



Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS

Oak Harbor

MAY 2026

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

CREATED & EDITED BY HEATHER CARDER

Serviceably Sound

By Dr. Ramey

Looking back to when I first graduated from veterinary school, prepurchase examinations were refreshingly simple. Horses fell into three clear categories: those with no apparent problems, those who were actively lame, and those who were what we called "serviceably sound." That third category has practically disappeared from modern veterinary practice, and I believe we're all worse off for it.

Serviceably sound horses weren't perfect specimens. They might have shown a little stiffness in one direction or carried themselves differently than a younger horse would. But these horses had been reliably doing their jobs for years, and there was every reason to believe they could continue for years more. Today, in our era of exhaustive radiographs, aggressive flexion tests, and what I affectionately call Scientific Wild Guesses about the future, I find

myself wondering what happened to simply accepting a good, working horse for what he is.

The transformation hit me hardest about two years ago when I became the fourth veterinarian to examine a twenty-year-old warmblood mare. This horse had been subjected to every diagnostic tool modern veterinary medicine offers: MRIs, bone scans, ultrasounds, and radiographs of virtually every skeletal structure in her body. Multiple specialists from prestigious hospitals had weighed in with their professional opinions. The consensus was unanimous and dire: this mare should never be ridden again. The diagnostic reports left no room for interpretation.

When the owner called me, I honestly questioned what unique perspective I could possibly offer after such thorough evaluation by my colleagues. Still, I went through my examination process. I ran my hands along her legs and felt the subtle swelling in her stifle joints.

When I flexed her legs, I noted the expected stiffness. Throughout the entire examination, this gentle, patient mare cooperated completely, never resisting or objecting to anything I asked of her. Then I requested to see her move. Her gait certainly wasn't expansive or effortless, but she moved forward willingly and, if I'm any judge of equine demeanor, happily.

I turned to the owner and asked a question that apparently none of my predecessors had considered important: "What do you want to do with her?"

The owner, who had clearly invested enough in diagnostics to fund a small developing nation, replied that she hoped the mare could give lessons to children.

My response was simple: "Why don't you give it a try?"

The owner's brow furrowed with concern. "But what about all of those reports?" she asked, gesturing to the stack of dire

Continued on page 11

WHAT'S TRENDING NOW

EQUILUME Pro-Light Therapy Mask

Illuminate a new era in equine performance. Daylight plays a pivotal role in regulating a horse's internal rhythms and ensuring the body works in harmony with the environment. Our cutting-edge blue and red light technology replicates the benefits of natural daylight to support your horse's overall health.

Extensive scientific research proves that blue light is the most biologically effective light for horses. Using the power of light, Equilume enhances fertility, performance and well-being, unlocking their full potential.

Equilume's Performance Lighting products mimic a long summer's day, stimulating seasonal hormones, including prolactin, while also ensuring that melatonin levels are sufficiently suppressed allowing your horse to produce a shiny summer coat and optimize the horse's muscle response to exercise.

Horses maintained under customized stable light systems with biologically effective blue light had a significantly higher fat-free mass (FFM) compared to horses under standard lighting. These horses also recorded higher weights and improved coat conditions.



This rechargeable Light Mask delivers 15 hours of blue light daily (8am – 11pm) ensuring your horse benefits from consistent light exposure when they need it most. Featuring a 12-month total battery life, the Pro Light Mask must be charged every 7th day to ensure uninterrupted use.

The Pro Light Mask features a fleece-lined headpiece, padded lining around the cup and long adjustable Velcro straps to ensure a comfortable and secure fit for your horse.

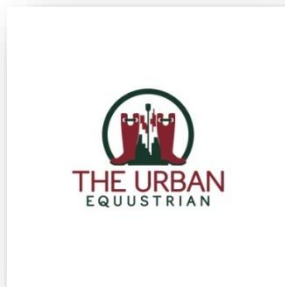
Equilume Pro Light Mask Pack Includes: Light Mask & Pro Charging Kit (Activation Key, Wireless Charging Pad & USB Cable)

The Equilume Pro Light Mask is the perfect solution for ensuring that your horse stays in the best health and condition possible whether stabled, on the road or at pasture.

www.equilume.com



Our Store is currently open by Appointment.



Shop Online!
www.thenoblehorsevintage.etsy.com

New Items for May



Scientists speculate that Crop circles are not made by Aliens....but rather are attempts by Dressage Riders trying to practice 20 meter circles...

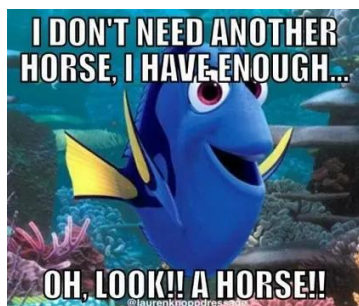


"See, this is the color I want"



rider: *adds too much leg*
mare:

You've probably seen a lot in your life, but have you ever seen a horse with a wolf on it?



Me when I see gas prices rising



“
Buying hay should at LEAST build your credit score.

@borninthebarn

”

WILDWOOD FARM B&B



This is your moment.

Today at Wildwood Farm B&B



A Bus Driver realized...

The secret to life is to fall seven times and get up eight.

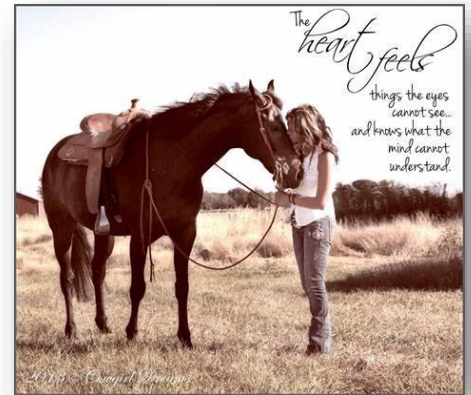
Immerse yourself in the equestrian world at Wildwood Farm B&B located on beautiful Whidbey Island.

Our ranch has a long history of igniting the spark between horses and humans, whether you want a small introduction or total immersion.

Come experience the power of possibility with these magnificent creatures and explore the abundance of silent repose.

www.wildwoodfarmbandb.com

WILDWOOD FARM HAS IT ALL!



WWW.PNWRiding.com

PACIFIC NORTHWEST RIDING ACADEMY



April 16, 2026

Summary for 03/01/2026 - 03/31/2026

35 alerts posted reporting on 56 confirmed cases

Ordered by State:

Disease	State	Confirmed
Equine Herpesvirus- Neurologic	California	1
	Maryland	1
	Ohio	1
	Virginia	10
Equine Herpesvirus- Respiratory	Arizona	1
	Maryland	2
Equine Infectious Anemia	Alberta	8
	California	2
	Texas	2
Equine Influenza	Kansas	1
	Montana	1
	Oregon	1
	Washington	2
Strangles	Florida	3
	Maryland	2
	Michigan	5
	Ontario	1
	Oregon	10
	Virginia	1
	Wisconsin	1

For the current status on CEM, please see:

<https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/equine/contagious-equine-metritis>

Equine Disease Communication Center

Nutrition Corner

Can my horse have EMS without being Overweight?

Horses with healthy body conditions can have metabolic issues such as EMS, just as some overweight horses can remain healthy. However, overweight horses more commonly have metabolic problems. A large body of evidence shows that adipose (fat) tissue can produce hormones and other chemical signals (known as adipocytokines) that can affect insulin signaling, resulting in insulin resistance and hyperinsulinemia, referred to as insulin dysregulation (ID). Even pockets of fat along the neck or tailhead area that might be present on a leaner horse could be problematic. Of course, horses with more adipose tissue produce more adipocytokines and are more likely to have ID. However, ID and EMS can also be influenced by the diet, particularly those high in starch and sugar (nonstructural carbohydrates or NSCs), or the horse's genetics.

Regardless of the cause of EMS or your horse's body condition score, work closely with your veterinarian to monitor your horse's insulin concentrations because hyperinsulinemia-associated laminitis (HAL) accounts for up to 90% of laminitis cases.

Basal blood samples, taken at rest, ideally after a horse has only had hay for the previous six hours, are a common screening tool.

However, your veterinarian might also suggest a dynamic test, such as an oral sugar test, to see how high your horse's insulin levels get after a dose of glucose. It can also be particularly helpful to test the blood about 60-90 minutes after feeding your horse's regular meal, or in the late afternoon if on pasture (because grass this time of day typically has the highest sugar content). This shows postprandial (after eating) insulin concentrations and would represent your horse's real world risk for HAL.

Managing horses with EMS typically involves addressing diet and exercise. Reducing your horse's calorie intake to facilitate weight loss (if overweight) and limiting NSC content to less than 10% of the total diet is important. This might require limiting or avoiding pasture access. Exercise—even low-intensity exercise such as walking, pole work, and hills—can contribute to better glucose metabolism (though exercise is not recommended in the acutely laminitic horse). If these methods do not fully control your horse's insulin concentrations, your veterinarian might turn to medications to support diet and exercise changes.

Though rare, horses with normal body condition scores might develop EMS, and insulin monitoring is an important part of EMS management.

WILDWOOD FARM AND TRIPLE CROWN FEEDS.

Our partnership with Triple Crown began in 2014 through a promotion with the USEF encouraging farm members to compare their current feeding programs with Triple Crown products. We have found the TC products to be superior to other products primarily because of the EquiMix technology and the research support of a leading-edge team including independent representatives of Equine Universities, Medical clinics and top-level riders and trainers

Down Memory Lane at Wildwood Farm MEET KNIGHT JAZZ

In the summer of 2004, we were offered the gift of a 19-yr old National Show Horse named Knight Jazz. We had known Jazz in the past, when I trained him for dressage and competed in various small shows and attended clinics with him in the late 1990s. Jazz's owner was moving to Portugal and wanted his last home to be with us.

Jazz was a beautiful bay horse who stood about 16 hands and was the elegant combination of an Arabian and a Saddlebred, known as a National Show Horse. We thought he would be the perfect horse for our riding lesson program

When I had known Jazz previously, he had been neglected and ridden incorrectly, developing back and pelvis issues that caused him to be locked up when riding. The dressage work we introduced him to was like therapy, and when he went back to his original owner in 1999, he was an amazing athlete with a strong, muscled conformation and exceptional work ethic.

When Jazz came back into our lives that summer of 2004 a lot of the work initially put into him had disappeared. His topline had dropped and his belly was distended, and the old anger he held in his frame was back. It was going to take 6-12 months of consistently good riding to get him to be useful in our riding program.

And, of course, that is exactly what we did!



At first Jazz was not able to move evenly and had a hitch in his left hind coming from his pelvis. The left and right pelvic bones were about 1 1/2 inches different in height. We had an amazing chiropractor who worked with him that year and the transformation was amazing.

Jazz entered our lesson program in 2005 and was an instant student favorite. A very expressive horse, he would talk to the students who arrived for their lessons with a deep nicker, hoping he was the one that would be chosen with treats and a good grooming. He often was!

Jazz was never very comfortable about being girthed and the students learned to take their time with him and take it slow; give him treats when we would hold his breath and offer gentle pats to reassure him.

One day one of his students approached us asking if Jazz was for sale. She had developed a deep bond with him and her parents said she could get her own horse to be kept at their property down the road. It was not a hard decision, and Jazz was able to spend the rest of his days in her loving care.



Taurus

Apr 20 - May 20

Strengths: Realistic, Dependable, Devoted

Weaknesses: Stubborn, Possessive, Unbending

Around the Stable: Instead of a pouty rump-to-the-door, this horse displays a big show of affection when you arrive.

In a Taurus horse, you have found a good-tempered and loyal companion. Always happy to see you, this horse will kick up a fuss if you don't pay them attention once you get to the barn.

Although these horses can be stubborn and willful at times, they can also form extremely strong bonds with their humans.

A Taurus horse loves nothing more than a steady routine and a caring grooming session. They love to get comfortable and relax under your massaging hands, so regular grooming is important in bonding with this horse. They are also very food-oriented, so make sure you have a well-balanced feeding schedule in place.

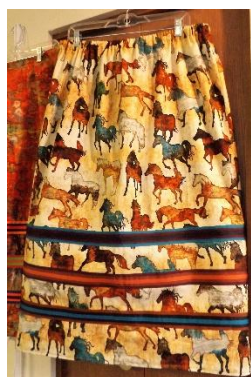
What Taurus horses despise the most are new situations and any changes in routine. Make sure to always stay calm and patient when introducing something new, and do it very gradually. Otherwise, this horse might entirely refuse to cooperate and will make your life a lot more difficult.



We celebrate these Birthdays in May!

Gary Struthers May 23rd, Terri Skelton May 25th,
Reno May 4th, Zippity May 9th, Sitka May 1st, Sterling May 15th, Mini
Max May 25th, Pharoah May 1st, Tanner May 19th

MOST FABULOUS HORSE SKIRTS!



London, England

Goodman's Fields Horses

Metal horses galloping through a London fountain provide a link to the city's past.



Six life-sized bronze statues show the freedom and movement of horses including splashes of water as they seem to gallop through the fountain. Some at first appear to be almost hidden between buildings with the horses in a number of different poses, including several that are in the large fountains that have a sequence of small splashes of water and lighting to provide the illusion of realistic movement as the horses gallop through the streets.

The plaque reads "Having escaped from their livery stables, six horses gallop through the streets of London. Careering through crowds of pedestrians until they are brought to a halt by the traffic flow on Lemen street."

The nearby Goodman's Field has an interesting history, written by the London historian, John Stow in his Survey of London and published in 1598. It provides some insight into the area, which included, "a farm belonging to the said nunnery; at the which farm I myself in my youth have fetched many a halfpenny worth of milk, and never had less than three ale pints for a halfpenny in the summer, nor less than one ale quart for a halfpenny in the winter, always hot from the kine, as the same was milked and strained. One Trolop, and afterwards Goodman, were the farmers there, and had thirty or forty kine to the pail. Goodman's son being heir to his father's purchase, let out the ground first for grazing of horses, and then for garden-plots, and lived like a gentleman thereby."

It was this written history that was the inspiration for Goodman's Fields Horses, the sculptor, Hamish Mackie has portrayed the unbridled joy of horses being released from the toil of working in the London streets. He included six breeds of horse to illustrate the variety of horses from the past.

Know Before You Go

The sculpture can be viewed at any time. It is on Piazza Walk, Goodmans Fields, between the Curzon Cinema and the Amazon Fresh convenience store. The nearest Underground station is Aldgate East, or from Whitechapel, which will pass past the fatberg manhole and the bell foundry. There is level access throughout, although there are randomly placed rocks and benches next to the unfenced water feature.

The Balearic Horse



The Balearic Horse, also known as Pura Raza Mallorquina, is a rare horse breed native to the Spanish island of Mallorca. These elegant equines have roamed the Balearic Islands for centuries, adapting to the rugged terrain and Mediterranean climate.

The Balearic horse is recognized as an official autochthonous breed by the Spanish government. This status helps protect and preserve these unique horses, which are closely tied to Mallorcan culture and history.

Known for their strength and sure-footedness, Balearic horses excel in various disciplines. They are prized for their calm temperament and versatility, making them ideal for both work and leisure activities on the island.

Balearic or Pura Raza Mallorquina horses are also known as the Cavall Mallorquí, and have unique physical traits that set it apart from other equine breeds.

The Pura Raza Mallorquina faced a serious threat of extinction in the mid-20th century. To protect the breed, a census (Censo) was conducted in the 1980s. This count revealed only about 30 purebred horses remained. The Asociación Española de Criadores y Propietarios de Caballos took action to save the breed. They created a stud book (Libro Genealógico) to track bloodlines. This step was crucial in fighting genetic erosion (Erosión Genética). Breeding programs were set up to increase numbers. Today, the population has grown to over 200 horses. While still rare, the breed is no longer at immediate risk of dying out.

The Balearic horse has a distinct look. It shares some traits with the Menorquín horse from nearby Menorca. Both breeds have a long head (Cabeza Alargada) and strong build.

Key physical features include:

- Height: 15-16 hands at the withers
- Coat: Mostly black, some dark bay
- Head: Long and straight profile
- Neck: Strong and arched
- Body: Compact and muscular

Cont'd from page 1

Professional opinions.

I looked at the mare, then back at the owner. "Don't let her read them."

Three years have passed since that conversation, and that supposedly unrideable mare continues to give lessons to children regularly and happily. She doesn't move quickly or for extended periods, and she benefits from occasional pain-relieving medication. But she has a purpose, she's adored by countless young riders, and by all observable measures, she's content with her life.

Another case stays with me just as powerfully. An eighteen-year-old gelding had been through the complete diagnostic circus: MRI, nerve blocks, radiographs, medication trials, and therapeutic shoeing adjustments. All of this was in response to a hoof issue that caused a slight forelimb lameness, particularly noticeable when circling. I drove well beyond my normal practice area to evaluate this horse and review the mountain of accumulated data. After my examination, I asked the owner about the horse's current use.

"I take him out for walks on the trail two or three times a week," she explained.

My recommendation seemed almost too simple: "Why not give him a small dose of pain reliever before your trail walks and let him enjoy walking around this beautiful arena the rest of the time?"

The owner's immediate concern revealed how deeply the culture of worry had taken root. "But won't the pain reliever destroy his stomach?" she asked anxiously.

"No," I assured her.

That conversation happened four years ago. I encountered the owners at a lecture I presented about a year later, and everyone involved was thriving. As far as I know, the gelding's stomach remained intact, and the arrangement continues to work beautifully for both horse and owner.

I share these stories because the commercial side of the equine industry seems determined to convince horse owners that anything less than perfection is unacceptable. Words like "optimum," "ideal," and other carefully chosen marketing language imply that every horse harbors some hidden pathology just waiting to manifest as catastrophe. The message being sold is dangerously binary: your horse is either perfect or doomed.

This relentless pursuit of flawless equine health is, in my professional opinion, largely harmful. The constant anxiety, the hours spent researching potential problems on the internet, the fear of what might go wrong—all of this robs horse owners of the fundamental joy that should come with horse ownership. When a horse glances at his flank, it almost never means he's experiencing intestinal torsion. When a horse receives appropriate nutrition, he's not teetering on the edge of some nutritional catastrophe that only the latest miracle supplement can prevent. Excessive worry leads to unnecessary diagnostic testing, wasted money on veterinary and other services, and a futile quest for reassurance through endless interventions and products.

Understanding and monitoring your horse's health is certainly important. But there's a vast difference between reasonable concern when your horse shows signs of illness or injury and perpetual anxiety about potential future problems. Constant worrying about a healthy, normal horse creates problems primarily for the owner, not the horse.

Just recently, a seventy-year-old client brought me her nineteen-year-old gelding. She'd acquired him from a riding school and was concerned because someone had mentioned he was limping. I watched him trot and confirmed there was a slight irregularity in his gait.

"What do you do with him?" I inquired.

"I enjoy walking on the trails with him on weekends with my friends. Or maybe every other weekend," she replied.

I palpated his pastern and felt a minor enlargement. I was fairly certain he had some degree of osteoarthritis, commonly called ringbone.

Here's what I didn't recommend: radiographs, bone scans, MRIs, joint injections, joint supplements, specialty shoeing, liniments, platelet-rich plasma therapy, or stem cell treatments.

Instead, I gestured toward her seventy-five-year-old husband Fred and asked, "How's Fred doing? Is he moving around like he did when you two got married fifty years ago?"

She laughed. "No, definitely not."

"Thinking about trading him in?"

"Only sometimes," she said with a smile.

I suggested she continue enjoying those pleasant long walks and perhaps give the horse—not Fred, as I don't prescribe human medications—a pain reliever if he seemed uncomfortable. Several months have passed and everything continues to go wonderfully. I actually saw them both just the other day. The situation is ideal for everyone involved. Nobody moves with perfect soundness, Fred included. But everyone is functional, serviceable, and most importantly, happy.

So, what does "serviceable" actually mean? To me, it means the horse can perform the work being asked of him without suffering. Horses typically go out and give their best effort—it's one of the qualities we treasure most about them. Our responsibility is to care for them, but that responsibility doesn't include achieving the impossible goal of perfection. A horse can be imperfect and still be wonderful.

Mark Twain captured a certain wisdom about horses when he wrote: "I preferred a safe horse to a fast one—I would like to have an excessively gentle horse—a horse with no spirit whatever—a lame one, if he had such a thing." (Roughing It, Chapter 64)

I rarely view situations in absolute terms. I believe firmly that the perfect is the enemy of the good. A horse isn't simply good or bad, serviceable or worthless. The equine world is full of wonderful horses who might have some minor flaw or imperfection, but who will nevertheless be the best horse their owner could ever hope for. Don't pass by one of these treasures simply because he doesn't match someone else's arbitrary definition of perfection. He might not be flawless, but he can still be serviceable, useful, and even absolutely great.

