickly and lightly, not putting much pressure on at all.

As the horse, can you feel how rude and harsh this was, even when it was "light"? The speed at which you apply the pressure is the most crucial element.

SIMULATION 3: Both simulations

Now do both those simulations again, and release when your friend (horse) blinks. Did you notice how much better your timing was when you brought the pressure on slowly?



How do you know if your timing was ineffective?

The quality of the response decreases. It takes longer to teach something, and the horse progressively feels more dull or heavy.

How do we release? Let me count the ways...

"Release" basically means you remove the advancing pressure, but there are different ways to do that.

- Micro-release: a momentary relaxation or reduction of the pressure. This could mean taking your leg pressure down a notch or opening your little fingers slightly on the reins for a moment before reapplying pressure.
- Neutral: maintaining Phase 1 to let the horse know he needs to keep moving.
- Full release: complete release of the reins or cessation of all leg and seat pressure for several seconds or more.

Improving your "feel" is actually what improves your timing. And the way to improve your feel is to slow way, way down.

Ways to improve your timing

Improving your "feel" is actually what improves your timing. And the way to improve your feel is to slow way, way down. Go slower than slow. Going slowly increases your sensitivity. Not only that, but your feel becomes much more polite and well received by the horse. For example, light, quick hands on the reins are actually more disturbing for the horse than firm pressure applied very slowly. The difference is that your horse can mentally tune in to what is happening; it gives him time to think and interpret your message.

Better feel and timing improve the quality of response and speed of learning

When teaching horses, pressure motivates and release teaches. Remember this as you teach your horse anything you want him to do. As you learn to do this appropriately and exquisitely, start to notice how much more quickly your horse learns and how confidently and calmly he begins to respond. Even better, you and your horse will start to perform with a whole new level of grace and harmony at which your "aids" are virtually imperceptible. And that will be because you and your horse are feeling of each other and for each other so you can feel together. 🐾

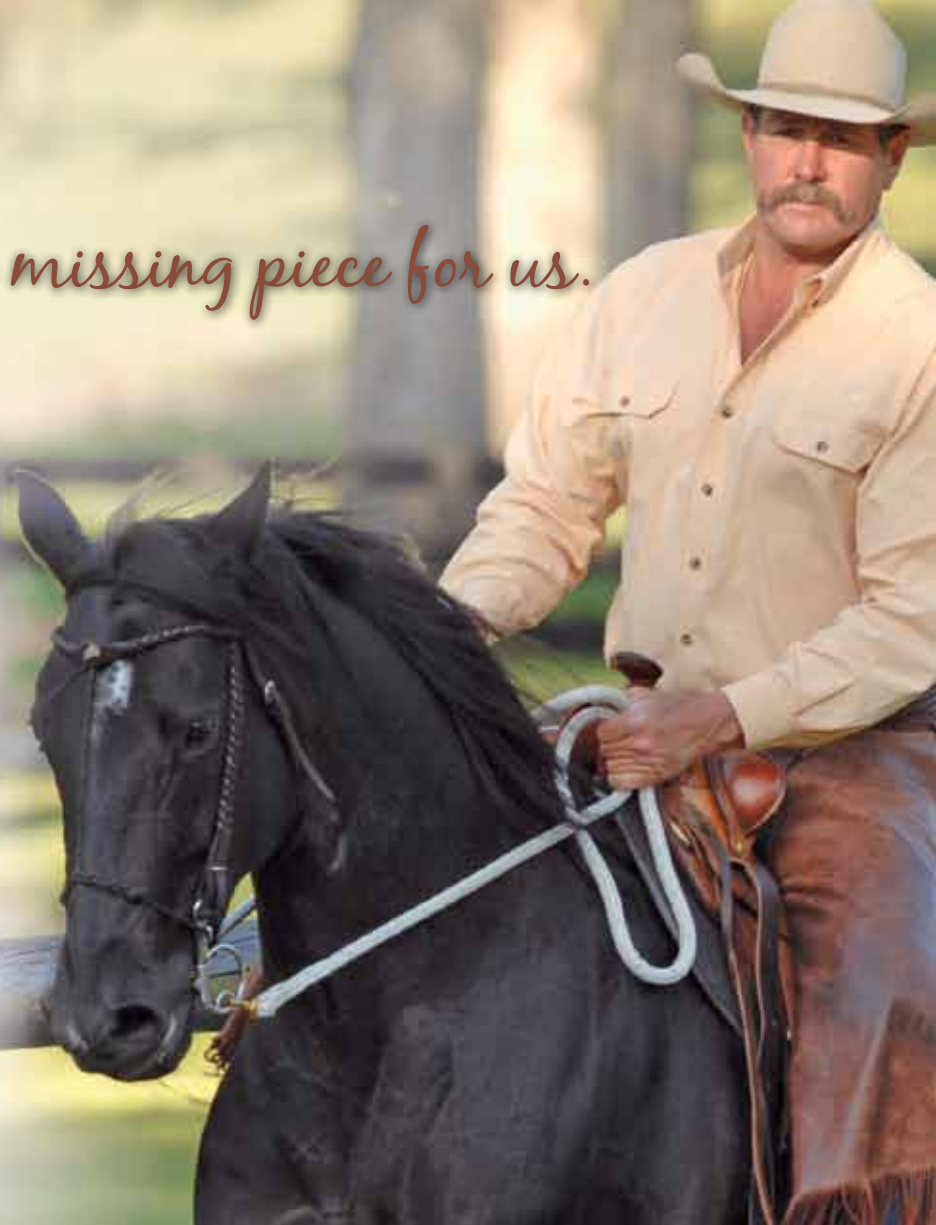
It was really the missing piece for us.

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

Cradle Bridle



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.



SADDLE FIT BREAKTHROUGH!

Shimming Solutions are Simple

by Letitia Glenn

Linda Parelli said to us in 2001, "We have got to do something to help these horses! Saddles are torture devices that hurt them and prevent their using their bodies as nature intended. Plus, they usually put the rider's weight in the wrong place! People are coming to us from all over the world for tips on how to ride with fluidity... and their saddles are often in the way too much for us to help them make enough progress!"

From the moment that my husband Art and I jumped aboard to help Linda solve this problem, I felt hooked deeply in the heart and mind. But I truly never dreamed that the pursuit of saddle and custom fit solutions for horses and the people who love them would become a mastery quest for me that would absorb my focus so completely.

Pat, Linda and their Parelli Professionals remind us constantly that "we must do in our bodies what we want our horses to do in theirs." Feeling what misery an ill-fitting saddle can generate has helped us design saddles and custom-fitting interface tools that have produced amazing results and gratitude from all over the world. Thrilling!

The photo above is a reminder that "feeling is believing." You can try this yourself to further understand an important concept about custom-fitting to the horse's back. If he has any "hollow" or sunken area toward the center along his topline, we have learned that providing gentle support under the saddle via shims (that fill in the hollow) encourages him to push up/round up into the delicious room available under a Parelli saddle. You'll feel that, too. You'll be able to lift your knees higher and have the sense that you could use your powerful hindquarters to climb all day. The "connection" between horse and rider is greatly improved when the pad and saddle are supported via a center shim if a horse has a noticeable low center back area. Use a thin or thick felt for fairly shallow "hollows", or one of our wonderful new tapered foam shims (which are thicker in the middle) for a horse with a deeper sag in the center.

Conversely, if only the shoulders and base area of the "backpack" carries the load (bridging), or if the hollow carries most of the load, you'll feel disconnected, want to drop your back and belly, feel "strung out" and not very powerful at all.



Our new TheraFOAM shims are our latest “puzzle solvers.” Used by themselves or in combination with our TheraFELT shims, they are proving to be fantastic aids for even the most challenging of saddle fit situations.

It’s now easier than ever to choose a shim pattern that will custom fit your saddle to your horse’s needs. Use less shims, not more. Just be a keen observer of what your horse’s back shape is telling you. We can show you how.

If you haven’t had a chance to visit us at parellisaddles.com lately, you’ll find lots of new illustrations and information on our website. We’ve focused on helping you keep it simple when assessing your horse’s back shape and setting up your shims.

We’ll show you why we use shims:

1. To provide the best clearance for shoulder movement.
2. To facilitate rider access of perfect balance point.
3. To fill in for damaged muscle or low center back.

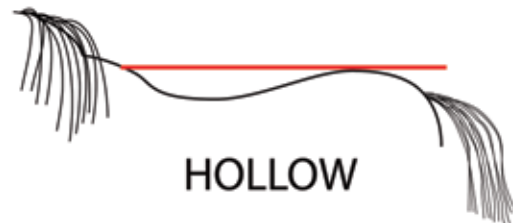
Keep your shim solutions SIMPLE.

We don’t like to use more than 3 shims for any horse’s back shape.

We’ll show you how:

1. To look at your horse’s topline profile and decide which of the basic 3 shapes is represented.
2. To decide which basic shim pattern will custom fit your saddle to your moving horse’s needs.
3. To troubleshoot and achieve success if you have some challenging issues.

Here are some of the hundreds of helpful illustrations you’ll see in full size on www.parellisaddles.com:



A low center back area always needs a center shim. If wither is lower than croup, more than 1 shim in front may be required to lift front of saddle for good shoulder/scapula clearance and balance point access.

Basic HOLLOW Shim Pattern with LIFT when raising the front or back of the saddle is necessary for scapula clearance, Balance Point access, or muscle atrophy



IMPORTANT CONCEPT:
If hollow is deep, FOAM Center shim is BEST. In addition to lifting the saddle out of ANY horse’s hollow back, it is usually important to incorporate an UPHILL or DOWNHILL pattern in combination with the HOLLOW pattern. Foam+Felt combinations work well, too.

Choose FOAM, FELT or COMBINE them, based on:

- Depth or shallowness of the hollow.
- Top of withers DOWNHILL of croup means need for more lift in front than when top of withers is UPHILL of croup.
- Top of withers UPHILL of croup may still mean that at least 1 shim is needed for scapula clearance.
- If back sags deeply, recommend Hill Therapy, too.
- If backbone is bony due to muscle atrophy, some shim in the back will help. (not shown). MAKE CERTAIN SADDLE DOES NOT TIP RIDER WEIGHT FORWARD nor is saddle TILTED back TOO MUCH causing it to dig into horse’s loin. Also: Hill Therapy.
- KEEP IT SIMPLE. Use as few shims as possible.



It is OUR RESPONSIBILITY to help the horse learn how to carry us in an athletic and healthy way.



That means
with a **LIFTED STOMACH, ARCHED BACK and STRETCHED TOPLINE, even when collected.**

We'll offer coaching tips to remind all of us of our responsibilities as riders:

Among hundreds of tips, step-by-step diagrams, photographic examples and testimonials, Linda and Pat remind us of our responsibilities as riders. We must help our horses learn to carry us in a healthy and athletic way.

We can do it with these tools. We don't need to become excellent at advanced maneuvers.

We do to need learn how to overcome common faults such as riding with a stiff, hollow back, gripping with our knees, driving with our seats, leaning too far forward or back, bracing in our body or stirrups, and pulling on the reins. Otherwise, even the best saddles cannot protect our horses! 🐾

Contracted Topline

GENERAL CAUSES:

Tension, impulsiveness, poor mover, stiff rider, bad saddle, hollow-backed, bracing rider, too much weight in stirrups, hands too strong, trotting or cantering too fast for horse's natural balance, etc.

SOLUTIONS:

- Good Saddle and Pad, well fit
- Fluidity
- A "Million" Transitions
- Stop pulling on reins
- Partial Disengagement
- Find horse's balanced stride in trot and canter
- Hill Therapy or Cavaletti



We'll show you diagrams and photos of typical saddle fit solutions...plus challenging, problem-solving scenarios that resulted in rave-review testimonials!

Below: This sample testimonial with instruction detail is one of more than 100 informative slides available on our website. View at full size on ParelliSaddles.com

Success with a significant HOLLOW

Who would believe that this big mare, with her back sunken this deeply, could feel so much relieving comfort from just two TheraFoam shims, that her loving owner, Terri Martinus, could enjoy such a round, athletic ride!



I have been using the Theraflex pad and shims for many years, firstly with a Balance saddle and then with the Parelli Fluidity saddle. Right from the beginning, my horse's way of going changed with my Parelli equipment. Her stride got longer, slower and her muscle atrophy, from years of ignorant saddling, improved. Recently, I was lucky enough to take my horse to Stoneleigh Park for the Instructor Conference with Pat and Linda. During one play session I asked Letitia for some advice, as I have been playing with Game of Contact and Pumpkin had been backing off the contact and was at times hesitant to go forward, unusual for her RBE horsenality! Letitia lent me the Therafoam shims and we used a center bridging shim with a shoulder shim at the front to lift the saddle. I started in Freestyle and immediately Pumpkin felt different. Almost as if she felt confident to push up into the saddle. Her stride got even longer and I felt more horse in front of me. I played a bit with GOC with Linda's help and although this is new to Pumpkin and she is still puzzling it out, she actually took me forward! When I could get my position, core muscles and hands all together, there were split seconds where Pumpkin powered off confidently. We still have lots to practice, but even since being home, I feel a difference with new pads. Thanks for your help Letitia!
Terri Martinus, 3* Instructor



What is your horse trying to say about how it feels when you ride?

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



www.ParelliSaddles.com



SECONDHAND GOLD

Lengthening & Shortening the Reins

by Teri Sprague, 4-Star Parelli Professional

"If this was the only skill you learned in this clinic, it would be worth every dime you paid to get here!"

These are the words I use to introduce the concept of short reins for communication and long reins for release in Advancing Level 1 and Beginning Level 2 clinics. Perhaps I make such a big deal about it because it was such a huge factor in my own development. When this skill is solidly in place, it is easy to communicate both our requests and release to our horse.

Pat calls this "going from casual to concentrated," and back. A casual rein should be long enough that the horse has release, but short enough that when you lift the rein, it easily communicates. The prerequisite for this is correct rein length. When your reins are the correct length and you hold your hand at the withers, they will be the perfect length for casual, yet easily shortened for communication. (See the photo above, and read more in the sidebar on determining your horse's perfect rein length.)

The visual that Pat uses for getting from "casual" to the short communicating rein called "concentrated" is playing a trombone. Holding the rein in the center, lift the rein toward your mouth while sliding the other hand down (photo 1). If you do both the lift and the slide, you will shorten the rein enough to be effective for any communication that follows. The mistake that many people make is





to do only the slide. When you do not lift, you have to lean forward in order to slide far enough make the rein short. This causes you to come off your balance point and creates a safety hazard (photo 2). Instead sit deeper on your balance point, lift, and slide. Now you will be connected through the rein to the halter, hackamore or bit.

Finally, after the slide, close your fingers from top to bottom. As you close your first finger, put the lifting hand down on the withers, horn or pommel and push to create a powerful, balanced position (photo 3). Close all four

fingers, one at a time. If your rein is the correct length, each finger will increase the pressure in phases until the horse responds. At first you may need to go through all the phases. Soon you will discover it only takes a finger or two to get the horse communicating back with softness. Now you can perform lateral flexion, direct, indirect, supporting and other rein requests.

Once the horse has responded to your request, the release is a simple matter of letting go with the sliding rein hand. The rein will naturally fall back to the casual position.

In the beginning you will do this with one rein. As you progress through the levels this process becomes more refined. (It is essentially the same process for picking up two reins in Finesse!) You become competent, fluid, polite and predictable. Your horse becomes calm, trusting, motivated and willing. 🐾

Teri Sprague is a Licensed 4-Star Senior Instructor and has been teaching Parelli since 1995. She teaches around the US and from her home facility near Ft. Collins, CO. Contact her at ts4pnh@yahoo.com or www.terisprague.com. Special thanks to Susie Hosey and partner Kody.

Determining Your Ideal Rein Length

Grasp the rein in the middle. Are your reins long enough to reach the base of your sternum? If not, they are too short.



Too short



Just right

While holding the reins on your sternum, lean back. Does your horse back? If not, the reins are too long.



Too short



Just right

Can You?

Here are some games you can play with your horse to help you develop your competence in going from long casual reins to short communicating reins.

Sit on your horse with one rein. Lengthen the rein, toss it over the horse's head and reorganize it to an effective length. Toss and reorganize. Toss and reorganize. How many times can you do it in a minute?

Sit on your horse with two reins (one loop rein). Focus straight ahead.

1. Rhythmically lift and slide down alternating sides of the rein. Do it to the rhythm of a catchy tune. Do it in such a way as to not upset your horse or move her feet. Then try it walking, trotting, cantering. Do it in such a way as to not upset the gait.
2. Drop and pick up the rein without looking, at the halt, walk, trot, canter.
3. Toss the rein from hand to hand without looking, at the halt, walk, trot, canter.
4. From the halt, lift and slide, then ask your horse for lateral flexion without moving the horse's feet. (Don't forget to put the lifting hand down as you close your fingers on the sliding hand.)



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Congratulations to the new Levels Pathway Graduates! April 15, 2011 – June 28, 2011

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