



## Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

June 2021

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

### How equine members of the film industry prepare for on-camera roles.

#### Behind the Scenes with the horses of Hollywood

WHEN A CHARACTER IN A movie or a TV show effortlessly hops on the back of a horse and rides off like hell's on their heels, it seems like it's no big deal. But making horses perform on camera takes a surprising amount of planning and preparation, leaving the horses better trained and cared for than most of the actors.

Horses have been a fixture of the moving picture world literally since the beginning. The very first "film" is often considered to be Eadweard Muybridge's shot of a galloping horse, created by a series of still photographs that he displayed in a spinning zoopraxiscope that gave the illusion of motion. As motion pictures evolved into silent films, talkies, and the movies and TV we love today, horses have been an integral part of the business.

Jack Lilley is the owner of [Movin On Livestock](#), a motion picture barn that has been supplying animals for TV and

film for four generations. Hired to oversee the equine handling on movies like the **Magnificent Seven**, Lilley ensures Hollywood's horses are kept safe and happy. This requires patience, training, and selecting the right animals in the first place

As with humans, not just any horse is cut out to be a star. Before a horse can even gallop on set they need to be vetted for their disposition. If a horse is too skittish, or "looky" as Lilley describes them, they might not be a great choice to bring to a bustling movie set full of flashing lights, loud noises, and frantic people. "We don't want any of them prancing or high-powered horses," says Lilley. "We want that type that you could put [your kids] on, and say, 'Ride him home.'" It's important that a movie horse isn't startled or spooked easily, both for the safety of the riders and the animals. "All in all, the American Quarter Horse is the best. They've got the best disposition and nothing bothers them."

Once Lilley's ranch gets a new horse, which are bought from the age of five and up, often from more traditional ranches, his team slowly acclimate them to being on a movie set. Cowboys—real ones, not movie ones—will slowly ride the horses around a set with the lights

and production pieces in place. "I like to start them on a big street scene," says Lilley. "Pretty soon they see that nothing's going to bother them." Ideally they'll acclimate to the madness of a movie set to the point of being shockingly docile. "[The ideal horse is one that] you could fall all over. If you were doing a fight, you could roll under his belly and he wouldn't try to step on you," says Lilley.

All behind-the-scenes hustle and bustle aside, a horse in a film is pretty likely to take part in a scene with gunfire, or some other violent activity. Whether it's an epic war movie like **War Horse** (which Lilley's ranch also had a part in), or an oater like **True Grit** (either version), or a fantasy romp like **Lord of the Rings**, the horses are in for some loud, action-packed activity, and even the calmest steed needs to be acclimated to it. To do this, Lilley takes the direct approach in his training, firing off some guns around them until it doesn't scare them. Of course, this is done with the health and safety of the horse in mind. "We'll take them down to the sand and ride them and shoot quarter blanks," says Lilley, referring to a cartridge with less kick than a normal bullet. Shots are fired

*Continued on page 11*

# CinergE Energy Bodywork

CinergE is a fusion of alternative bodywork treatments designed to bring health and well-being to living creatures of every kind. CinergE combines energy balancing, Reiki, deep tissue massage and animal communication to locate and treat a horse's physical imbalances that cause mental and physical stress.

**Energy Work:** Horses are extremely sensitive to touch, and this quality helps them release blocked energy very easily. Energy release helps muscles soften which increases circulation and detoxifies tissue, reducing inflammation. Energy work brings healing circulation to arthritic joints and also helps injuries heal more quickly.

The first thing to do when starting to work on a horse is to balance the "fuses", three sets of key body points that represent linkages for the emotional, mental and physical energy systems.

**1. The Emotional Fuses**...are the sockets over the eyes. When these fuses are out it means that something is upsetting your horse. It could be something as simple as a change of stall location. It could be a change from sweet feed to pellets. It could be a training problem.



**2. The Mental Fuses** ...are below the ears (the bone there looks like a V). If these fuses are out of balance, it means the horse has been through some kind of trauma. It could indicate that the horse has been abused, run through a fence or had a very bad experience.

**3. The Physical Fuses**...are located on your horse's chest, in the pectoral groove. These fuses can be out for a variety of reasons. The first thing I look for is a change in hay, especially looking for moldy hay. Airborne springtime molds will also affect these fuses, as will other physical stress issues such as injuries. No need for alarm if you find any of these fuses out of balance – it is just a signal to keep a slightly more watchful eye on your horse.

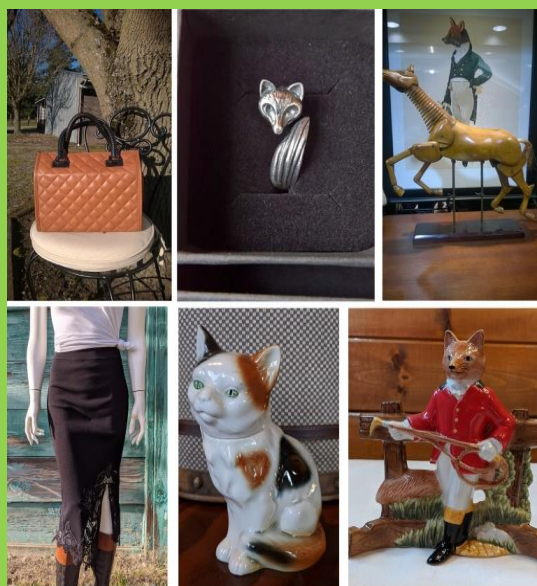


Our store is open 12:00pm – 7:00pm Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday

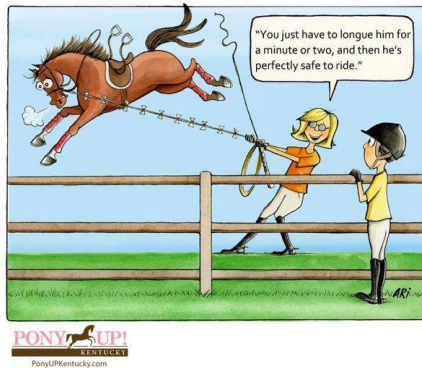
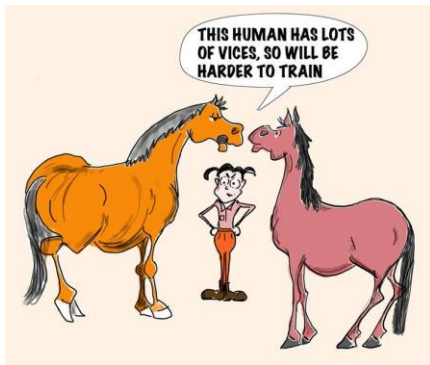
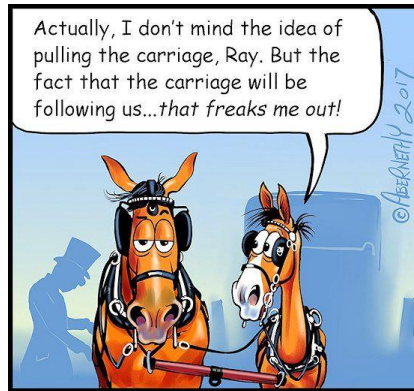
Shop online!  
[www.thenoblehorsevintage.com](http://www.thenoblehorsevintage.com)  
[www.theurbanequustrian.com](http://www.theurbanequustrian.com)



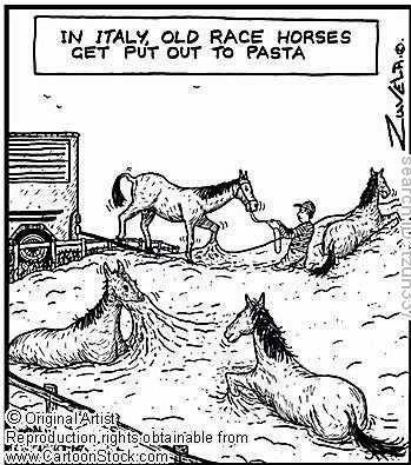
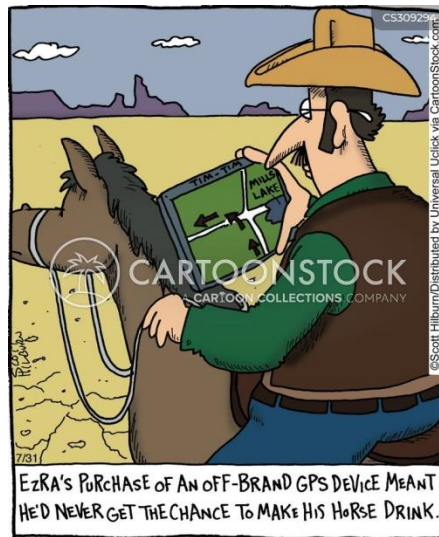
## New Items for June







**LOOK MA NO CAVITIES!**

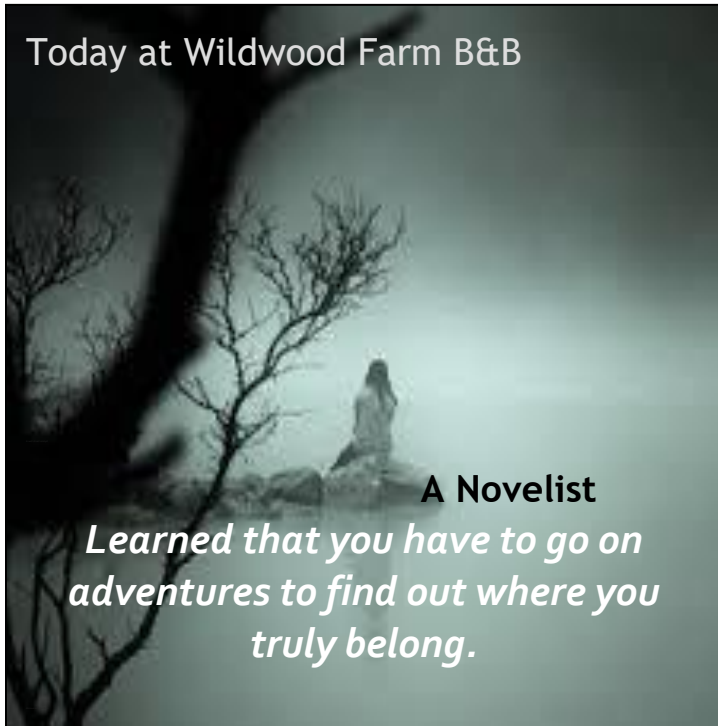


## WILDWOOD FARM B&B



### This is your moment.

Today at Wildwood Farm B&B



**A Novelist**

*Learned that you have to go on adventures to find out where you truly belong.*

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](http://www.wildwoodfarmbandb.com)

WILDWOOD FARM HAS IT ALL!

PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
PNWA  
Riding Academy



### WILL YOU?

Learn that the perfect companion never has fewer than four feet?



### WILL YOU?

Learn to not only talk to animals, but to listen?



[WWW.PNWRiding.com](http://WWW.PNWRiding.com)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
RIDING ACADEMY



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Topic Sentences and Friends

Carefully read the paragraph below. Draw a square around the topic sentence and color it red. Search for the supporting sentences and color them green. Color the concluding sentence yellow.



Horses come in many colors, shapes, and sizes. They are usually grey, black, white, brown, yellow, or red. They can be large, or they can be small. All horses have hard hooves, which protect their feet. These hooves are made out of the same material as your fingernails. A horse's job is determined by its size, speed, and power. Some horses are beasts of burden, used for the farm or pulling carriages. Other horses are used for sports, like racing or polo. There are many varieties of horses, called breeds. People have been breeding horses for thousands of years, and in many parts of the world they are still very useful animals and wonderful companions.



Write a paragraph about an imaginary or real pet. Underline your topic sentence, and be sure to include at least three supporting sentences and a conclusion.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Nutrition Corner

### The Benefits of Dandelion Root

Although most people think of dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) as a pesky weed, the plant has long been used in herbal medicine for both humans and horses to aid in digestion, help stimulate appetite and detoxify the blood.

In traditional Chinese and Native American medicine, dandelion root has long been used to treat stomach and liver conditions, the root of the dandelion is rich in the carbohydrate inulin, which is a type of soluble fiber found in plants that supports the growth and maintenance of a healthy bacterial flora in the intestinal tract.

Dandelion root is also full of potent antioxidants that help neutralize the free radicals in your horse's body. It contains a high level of beta-carotene, which is known to provide strong protection against cellular damage and oxidative stress.

Dandelion Root may be effective in reducing inflammation

Caused by disease due to the presence of various bioactive compounds like polyphenols within the root (and plant).

Chicoric and chlorogenic are two bioactive compounds found in dandelion root that may aid in blood sugar control, as these acids have been shown to limit the digestion of starch.

Dandelion root is a diuretic, which can detoxify certain organs and it also contains potassium which is associated with healthy blood and oxygen utilization.

Dandelion root is good for your horse's liver and can reduce levels of excess fat stored in the liver and protect against oxidative stress in liver tissue.

Dandelion root has also shown to have the capacity to dramatically slow the growth of cancer cells in the liver.

**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 over 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

### In Memory Of Blue

Blue came to Wildwood Farm in May of 2020 when he was 26 yrs old, a free adoption from a family in Oregon who simply did not have the time or resources to keep him going, and we were looking for a horse for an elderly client who we thought Blue would be a perfect fit for.

It didn't turn out as planned and our client found another horse he wanted, but we saw something very special in Old Blue and decided to keep him on as a horse our instructors could ride when giving trail rides. And Blue proved himself to be a solid, hard-working horse that was no-nonsense. He had skills and he knew how to use them for the rider who knew how to ask, and he found a few students who benefitted from the chance to ride him.

Blue was a blue roan quarter horse what was started on a ranch in Montana. He worked cows and spent full days on the range working hard for his cowboys. When Blue was about 15 yrs old he was purchased by a family in Oregon who wanted a gaming and trail horse and for 10 years he toted the adults and children around to various gaming Shows and rodeo events, and he never let them down.



One of the stories we were told about Blue is when his young rider – she was 6 – was doing a reining pattern at a local show she messed up the pattern and lost her reins. But Blue knew the pattern and made the appropriate corrections and finished to a standing ovation by the crowd.

We lost Blue to complications from colic in May, and he will be missed. His stoic energy and straightforward work ethic was a pleasure to witness and we are simply left with gratitude for the year we had with him.

## INTERVIEW WITH INTERNATIONAL TRAINER OF THE YEAR BRIAN MEEHAN (UK)

**Brian, to set the scene for our readers, how many horses do you have in training here at Manton at any one time?**

About 80

**Is that a fairly consistent number throughout the year?**

We start the year at about 85 and it dwindles down until the autumn and then we restock with yearlings.

**What is the average day like for these horses when they haven't got any actual racing coming up? Is every day fairly consistent?**

Generally, yes. The idea is to keep them in a routine as most of them are young, 2 and 3 year olds and they don't like being out of their comfort zone. We try and keep them in the same routine and have them fed at the same time, exercised at the same time and so on.

**And how does race preparation differ to that? For those that aren't in the know, do you up the workload or reduce the work load?**

Well every Thursday we do what we call 'fast work', where they are on the grass or the all-weather depending on the conditions. Almost every horse will do that each week. That then gives you a guide as to how forward or backward they are, then the next week we'll step it up if they look like they are ready. We had a 2 year old today who stepped up this morning so next week we'll put him in with one that's won a race and see where he is. They have an inherent fitness level that's there anyway, it's really about stepping them up and making them sharper. Giving them more experience riding at home with better horses, sharper horses, ones that have more experience.

**When looking to mix the horses in that way is there ever a tendency to be cautious over the fear of injury or that the step up might be too much?**

Yeah, I mean instinctively when you are coming up to a classic or a Group 1 race you tend to be a little more careful but you shouldn't be really as they don't know, do they? I mean they have a certain instinct that something different is coming up but really the important thing is to keep them in their routine

**Just on the actual training side of things, there is more technology and analysis than ever before involved in watching racing. Has that crept into training at all? Have things changed over the years?**

There are a number of ways you could approach the question really. They say that veterinary science is always ahead of medical science, so things there have changed for sure. In terms of the actual training, I don't think so. Again perhaps when there is a problem on the veterinary side of things, there is more you can do and more you can find out. Although that is quite dangerous too because no matter what the injury, horses generally need time, so you have to give them that. In terms of other things, we send the owners video reports once a fortnight, with some dialogue from me which the owners really like. But the actual training side of things hasn't changed much.

**Talking of the veterinary side of things, has the nutrition and the way the horses eat changed in recent years?**

Yes there is more knowledge and there are more things that you can find out but again it needs to be kept simple. One thing that has really changed, which is significant, is that there is an awful lot more racing. So there is more pressure on us, and the horses. Recovery therefore becomes really important. We keep the feeding simple but analyze more often. The sort of horse I have, it's all about growth so a high protein diet, but simplicity is the most important thing.

**We've been asked how you might weigh up a horse, or how long it takes before you get a feel for the horse? Can you ever tell early on whether they have got it or not?**

It is really about feeling a positive attitude from the horse. Any horse that has a lack of interest or a negative feeling about it takes a bit longer to gauge, and that comes out even more when the pressure is increased. So it's not immediate.

**In terms of a horse trajectory and how you train it and what races you aim at it, how much of that is down to your intuition as a trainer and how much is down to work guys, jockeys, owners and the like and their opinions?**

It's a combination of your trusted lads, daily riders and exercise riders who give important feedback, the pedigree and also the individual himself. As trainers we all tend to follow a routine year after year; you might take the horse to Newbury, if it wins you follow it up elsewhere and so on. There is a routine and pattern there too.

**Talking of the owners, how honest can you be with owners? Do they appreciate the honesty if you tell them one isn't up to it, etc.?**

Across the board everyone wants honest feedback. As we are more scrutinized by the media, social media and the like, we have to be prepared to supply honest information, sometimes more than you like. You might think that instinctively a horse that isn't performing has more to give but because there is more footage, more opinions at an early stage you may have to take it out of training earlier than you would like.

**How hard is it to manage owner's expectations?**

It's more down to the trainer and his expectations. If you can keep your enthusiasm under wraps and be honest the owners normally feel the same way.

**Do the owners try and lean you towards booking certain jockeys for certain horses?**

A little bit. Usually you make the right judgement call anyway. I usually use the best available and I have Jimmy Fortune who has been out most of the season, unfortunately.

**For those that are new to racing, saying a horse "won't go well" on certain ground is something people can find difficult to understand. How do you tell when training them how they will go on what ground?**

Well you've got pedigree to start with. It tends to follow. Then the way they move and lastly if they are actually running it in practice. Those are the key three.



# Marwari Horses

Gundisar, India

**Old and brave breed of warhorses known for their elegant, curved ears.**



**RENOWNED FOR THEIR BRAVERY IN** battle and recognized by ears that curve into a perfect arch, the Marwari Horses of India were once the exclusive steeds of the Rajput rulers.

Named for Marwar (“region of death”), their original breeding place in Rajasthan, the horses were believed to be divine and superior to even the most royal of people. The horses were celebrated for their bravery and loyalty in the bardic literature of the Rajasthan.

One story tells of a horse ridden by the Rajput Amar Singh that bounded over a wall to save its cornered master, dying in the process. It is still memorialized with a statue by the Agra Fort near the Taj Mahal. Another tells of Chetak, the horse who knocked an elephant in the head with its hooves in the 1576 battle of Haldighati, so that its rider could kill the elephant’s master and stop the Mogul army from advancing. Later in the battle, one of Chetak’s legs is severed above the foot, yet he still rides his master to safety.

As one of the world’s oldest horse breeds, the origins of the Marwari horses are hard to pin down, but they are believed to have been bred with the Turkmenian horses of Alexander’s army. Hundreds of years of selective breeding developed a horse that was ideal for war on the arid terrain, with an ability to survive extreme heat and cold and move quickly over long distances. Their curved ears are their most notable trait and contribute to their regal presence.

All of the surviving Marwari horses are descendants of the legendary Rajput war horses. The Imperial British rule, followed by the Indian democracy, almost caused the horses to disappear. Seen as a symbol of a feudal, socially divisive past, most were shot, castrated, or given to peasants to serve as work horses. Horse aficionados and the few surviving Rajput families, who have been heavily involved with tourism in the area, have preserved the Marwari horses from extinction, although their number is still only in the hundreds.



# EXTINCT HORSE BREEDS



Turkoman Horse



Irish Hobby Horse



Narragansett Pacer



Anglo Norman Horse



Neapolitan Horse



Charolais Horse



Nisean Horse



Abaco Barb Horse



Old English Black Horse



Norfolk Trotter



Destriers Horse



Angevin Horse



# Assateague Island

Berlin, Maryland

**The land is home to swimming ponies and a legendary 18th-century treasure.**



THIS 37-MILE-LONG ISLAND BELONGS TO two states, three conservation agencies, and two herds of feral ponies. Every year, the ponies are rounded up to swim across the channel to Virginia.

Located off the eastern coast of the Delmarva Peninsula, Assateague Island is a designated National Natural Landmark, with two thirds of the island in the state of Maryland and the remaining third in Virginia. The entirety of the island is owned by three different agencies: the National Park Service, Maryland State Parks and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

While no humans live on the island, herds of feral ponies have been inhabiting Assateague for hundreds of years. The ponies are remarkably well-adapted to their feral island lifestyle, living off of dune and marsh grasses and drinking from the island's freshwater ponds. There is some debate as to whether the ponies are in fact ponies genetically or horses who have gradually become smaller in stature due to their environmental adaptations. There are various theories surrounding the origins of Assateague's feral equines, but a local legend has it that they are the surviving ancestors of a shipwreck that occurred off the coast hundreds of years ago. There is some evidence to suggest there may be truth in this story, as the captain of the Spanish galleon *La Galga* historically recounted wrecking his ship "within two ship-lengths" of the Maryland-Virginia border in 1750.

A number of treasure hunters have sought the sunken galleon to no avail, but recent findings suggest that the ship may actually be buried beneath the sand of Assateague Island, as the beach has been built out and the coastline has changed significantly over time. Maritime historian John Amrhein has petitioned to lead an archeological excavation of the site where he believes *La Galga* has been buried, but has been met with some opposition and still awaits permission. Assateague's Virginia pony population is rounded up annually by neighboring Chincoteague Island's volunteer fire company for the Chincoteague Pony Swim. "Saltwater cowboys" herd the wild ponies across Assateague Channel during low tide to Chincoteague, where they are corralled and later put up for an auction benefitting the fire department. Ponies are bid upon either for personal ownership or as "buybacks", in which case the ponies are returned to their island home for another year of feral roaming.



**Hollywood Horses** *contd from page 1*

away from the animals, not, Lilley says, “over the horse’s head, or to the side of it.”

Most movie horses are trained for general on-camera appearances, but some end up being trained into specialty roles as well, such as falling or jumping. Whenever you see a horse fall down on screen, either from being killed or knocked down, that horse has been trained to do so in a way that won’t hurt them or the rider. Lilley’s ranch teaches the animals to do this by lifting their legs and laying them down, then walking them, then laying them, again and again until the horse can do it themselves on cue. But finding these specialty horses is harder than finding general-use movie horses.

Even once a horse is trained and ready for the spotlight, special preparations are often made on set to make sure that the experience is easy on the animals. A common practice is preparing the ground over which there is going to be a chase or a stampede. In movies it is a common sight to see people hop on horseback and gallop off at full speed. But in reality this can be incredibly hard on the horses pounding along the solid ground, not to mention the possibility of them tripping or breaking an ankle in some unseen divot. To make sets safe for the animals, Lilley says that the ground will be tilled up until it’s soft, or a thick layer of sand will be laid down for them to run across. Almost nothing with a horse on film is as simple as the narrative makes it.

Any actor that’s going to get on a horse needs to be specially coached as well. Lilley won’t allow untrained actors to ride the horses, or let the directors overwork them. He says that he’s nearly come to blows with directors trying to drive the animals too hard. The American Humane Association has monitored and regulated animal safety standards on film sets since the 1930s, spurred on by the death of a horse on the set of 1939’s *Jesse James*.

While the association has protected animal stars for decades, to hear Lilley tell it, the wranglers of the horses are just as concerned—if not more. “There’s none of that beating and whipping on them,” says Lilley. “You’re getting nothing doing that to them. Patience is the biggest thing.” Even when a horse is ready to retire, Lilley says that he looks for a good home for them, giving them to families where they’ll have a cushy rest of their life.

It’s easy to forget the equine actors that bring our movies and TV shows to life are just as trained as the attractive men and women on their backs, they deserve all the care and preparations they get. Next time you see Jon Snow gallop back under The Wall (we all know he’s coming back), or a highlander woo someone from horseback on *Outlander*, don’t forget the stoic animals that make it possible.

Movin On Livestock is a family owned and operated motion picture livestock barn located in New Mexico. They provide all specialty performing livestock, cast and non-descript livestock, and other relevant animals. They also provide a large variety of period tack, stagecoaches, wagons, and vintage buggies. They have full transportation to and from all sites and are affiliated with only the best teamster animal wranglers.



# Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

2326 Happy Valley Rd  
Oak Harbor WA 98277

## MEET ONE OF THE FEW NATIVE JAPANESE HORSES THE KISO

Kiso horses are from Nagano, which is situated on the Japanese island of Honshu, which is the largest and most heavily populated of Japan's islands. The Kiso horse is the only breed considered to be native to the island of Honshu. Like most of the Japanese breeds, Kiso horses were practically wiped out by the Edo mandate during the Meiji period. However, the breed still exists due to a single stallion that escaped gelding.

All of the Kiso horses in Japan are domesticated, and they all continue to survive thanks to efforts by the Kiso Uma no Sato, which is a center dedicated solely to the conservation and continuance of the Kiso breed. At this center, you can see the few remaining Kiso horses. Furthermore, for the right price, you can even ride them! It costs 2,000 yen (about \$18USD) to ride a Kiso horse for just 15 minutes, but the money helps to keep the breed alive. Currently, there are just 30 of these horses remaining.

