

HOOFBEATS

Monthly Newsletter from the Jester Park Equestrian Center

May 2015 • Issue IV

www.polkcountyiowa.gov/equestriancenter

SLO

LESSON HORSE OF THE MONTH

"Slodancin' Ona Impulse" or Slo - as we call him, is a seal brown American Paint gelding with a wide white blaze on his face. He has three white legs and is registered with the APHA due to a white patch located on his inner thigh! Slo is 13 years old, and loves to be dressed in the color red! He has extensive western pleasure training and was a competitive show horse before making his way to JPEC. Slo has been working as an able-bodied lesson horse and serves our advanced/intermediate level students. With his sensitive and responsive nature, he helps them fine tune their skills. His sweet and loving personality has quickly made him a student favorite.



MAY

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2 No Lessons
3 No Lessons	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	Mom's Morning Out	15	ACTHA Spring Challenge
17	18	19	20	21	22	Trail Season Opening
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 No Lessons

• Special JPEC Sponsored Events

- Mom's Morning Out Event
- ACTHA Spring Challenge
"American Competitive Trail Horse Association"
- JPEC Trail Season Opening!

Find a detailed calendar of events of all the happenings at JPEC on our facebook page!

HORSEY TERMS

"Thrush":

(th-ruh-sh)

Thrush is a very common bacterial infection that occurs on the hoof of a horse, specifically in the region of the frog. It is a bacteria that occurs naturally in the animal's environment – especially in wet and muddy conditions, and grows best with low oxygen. You'll see students and instructors picking out and cleaning horses hooves at JPEC almost all day in an effort to combat this annoying byproduct of the welcomed warm and wet weather of spring time!

We have a variety of horses here in our barn at JPEC, everything from the typical Quarter Horse to a Gypsy Vanner (yes, the one with the mustache). One horse breed that you might have heard of is a Thoroughbred. If you have ever watched horse racing, you have likely watched this breed speeding down the raceway. Along with racing, they are often used in show jumping, dressage, polo, and other sports. Thoroughbreds have a very slim, athletic figure and average 16 hands tall. You may hear them referred to as hot blooded due to their level of agility and speed, these horses typically have a lot of energy.

FunFact: Thoroughbreds are officially said to be one year older on January first of each year, no matter when they were actually born. For example, a horse born in January and a horse born in March are both considered one year old the next January. Because of this, breeders want their foals to be born as early in January as possible so they have an advantage over other horses considered the same age.

Breed Spotlight - Thoroughbred



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AIRO

LESSON HORSE OF THE MONTH

Airo is a handsome 18-year-old bay Arabian gelding. Before making his way to Jester Park Equestrian Center he was an open and 4H show horse, a jumper on the Kent State Equestrian Team, a camp and trail horse, and a Therapeutic and able bodied lesson horse. He is currently serving as a therapeutic horsemanship mount with the intention of being introduced into many of our other programs with his smooth gaits and friendly, inquisitive disposition. Airo is hard working and very patient with his riders.



MAY

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2 Volunteer Training Session
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	Mom's Morning Out	15	ACTHA Spring Challenge
17	18	19	20	21	22	Trail Season Opening
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

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"Hope From Horses"

Youth Service and Volunteerism Program

JPEC is always looking for better ways to serve the community and members of Polk County. Due to the volunteer requirements currently in place, many youth under 18 years old are excluded from volunteering at the facility and working around the horses. Additionally, many youth who are in need of the leadership and mentoring found at our facility, as well as the therapeutic benefits of horses, cannot afford weekly riding lessons or fees to participate in many of our events. So where do these youth "fit" at Jester Park Equestrian Center?



The "Hope from Horses" program is designed to allow youth to participate, under supervision, in the day to day activities and events at the Equestrian Center. This program is based off the premise of a "working student" program model, and would involve training, mentoring, riding, and volunteerism. Students are required to volunteer a minimum of 4 hours a week around the barn while gaining valuable skills and knowledge around the barn. This program is free of charge and runs as a 12 week session with the ability for students to move up levels in the program and gain more responsibility as they progress.

For more information please visit online at www.JesterParkEC.com or find our brochure on the program by the main entrance of JPEC.

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Becoming a Horse Whisper

How to read and decipher what your horse is thinking

EARS || The position of a horse's ears can be a good indicator of how your horse is feeling or what they are thinking. Some common ear positions are:

- Pricked ears indicate an interest in something.
- Ears flattened back generally indicate your horse is upset about something.
- One or both ears facing backwards but not flattened or pinned means they are listening to some thing behind them. If you are riding, it is probable that your horse is paying attention to you.
- When the ears flop naturally your horse is calm and relaxed.

POSTURE || Horses eyes or facial expressions can also tell you what your horse is trying to tell you. They may include:

- A happy, relaxed horse may have half-closed eyes.
- Horses may try to reciprocate being groomed by someone they like by nibbling on them.
- A relaxed horse's head normally hangs low.
- A wrinkled nose might mean pain or irritation.
- While being groomed in just the right spot the lower lip will be back and the neck extended.

SOUNDS || Just like people horses use sounds to communicate how they are feeling. Some you might hear are:

- Sighing along with the relaxing of muscles is a sign of contentment.
- Nickering is a horses way of saying "Hi" in response to a person or horse they know.
- Snorting is often a sound of excitement, whether it be going faster, seeing another horse, enjoying themselves; or they could be clearing the nostrils.

MOVEMENT || Other things horses can do to communicate how they are feeling are:

- Tail Swishing can be a sign that your horse is upset or trying to tell you to get away from them. Although, in the summer months tail swishing can just be them trying to get flies away. Look at your horses other body parts such as eyes or ears to see if they are upset.
- When a horse flattens its tail it is a sign of fear just like in dogs.
- Stamping feet or pawing at the ground may also show a horse is uncomfortable, agitated or simply excited and eager to move around.



What do you think each of these horses are feeling?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____