

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO

CREATED &amp; EDITED BY HEATHER CARDER

## Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

### December 2022

## The Club-Footed Comet

### A racehorse named *Assault*.

While visiting family in Corpus Christi this November, it was decided that a trip to the infamous King Ranch in Kingsville would be a great outing for us; I had, after all, been a fan of the King Ranch Saddlery (and catalog) for a long time, and it was just a short drive to the tourist center.

Personally, I did not have my hopes up. After all, the ranch was 825,000 acres and the tour was given on a bus through a very small section of the ranch. When our tour guide started pointing out local birds and deer I thought my doubts were justified, although the local Javelina and wild turkey were interesting to see. But, the bus was warm and the voice of our guide was a pleasant drone, and a few passengers dozed pleasantly as our bus bumped along, surrounded by glimpses of the Santa Gertrudis cattle that the King Ranch has been breeding since they genetically created them in the 1900s.

About ½ hour into the tour we approached a compound that had some yearling quarter horses in paddocks and a few disinterested mares in larger fields. Across the drive from them our guide pointed to a rambler-type house and a couple of low-set gravestones that were out on the front lawn. Apparently these belonged to 2 infamous race horses, Assault and Middleground. Suddenly my interest was piqued – I thought the King Ranch was famous for their quarter horses, not thoroughbreds. As I would find out, the story is pretty amazing!

It all started in 1932 with Robert Kleberg Jr, grandson of King Ranch founder Richard King, who took over the operations of the ranch. Up until this time ranch was focused on breeding quarter horses, which only made sense for the work the ranch needed. But in 1934 a stunning thoroughbred stallion by the name of Chicaro caught Robert's eye and the ranch's foray into the sport of kings was sealed. In 1935 Kleberg met breeder Morton Schwartz and

purchased a string of mares and fillies at the auction in Saratoga Springs from him; the following year Schwartz won the Kentucky Derby and Preakness with a stallion named Bold Venture, and in 1938 Kleberg bought this amazing stallion to serve as the foundation sire at King Ranch.

On March 28, 1943 Assault was born, and he was not what one would call impressive. A bit of a let-down with a father like Bold Venture! In fact he looked a little fragile and delicate. But it was said he loved to run and he was fast, faster than the other foals and showed a competitive heart. When he was still a suckling he met his first Los Kineños (people of the King Ranch) named Alberto Villa Treviño – his nickname was Lolo. Although Lolo was only 13, he introduced Assault to his first human touch- his gentle voice soothing him as he rubbed him and brushed him with burlap bags, put his first halter on him and taught him to give to pressure, and introduced him to warm baths. It is recorded that Lolo saw greatness in Assault even though he was a bit smaller than the

*Continued on page 11*

**WHAT'S TRENDING NOW**

**Engineered horse boots a “game-changer” for equine lameness**

A US based company is bringing engineering technology into equine lameness rehabilitation with a new medical device that looks like a cross between an artificial leg and a horse boot. The \$2000 Fast Track boots from Horsepower Technologies are made of aircraft-grade aluminum and provide a structure that takes the weight off tendons and ligaments. Internally, the device molds into the horse’s leg and heats up to relieve the area. A dial on the side of the device allows changes to the degree of restriction of motion: Horses that recently injured themselves can only walk, horses on the way to recovery can be allowed to flex their fetlocks more for trotting.

Horsepower’s chief veterinary officer Carl Kirker-Head said the boots fulfilled “a previously unmet need for the veterinary profession”.

“The amount of support provided to the injured tendon or ligament can be variably controlled depending on the duration and severity of the injury, and the stage of the rehabilitative regimen.”



Fast Track is being sold only to veterinarians as it requires some individual training to use.

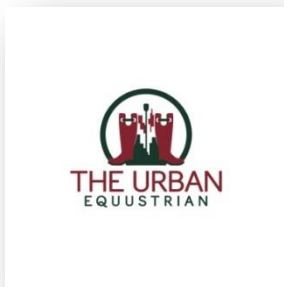
FastTrack for rehabilitating horses off-loads the flexor apparatus (superficial and deep digital flexor tendons, suspensory ligament and associated structures) by providing a variable degree of mechanical support to the fetlock joint. This reduces the pain associated with flexor apparatus injury (tendinopathy, desmopathy, etc), allows a safe early return to function, and reduces the opportunity for re-injury of the damaged tissues.

Early mobilization post-injury has many benefits including increasing blood flow and lymphatic flow to promote healing; stimulating tissue repair for faster healing; limiting the extent of connective tissue fibrosis, all while preserving range of motion.

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

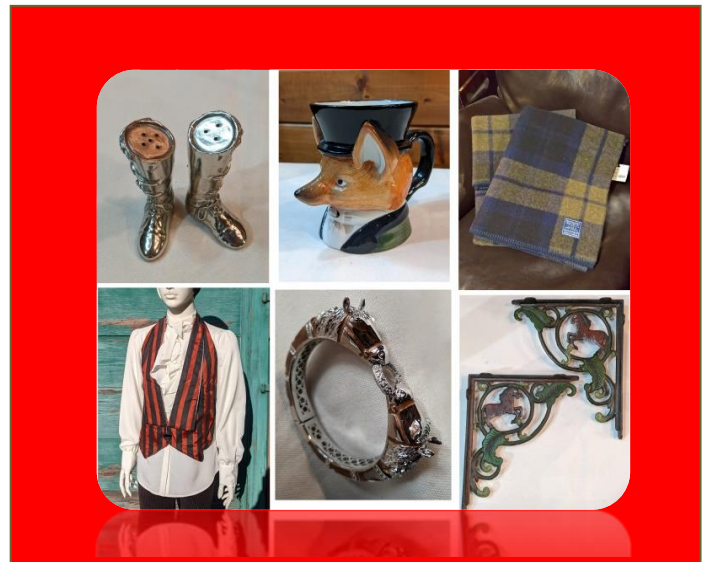


Our store is open Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 12:00 – 6:00 the whole month of December!



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

**New Items for December**





This is your child on a draft horse.

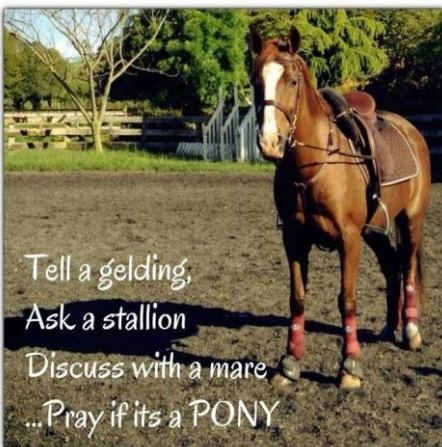
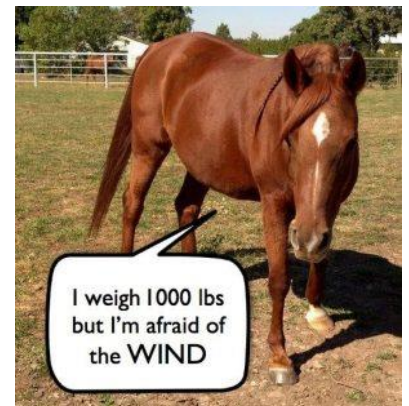
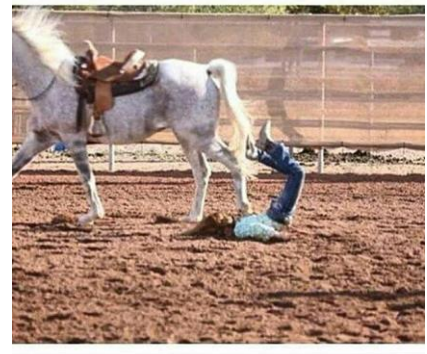
This is your child on a pony.



Never knew how much 'try' he had until we put him in the diet yard



'Describe your life in one photo'



## WILDWOOD FARM B&B



### This is your moment.

Today at Wildwood Farm B&B

**A delivery driver learned**  
Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently.

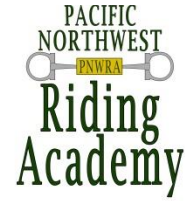
Immerse yourself in the equestrian world at Wildwood Farm B&B located on beautiful Whidbey Island.

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!



**"We will never have to tell our horse that we are sad, happy, confident, angry or relaxed. He already knows long before we do."**

-Marijke de Jong



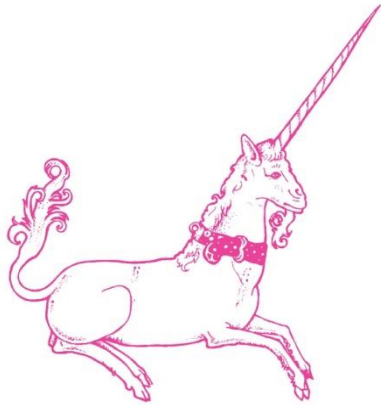
**"It is the horse's gift to connect us with heaven and our own footsteps."**

-Ronnie Sweet



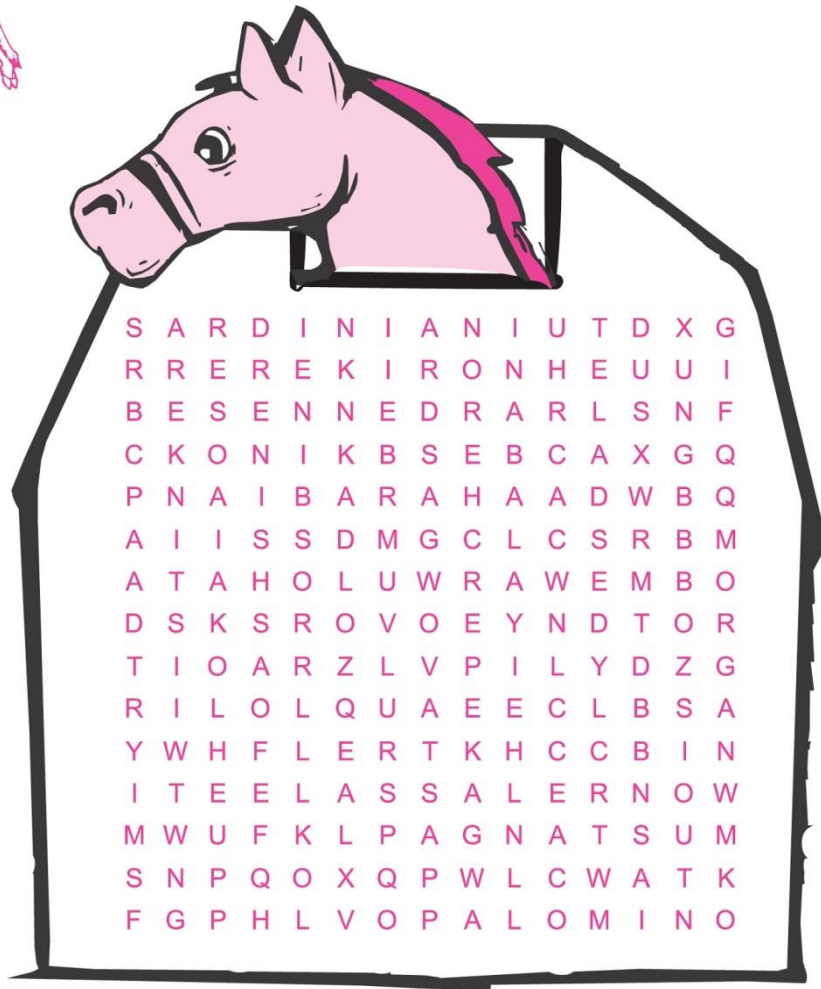
[WWW.PNWRiding.com](http://WWW.PNWRiding.com)

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST RIDING ACADEMY**



Unicorns are pretend creatures with the body of a horse and a head with a horn. Can you find all of these real horse breeds in the letters below? Look up, down, sideways, backward, and diagonally.

- Appaloosa
- Arabian
- Ardennes
- Azteca
- Bashkir
- Clydesdale
- Fleuve
- Holsteiner
- Konik
- Lokai
- Morgan
- Mustang
- Noriker
- Palomino
- Percheron
- Salerno
- Sardinian
- Thoroughbred
- Tinker
- Walkaloosa



# Nutrition Corner

## WATER

Water is not often thought of as a nutrient, although lack of water intake causes illness and death much more quickly than feed nutrients. Water requirements vary with losses, so horses housed in hot environments or those losing large amounts through sweat, respiration, or milk will need more water than nonproducing or sedentary horses. Intake is expected to be larger in hot environments, with larger feed intake or larger horses.

With the possible exception of the extremely hot horse immediately following hard exercise, water should be offered free choice as the bigger concern is lack of intake. Extra intake of water is easily expelled via urine. Voluntary water intake is expected to vary considerably between horses and by the same horse on different days. Water consumption should be monitored whenever possible so normal intake levels can be assured and observed. Sources that supply fresh, clean water supply are preferred as contaminants may decrease voluntary intake or contain products harmful to the health of the horse.

An adult horse's body is composed of roughly 70 percent water, which equates to 770 pounds or 96 gallons of water for the average 1,100-pound horse. Foals' bodies have even higher water content, roughly 80 percent, and on a weight-to-weight basis, small horses consume more water than large horses.

Because fat is low in water content compared to lean muscle, fat horses typically require less water than horses maintained at optimal body condition.

Horses on good-quality pastures, which can be 65 to 80 percent water, will consume less drinking water compared to horses on hay and grain because a large percentage of their water needs are met by the moisture in the grass.

An idle, 1,100-pound horse in a cool environment will drink 6 to 10 gallons of water per day. That amount may increase to 15 gallons per day in a hot environment. Work horses require 10-18 gallons of water per day on average but could require much more in hot weather. Nursing mares drink more water because of fluid loss associated with milk production and increased consumption of feed to support milk production. An 1,100-pound nursing mare can easily drink up to 20 gallons of water per day. Foals also have higher water requirements and will drink 6 to 8 gallons of water per day even in relatively cool weather.

## 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

## My Friend, D'Artanian

(Thoughts borrowed from Equineink.com)

When people talk about a "heart horse" we all know what they mean — it's a horse with whom we have an unusually strong connection, an equine soul mate. This is a horse who makes you smile every time you go to the barn, who makes you feel better when you've had a bad day, who trusts you the same way you trust him or her. This is not just a horse that you like a lot. It's a horse that you love.

Earlier this month we lost D'Artanian with whom I had that kind of connection. At 30ish, he had lived a long, loved life and when he finally found it difficult to stand, it was not an unanticipated development, but it was still hard to let him go.

Some people believe that you are lucky to find one horse that touches your heart in this way. I hope not. I believe heart horses (and other lucky sentient beings) are like children. There is room in your heart to love them all. Not in the same way, but with an equal fierceness, a protectiveness that encapsulates the specialness of that relationship.



My first hearthorse was Charlee, my very first horse ever that I got when I was eleven- right after my mother died. Charlee taught me to love, and actually loved me in a way no one had before. When I had to let her go 30 years later I did not feel as much sadness as gratitude for her being in my life. I have had others that will be forever in my heart, too – Salero, Rico, Bridghett, Alex.

I don't know if I'll ever have another horse that touches my heart the way that some of these horses in my past have done. I feel immensely lucky to have had time with each of them — and there were other horses that I rode, owned, or cared for that were also nice horses but somehow just fell short of being heart horses. I hope they found their special humans after they moved on from me.



### **THERE ARE NO ALBINO HORSES.**

Albinism does not exist in horses. Some coat colors may look like albino at first glance, such as the maximum sabino, cremello, or perlino. However, research has shown that the gene responsible for these colors is not an albino gene. Very rarely, horses can be born pure white with pink skin that some people might mistake for an albino horse. This color is called dominant white, and it's fundamentally different from an albino. Dominant white horses have no pigment cells, while albino animals have the normal amount. Some white foals will carry a gene linked to a condition called lethal white syndrome. These foals look like a regular dominant white and always have blue eyes, but will die within 72 hours after birth.

### **HORSES ARE NOT NATIVE TO THE AMERICAS.**

While the modern horse didn't develop in the Americas, its ancestors lived there for millions of years before mysteriously going extinct around 8,000-12,000 years ago. Scientists are still searching for an explanation, with some possible causes being climate change and overhunting by humans. Luckily, horses migrated from Alaska to Eurasia around 2-3 million years ago, where they survived. After disappearing from the face of America, it wasn't until the late 15th century that horses returned alongside Christopher Columbus. Countless fossil remains have been uncovered that prove the existence of ancient horses on the American continent. Both the Eohippus, the oldest ancestor of horses that lived between 56-33.9 million years ago, and the first species of the genus Equus have been found in the United States.

### **THE HIGHEST RECORD JUMP BY A HORSE IS 8 FEET 1.25 INCHES.**

On February 5, 1949, Captain Alberto Larraguibel Morales cleared 8 ft 1.25 in (2.47 m) riding Huaso ex-Faithful in Vina del Mar, Chile. The FEI stated that anyone who wants to beat the record set by the Thoroughbred has to jump 2.49 m. Interestingly, an unofficial record is held by American Fred Wettach Jr. and his horse King's Own. The pair jumped 8 ft 3.5 in (2.53 m) in front of 25 people, which didn't count as an official attempt. Furthermore, the longest jump ever (28 ft or 8.4 m) was performed by Andre Ferreira and his horse Something over a water obstacle. The record was set on April 25, 1975 at the National Event "Rend Show" in Johannesburg, South Africa.

### **THE LONGEST HORSE RACE IS 1,000 KM.**

The annual Mongol Derby is the world's longest and toughest horse race, stretching across 1,000 km (621 mi) of Mongolian steppe. 45+ competitors set out each year to complete the race on semi-feral native horses. The race consists of 40 kn. (24.85 mi) long sections, at the end of which competitors change horses. The sections have to be completed entirely on horseback, and if you fall off at the 39th km, you have to walk all the way back to the base. According to Equestrianists, around 1,500 Mongolian horses are prepared for the race each year. All horses receive a vet check before the start of the race and after completing a section. Only competitors whose horses are fully fit and healthy can continue the race. The Mongol Derby is the ultimate survival race where horse and rider can only rely on themselves. Most people train for years before taking part in this once-in-a-lifetime adventure.

### **TWIN HORSES ARE EXTREMELY RARE.**

Unlike most mammals, horses are not meant to nourish more than one fetus. When a twin pregnancy is detected by ultrasound, the smaller embryo will usually be eliminated by a vet to save the mare and the remaining foal. However, if such a pregnancy is not detected early on, mare owners might decide to keep both foals despite the risk. The procedure to remove one of the foals at a later stage is an expensive surgery that most people can't afford. There have been many cases when twin foals were successfully born. One example is the famous Arabian twin colts Majus ZF and Majician ZF that developed inside a single placenta!

### **A HORSE CAN CARRY 20% OF THEIR BODY WEIGHT.**

Theoretically, a horse is physically capable of carrying a person that is 20% of his weight, which means a 2000-pound draft horse can carry up to 400 pounds. The weight capacity depends on many factors, such as its physical condition and health status. Horses with certain physical conditions or health issues may not safely carry as much weight as a healthier horse could. Horse weight limit also depends on how they are used; for example, a racehorse may not carry weight while a draft horse may have no problem.

### **HORSEPOWER WAS CALCULATED FROM HOW MUCH WORK A MILL HORSE COULD DO.**

To understand the roots of this unusual metric, we need to turn the clock back to the 18th century, when the advent of steam power was about to provide early retirement for a lot of hard-working horses. James Watt (1736-1819), a Scottish-born inventor and engineer, was trying to stir up interest in his new-and-improved version of the steam engine. The problem was, how could he pitch a product so new that there was no accurate way to measure the benefit it provided? That's why Watt took an interest in the working horses that pulled, pushed, and lifted heavy loads in factories, mills, and mines. He was looking for a way to prove his stationary industrial steam engine could easily outwork them.





# Comanche, Survivor of the Battle of the Little Bighorn

University of Kansas Natural History Museum  
Lawrence, Kansas

**Lone survivor from Custer's Last Stand forever preserved.**



**ON JUNE 25, 1876 THE** five companies of the US 7th Cavalry under the command of Gen. George Armstrong Custer were annihilated by a force of Lakota Sioux and Cheyenne at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. The following day, troops from the remaining companies of the 7th Cavalry discovered the carnage – 210 men lay dead, including their commander, along with dozens of horses. While no US Army soldier survived the engagement, one horse was found alive on the battlefield.

The horse, named Comanche, had belonged Capt. Myles Keough, and had suffered no less than seven bullet wounds during the battle. Though he was heralded as the lone survivor of the battle, many historians believe that as many as 100 horses survived and were either captured or bolted.

After the battle, Comanche was transported to Ft. Abraham Lincoln in the Dakota Territory, and he was officially retired from service in April 1878. As part of his retirement, the commanding officer of the fort ordered that “a special and comfortable stall is fitted up for him, and he will not be ridden by any person whatever, under any circumstances nor will he be put to any kind of work.” The horse was also given the honorary title of “second-in-command” of the 7th Cavalry, and he lived out the rest of his days as a company mascot.

When he died in 1890, he was the first of only two horses in American history ever given a funeral with full military honors. He was not buried, however; instead, his body was sent to the University of Kansas to be stuffed and put on display, where he resides today in the university’s Natural History Museum. In 2005, Comanche was moved to a new exhibit on the museum’s fourth floor after undergoing a complete restoration.

# Facts about the Thoroughbred

## 1. A Thoroughbred is truly “thoroughly bred”

Thanks to the meticulous record-keeping of the current Thoroughbred registry (the Jockey Club) and English horse breeders in the 17th and 18th centuries, all modern registered Thoroughbreds can trace their pedigrees back to one of three foundation sires – the Godolphin Arabian, the Byerly Turk, and the Darley Arabian.

## 2. They have deep English roots, with Arabian influence

Developed during the reigns of King James I and King Charles I, local English horses were bred with swift imported Arabian and Barb stallions. As the sport of horse racing grew in popularity, the breed was refined to create fast, athletic horses with great endurance that matured quickly.

## 3. A breed recognized around the world

While horse racing has been a popular tradition for thousands of years, Thoroughbred racing began in England. As British influence grew, they began to export these fine steeds to the far reaches of the globe.

Today, Thoroughbred racing is popular in the United States, England, Australia, Ireland, Japan, India, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand, and many other countries all over the world.

## 4. Only live breeding is allowed

The Jockey Club only allows Thoroughbreds to be bred using live covering – that is, both horses must be physically present for breeding to take place. No artificial insemination or use of frozen embryos is allowed. This controls the number of mares a single stallion can cover in a season, and thus preserves the bloodlines (and as a result can protect the price point for more valuable offspring).

## 5. They’re a tall breed, but they didn’t begin that way

Thoroughbreds are known for being lanky with long legs, but did you know that the very first Thoroughbreds stood only 13.3 hands high? That’s about the size of a large pony! At the beginning of the 18th century, racehorses barely cleared 14 hands. However, by the 1750s, their average size had increased to 15 hands. Some of the most successful modern racehorses have stood over 16 hands high, although most Thoroughbreds still reach an average height of around 15 hands.

## 6. All Thoroughbreds have the same birthday

Every January 1st (or August 1st in Australia) all registered Thoroughbreds celebrate another birthday and gain a year in age. This provides standardization for the racing industry, although it can give an advantage to horses born earlier in the year. Originally, English colonists had celebrated their racehorse’s birthdays on May Day (May 15) in line with English tradition. Eventually, the Northern states adopted the January 1st birthday (as it had been changed in England). But the Southern states would not concede to the change until after the Civil War. So for a time, racehorses in America had two different birthdays!

## 8. What’s in a name, anyway?

Naming a new baby racehorse is no easy feat. The Jockey Club rule book lists 17 different conditions for naming a Thoroughbred, and will immediately reject any name that breaks one of these rules. Nonsense words or other “made-up” terms must be explained, and any words in a foreign language must be sent with an English translation to be considered. Owners must submit 6 different name choices, and the final decision is up to the Jockey Club.

*(Cont'd from page 1)*

Other horses; he seemed determined and forward thinking even at his young age.

It was one morning after his daily routine was over - and shortly after being weaned from his mother – that Assault was turned out in a large field with the other colts and his handler remembered that he took off in a full gallop, kicking up his heels. What happened next was not witnessed but the results tell the sad tale: Assault did not see a surveyor's stake sticking up in the grass and as he galloped his right front foot stomped down on the sharp stake. It stabbed through the soft middle part of his frog and came out the front wall of his hoof. He was out all day and night in what must have been terrible pain; in the morning he was seen hobbling to the barn where he knew there would be fresh feed and hay. When Lolo saw him he immediately called the farm vet, Dr. Northway, to examine him. The prognosis was grim, and though various medicines were given after a week he was still not getting any better. There were whispers among the staff of him never getting well. Dr. Northway, however, would not give up and decided to operate and cut out the infected area, which meant he had to cut away a large part of his right hoof. After weeks of stall rest and packing his foot with antibiotics, Lolo was said to be very concerned as Assault's right foot was not growing as big as his other hooves and it was very soft. It was doubtful they could ever put a shoe on him, and the most Assault could do was limp along with the occasional trip as he lost his balance. His future looked grim and many of the workers there felt there was no future for this little colt.

Lolo, however, saw the determination Assault had and wasn't so quick to write him off. He knew this colt had a heart as big as Texas and that he seemed to be trying to improve and would not quit. Lolo whispered to him that Captain King, the founder of the King Ranch, had limped too and was given the affectionate name of El Cojo, or the lame one. But that limp never held him back and he always looked ahead, not backwards and that is what Assault should do.

After many weeks he was let back out into pasture and after months his soreness went away, even though he still protected his hoof. He had a definite limp but by the time he was 15 months old the vet announced that his hoof was completely healed and designed a special shoe for him that had a leather pad to cover the damaged frog and a talented blacksmith made the shoe turn up in the front where the hoof was thicker, where it could be attached and made to stay on. With his new shoes on Assault gained the courage to try and run, and run he did – his right hoof hit the ground in perfect rhythm with his other hooves. At least at the gallop Assault was sound!

By the next fall Assault was stronger and taller and ready for his basic training - learning to wear a saddle, hold a rider and learn to stop and steer. And every day he grew stronger and faster. Robert Kleberg was keeping his eye on this little colt, too, and seemed to see something in him as it was decided to send him to the ranch's training track for real racehorse training on a real racetrack.

Though Assault had a tendency to limp when he walked or trotted, and sometimes would stumble when he was first out of the gate, he was exceptionally fast at the gallop and soon was moved to train with the fastest group of colts. One day the Ranch's special trainer, Mr. Max Hirsch, saw him run and decided they were going to take a chance on this little thoroughbred. Max had trained his father, Bold Venture, after all. This required him to move to South Carolina for training and he had to leave Lolo, his first human friend. It is said Lolo had tears in his eyes when he loaded Assault into the box car.

At the beginning of his race career at the age of 2, Assault stood at 15 hands. It is said he held his head high to make himself look taller, particularly when he was heading toward the starting gate! He still stumbled and limped regularly, and many people did not think he would make a very good race horse with his deformed foot. But Max Hirsch saw greatness in him and saw that his gallop was true – and that is what mattered.

# Wildwood Farm CLIPS & CLOPS Oak Harbor

2326 Happy Valley Rd  
Oak Harbor WA 98277

That first year Assault had 2 wins from 9 starts and won the Flash Stakes in a 4-way photo finish. Early in his 3 year old season he won the Wood Memorial, but he was an outsider when he was entered in the Kentucky Derby. With jockey Warren Mehrtens aboard he raced past all the rivals and won the Kentucky Derby by 8 lengths, the largest margin of victory at that time. Although he was the favorite going into the Preakness Stakes a week later, Mehrtens made the mistake of pushing Assault too early in the race and although he won by a neck, many thought his stamina was not what it should be. For the final race in the Triple Crown – the Belmont Stakes – Assault was not the favored horse to win, and many people felt justified when he tripped and almost went down when the starting gate opened and he trailed for much of the race. In the final 200 yards, however, he moved past the leaders to win the Belmont by three lengths. He was the seventh Triple Crown winner ever, and the only one – to this day- bred in Texas.

Later that year Assault was plagued by a kidney infection and did not race again until he was 4 years old, where he won 5 of his 7 races and never finished less than 3<sup>rd</sup>. In his career, Assault raced a total of 42 times with 18 victories (15 stakes races), 6 second-place finishes and 7 third-place finishes. His total earnings were \$675,470 which in today's money would be over \$10 million!

Retired after his 4-year old season, the plan was to breed Assault but it was found he was sterile. He was also plagued with fetlock, knee and bleeding problems throughout his life. He lived the rest of his life out at King Ranch and died on September 1 1971 after falling and breaking his left front leg at the shoulder - he was 28.

In total, King Ranch won six Triple Crown races – two Kentucky Derbys, one Preakness and three Belmont Stakes. Bold Venture remains the only Kentucky Derby winner to sire two Kentucky Derby winners.

**MIDDLEGROUND** The horse buried next to Assault on King Ranch is his half-brother Middleground. Born in 1947 and sired by Bold Venture, he won the 1950 Kentucky Derby and Belmont Stakes and came in second in the Preakness Stakes. Later that year he broke a bone in his foot and was retired to King Ranch. In his lifetime he sired 101 winners and 7 Stakes winners. He died in 1972.



Middleground



Bold Venture