



As we write this note to members, it's important to think about how much has changed and affected all of us in the past year. We reflect on how lucky we are to live and/or spend time in North Salem as riders and nature enthusiasts. So many have been quarantined these past few months and we couldn't be more grateful to be quarantined in North Salem. For the first time we had to postpone our annual meeting which always takes place on the first Saturday in June.

There are so many people around whose daily lives have changed. There are walkers, hikers, bikers everywhere. Quiet dirt roads are filled with people who need to get out of their houses and breathe some fresh air. This has disrupted some of the riding for those whose horses are perhaps a bit skittish. And it has created some issues with people walking where they shouldn't. As NSBTA members, we ask you to be compassionate and polite while explaining to those you may encounter that they are walking where they shouldn't be. This is particularly relevant in the Vail Lane and Baxter Road areas. The properties are posted but they also say, "NSBTA Members". To be clear, this is meant for those members on horseback, not on foot.

So, let us all look forward to normalization. We are so lucky to have generous landowners who allow riders on their properties and make our trail system the best and most diverse in the northeast. We need to constantly respect this privilege. There are times when the land is wet and we are asked to temporarily close sections of the trails. There are places that should be closed because they are wet but we may not know right away. This is where we count on you to make the right decision and turn around. You should think of the property you are riding on as if it was your backyard. Some of the big properties we are allowed to ride on have areas that landowners do not want horses. They are clearly marked but for some reason, riders ignore the postings. Please be sure you are on our very well marked trails. If not, please turn around and go back.

We are thankful to have such a beautiful town and such wonderful landowners, including the North Salem Open Land Foundation (NSOLF). The NSBTA and NSOLF are sister organizations. The NSOLF has protected open space that we can ride on and we maintain the bridle trails on their property. Your support of both organizations is critical to preserving this wonderful horse community. Visit their website at www.nsolf.org to see all the preservation work they have done and to support the cause.

Thanks to our members, both riding and non-riding, for your support. We hope this finds you well and able to enjoy the beautiful North Salem countryside.

Charlotte Harris & Katherine Daniels
NSBTA co-presidents



2020 Trail Report

From our co-president

The NSBTA has finished so many great projects since our last newsletter trail update. First and foremost, we need to remind everyone that with the exception of North Salem Open Land parcels, our bridle trails are on private property. You must be on horseback to use these trails. Any other activities, such as hiking and dog walking are not allowed. Please respect the wishes of our landowners. I encourage you to visit our website to read the 2018 Newsletter, which includes a detailed trail report, and see what we have been up to.

We now have a trail app!



Explorer for ArcGIS App

You can download it on your phone and use it to navigate our vast trail system. That said, we provide it with the same disclaimer that most GPS apps have. It's not perfect, as the driver in Mt. Kisco discovered when his GPS app told him to turn and he ended up on the railroad tracks! Please follow the NSBTA trail markers and use your judgement as to whether you are in the right place. If you are a member and need instructions on how to download the app, please email: info@nsbta.org. Remember, landowners may change or redirect access to their properties. Please pay attention to posted signs as they supersede anything else.

It's a little hard to remember what a wet spring we had given the current dry conditions. And there have been a few big storms that resulted in quite a bit of "blowdown" in some areas. The bulk of the work in the early part of this year was clear-



ing trees and repairing erosion. It is sad to see all the ash trees dying from the emerald ash borer beetle. While you're out riding, you may see ash trees that look like the bark has been stripped off by something ominous. The first time I noticed this I thought a bear had chosen the tree to sharpen its claws. Turns out it is a condition related to the ash borer caused by woodpeckers as they strip the bark to feed on the ash borer larvae and pupae. These dying ash trees have been a big issue in our trail maintenance.



Most of our work over the past year and a half has been aimed at continuing to improve our existing trails. This has been done primarily by removing rocks and placing water bars in steep areas to control erosion. It has been particularly important in the Turkey Hill quadrant of our system as well as the eastern portion of our trails that border Connecticut. These areas have some very steep sections which need constant maintenance. We have to clean out and replace culverts, remove deadfall, clear sediment from the water bars that are doing their job and cut back invasive species that tend to take over the trails and shred the riders! I have to say, our trails are in the best shape they have ever been.



New Projects

Hardscrabble

The northwestern part of our trails were rarely used for many years. We kept them up but there was very little horse traffic. However, with the construction of new barns and private homes changing hands, the area is coming back to life! We cut a new section to connect the east/west trail from Harvest Moon all the way to our trails behind Bridleside, Black Gate Farm and the North Salem High School. It's a fantastic stretch that spans old growth pine forests, wetlands and beautiful meadows. The trails are on the GPS app but if you have any questions, just email info@nsbta.org. Along the way, if you are inclined, there are some new, inviting jumps around the perimeter of the "New Darlington Hall" fields that abut Hardscrabble Road.



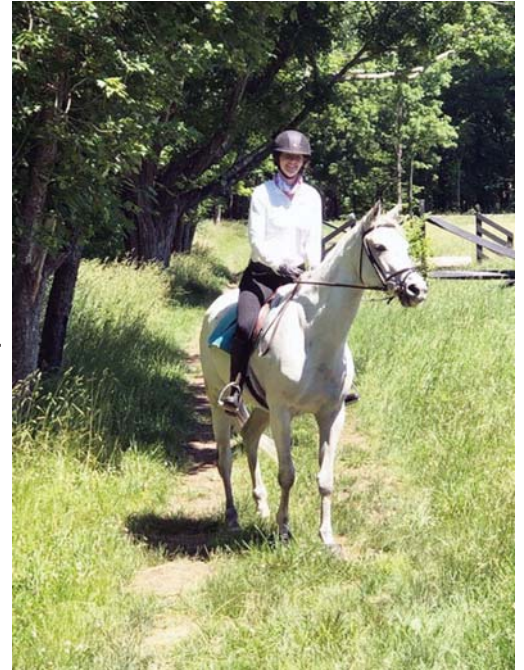
North Salem Vineyards

The old North Salem Vineyard property is a key parcel that connects these northwestern trails down and over to Baxter Road. There are fantastic farm roads that NSBTA riders are allowed to use a specific portion of. But I emphasize, specific. Everything is very well marked as far as where you can and cannot ride. There are only three access points to this property: north from Hardscrabble Road, east from Old Salem Farm's composting operation by the picnic table and west from Delancey Road. There is no access from the south. Please pay close attention to the NSBTA trail markers and the signage.

Bloomerside Preserve

Just east of June Road and across from the North Salem High School is a North Salem Open Land Foundation (NSOLF) preserve called Bloomerside.

We have many trails through this property but NSOLF also has just hiking trails. The NSBTA trails are clearly marked with our trail markers. Please keep to those paths as the hiking areas are a bit more fragile and not up for horse traffic. NSOLF markers are round and of various colors. We are in the process of stabilizing a steep section of this property with water bars as horse traffic over the years has eroded it. And we repaired a washed-out section behind Summit Farm. We have also replaced many natural jumps that have been in the woods for years and have rotted.



2020 Trail Report (cont.)

Trolley Trail / Vail

There is a river crossing on the trail that runs from the old trolley trail (parallel to Finch Rd) to the back fields off the west side of Vail Lane. The banks on either side are quite steep and horses with water issues do not like it. Given the topography there was no way to make the banks less steep, despite having installed “steps”. Instead, we cleared a go-around that comes out on one of the new trails just to the east. You still have to cross a tiny stream but it’s flat and very inviting. And while I have you in this area, please note that riders have to stay on the edge of all the fields where there are mowed paths. One or two fields had a trail running diagonally through the center but not anymore. Everything is very well marked with signs that say “Stay to the Edge”. When the grass is tall it is very easy to know where the paths are. But once the fields are cut, you have to pay more attention to the signs. Many of these fields have jumps which you can choose to take. Just remember, there is no schooling allowed.



Hilltop to Wallace

We were able to build a trail, thanks to the cooperation of eight landowners, from Norton Lane behind the homes along the north side of Rt. 116 that crosses the road just east of Hunt Lane. The trail then winds behind three homes on the south side of Rt. 116 and comes out on Hunt Lane. In addition to this route, we have cleared a trail closer to

Wallace Road from Hilltop. We have Bob and Ellen Daros to thank as well as Samara Heafitz. This trail goes from the grass paths behind the houses on the south side of Rt. 116, west of Hilltop and east of Vox, and comes out diagonally across from Wallace Road. There is a very short stretch where you have to ride along the edge of Rt. 116, but the shoulder is wide and the sightline is good.



Photo courtesy of Susan Sack

One of the most important things the NSBTA struggles with in places is keeping horses away from traffic. For the most part, our trails are set up so riders just cross busy roads directly and do not spend any time along the shoulder. The NSBTA has requested road crossing signs in ten sections of town but have not had any luck with the DOT as of yet. We have asked the North Salem Town Board for help. Hopefully this will help expedite the request.



Windswept

Trails on the Windswept property are not on our trail map/GPS App at the landowner's request. They are open to NSBTA members but you will not



see them on your app while riding. NSBTA has completed a big trail reconstruction project this past year to fix an important but previously impassable trail. It had turned into a

nasty, rocky ravine from runoff and erosion. Thanks to our team, the trail is good to go!

Trail Wardens

Years ago we came up with the idea of having trail wardens to help us manage trail maintenance. We broke down our map into quadrants and recruited riders who frequent the trails in the various areas. Our trail team cannot be everywhere all the time so we count on the feedback from our wardens to quickly attend to any problems. If you visit our website (www.nsbta.org/about/trail-wardens/) you will find a list of trail wardens, led by Mike Chaves. These volunteers



report trail issues to Mike who then communicates the information to our trail team. In many cases, Mike fixes the problem himself! If you would like

to be a trail warden, please email Mike: mikechaves40@gmail.com.

The NSBTA website, www.nsbta.org, has a "trail alert" section which we encourage you to visit on a regular basis. It has the most current information you can get on any disruptions or changes to the trail system. The 2018 Newsletter is also on the website. If you are new to the area, it's a great way to learn detailed information on past trail projects around town. Despite our phenomenal trail warden network, we encourage members

to send feedback on trails you ride. The best way to do this is via email: info@nsbta.org. The more information we get, the better we can improve our trail system!

A trail report would not be complete without thanking our landowners for their generosity. So many of our trails are on private property and North Salem Open Land Foundation (NSLOF) preserves. This access is key to our trail system and on behalf of the NSBTA Board of Directors I thank you from the bottom of my heart! We have such a beautiful town. The miles of open space, reservoirs, lakes, rivers and woods make one feel they could be living anywhere but in a town within commuting distance to a major metropolitan area. We are so lucky to have residents who appreciate North Salem's beauty and allow riding trails on their land. Our thanks to the members who generously shared their trail riding pictures with us. The NSBTA also would like to thank so many of our non-riding supporters who also appreciate what a special town we have.

Stay well and be safe. Happy Trails!

Charlotte Harris, co-president

Attention Trail Riders



With the exception of Town property, conservation land and roads, our trail system is made up entirely of private property. Trail riding in North Salem and environs depends on the cooperation of our landowners. **Everyone MUST be a member of NSBTA to ride on the trails!** We can continue to enjoy our trails only if ALL RIDERS follow a few common sense rules and use good, safe and respectful judgement on the trails.

Country Vet Chronicles

BY MATT ELLIOTT

Equine vaccination protocols and injection sites

First, a bit of fascinating history of vaccines and immunizations that involves an English country doctor, Edward Jenner, who in 1796 performed the world's first vaccination. Cowpox is a virus that affects cattle and can be transmitted to humans. It is similar to but much less severe than Smallpox. Cowpox in humans was first observed in dairymaids who came into contact with the udders of infected cows. The dairymaids developed pustules on their hands. As Smallpox swept across England, it was noted that milkmaids were resistant to the virus. Doctor Jenner took pus from a Cowpox lesion on a milkmaid's hand and inoculated 12 children. Six weeks later he exposed them to the Smallpox virus. The vaccinated children remained unaffected. Dr. Jenner was instrumental in popularizing the use of Cowpox to vaccinate people against Smallpox.

The vaccines available for horses are numerous and include the following:

- Potomac Horse Fever (PHF)
- Eastern and Western Encephalitis and tetanus (3 way or EWT)
- Western Nile Virus (WNV)
- Influenza and rhinopneumonitis (Flu/rhino)
- Strangles
- Rabies
- Canine Lyme vaccine? Unfortunately, there is no substantiated clinical evidence that the dog vaccine works in horses.

The frequency with which your horse should be vaccinated depends not only on the risk of exposure, but also 'stress', a known phenomenon which diminishes the efficacy of the immune system. For example, a 2 year old Thoroughbred race horse on the track receives a flu/rhino immunization every two months, whereas a lone pasture horse may need to be immunized only once or twice annually.

Horses develop immunity to several diseases with age. An older horse living in a paddock with



another horse that is not shipped, shown, competed and exposed to a lot of 'horse traffic', doesn't require the same frequency of immunization as the horse that is exposed frequently to other horses. Unfortunately, many of the diseases that horses are immunized against are transmitted by biting insects like PHF, WNV, and Eastern and Western Encephalitis. Rabies is transmitted by skunks, fox, raccoons, bats, coyotes and in places like Texas, armadillos.

Ideally, horses should be immunized with one vaccine at a time every 4-6 days to minimize adverse reactions, yet this is impractical for veterinarians, so horses often receive multiple vaccines simultaneously.

Three of the respiratory disease vaccines can be administered intra-nasally (Strangles, influenza 'flu' and rhinopneumonitis 'rhino').



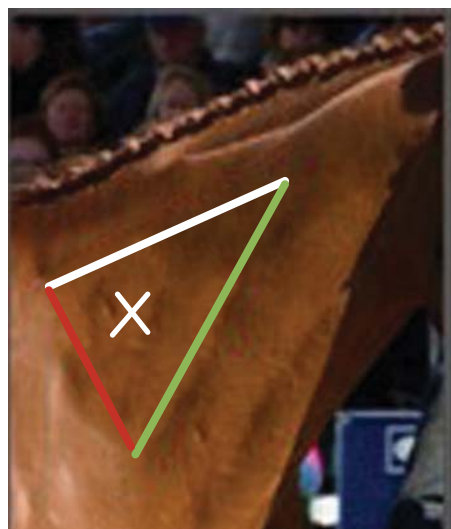
A catheter-like applicator is attached to a syringe and inserted into the horse's nostril. The vaccine is sprayed as a mist into the horse's nostril. Horses may have any number of adverse reactions to being immunized. Some horses will spike a fever, some will have injection site reactions, some will develop hives, others may even develop abdominal pain or 'colic'.

Administering an anti-inflammatory such as Banamine or 'bute' prior to immunization may actually reduce the horse's production of antibodies in response to the immunization being administered.

Some horse owners may elect to have blood drawn from their horse to determine if adequate antibodies already exist. If the test is positive, there is no need for the vaccination. This is a great idea, but much more costly.

There are several sites where intramuscular (IM) injections can be administered. The site of the IM injection is important for the safety of both the horse and the handler. Choose a large muscle mass that is actively used by the horse. This promotes drug absorption and decreases the chance of swelling and pain at the injection site. The site should allow the needle to be placed deep in the muscle without danger of hitting bone, ligaments, nerves or blood vessels. Also, the injection site should allow the handler to be in a relatively safe position in case the horse objects to the injection.

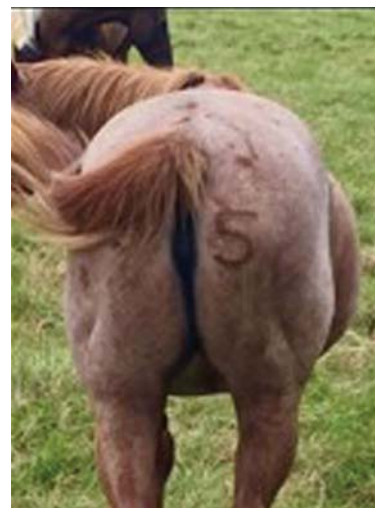
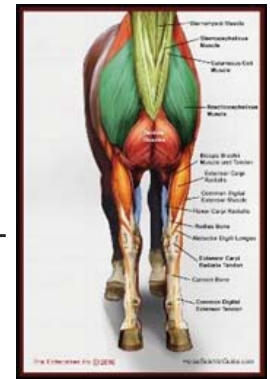
In my opinion and of most veterinarians in Europe,



administering an IM injection in the neck has the potential to be problematic for the horse. The neck injection site is inches away from the horse's spinal cord, and often results in 'sore necked' horses that are hesitant to bend to drink resulting in a

constipated or impacted horse the following day.

Another problematic injection site is the croup. Abscesses that develop from an IM injection in the croup area have nowhere to drain except in the groin area between the hind legs. Much better as far as the horse is concerned is the pectoral area...the muscles between the front legs.



The caudal thigh (just below the # 5 in this photo) is also a good injection site. But please remember that cows are not the only ones that can 'cow kick' so pick your patients bearing this in mind.

It is always best to exercise a horse the day of immunization. This will minimize the likelihood of an injection site reaction. Taking your horse's temperature for a day or two following vaccinations is a good practice. A fever is a sign that your horse may be having a reaction to the vaccination.

Pregnant mares and foals receive a different immunization schedule which you should discuss with your veterinarian.



Sideways Is Not Simpatico

By Katherine Daniels

In 2018, my horse, Simpatico (Pisco), suffered his second suspensory injury. He was 17, too old for surgery (in my judgment) but too young to retire. After the obligatory six months off, I started thinking about what to do. I knew that going back to jumping was not wise, but trail riding (which we of course love) seemed too limiting. Sending him to Kentucky was off the table.

In early December 2018, I travelled to Memphis to run in a marathon to benefit St. Jude's Children's hospital. At a post-race party, my friends' sister was wearing a jacket with the Parelli logo on it and we started talking. Less than a month later, I got a subscription to the Parelli Natural Horsemanship Savvy Club for Christmas. It was the start of an adventure, one with many challenges and rewards.

The first step in Level 1 of the program is to psychoanalyze your horse. This involves plotting his behavioral characteristics on a circular chart. If most behaviors fall in the upper left quarter of the circle, the horse is a "left brained extrovert"; the lower left quarter, a "left brained introvert." Likewise, if the behaviors fall largely in the upper right quarter, he is a "right brained extrovert"; if on in the lower right quarter, a "right brained introvert." It felt gimmicky at first, but it was fun to analyze and plot Pisco.

Born and raised in Guatemala, he came to the United States as a show jumping prospect. His importation papers say he is a Quarter Horse, but if that is true there is a lot of Thoroughbred in there. He wasn't gelded until age 9, which explains a lot. He plotted as a left brained extrovert (confident, playful, pushy, opinionated, friendly, brave), but he can quickly flip into full-blown right brain behavior (high-headed, panicky, bracey with a tendency to rear) if something frightens him or otherwise rattles his confidence. Thankfully, that is rare.

As the cornerstone of his approach to horsemanship, Pat Parelli has identified seven games that



horses play with one another and that we can use to communicate with them better using language that they already understand. The idea is to make your horse responsive and supple and to clearly establish yourself as the alpha partner in your little "herd of two." It sounds simple, but it is actually profound. I was already doing some of it, but not mindfully the way I am now.

The seven games are: friendly, driving, porcupine, yo-yo, circle, sideways and squeeze. To play these games you start by dividing your horse into zones. The head is Zone 1, neck and shoulders Zone 2, the barrel is Zone 3, and the hips are Zone 4, the tail area Zone 5. The idea is to control each zone independently. The horse should be quick to respond, happy to do so and supple.

Pisco loves friendly game. When we play, he happily tolerates almost anything. With driving and porcupine games, I found Zone 4 to be quite responsive and supple but Zones 1 and 2 were super stuck. After a year, they are getting better, but we have a ways to go.

Circle game was crazy! Pisco has always hated lunging and while circle game is different, it felt a lot like lunging to him at first and he was not shy



about expressing his opinion. You have no idea how big your cute little horse (just over 16 hands) is until he stands straight up on his hind legs just 12 feet in front of you. Magnificent is the word that comes to mind. Thankfully, we have gotten beyond that and he will now walk and trot around me happily at 12 and 24 feet but it took a while.

Squeeze (going between objects) and yo-yo (just like it sounds) games are easy for us. Sideways is not. Under saddle, we have a rudimentary half-pass. It is not going to win us high points in dressage, but it is a half-pass. On the ground, forget about it. Even with a wall in front of us, Pisco does not understand what I want from him. Zone 4 moves, but Zone 1 and 2 are stuck, stuck, stuck.

Working on sideways and circle games has had a fascinating effect on our relationship. As he started to accept me as the alpha, I started to see a lot more right brained behavior from him. Apparently, this is not uncommon. One day, he got himself so wound up on a trail ride that I thought he was literally going to explode. His heart was pounding a mile a minute, he was rearing and spinning. Totally out of his mind. I still feel gratitude for the

three kind riders who witnessed it and stayed with me until I could get off. Usually I feel safer in the saddle than on the ground, but not that day. I walked home with him dancing around me like a lunatic.

Although we still have not mastered sideways game, we seem to have gotten beyond the resistance. One of the things that helped a lot was making subtle adjustments in my position as a rider. Those of us who grew up showing were taught from an early age to sit up straight on our “sit bones.” What I learned from the Parelli program, however, is that your point of balance is slightly behind your sit bones, more on the fleshy part of your glutei. Simply changing the angle of your pelvis can make an enormous difference for your horse by getting your weight off the forehead. I wish I had understood this earlier. Pisco is so much happier when I ride this way. He is more sure-footed and his top line looks better than ever. Zone 2 is still relatively stuck, but getting much better.

I also gave up trying to micromanage straightness. With a club foot in front and a weak hind suspensory, straight as I see it is not important to him. He goes best when I just let him be. What I am learning as I continue to practice at Level 2 is that I really don't need my reins much at all. I can guide him solely with my body position and my thoughts. Of course, I am glad to have reins when a buck jumps out of the woods . . . Or when we see a white/grey horse off in the distance (there is something about white/grey horses), but most of the time I simply don't use them or need them.

Perhaps the most profound insight of all is how to position my saddle properly behind Pisco's scapula. From age 10, I was taught to place my saddle too far forward. Just moving it back a couple of inches, at Linda Parelli's suggestion, has freed up the front end remarkably both under saddle and on the ground. (Things really are connected).

It has taken us a full year to work through Levels 1 and 2 of the program on our own. We are now ready for Level 3, working at liberty. I am super psyched. All I need is a safe place to practice . . . Onward and upward!

The Wonder of the Hunt

by Yukimi Tachibana

Photographs courtesy of

Helen Houghton

It takes me a long time to get my mind back to real life after the hunt. My mind that had left the busy daily life behind completely, remains with the sunlight trickling through the leaves into the deep woods, the misty fog that covers the forest after rain and the harmony of people on horseback and the hounds. My ear is still hearing the music from the hounds, the sound of the bugle the huntsman blows, and the hooves of galloping horses.

This was the second season for me with the Golden Bridge Hounds (GBH). I have been in North Salem since 2008 and had occasionally bumped into the hunt...the riders dressed in red and black crossing Hardscrabble Road with the hounds. I always wanted to try it as it looked so beautiful and fun. I finally got an opportunity to try in 2017. I initially thought I would just try a few times to fulfill my curiosity, but I ended up becoming a member very quickly.



streams, swamps... In all kinds of weather, sunny blue sky, cloudy gray air, foggy rain, and on a day when the snow is falling on the ground silently.

The air smells differently each time, of wild flowers, of freshly cut grass, of mud and of snow. After the rain, tree bark looks black and the wet leaves are breathing dampness.

The hounds in a pack, scattered, calling each other and working for a common purpose. The huntsman, in complete control of the hounds, holding all 15 couples of them back behind her before crossing the road.

As we start the hunt, I wonder in which direction or how far we will end up going. What is the day going to be like? We could go fast, up and down the hill, ducking for low branches, turning quickly, jumping and splashing mud...or there could be a long wait where we are at a halt while hounds sniff the ground or go off in a direction we cannot follow on horseback. The day could start slow but end up very fast and exhausting.

There always seem to be challenges or surprises. Having to go down a steep rocky hill with a big horse right behind me, my horse slipping in mud, moving away from a bee's nest quickly, crossing a river with gushing water, a buck jumping up from grass in front of me, or realizing that my horse just took off to jump a big stone wall that I was planning on going around!



The hunt has turned out to be more than what I ever imagined. There are so many aspects that make the experience whole.

Being on horseback for hours on end...in many different picturesque landscapes...open fields, forest, dirt roads, rocky hills,



And the company I ride with...helping me stay warm on a freezing day with chilling wind, staying behind me on challenging terrain, reminding me to stay alert, teaching me how to go up and down steep hills, and helping me dress properly. Whispering during the hunt and laughing loudly after!

The experience of the hunt on the weekend fulfills me completely, and I go on, back to my busy week-day life in the office and raising my children in Manhattan...but now I daydream... re-live my last hunt and inflate my heart with expectation of my next hunt.



The Versatile Frittata



Basic frittata recipe

Preheat your oven to 350° F. Heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil in a 10" oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Iron frying pans work best. Add ½ cup diced onions. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, whisk 8 large eggs in a medium bowl with ½ cup of milk, ¾ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Don't over beat. Just stir until the yolks and whites are combined.

Customize, using one of the suggestions below, or whatever you have on hand.

Pour the egg mixture and any additions into your skillet, stir, and cook just until edges start to pull away from the pan. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until set, 16 to 18 minutes. Then enjoy!

For a Cobb frittata:

Add 1 cup each halved cherry tomatoes, diced avocado, and cooked chicken, plus ¼ cup each crumbled cooked bacon and blue cheese.

For an Italian frittata:

Add 8 ounces Italian sausage that you've crumbled and browned, plus ½ cup cooked broccoli rabe, cut into 2-inch segments, and ¼ cup grated Parmesan.

For a spring frittata:

Add 2 cups sliced cooked asparagus, 4 ounces smoked salmon (chopped), and ¼ cup each chopped fresh chives and flat-leaf parsley.

For a Greek frittata:

Add 1 pound baby spinach that you've cooked just until wilted and squeezed dry, plus ½ cup crumbled feta, as well as 2 tablespoons each chopped fresh dill and sliced scallions.

Equestrian Safety Vests

By Anita Zander

For several years, having heard about the new “blow up” safety vests which could protect you better than the traditional ones, I was very dismissive and couldn’t imagine ever wanting to wear one. I hadn’t gotten seriously injured in many, many years and I was sure that it was because my horse was SO SAFE (even though she did like to buck a bit when spring came around and also when hunting started in earnest). I heard that they went BANG when you fell off and surely that would freak out all the horses around and I could get trampled by a herd of spooking equines! Never mind that I was one of the “more mature” riders in my riding community, I stuck on really well! (We all know about those people who fall off constantly, Well THEY are the ones who need those things).

Ed Kelly, one of the Masters of the GBH, had been wearing one for years, and tried to encourage others to join him. Yes, I was older, but not as old as Ed, I thought! As time went on, a few people started showing up in the vests, and they said things like...” It’s not IF you are going to fall off, it’s WHEN.” “Safety helmets went through the same evolution, and no one would be caught dead without one now.” “I like my body, and I like my life as it is, and riding horses is dangerous. Why not wear a vest?” “But they are so expensive”, everyone who didn’t have one said. “It’s a very inexpensive insurance policy” said the vest wearers. I could go on...

Two of my friends who wore vests (men!) fell off twice over jumps at the Bedford Hunter Pace and they came home smiling and laughing about it. Hmmm, that’s interesting. A friend who had just started hunting, and wanted to ride aggressively, came out in a vest. Yes, that was a good idea, there is a lot to learn about riding in the hunt and most people do fall off at first. Well one day, galloping around a corner, the horse he was riding fell down and he was thrown hard and fast onto the very hard cold ground. Everyone’s heart



stopped!! Surely he is going to be really hurt, we all thought. He got up, vest all puffed up around his upper body and neck and walking like a robot, and he was fine!!! I think everyone there changed their minds about vests at that moment!!

My husband had been trying to convince me to get one for a long time, and I came home and sort of hinted that maybe I would get one. He was thrilled until I told him the price! He sort of gulped, but said that I was worth it.

We all know how expensive horse ownership is, and I thought that I really didn’t want to spend any more than I had to on that Thing. There were much more interesting things that I wanted and NEEDED! I started doing a lot of research...and in fact I decided that it was a good idea to wear one after all.

I decided on the HitAir vest for a number of reasons. That one seemed to have all the features that were necessary and there were several different configurations that one could choose. They had great safety ratings, having been converted to equestrian use from the motorcycle vests that the company had started with years before. The Pro-Air was more expensive and seemed to not look as streamlined. After all, I still had to look as good as possible on the horse!

I spoke with the company many times with questions, and eventually asked if I could get a discount if I got a few friends to buy one as well. Yes was the answer! I ended up with 14 orders!! One friend had told his wife NO WAY was he wearing one of those things. Then one day soon after his horse spooked big and he ended up with broken ribs and it ruined his whole fall riding season. They both got them! Many of the riders who saw that fall I described signed up for one. Someone got one for his daughter. One man got a black one for his wife, and by the way he could wear it with his hunt coat during cubbing instead of wearing the red one!



I rode a long time without falling after I got the vest. Told myself that indeed it was a great insurance policy, I might never fall off again! Lots of riders had a hard time remembering to unhook the vest from the saddle when they dismounted, which meant they had to replace the gas canister. Luckily everyone had bought several, but now they needed to remember...a chorus of “unhook” often starts as we approach the trailers or the barn!

One day out on a trail ride, I decided to trot a rather small cross rail. Apparently, my horse slid as she took off, hit one of the rails, and slid on the other side. I fell off very gently, but my vest didn't go off! Wasn't hurt at all, but very confused. That night I watched YouTube and read all the directions and finally figured out how to change the cartridge. And I realized that the reason the vest had not gone off was that the cartridge wasn't screwed in properly. The instructions clearly say to check that before wearing the vest!! Whoops. I struggled to figure out the directions, and finally called up my (male) friend to help me. (All the

women who I asked how to do it said that they had just gotten their husbands to do it!) I proudly did it again myself after I got home, just to be sure that I understood.

And THANK GOODNESS I had that first experience because a couple of weeks later I did something stupid and my horse got upset and bolted off. (that super safe horse I was telling you about...it was spring) I fell hard, the vest did what it was supposed to do, I got up and walked around and felt nothing. I couldn't move my head because the neck puffs were so high and firm. It was hard to get the buckles unbuckled to take off the vest at first, because it was like a big suit of armor over my torso and around my hips. People said it looked like I had hit my shoulder, but I kid you not...NOTHING HURT!!!! Each day when I woke up, I would go over my body, because you know how the 2nd/3rd day is the worst after a fall? Nothing! Absolutely amazing!!! And guess what, it doesn't go bang, it goes Whoosh!



Obviously, I am a fan. It was a lot of work to take all those 14 orders and learn everything about the differences in the styles and the sizes, but I am so happy that so many of my friends are now protected, and that I am. I have decided to become a HitAir dealer, so that more and more bodies are saved. I urge you to consider investing in one ... or in two of different colors!

Profile of a Trainer: An Interview with Tamar Ross

Interview by Katherine Daniels, June 7, 2020

What is your first horse memory?:

It isn't my first memory, but it is the most vivid. The horse was named King Arthur and I was 7. We were at the Mounted Troup in New Canaan. They told me I shouldn't ride him because he was way too big for me, but I loved him and rode him anyway.

How old were you when you started riding?:

I think I was 4. I started at Nimrod Farm in Weston. Debbie Porter was my teacher. I fell off at some point. I wasn't hurt – just scared – but I did not get on a horse for at least two years after that.

Were your parents supportive (after you started riding again)?:

My mom was. She sometimes rode with me when we moved to Weston.

Besides riding, what was your favorite subject in school?:

I loved sports (all of them) . . . and math.

When did you start showing?:

I started with walk/trot classes when I was 7.

Since then, how many horse shows have you ridden in?:

Countless. I have ridden in shows all up and down the east coast. Mostly hunter/jumper shows. That is what I do best.



Has hunter/jumper always been your favorite discipline?:

Yes, but it was kind of by default. That is how I started and that is what I became proficient in. I actually love dressage (good flat work gets you to the jumps correctly) and eventing but jumping in a ring or a grand-prix field is where I feel most at home.

Can you remember the name of your first riding instructor?:

Yes. Debbie Porter.

Does her voice ring in your ears when you ride?:

Not really, there are so many people who have influenced me as a rider.

Who are the five most influential riding instructors in your life and why?:

I started riding with Barbara Lindsay, who sadly passed away. Then I leased a horse with Phil Ake for a summer. I feel like I have come full circle now that I am back at Vail Farm. Carol Maloney was my first long term trainer and the first to ask me to start riding other people's horses. That felt great! I knew then that I was a good rider and that she had faith in me. Cindy Thomas is another person who made me realize that I had a calling. I thought the world of her, and to have her have confidence in me was truly special. It is really hard to pick only five. Kipp Rosenthal was influential for technical skills.

All of my teachers taught me to be calm around horses and not to ride emotionally. Those are such important lessons.

How about horses, are there five that are the most influential in your life?:

Let's see . . . Lucky Larry. He was my very first pony. He had been abused. When I got him, he was feral and untrained. My mom bought him for \$1,500 (or something like that). We ended up getting ribbons at A horse shows! That was so cool. The second on the list is Blue Haviland. She was my first large pony and she was burdened with terrible arthritis. She taught me empathy. I will never forget her. Empathy is so very important for a horse person.

It gets harder as we go, but I think the third most influential was Harbor Lights. She was my first full sized horse. She taught me that mares have moods – and buttons. You have to know when and how to push them! Number four, is Dokken, it is a German name with the umlaut over the “o”. He was my first jumper. He started out as a dressage horse, but I took him to the “mini grand-prix” – now known as the Meter 40.

There are so many wonderful horses I could name. I don't feel comfortable speaking about horses in my present world . . . or even the recent past, but I will talk about your horse, Pisco. He is special. When I met him, he was a leggy, 5-year-old Thoroughbred stallion from Guatemala. He cleared the jumps in his own style, which was not typical but effective. He knew his job and he got it done. He taught me that not all horses are the same and that you don't have to be a fancy warmblood to be a good jumper. He was a stallion and from a very different world, but he was so easy! You never knew him as a stallion, but after he was gelded he didn't really change much. Just don't try to clean his sheath!

How many barns have you taught at and which are your favorites? You don't have to name names, but what set up works best for you?:

Good footing in the ring and ample turn out are

the most important things. The rest is icing. I really don't mind a mix of equestrian disciplines in the same barn. It makes life more interesting . . . as long as everyone displays respect for one another. As I mentioned earlier, I am at Vail Farm now and what I like most about this location is the amazing access to the bridle trail system.

If you had not become a professional trainer, what career would you have chosen?:

Sports psychology. No question.

What advice do you have for people who want to become professional horse trainers?

Have thick skin. Learn quickly how to recognize who your friends are because it a tough, competitive business. On the other hand, I have made so many wonderful friendships. You just have the fortitude to weather the storms that come in almost every human relationship.

What drew you to North Salem?

The open land and, of course, the trails. I also find a great deal of community support for riding here. It is a special place.



In Memoriam, Jill Murphy

As one of her long time friends said on FaceBook, “Jill the raconteur knew everyone and we knew her. Her ever changing collection of animals was well known and was as large as her home would allow - everything from sleek well-bred Tonkinese to feral cats. There will be happy peaceful animals welcoming her to her eternal home.”

Jill passed away on June 2, 2020 at the age of 75 at Laurel Ridge nursing home in Ridgefield, Connecticut of complications from a stroke and seizures that resulted from an earlier accident. She was born in Indianapolis and graduated from Wayne State University in Detroit with a degree in Theater.



After moving to New York City, she performed in several plays and musicals, but, tired of the life of a struggling actor, she answered a want ad for a keeper of a pony barn. The job turned out to be at the Bronx Zoo where she ran the camel and pony rides, learned how to train camels, and cared for all kinds of creatures in the children’s zoo.

After leaving the zoo, she moved to Westchester County, settling in North Salem in 1978, where she could indulge her love of animals. She owned many horses over the years, including her Norwegian Fjord pony, Greta, whom she rode and drove in carts and a sleigh for 28 years.



She never turned away a stray or feral cat and at one point had 22 barn cats. She bred championship Rhodesian Ridgeback dogs, and through her “Mousebane Tonkinese Cattery”, she bred Burmese and Tonkinese cats. She also operated a horse blanket cleaning and repair business.



Jill wrote the “Horse Talk” column for the Record Review for over 20 years, where she would report on local horse events, or just wax lyrical about her joy of living on a farm and communing with animals.

Jill, you will be missed!

Annual Meeting 2020

The Board has decided to postpone the annual meeting until next June. The terms of the current directors will be extended for one year. The sense of the Board is that an in-person annual meeting would be unwise and an annual meeting via Zoom would be too difficult to manage. We will plan to be together next June.

Scenes from the 2019 Annual Meeting



Jingle Bell Jog

This annual event, held on the first Sunday in December, is always a terrific way to kick off the Holiday season. Here are some photos from previous years taken by Helen Houghton.



North Salem Bridle Trails Association 2020 Membership Form

Please visit www.nsbta.org, click on "Membership" and pay via PayPal or fill out the form below, make checks payable to NSBTA and mail to: NSBTA, P.O. Box 585, North Salem, NY 10560.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Number of saddle tags: (max is 1 Junior, 2 Adult, or 4 Family) _____

Where do you board your horse(s)? _____ Are you a new member? (Y/N) _____

Membership Types (Check One):

\$ 50 Junior

\$ 270 Family ()

\$ 1000 Patron ()

\$ 185 Adult ()

\$ 500 Sponsor ()

\$ _____ Contributor



By joining the organization you agree to the NSBTA Terms of Membership.

NSTBA TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

- ◆ Be an NSBTA member in good standing.
- ◆ Always wear protective headgear.
- ◆ Be considerate and courteous at all times.
- ◆ You must be on horseback to use trails on private property. Hiking, skiing and dogs are allowed only on NSOLF parcels.
- ◆ No wheeled or motorized vehicles of any kind are allowed on trails.
- ◆ No smoking on trails.
- ◆ Always ride on the edge of fields, not through the center, unless otherwise marked.
- ◆ No schooling over jumps. No lessons without permission from landowner.
- ◆ Jumping can be dangerous. **Some jumps are for advanced riders and horses only.** Know your abilities and limitations and those of your horse. Stay within your zone of safety.
- ◆ Stay out of wet areas. If trail is wet, do not use it.
- ◆ Respect privacy. Stay on the trail and walk near barns, rings or paddocks. Do not ride on lawns or approach houses. Be alert for children, pets and other distractions.
- ◆ Ride single file on roads and move to the side for cars. Thank drivers who reduce their speed.
- ◆ Obey signs and other restrictions.
- ◆ Never canter or gallop toward or away from a horse or a group of horses. Ask permission to pass, especially if you wish to trot away.
- ◆ In consideration of your use and enjoyment of the trails, you agree to assume all risks associated with trail riding and agree to hold harmless the NSBTA (including its officers, directors and contractors) and the landowners against any injury that may occur to you and your horse.



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NORTH SALEM BRIDLE TRAILS ASSOCIATION

2020 NEWSLETTER



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