



YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

## The Badass Black Cowboys of Compton, California

A new book honors the Compton Cowboys and the Motto they live by: “Streets raised us. Horses saved us.”

Richland farms, a zoned agricultural area in the city of Compton, south of Los Angeles, has long fostered a vibrant equestrian community. In 1988 Mayisha Akbar created a horseback riding club for local black youth to keep them away from gangs and violence. As members grew up, many kept riding, continuing a long and rich history of black cowboys in the American West. Today, a close-knit group known as the Compton Cowboys celebrate this legacy on the very same ranch Akbar developed. Their motto: “Streets raised us. Horses saved us.”

Journalist Walter Thompson-Hernández grew up in nearby Huntington Park. On weekend drives to Compton, he would see Black riders on the streets and along train tracks. Years later, as a journalist, he

embedded with them for a year and a half. His reporting became the remarkable book *The Compton Cowboys: The New Generation of Cowboys in America’s Urban Heartland*, published by HarperCollins in April 2020. Thompson-Hernández tells the stories of 10 black cowboys – from Charles Harris, a rider who opts for Air Jordan and a Yankee’s baseball Cap, to Keiara Wade, the only woman in the group who has been riding since she was a toddler.

A central figure in the book is Mayisha’s nephew, Randy Hook, who dreams of developing a sustainable business model that can inspire the creation of similar ranches elsewhere. “We’re connected to Black cowboys in Philadelphia, cowboys in Chicago, and also with cowboys overseas”, he says at his aunt’s retirement party, which Thompson-Hernández attended. “We just need the resources to do this in a big way and put ranches like this one in inner-city environments where there’s a lack of nature, because we see that this model works. These horses”, he added, “Changed us, and we think They can have the same effect on at-risk youth everywhere.”

# Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

## SEPTEMBER 2020

Here is a recent interview with Thompson-Hernández:

### When did you first find out about Black Cowboys in Compton?

I was six. It was a Sunday afternoon and my mom and I were driving down Alameda Street heading toward the Compton Swap Meet. I saw these two Black men on horses. It was the first time I saw Black folks on horses. It was the moment when I realized that there are a lot of different sides to history. The history I was learning in school wasn’t the only factual story. It was something I never forgot about. As a child, I was in complete awe of the cowboys and how cool and beautiful they looked. As an adult, I came to realize that the horses act as a shield and even armor.

### The Richland Farms Property is clearly more than just a ranch.

It’s a place where the cowboys and community residents can go to feel free. There’s a lot of dangers outside – police violence, gangs – but inside the ranch, it feels like a sanctuary. People can ride horses and be at peace in a way that is doesn’t happen outside.

*Continued on Page 9*

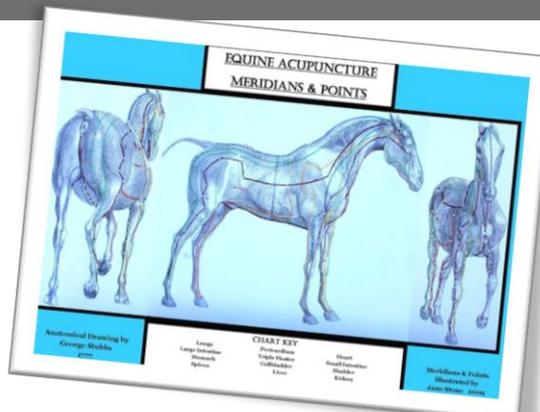
# Equine Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a procedure in which tiny needles are inserted at specific locations of the body for therapeutic purposes. This procedure was originally developed by the ancient Chinese, who believed that these anatomic locations were portals in the skin. Through these portals, the ancient acupuncturist could access meridians, or energy channels, that communicated with internal organs.

Experiment-based research has since shown us that these points are actually anatomic locations particularly rich in nerve endings and/or blood vessels. When needles are placed in these locations, neurotransmitters and other local factors are released, starting cascades that ultimately lead to body-wide therapeutic effects. An acupuncture treatment involves placement of needles into the points appropriate for your horse's specific problems.

Acupuncture is a very effective treatment option to help minimize performance-related muscular soreness or to manage compensatory soreness secondary to other injuries. It's especially likely to be recommended as a first line of treatment for your horse if he suffers from back pain.

Many people don't realize that acupuncture can also be a useful therapy for problems beyond the musculoskeletal system. For example, a mare with



decreased fertility may be having difficulty clearing fluid from her uterus. Acupuncture can help lead to smooth muscle contractions of the uterus, thereby helping the mare clean herself out.

Or, if your horse has allergy problems (hives, skin rashes, or a chronic cough), acupuncture, in combination with medical therapy, can help control symptoms and improve his response to other medications. Acupuncture may even be used to relieve jaw pain following a dental procedure, or to help quiet intestinal spasms that occur during an acute colic.

Three primary programs are recognized for acupuncture training, and each has a slightly different emphasis. All three require that students be licensed veterinarians, with the exception that third- and fourth-year veterinary students and veterinary technicians can participate in some courses. The practitioner you select should be able to provide credentials from one of the three.



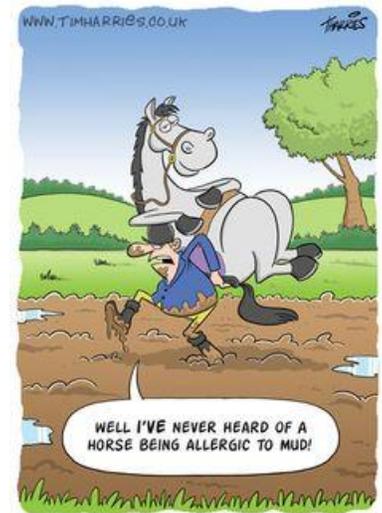
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## New Items for September





**Equine Yoga:**  
Proof your horse can bend when he wants to.



Here, eat a Snickers.



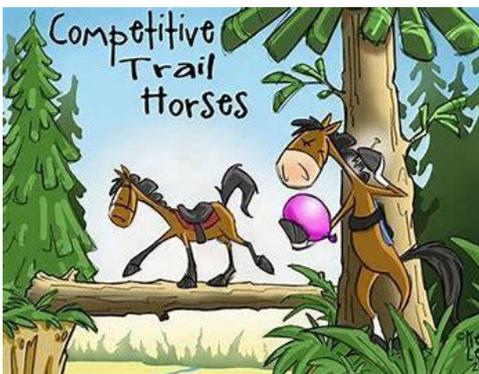
Better?



**McHUMOR** by T. McCracken



"Don't laugh. It's added three points to his scores."



Why do horses like to fart when they buck?

Because they can't achieve full horse power without gas!

What do you get if you cross a horse with a bee?

Neigh-Buzz

A talking horse walks into a bar & approaches the manager. "Excuse me, good sir", the horse says, "are you hiring?" The manager looks the horse up and down and says. "sorry pal, why don't you try the circus?" The horse nickers, "Why would the circus need a bartender?"



This is your moment.

Today at Wildwood Farm B&B



**A lone Journalist**  
*Discovered the poetry in nature,  
learned that horses are the oldest  
souls – and in the foggy silence of  
morning learned to breathe again*

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

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### WILL YOU?

Learn from me and take my wisdom with you as a safe secret tucked into your pocket?



### WILL YOU?

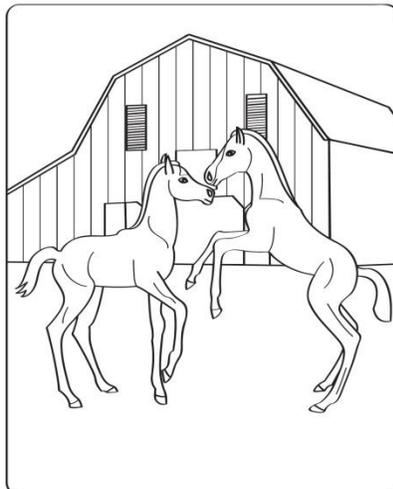
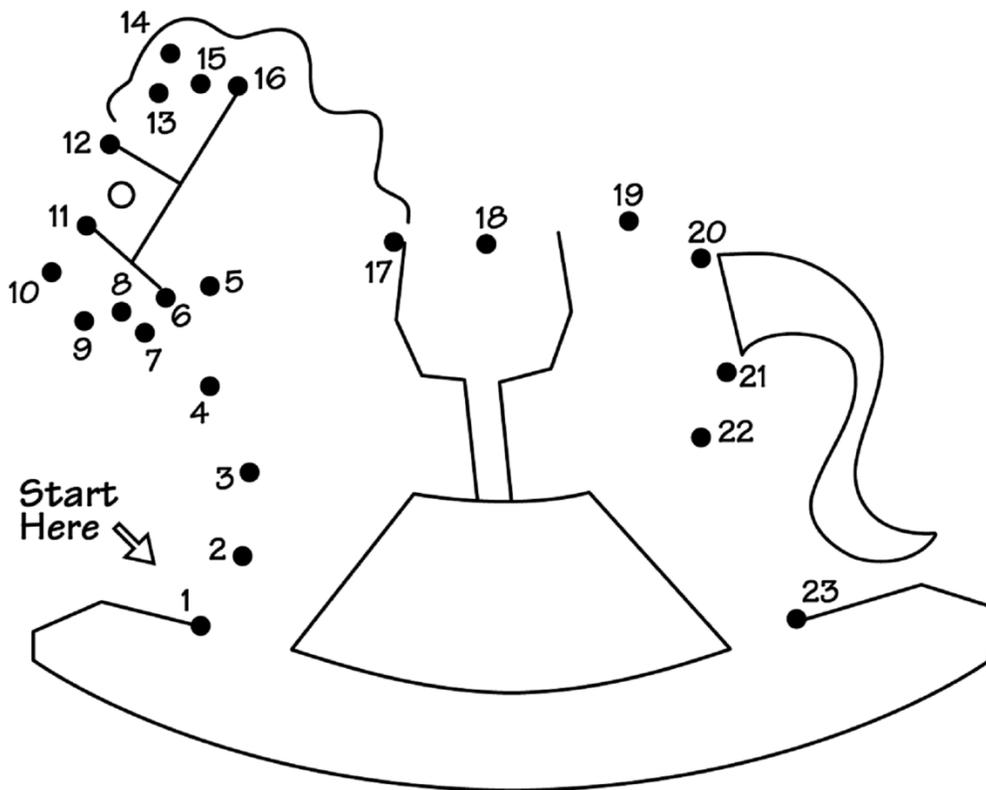
Allow me to tell you who you really are so you can move forward and paint your own portrait?



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PACIFIC NORTHWEST  
RIDING ACADEMY

# connect the dots



Color us!

# Nutrition Corner

## GROWING GOOD FEET THROUGH NUTRITION

**How do you recognize a good hoof?** A good hoof is one that is free of horizontal and vertical cracks in the hoof wall and possesses enough wall thickness to provide adequate protection from injury of the sensitive tissues underlying the wall such as the laminae. A good hoof has good sole depth to provide adequate protection to the digital cushion and coffin bone and possesses enough heel height, toe length and balanced growth.

Improving hoof quality and growth rate through nutrition involves supplying an adequate amount of essential and functional nutrients to support adequate hoof quality and supporting normal blood and lymph circulation in order to ensure those nutrients can be delivered to the hoof tissues that require them. Essential nutrients refer to those nutrients that are required by the horse for the maintenance of normal health and well-being. Functional nutrients refer to nutrients that may serve a function in the improvement of health and/or performance of the horse or particular systems within the horse such as hoof health, intestinal health, muscle function or immunity.

It is very important to understand that all essential nutrients must be supplied at required levels before functional nutrients such as biotin or methionine can be effective at improving hoof quality. This is why when many owners include a "Hoof Supplement" in their horse's diet they

See very little or no results due to the fact that the intake of basic nutrients was inadequate and/or unbalanced. Dr. William Vandergift, a consulting nutritionist who works with Triple Crown Feeds, tells us that he prefers supplements designed for hoof health to contain all essential nutrients in combination with functional nutrients.

Biotin, methionine and organic zinc are well-regarded for supporting hoof health, as well as other B-complex vitamins such as pyridoxine (B6) and folic acid may also improve hoof quality when added to your horse's diet.

Some functional nutrients are recognized for support of hoof quality while others may play a bigger role in supporting hoof growth. Omega-3 fatty acids, especially EPA & DHA, may have a blood-thinning effect and thereby support normal blood circulation to the horse's foot. Amino acids such as arginine or citrulline, when provided at levels higher than normally required can also help support normal blood flow. Providing blood circulation support may also help buffer the negative effects of elevated insulin levels in insulin-resistant horses.

There is no such thing as a horse with perfect feet, but with good nutrition you have a much better chance of having one with good feet.

### 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

## MEET CHARLEY!

Charley is an American Bashkir Curly that was born on a ranch in Montana in the spring of 2000. When he was four he was purchased by Heritage Farm Training Center in Kent, Wa and within a few months he was sold to a family who lived in Kirkland and were looking for a small horse for their daughter.

Charley was sent to formal training in both English and Western and proved himself to be a very patient and sturdy mount for beginners and children. Having outgrown his girl, in 2009 Charley was once again sold, this time to a family in Bonney Lake who had a special needs son. Charley was the perfect companion for this boy – steady, cool and collected.

In May of 2016 Wildwood Farm was given the opportunity to adopt Charley as his owners had fallen ill and needed to find a home for him and Rio, his companion since 2009. Today Charley (and Rio) are an integral part of the riding program here at Wildwood Farm and Charley is the perfect size and temperament for many beginner as well as intermediate riders.

Charley is chestnut in color, stands approx. 14 hands and shows his curly hair primarily in the winter



The Curly is a breed of horse that comes in all sizes and body types but carries a gene for a unique curly coat of hair. The Curlies are known for their calm, intelligent and friendly personality and are also known for having a great constitution and great stamina.

They are the only tested hypoallergenic horse breed due to a protein that is missing from the hair that causes reactions to horses with allergy sufferers.

The origins of the breed are debatable but most historians believe they are Iberian in nature. Today you will find horses that are called North American Curlies and Bashkir Curlies – with no visible difference between the two.

## INTERVIEW WITH OLYMPIAN LAUREN HOUGH

*They say it's a man's world, but if women would be more like Lauren Hough then it would definitely be a woman's world. Born into a family who cherished, admired and rode horses, Lauren caught the horse bug when she was very young and became a successful hunter and then took to show jumping where she found herself a freak of a rider against the clock and later on developed a deadly accurate eye over 1m60 jumps. Lauren Hough is a sharp and calculated woman who always aimed for the bulls-eye and got it most of the time. She is tough, she is determined and she is competitive.*

**Most of the top riders nowadays didn't originate from a "horsey" family, or if they did then their parents were the type that had horses at their barn and went to National shows here and there. Your case begs to differ; your dad is a Bronze Olympic medalist. Correct?**

Absolutely! I was super fortunate growing up with both my parents being very involved with horses. Both of them allowed me to get help from the very best in the industry.

**There are very few women in the top sport that are physically and mentally tough. Steve Hadley once said you were "strong as most men." What can you say about that?**

Well, I take my fitness very seriously and I do a lot of things besides riding. I definitely feel that in high-pressure situations I get tougher. I'm able to stay focused when the going gets tough. I've worked with sports psychologists and I've been able to apply those methods in a successful way – I think getting help from outside the industry is always constructive

**So, you did the Sydney Olympics when you were 23 years old, of course now it's become a normal thing for young riders to jump championships like this. But back then; didn't you feel it was a bit big to jump the Olympics as your first championship?**

Actually, the Olympics was my first Nations Cup (laughs. So it actually came sooner than I expected. I think it was good that I didn't entirely appreciate, at my young age, the gravity of the opportunity at the time. I was able to just focus on the task at hand and I had a young horse as well with little experience so I was really surprised but excited for the opportunity. Attending the Olympics certainly gave me an early boost in my career – certain things came quicker.

**Seventeen years ago, you won Team Gold at the PAN American Games and before that you rode the selection trials with a broken bone? Tell us that story.**

I broke my collar bone, yes a week before the World Cup Finals. It was a pretty severe break but I didn't have surgery. We had the selection trials a few weeks after, and I had a great horse called Windy City who was a wonderful little horse with a lot of blood but wasn't very strong so he helped a lot. We were able to jump the first two rounds clear and because of that Frank

Chapot and the selectors decided to give me a by after the first two rounds so that I could heal properly.

**Now, we must ask you about your horses in particular Quick Study who you got most of your medals with. Where did you originally find him? And what was he like to ride?** Quick Study came from Vandousselaere; the same place as Cortes C and Cylana. I got him towards the end of his 7 year-old year. He is now 21, so I've had him quite a while now. He was extremely wild and incredibly hard to ride at the time, but very scopey and athletic. Our first success came when he was turning 9 years old, where we won the Grand Prix of Harrisburg. One of my favorite memories with Quick Study is winning the Global Champions Tour in Hamburg in 2010 and then the Grand Prix of Dublin – he has been a horse of a lifetime with me.

**So, Ohlala lived up to your expectations and developed into a star that can jump the very big shows even though she's smaller than most of the horses out there?**

Ohlala has absolutely gone beyond all my expectations – let's put it that way. It wasn't until the beginning of 2014 that she made that big step up into the biggest classes. From there, she continued to prove herself, she is an amazing horse. As for her size, she doesn't think she is small, she probably thinks she is bigger than most – she's incredibly talented I must say. I've never had a horse who goes into the prize giving and loves every moment of it. She knows she's won and she enjoys that. She's a very special animal.

**Seven years ago, Ohlala got caught on laminitis and your team nursed her to recovery. What happened? And what advice would you give to avoid it?** Ah yea, it was Christmas Eve 2012, and she very quickly developed a strong pulse in both front feet. We noticed it straight away and we had people there around the clock. We had her stand in ice for an hour every three hours - she made a very quick turn- around because we caught it so quickly. We learned that she has a very low tolerance to sugar and glucose, so she has special feed now. We gave her the right amount of time to recover before bringing her back to competition. So the advice I would give would be to monitor your horses closely so you can catch changes quickly.

**What's on your bucket list for this year?** Well, I've already had one big achievement, which was getting back to the top 30 which I was out of for the last two years. So, my first goal would be to stay there, and the second goal would be to DO the best I can in the top 30 – you have to take it one day at a time in this sport and ensure that the horses always come first, because if you do that then the winning comes easily. A healthy and happy horse is very important to me

To learn more about Lauren visit her website at [www.laurenough.com](http://www.laurenough.com)

# Blue Mustang

## Denver, Colorado

**The Denver airport is guarded by a 32-foot-tall sculpture of a demonic horse.**



**The “Blue Mustang” Sculpture was** created by the widely recognized artist, Luis Jiménez, whose previous works are displayed in numerous museums including the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C.

Standing 32 feet tall and molded from polychromed fiberglass, the mustang is painted a vibrant blue with red, glowing neon eyes. Meant to represent the “wild” spirit of the old American West, Jiménez installed the glowing eyes as homage to the neon workshop he worked in as a youth. These glowing eyes have earned the sculpture the nickname “Blucifer.”

The sculpture was commissioned in 1993, two years prior to the opening of the airport it stands outside of, but delays postponed its completion. Among these delays was the tragic death of the artist in 2006, when a 9,000 pound portion of the “Blue Mustang” sculpture broke loose and severed one of the artist’s arteries. His sons completed the remaining work.

Finally in 2008, the mustang was installed at the entrance to the airport, much to the dismay of the residents of Denver. Public opinion has vilified the artwork with calls from many quarters to have it removed to a less prominent location. City officials had postponed any attempt to remove the work until after 2013 so that residents and visitors could grow accustomed to the statue in hopes that public opinion will soften over time.

## Know Before you Go

Located just outside the main entrance to the Denver International Airport. Although you can pass fairly close to the statue on Peña Boulevard, you cannot park close to it and traffic does not stop on the road. Also, you are not allowed to pull over or park in that area.

# Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

2326 Happy Valley Rd  
Oak Harbor WA 98277

## **The Black cowboys of Compton (continued from first page)**

More than anything, it serves as a therapeutic center. Studies have shown that equine therapy has an incredibly positive impact on people who have experienced trauma and stress.

## **The Compton Cowboys made headlines last month when they rode at a Black Lives Matter protest. What was the significance of their presence?**

Their presence was incredibly powerful. So many demonstrators had been used to seeing white guys on horses, mounted police officers. Black men and women on horses was a political statement that inspired fellow demonstrators. I think this year has really galvanized the cowboys to organize peace rides in Compton, to really speak out against what's going on in the world. It's evident that we're in this important civil right movement, and I think the cowboys are leading the charge for racial justice.

## **Urban cowboy communities exist in cities around the United States, from Los Angeles to Philly to Baltimore, and their visibility is increasing. What is the future of the Black cowboy tradition?**

I think we are in somewhat of a Black cowboy renaissance. I also think that every 10 years or so we are moved by the images of Black men on horses in Hollywood and popular culture. I think the future of Black cowboys rests on the experiences of the younger generation. The Compton Cowboys, for example, are deeply committed to preserving the legacy of Black cowboys in the city. Their biggest fear is that they will be the last generation of Compton's cowboys. I think other cowboys around the United States feel the same.

## **What are some of the other challenges the ranch in Compton faces?**

I think the biggest deterrent is finding the money to keep the ranch alive. It's a really precarious situation. It's really hard to come up with almost \$20,000 a month to keep it running. The youth program was thriving before the pandemic, and it was suspended as it's been difficult to find resources.

## **What do you hope readers will take away from your book and photographs?**

I hope they see themselves in the pages of this book. This is a very universal story. It's a story that touches on hardship, joy, redemption, salvation. The way that we all struggle to belong. That's a story that a lot of people can see themselves in.





Keiara Wade and her daughter, Taylor, ride around the stables in Gardena, California



Keenan Abercrombia rides through the streets of Compton



Members of the Compton Cowboys prepare to ride in the Compton Christmas Parade.



Kenneth Atkins and his horse Ebony wait for the light to turn green at the intersection of Wilmington Ave and Alondra Blvd

Visit [www.wthdz.com/compton-cowboys-1](http://www.wthdz.com/compton-cowboys-1) for more information

## “Horse With No Name”

It’s a song that came quickly, as he remembers, “all in one fell swoop.” So immediate was its creation that Dewey Bunnell wasn’t sure what he had, and even if it was worth recording, or should be relegated to the novelty song bin. Never did he consider it hit material, or a song that would become a rock standard and for which he’d be famous forever.

Yet “Horse With No Name,” which vividly introduced the barren desert landscape of the southwest into popular song long before The Eagles, James Taylor and others did it, was never easy to understand. Even for its songwriter. From its inception, it seemed to take on a life of its own. It’s something which hasn’t ever stopped, and extends to now. Released in late 1971 overseas and early 1972 in America, it went to the top of the charts. But never was it a fly-away hit, beloved during the season of its creation but ultimately forgotten and abandoned. Instead, it’s become one of those songs with an appeal that has incrementally expanded over the years. Never has it been absent from radio, the culture, or our memories, for long.



Dewey Bunnell and his horse, NoName

**DEWEY BUNNELL:** The song was borne out of pure boredom. I had just graduated high school in London, and my family moved up to Yorkshire, where my mother was from. I wanted to stay in London, so I moved into the home of a friend and his family. I wrote the song alone in this guy’s bedroom that I shared. I wrote it all in one fell swoop. I wrote it in a couple hours.

I didn’t question the song. I felt like it suddenly appeared, like waking up in a dream. It was a dream of being on a horse and realizing that I don’t even know the name of this horse. And there was *serious* heat. I remember getting sunburned severely as a kid and it was on a beach. It wasn’t in the desert. But I guess in my mind’s eye, I was thinking, “I’m on this horse, I’m going somewhere, who knows where? I don’t know the name of the horse. Maybe I didn’t even have a hat on.”

Do not underestimate the concept of trying to find rhyme. “I spent three days in the desert sun, my skin began to turn red, I was looking at a riverbed.” Had it been the other way around, I probably wouldn’t have come up with the sunburnt thing.

There's a lot of motion in the song. That's something I can't get away from in my songs. I've had a lot of travel experiences and those are the things that get branded in your brain. There's motion, and there's a progression. And by the end of the song I let the horse run free. I wasn't sure why, but it seemed right. It's seemed it was time to let go of the horse and to move on.

It wasn't called "A Horse With No Name" though. It was called "The Desert Song" then. And it was just thrown into a pile of other songs. When I first brought it to Gerry and Dan, and we were playing it, I really thought it was almost a *novelty* song.

I remember the first time we played "Horse With No Name" live, we were opening for Traffic. It was still "Desert Song," then, and my mother heard it for the first time. She said, "I do like that horse thing." Other people, too, said "That song about the horse was a good one."

I am glad we used that title. So many people think it's mysterious. Here it is, just about 50 years later, and people still say, "I feel so sad for that horse. Why didn't you give that horse a *name*?" They actually get emotional about it.

### **"Horse with No Name"**

**By Dewey Bunnell**

[Verse 1]

On the first part of the journey  
I was looking at all the life  
There were plants and birds and rocks and things  
There was sand and hills and rings  
The first thing I met was a fly with a buzz  
And the sky with no clouds  
The heat was hot and the ground was dry  
But the air was full of sound

[Chorus]

*I've been through the desert on a horse with no name  
It felt good to be out of the rain  
In the desert you can't remember your name  
'Cause there ain't no one for to give you no pain*

After two days in the desert sun  
My skin began to turn red  
After three days in the desert fun  
I was looking at a riverbed  
And the story it told of a river that flowed  
Made me sad to think it was dead

*I've been through the desert on a horse with no name  
It felt good to be out of the rain  
In the desert you can't remember your name  
'Cause there ain't no one for to give you no pain*

[Verse 3]

After nine days I let the horse run free  
'Cause the desert had turned to sea  
There were plants and birds and rocks and things  
There was sand and hills and rings

The ocean is a desert with its life underground  
And a perfect disguise above  
Under the cities lies a heart made of ground  
But the humans will give no love