



GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR BARN LIFE

Over thirty years ago, I was given a wonderful opportunity to start my own riding program with my four horses, **MA**ggie, **JO**hnny, **DA**kota (that's where the MAJODA came from), and my beloved Jackie (whose name did not fit into my chosen barn name). I had been teaching riding at other barns for many years and looked forward to running my program the way I felt best. I knew I wanted Majoda Stables to be a welcoming and non-competitive barn where kids and adults could learn to ride and enjoy the benefits of being around horses and other like-minded people.

Vera has become a very competent and compatible partner in running Majoda. We both agreed that we were not interested in being a barn for competitive riders. Our mission is to encourage anyone who loves horses to learn how to communicate and be in a relationship with them. We leave the competitive side of riding for other barns to handle.

As is often the case, a core group of kids, who we fondly nicknamed "The Barn Bums," form friendships – many of whom maintain those friendships for years to come. The average length of time any group like that lasts is about 4-5 years, and then the kids move on. In the past 30 years, that means there have been about a half dozen variations of "Barn Bums." One of the difficulties of these groups forming is that they tend to become a bit of a closed group who start to feel, shall I call it, "entitled" or "better than" those not included in their group. That's human nature, especially amongst young folks. (It can even occur with our adults – it's not always just a kid thing!) It can really cause pain and alienation for those who are not included, and it makes the atmosphere in the barn unpleasant and unwelcoming.

When we formed the Advanced Horsemanship Program (AHP), we offered it to our students who wanted to go deeper into horsemanship. Some of our students wanted to compete at horse shows and we were happy that the Interscholastic Equitation Association (IEA) was available for these students to go to horse shows without us having to be involved. We are supportive of this program, but caution those involved not to fall into the pattern of entitlement and exclusion. Our AHP students do have more opportunities and responsibilities, but not authority or privilege. We consider all our students and volunteers to have equal importance and value. The authority belongs to the adults who oversee, teach, and work for Majoda. That would be: Diane (Owner / Director), Vera (Manager / Head Instructor), Joanne, Lisa, Mary, Donna, and Sydney (Instructors), as well as Kathleen, Merilee, and Shannon (Adult Volunteers).

EXPECTATIONS:

- Respect everyone, human and animal.
- Be helpful and follow the directions of the adults in charge.
- Speak kindly of and to everyone, human and animal.
- Let Vera, Diane, or another responsible adult know if there is a problem or concern.

~ BE GRATEFUL FOR THE GIFT OF BEING PART OF MAJODA STABLES! ~

~ WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GIFTS YOU BRING TO MAJODA STABLES! ~