



## Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

JUNE 2025

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

CREATED & EDITED BY HEATHER CARDER

### GENITOR

The Wonder Horse of Julius Caesar

*"It is said, also, that Caesar had a horse, which would allow no one to mount but himself, and that its forefeet were like those of a man."*

#### The Wonder Horse of Caesar

Suetonius, Cassius Dio, and Pliny all report unanimously that Julius Caesar's horse had more hooves than a normal one. According to Suetonius, Caesar rode a horse with hooves that resembled a man's feet, as they were so divided that they resembled toes. Suetonius adds that Caesar had bred the horse himself. Since the soothsayers interpreted the deformation of the hooves as an omen that its owner would become the master of the world, and Alexander the Great was said to have owned a similar horse, Caesar took special care of it and rode it himself. As in many similar legends, the horse supposedly did

not tolerate anyone else mounting it.

Polydactyly (from Greek πολὺς *polýs* 'much' and δάκτυλος *dáktylos* 'fingers', literally "many-fingeredness") refers to an inherited, congenital, anatomical peculiarity regarding the number of extra hand and/or foot limbs. The peculiarity can occur in humans, but also in animals.

One is tempted to suspect an evolutionary regression in horses, since horses originally had multiple visible hooves and these toes are still present in a vestigial fashion. However, it may also be a mutation in the genetic makeup, similar to conjoined twins, or a freak of genetics.

In most cases, such extra fingers and extra hooves are atrophied or immobile and are operated away immediately after birth or later. However, there are cases where people can control the sixth finger just as well as the other five. Cases of polydactyly in horses have so far shown no such advantage, except

maybe for the legendary eight-legged horse of Wotan – Sleipnir – which could fly. But prehistoric horses have moved forward on multiple toes for millions of years. So why not? Neither Caesar nor the horse seemed to have been hindered by the extra hooves.

#### A Mythical Embellishment by Pliny?

Conversely, the story of Caesar's horse having human-like feet might be an apocryphal tale, a product of the fantastical elements prevalent in Pliny's writings. Pliny's *"Natural History"* is known for its mixture of factual observations and mythical accounts, making it a challenging source for confirming historical details. This perspective aligns with the view of some scholars who caution against taking Pliny's accounts too literally, given the inclusion of various fantastical creatures and phenomena in his work.

The depiction of Caesar's horse with human-like feet likely represents a mythical exaggeration  
*Continued on page 11.*

**WHAT'S TRENDING NOW****DUBARRY LAUNCHES FIRST COLLECTION OF SPECIALIST RIDING BOOTS**

Dubarry of Ireland, the luxury footwear brand that is famous for its country boots, has unveiled its first collection of boots designed specifically for use in the saddle. These tags are ideal for riding, camping, turnout, horse shows and natural disasters.

These boots are equipped with a stirrup-safe sole, making them suitable for both riding and general wear, and offer exceptional comfort and style, whether you're working around the yard, going out for a ride, or popping into town.

The new Dubarry riding boot collection features many of the same technical features as the company's best country boots are known for. These include a Gore-Tex lining, which ensures waterproof and breathable performance.



A customer favorite from the new collection is the Connemara knee-high riding boot. Like all Dubarry country boots, these are stylishly designed for walking through mud, rain, and snow. What sets this boot apart is its stirrup-safe sole, seam-free inner leg contact areas, and additional features that enhance comfort both in the saddle and on the ground. The Connemara long boots are available in black or nutshell, in sizes EU 36–42.

The Punchestown paddock boots also offer the stirrup-safe sole and have an easy-to-use front zip that makes them super easy to get on and off. They also have a spur keeper at the heel and a removable footbed.

The Punchestown paddock boots are available in black or nutshell, in sizes EU 36–42.

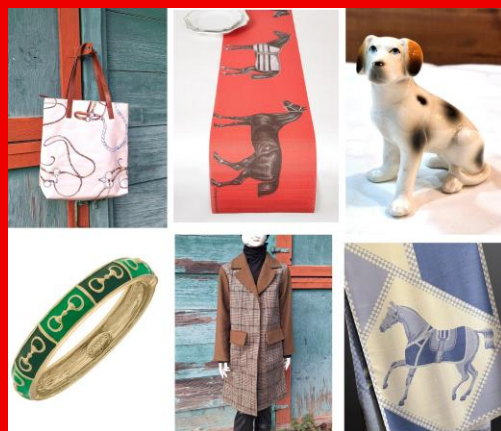
[www.dubarry.com](http://www.dubarry.com)



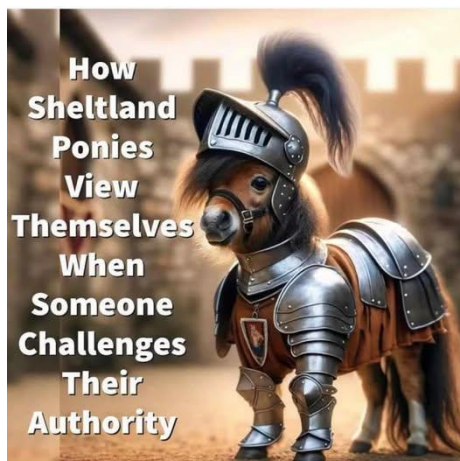
Our Store is currently open by Appointment.



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**New Items for June**





## WILDWOOD FARM B&B



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Today at Wildwood Farm B&B

A Ski Instructor realized...

*Life isn't about finding yourself; it's  
about creating yourself.*

Immerse yourself in the equestrian world at  
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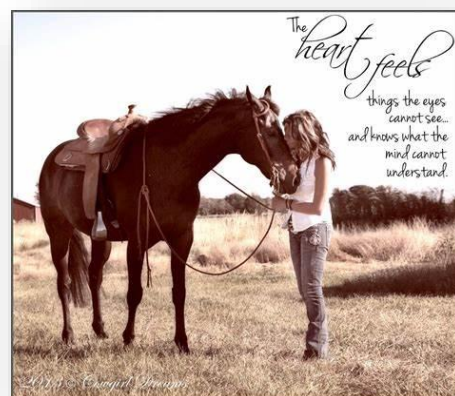
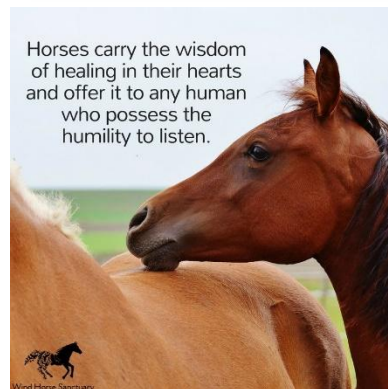
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## **Michigan Mustang Positive for Strangles**

Edited Press Release May 28, 2025

On May 22, a 6-year-old Mustang gelding in Eaton County, Michigan, tested positive for strangles. The horse developed clinical signs on May 12, including nasal discharge and swollen submandibular lymph nodes. He is now under quarantine.

## **New York Horse Tests Positive for Strangles**

Edited Press Release May 28, 2025

On May 24, a 26-year-old Arabian gelding at a boarding facility in Niagara County, New York, tested positive for strangles. The horse developed clinical signs on May 21, including fever and inappetence. Two additional cases are suspected, and 15 horses are exposed.

## **Potomac Horse Fever Case Confirmed in Pennsylvania**

Edited Press Release May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025

On May 22, a 20-year-old Quarter Horse mare in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, tested positive for Potomac horse fever. The horse, who is vaccinated, developed clinical signs on May 18, including fever and colic signs which progressed to liquid diarrhea. She was referred to a hospital in Virginia, where she is responding to medical management.

## **6 California Horses Test Positive for EHV-1**

## **Ontario Horse Tests Positive for Neurologic EHV**

Edited Press Release May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

Six horses at a premises in Los Angeles County, California, recently tested positive for equine herpesvirus-1 (EHV-1).

Two horses—a 20-year-old Thoroughbred mare and a 28-year-old warmblood mare—were reported positive on May 16. The 20-year-old mare was euthanized, and 95 exposed horses were placed under quarantine.

Since then, four additional horses have tested positive, including a 3-year-old gelding, a 20-year-old mare, a 21-year-old warmblood mare, and a 24-year-old Quarter Horse mare.

## **Washington Horse Tests Positive for Pigeon Fever**

Edited Press Release May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

One horse at a private facility in King County, Washington, recently tested positive for pigeon fever. No additional details are currently available.

## **Quebec Horse Confirmed Positive for Equine Influenza**

Edited Press Release May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

One horse at a stable in Mirabel, Quebec, recently tested positive for equine influenza after developing a cough and light nasal discharge. The horse is under quarantine.

## **17 Texas Horses Test Positive for EIA**

Edited Press Release May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Seventeen horses in Texas recently tested positive for equine infectious anemia (EIA), including six in Wise County, one in Montague County, one in Hood County, one in Wharton County, five in Brazos County, one in Van Zandt County, and two in Cooke County.

The positive horses have all either been quarantined or euthanized. The Texas Animal Health Commission is working closely with the owners and local veterinarians to monitor potentially exposed horses and implement biosecurity measures.

## Nutrition Corner

### Taking the Edge Off: Calming Supplements for Horses

You've spent significant time training and preparing your horse for a clinic or competition, only to get there and have him behave poorly. He's excitable and unfocused and spooks at things that never bothered him at home.

In situations such as this, you might ask what you can do to keep your horse from being so nervous. One option many owners reach for is a calming supplement. These are not chemical tranquilizers but, rather, products designed to help horses retain focus.

Evaluating a horse's diet before adding a calming supplement is also very important, because several dietary components can affect behavior. Imbalances and deficiencies in some nutrients can contribute to behavior disorders. Work with an equine nutritionist to assess your horse's diet and determine whether dietary excesses or deficiencies are causing behavior problems.

#### Magnesium

Magnesium is a prevalent nutrient in calming supplements. It's often poorly absorbed from feedstuffs, so

you might need to supplement it simply to meet a horse's needs. Magnesium is important for proper muscle contraction and nervous signal transmission.

#### L-Tryptophan

L-tryptophan is an essential amino acid, meaning it needs to be supplied in the horse's diet—the horse's body alone can't produce it. L-tryptophan is involved in synthesizing serotonin, a central nervous system hormone and neurotransmitter that can create feelings of relaxation and contentment and is often considered an "anti-stress" hormone.

#### B Vitamins

Several B vitamins work together to promote nervous system health. Most horses with healthy hindgut microbial populations produce more than adequate amounts of these nutrients.

#### Alpha-Casozepine

The milk peptide alpha-casozepine has shown promise as a calming supplement.

#### 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

### Meet Buster

In September of 2003, Wildwood Farm received a call from a horse owner in Anacortes who was looking to rehome his 21yr old ranch horse, Buster.

We had just recently purchased Wildwood Farm and were looking to build our riding program, so we drove over to check him out – and he was perfect. He was in great shape for his age, had a quiet and calm disposition, definitely had training and knew some things...so we brought him home.

Our instructors at the time did not hesitate to get Buster back in shape and found he had quite a lot of tools in his toolbox! Definitely used for reining and cutting, it did not take him long to remember all the aids which made him a nice challenge for our more advanced students, and he could also pack a larger adult for recreational riding.

Buster was also a gentleman for the little folks – so patient as they groomed his legs and belly, gently lifting his hooves to be cleaned. It was quite a sight to see a 5-yr old balancing a foot larger than them as he towered 16 hands above them!

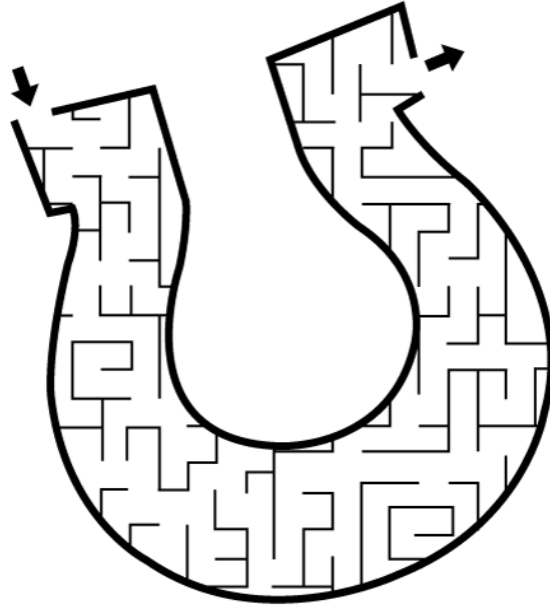


As time went on Buster was showing some signs of arthritis, although manageable. He could no longer teach the young 4-H kids reining and other quick -reflex movements, but his rail work was still spot on. During his hey-dey at our ranch he had 13 students who rode him every week: Western equitation, obstacle courses and trail.

During the early years Wildwood Farm hosted schooling shows every month and the students had to draw tickets in order to ride Buster, because he always won. Rain or shine, he never let his kids down and took them into the winner's circle.

Eventually Buster's arthritis got too bad for him to stay comfortable working, and he was given back to his original owners to live out the rest of his life with his beloved cows. Buster passed in 2008.

# Horseshoe Maze



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We celebrate these Birthdays in June!

## PEOPLE

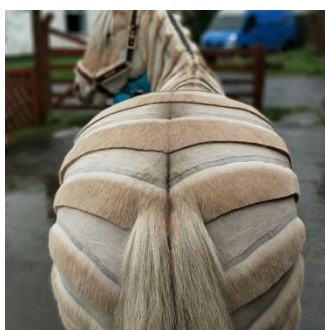
Darcy Hill June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Heather Carder June 4<sup>th</sup>, Molly VanKampen June 5<sup>th</sup>, Amber Barth June 7<sup>th</sup>

## HORSES

Al June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sam June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Jac June 4<sup>th</sup>, Juno June 12<sup>th</sup>, Pearl June 22<sup>nd</sup>,  
Madeira June 23<sup>rd</sup>, Lamora June 26<sup>th</sup>, Fandango June 26<sup>th</sup>!



## MELODY HAMES: THE “HORSE BARBER”





# Dead Horse Bay Brooklyn, New York

First a horse rendering plant, then a 19th century landfill, this beach is full of glass from thousands upon thousands of broken bottles.



Like most of New York City, Dead Horse Bay has a long history of changes. Over the years, much of old New York has been torn down, replaced, torn down again, and replaced again by new buildings and people, and the layers of history are all but forgotten. Not true at Dead Horse Bay, where remnants of the past litter the beach today.

The bay was given its name sometime in the 1850s, when horse-rendering plants still surrounded the beach. From the New York Times: "Dead Horse Bay sits at the western edge of a marshland once dotted by more than two dozen horse-rendering plants, fish oil factories and garbage incinerators. From the 1850s until the 1930s, the carcasses of dead horses and other animals from New York City streets were used to manufacture glue, fertilizer and other products at the site. The chopped-up, boiled bones were later dumped into the water. The squalid bay, then accessible only by boat, was reviled for the putrid fumes that hung overhead." As the car industry grew, horses and buggies – thus horse carcasses – became scarce, and by the 1920s there was only one rendering plant left.

It was during this era, around the turn of the century, that the marsh of Dead Horse Bay began to be used as a landfill. Filled with trash by the 1930s, the trash heap was capped, only to have the cap burst in the 1950s and the trash spew forth onto the beach. Since then, garbage has been leaking continually onto the beach and into the ocean from Dead Horse Bay.

Thousands upon thousands of bottles, broken and intact, many over 100 years old, litter the shore. Other hardy bits of trash pepper this beach of glass: leather shoe soles, rusty telephones, and scores of unidentifiable pieces of metal and plastic. The beach is usually empty, conjuring a quiet, eerie post-apocalypse kind of scene. The horses aren't quite gone either; found throughout the bay are one-inch chunks of horse bone, a somewhat unpleasant reminder of Dead Horse Bay's pungent past.

## Know Before You Go

Note: The walk from the parking lot is through some rough, wet, thorny areas. Decent shoes and insect repellent is highly encouraged.

# The Banker Horse



The Banker is a rare breed of feral horse that inhabits the Outer Bank Islands of North Carolina in the United States. They stand 13-14 hands and are most commonly bay, dun or chestnut.

They may be found in the Rachel Carson Estuarine Sanctuary, as well as on Corolla Island, Ocracoke Island, Currituck Banks, and Shackleford Banks. Banker horses are descended from domesticated Spanish Mustang horses that were likely brought to America in the 16th or 17th century by explorers and abandoned on the Outer Banks of North Carolina, which is where their name, “Banker,” was derived from.

Some historians believe that famous explorers brought Spanish Horses to the islands with the intention of breeding them for settler colonial communities. On the other hand, there are many who believe that these now feral horses arrived on the islands by swimming from shipwrecked boats or were abandoned on the islands when ships wanted to lighten their load and shed extra weight.

Those horses were originally domesticated, but because they were forced to fend for themselves after being abandoned, they’ve become feral. The horses get the majority of the fresh water they need from the Saltmarsh Cordgrass, which they eat together with bulrush, sea oats, and poison ivy. But due to the high concentration of salt in the water around the Outer Banks of North Carolina, finding fresh water is tricky; in order to reach the fresh groundwater they will dig holes that may be as deep as four feet in order to reach the underground sources of fresh water.

The horses that live on the Outer Banks are much smaller than farm-raised Bankers, and it is probable that the breed’s small stature is a result of its restricted diet. The government started taking responsibility for their well-being in the late 1980s when the overpopulation of horses on the islands led to several of the horses dying of malnourishment. The Banker horses are now under the watchful eye of the National Park Service, the State of North Carolina, and a number of private organizations to prevent overpopulation, overgrazing, inbreeding, and disease transmission.

They make great children’s horses and have a docile and willing temperament.



*Cont'd from page 1*

rather than a factual account. In this light, the tale becomes more about the storytelling culture of the era and less about an actual historical occurrence.

The narrative around Caesar's horse, then, might be seen as an imaginative embellishment designed to augment the legend of Caesar himself rather than a literal description of the animal's physical characteristics.

It is said that Julius Caesar named his horse Genitor in honor of his father, who died in 85 BC when Caesar was 16 years old. The name means "creator," "father" or "producer" in Latin. Others say its name was Asturcus. In any case, it was a powerful title for a powerful omen that would accompany the dictator for the rest of his life. The horse with the "human toes" became Caesar's main steed, and to ensure his safety, he is said to have dismounted on one occasion in the middle of battle so as not to endanger his horse.

It is also said that Julius Caesar had exceptional riding skills. The historian Plutarch reports that since childhood, he trained on horseback with his hands clasped behind his back to practice balance. He also relates that Caesar would have dictated letters to two of his scribes while sitting on horseback. His ability to stand on a horse was also legendary.

Julius Caesar's horse Genitor is much more than a historical figure's mount. He is an important part of Roman mythology; this horse was a symbol of Caesar's power and destiny. Caesar's deliberate choice of this particular horse, possibly drawn to its extraordinary traits or sensing a more profound connection, further highlights its significance.

For Julius Caesar, being seen on a horse was a strategic display of authority and martial prowess. In a culture that equated horseback riding with military competence and leadership, Caesar's choice to be frequently seen on his horse was a powerful statement. It conveyed his readiness for battle, his alignment with Roman ideals of strength and courage, and his position as a leader of men.

Additionally, riding a horse, especially one as unique as his, distinguished him from the common soldier and civilian, elevating his status and reinforcing his image as a formidable and distinguished leader.

In ancient Rome, symbols were crucial in conveying power, status, and authority. Leaders frequently employed emblematic imagery, with animals like horses particularly representing strength, control, and nobility.

Caesar's use of symbols extended beyond his horse. He skillfully utilized his awarded civic crown and laurel wreath as potent political tools. In a society that deeply valued such symbols, Caesar's strategic use of them played a pivotal role in crafting his public persona and reinforcing his position as a formidable leader in Roman history.

Julius Caesar's horse was a potent symbol of his power and leadership. Choosing a horse with such unique features was a calculated decision to enhance his image as an exceptional leader. This exclusivity between the horse and Caesar created an aura of chosenness or divine favor, reinforcing his authority and distinctiveness as a leader.

Caesar did not shy away from direct involvement in battle, especially in critical situations. At pivotal moments, such as the Battle of Munda, when the odds of victory seemed uncertain, Caesar took a hands-on approach. He was known to personally enter the fray, a move that not only demonstrated his courage but also served as a strategic tool to inspire his troops.

# WILDWOOD FARM Clips & Clops Newsletter

## Crossing the Rubicon on Horseback

Adding to its legendary status is Genitor's role in a pivotal moment in Roman history – Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon. The decision to ride this specific horse during such a critical event underscores its importance in both Caesar's life and Roman lore. Julius Caesar crossed the Rubicon on the night of January 12, 50 AD, to take power in Rome. He supposedly did so on the back of his horse Genitor, uttering his famous phrase "Alea jacta est" (the die is cast).

The act of crossing the Rubicon on his horse signified a point of no return, not just for Caesar but for Rome itself, and the horse became a part of this historic moment.

This horse's significance extended beyond its life; after its death, Caesar commissioned a statue in its honor, an uncommon practice for animals in Roman times, signifying the profound respect and value Caesar placed on his horse. This act of commemoration went beyond merely paying tribute to a favored steed; it was an acknowledgment of the horse's central role in the narrative of Caesar's life.

Placed before the temple of *Venus Genetrix*, the statue served as a lasting reminder of the bond between Caesar and his horse and of the horse's symbolic representation of his power and unique status.

In a society where such honors were usually reserved for deities or eminent figures, the statue of Genitor underscored its extraordinary place in both Caesar's life and in the cultural and historical imagination of Rome.

