Volume III:
More than a Machine

by

Vicki Watson

Horsestory Volume III : More Than A Machine by Vicki Watson
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Riding a horse is not a gentle hobby, to be picked up and laid down like a game of solitaire. It is a grand passion. It seizes a person whole and once it has done so, he/she will have to accept that his life will be radically changed.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

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Introduction

In the past, a horse was viewed as a piece of equipment needed to get a job done. Beginning in the early 1900s, machinery took over much of the work that had been performed by equines. A machine could do the work cheaper and faster. Although "progress" was perhaps inevitable, we lost something valuable when we replaced living beings with inanimate, unfeeling objects. A horse is more than a machine.

Horses can perform duties a machine cannot, while at the same time, maintaining a warm relationship with their owner or handler. Few horses demonstrate that better than Reckless, a mare who served faithfully with a Marine unit in the Korean War.

> *Reckless was a very special horse and undoubtedly bonded through a spiritual connection of love with her Marines. The noise and waves of concussion can't be described, but she endured it all. I believe an angel had to be riding Reckless, since she was alone and without a Marine to lead her. I have always cherished my horses. But after watching and learning more about that little mare of the Reckless Rifles, mine are even more special because I know they have the same Creator.*
>
> *—Sgt. Harold E. Wadley, USMC*

In 2023, there were an estimated 6.65 million horses in the United States, owned by 1.5 million people[1]. Although some of those animals still serve in old-time roles such as farming, the more common use of horses today is for recreation and entertainment.

This final volume of the Horsestory series highlights the roles horses continue to play in modern times. When available, the stories of specific animals are recounted. A book could be written about each of these chapters—and many have. If you're intrigued by these topics, dig in, and research more about them.

> *I call my horses "divine mirrors"—they reflect back the emotions you put in. If you put in love and respect and kindness and curiosity, the horse will return that.*
>
> *—Allan Hamilton*

Vicki Watson

[1] *horsecouncil.org/economic-impact-study*

1

Equine Bookmobiles

Over the years, horses have delivered a variety of things. A surprising one is books. The first mobile library, called a "perambulating library" began in 1857. It circulated between eight villages in northwest England. In that case, a man walked the route, pushing a wheelbarrow-like cart filled with a modest selection of books.

That concept was improved upon with a horse-drawn book wagon which could carry more books. The first horse-drawn bookmobile in the United States was the idea of Maryland librarian Mary L. Titcomb. In 1905, she managed the delivery of books from Washington County's public library to Maryland's rural areas by horse-drawn cart.

The horses, Dandy and Black Beauty, driven by the library janitor, Joshua Thomas, pulled Titcomb's wagon, which contained 200 books. Mrs. Titcomb instructed Thomas that there should be "no hurrying from house to house, but each family must be allowed ample time for selections."

During its first six months, the book horses covered their route thirty-one times, averaging thirty miles each trip. Joshua Thomas, Dandy, and Black Beauty served their patrons for over five years. However, in August 1910, the book deliveries came to an abrupt end when a freight train collided with the wagon at a crossing. Thomas and the horses survived, but the book wagon was destroyed. In 1912, the service resumed, using an International Harvester truck rather than the horses and wagon.

Other parts of the country also used horse-drawn book wagons, particularly during the Depression, due to gas rationing and travel limitations. In the early 1900s, Berea College started taking books to Kentucky's isolated mountain communities by wagon. Horses from the Berea College farm pulled wagons packed with hundreds of books. Berea's bookmobile service continued until 1943.

Horses weren't the only equines to bring books to people. Another early mobile library was a mule-drawn wagon carrying wooden boxes full of books. Created in 1904, the mules served rural Chester County, South Carolina.

In 1943, librarians in Nutley, New Jersey, remodeled a former milk wagon to carry 300 books. The librarians hired a driver for $5 per trip. A boy rang a bell ahead of the wagon to alert people that Teddy the Library Horse was approaching.

With the end of World War II and the country's economic recovery, motorized vehicles replaced the horse-drawn bookmobiles.

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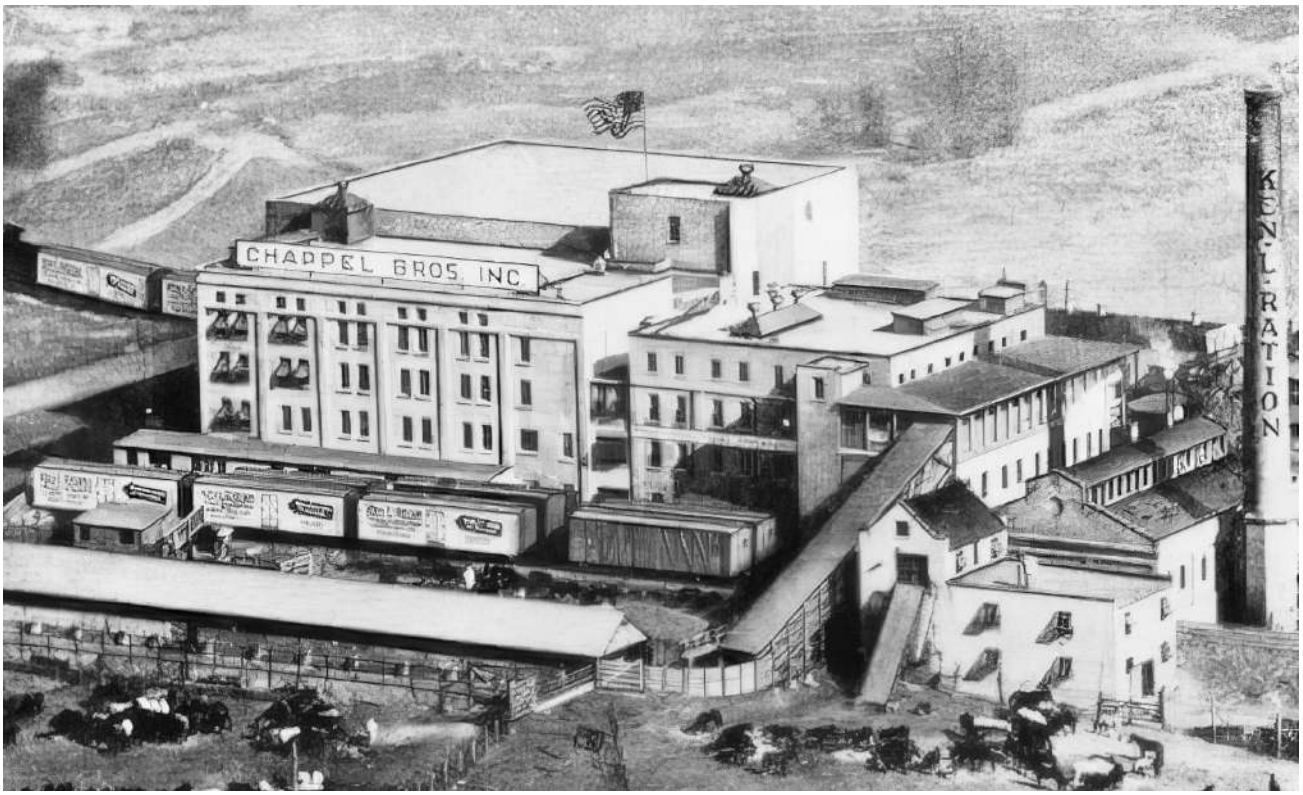
Mustang Defenders

Phillip Chappel amassed a fortune by capturing Mustangs and selling them as war horses. Britain purchased more than 100,000 from him during the First World War. When the war ended and motorized vehicles became increasingly popular, the demand for horses dried up. With his lucrative income gone, Chappel needed another way to make money.

He launched Ken-L-Ration in 1923, the first company to sell canned dog food made from horse meat. Those same Mustang herds that had provided a supply of war horses became the source of meat for his pet food. By 1925, Chappel's Rockford, Illinois plant processed 200 horses daily.

To ensure a steady supply of Mustangs for the plant, he owned and leased 1.6 million acres in Montana, Wyoming and the Dakotas. Draft horse stallions were introduced into the herds to increase the Mustang's size, resulting in more meat from each horse.

Ken-L-Ration's advertisements focused on their premise that horses were the optimal meat source for dogs. They used a cartoon strip featuring two dogs, Angus and Buddy, who learned about the supposed evolution of the horse and the equine's destiny as canine food. Chappel Brothers also highlighted the fact that they raised horses specifically for slaughter.




ANGUS AND BUDDY
The History of the Horse and Dog.
SAY, ANGUS, D' YOU REALIZE THAT CHAPPEL'S RAISE THEIR OWN MEAT HORSES FOR KEN-L-RATION ON THE VERY SPOT WHERE THE FIRST HORSES LIVED FIFTY MILLION YEARS AGO?
AYE, AN' THEY'RE REAL MEAT HORSES TOO. IN FACT, THEY LOOK LIKE THE HORSES OF A MILLION YEARS AGO, BEFORE THEY WERE EVER USED FOR RIDIN' OR WORK
I S'POSE CHAPPEL'S COULD RAISE ANY OTHER MEAT ANIMALS JUST AS EASILY, COULDN'T THEY?
SURE. AN' IT WOULD COST THEM LESS. BUT THAT'S WHY KEN-L-RATION'S SO GOOD. IT'S THE HORSE MEAT.
Out in the Western Range States where the dawn horse roamed 55,000,000 years ago, Chappel Bros. Inc. have brought together the descendants of the two bands of horses that separated in Siberia almost a million years ago.
Out there on the vast Chappel ranches, meat horses are raised for Ken-L-Ration by breeding imported Belgian, Shire and Percheron stallions to the Western range mares.
These Chappel horses are the healthiest meat animals in the world. For fifty million years the meat of the horse has been the natural and best food for dogs and today science has proved positively that—
"In canine nutrition, the meat of the horse has a higher nutritive (biological) value than the best quality meat generally used."
Mariner & Hoskins, Inc.
Mariner & Hoskins Biologic Laboratory, one of the oldest and most reliable research institutions in the world, made the statement quoted above after eighteen months of research and actual feeding experiments.
YE KNOW, BUDDY I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT HORSE MEAT, LIKE YE GET IN KEN-L-RATION WAS BETTER THAN ANY OTHER KIND. BUT NO ONE EVER TOLD ME SO.
AS IF THEY'D HAVE T' TELL YOU AFTER IT'S BEEN BRED INTO YOU FOR FIFTY MILLION YEARS. THAT'S JUST INSTINCT.
Your quality dealer sells Ken-L-Ration because he knows that it is better to make a smaller profit on a product that brings you back, than to make a larger profit on the single sale of a cheap, unsatisfactory product, with price as the only thing to recommend it.
KEN-L-RATION
A HORSE MEAT PRODUCT
ORIGINAL AND GENUINE QUALITY MADE IT FAMOUS
HIGH STAKES
CHAPPEL BROS. INC., ROCKFORD, ILL.
"ANGUS AND BUDDY" EVERY MONDAY
Give Your Dog a Ken-L-Locket
Change of address can be made easily on the handy blank securely enclosed in the Ken-L-Locket. This special offer for a limited time only. Send 1 Ken-L-Ration label and 5 cents NOW
CHAPPEL BROS. INC.
101 Peoples Avenue, Rockford, Ill.
I am enclosing one Ken-L-Ration label and 5 cents—in stamps or coin. Please send one Ken-L-Locket to
Name
Street and number
City
State
My dealer's name is

Chappel Bros. maintain the world's largest herd of meat horses to provide the best meat for Ken-L-Ration. … 1,600,000 acres of America's richest range country—as large as the state of Delaware - make up this mighty kingdom.

In October 1925, a small fire occurred at the Rockford plant. When three more fires broke out in the following weeks, Chappel knew they could not be accidental. He had a ten-foot fence built around the four-story building and hired armed guards to patrol the perimeter.


Frank Litts

In December, the guards surprised a man lurking about in the dark. When the intruder ran, the guards fired at him. Upon investigating the area where they'd seen the stranger, the guards discovered a suitcase filled with 150 sticks of dynamite.

The following day, they found the intruder, Francis Litts, lying in a field. He had been shot in the back but was still alive. Litts could only whisper, "I did it for the horses."

Litts, forty-one, had grown up in Montana and Idaho and loved horses. When he learned Mustangs were being rounded up and sold to Chappel's plant, he resolved to put a stop to it.

Litts hoped his trial would be publicized so others would learn what was happening to the Mustangs. However, that kind of publicity was the last thing Chappel wanted. Whether Chappel had some influence over the court is unclear, but the judge ruled Litts was insane, thereby avoiding a public trial.

In 1926, Litts was sent to an asylum. He escaped from the facility after seven days. A year and a half later, Frank Litts was back in Rockford with another supply of dynamite, determined to finish his mission—destroying Chappel's plant. Unfortunately for Litts, a woman spotted him in a hotel lobby. She had worked at the jail where Litts had been held during his first arrest. The woman notified the police. Frank was arrested and returned to prison where he died at fifty.

Through most of the 1920s, the Rockford plant made half a million dollars a year. The Ken-L-Ration brand expanded to produce cat and other pet foods. Quaker Oats purchased the company in 1942. Quaker continued the slaughter of the Mustangs until the end of World War II.

In 1946, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was created. The BLM initially sided with the ranchers and worked to remove wild horses from the grazing lands or at least ignored the ranchers' efforts to eliminate them. By the 1950s, the Mustang population had dropped to approximately 25,000 due to cruel techniques such as plane roundups and poisoning the horses' watering holes.

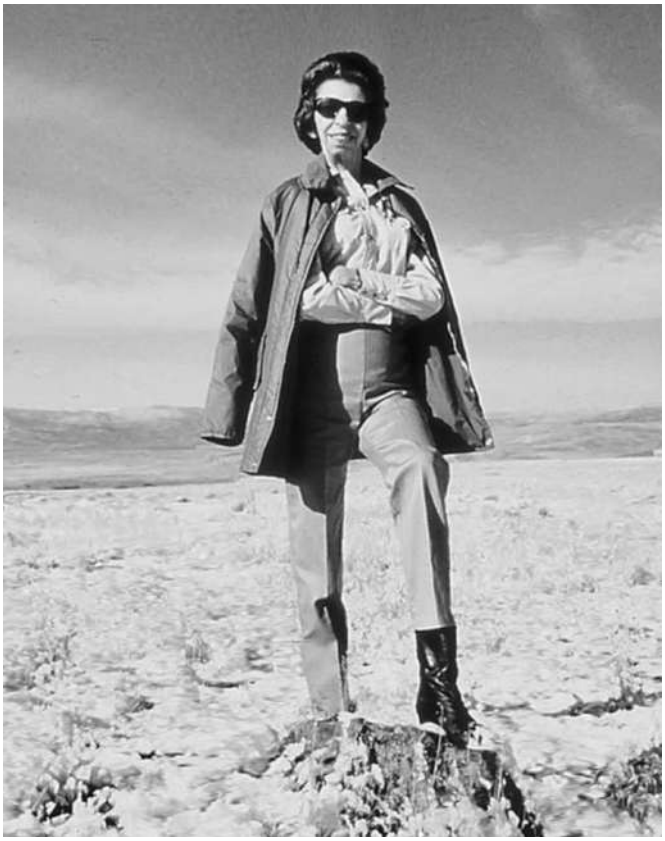
Few are aware of Frank Litts' effort to save the Mustangs. More know about the work of Velma Bronn Johnston, better known by her nickname, "Wild Horse Annie." Mrs. Johnston was as passionate about protecting the Mustangs as Litts; however, she chose to fight for them by legal means.

Velma Bronn was born on March 5, 1912, in Nevada. At eleven, she came down with a fever, then aches in her joints and muscles. The mysterious illness progressed until she could not walk. Her parents took her to Children's Hospital in San Francisco, which accepted children from poor families who couldn't otherwise afford treatment.

Velma had polio. Doctors put her in a body cast from her head to below her hips to prevent the disease from twisting her back. Her parents returned home while Velma remained in the hospital for six months. When the cast was removed, Velma's body was disfigured anyway. Her left eye drooped, her teeth no longer aligned, one shoulder was higher than the other, and her back bulged. But unlike other polio victims, she could walk.

Although Velma had missed much of her sixth-grade year, She passed a test that allowed her to advance to the next grade with her class. She had been shy before, but became even more so after her hospitalization, when her classmates teased her about her appearance. Perhaps those difficult school years gave Velma a heart for the Mustangs.

After high school, she became a secretary in Reno, Nevada, where she met her future husband. After Charlie and Velma's wedding, they purchased sixteen acres, which they named the Double Lazy Heart Ranch. While driving to work one day, Velma saw blood dripping from a stock trailer ahead of her. She followed it, thinking one of the cows in the trailer was injured. When the truck pulled into a stockyard, Velma was horrified to discover the trailer wasn't hauling cattle; it was packed with captured Mustangs.



That moment changed the course of Velma's life. Although she didn't act immediately, she couldn't erase the picture of those suffering Mustangs from her mind. She decided to talk to someone at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), naively thinking they would be concerned about the welfare of the horses. The man assumed she was a rancher's wife who had come to complain about the Mustangs grazing on their property. The agent assured her the BLM was doing all it could to get rid of the horses. Velma was awakened to the fact that the BLM was not on the side of the Mustangs.

Velma and Charlie began working behind the scenes to sabotage Mustang roundups, releasing horses they found penned in unattended corrals. At meetings, they spoke out against the cruel roundup techniques. Velma worked with Nevada State Senator James Slattery to propose a state ban on mechanized horse roundups.

Her actions made Velma unpopular with ranchers in the area. When she received threatening phone calls, she began carrying a gun. The BLM director intended to insult her by calling her Wild Horse Annie, but Velma proudly adopted the name.

The Nevada state bill passed in 1955, but the BLM had inserted a clause specifying that the law only applied to horses on private land. Because most Nevada horses grazed on public lands, the new law had little impact.

In 1959, with the help of U.S. Congressman Walter Baring, HR2725 passed, banning aerial roundups on public land. This became known as the Wild Horse Annie Act. The BLM did very little to enforce the act, so the roundups continued.

In April 1971, Velma traveled to Washington, D.C. to testify before the House Committee on Public Lands. As a result, the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act passed in December of

that year and was signed by President Nixon. The law made it a crime to hunt the horses by aircraft or motorized vehicles. Polluting watering holes for the purpose of trapping or killing animals was also banned. The BLM was required to implement management programs to maintain a sustainable number of horses on federal land.

In 1976, an amendment to the Wild and Free-Roaming Horses Act allowed the departments of the Interior and Agriculture to again use helicopters and motorized vehicles to round up the horses. This reversal removed much of the power of the 1971 act. But there was no longer anyone to fight for the horses. Velma Johnston had cancer and would die the following year.

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Seabiscuit

No one expected the knobby-kneed, solid bay colt to amount to much. Born on May 23, 1933, at Wheatley Stable in Kentucky, the groom present at his birth labeled him a runt. The colt's royal bloodlines weren't obvious from his appearance, but Seabiscuit was a grandson of the legendary Man o' War.

The foal's name continued the convention used for his father, Hard Tack. Both names refer to a biscuit or cracker eaten by sailors. Hard Tack was beautiful but so temperamental he was retired after a brief career on the track. Seabiscuit's mother, Swing On, also had an impressive pedigree, but she was too lazy and slow for racing.

The colt's owners hoped he had inherited the talent of his grandfather, but the most notable thing about Seabiscuit in his first year was his ability to sleep and eat. For his small size, the colt had a ravenous appetite. And while most horses doze standing up, Seabiscuit loved to lie down and stretch out for long naps.

The Wheatley's trainer, Sunny Jim Fitzsimmons, considered one of the best in the nation, had trained Hard Tack. He may have assumed Seabiscuit would be as difficult to work with as his father. Frustrated by the colt's laziness, Fitzsimmons instructed the rider to whip Seabiscuit as often as he could for a quarter mile. Frightened by the rough treatment, Seabiscuit ran faster than ever. That convinced the trainer that harsh treatment was the only way to get the horse to run.

Seabiscuit lost his first seventeen races as a two-year-old. He finished the 1935 season with five wins in a grueling schedule of thirty-five outings. Despite Seabiscuit's earnings of over $12,000, Fitzsimmons remained unimpressed. He'd entered Seabiscuit in several claiming races, hoping someone would take the colt off his hands. The trainer had other horses he'd rather focus on.

But no one was interested in Seabiscuit. That winter, he served as a training partner for Granville, one of Fitzsimmons' favorites. Seabiscuit became more irritable and unruly as he was held back in those practice sessions to let Granville "win."

The future appeared bleak for the short (15.2 hand), plain-looking colt. His prospects mirrored those of many Americans who felt hopeless during the Great Depression when one in four people were out of work. America's worst economic crisis began with the stock market crash of 1929. The Dust Bowl of the 1930s made matters even worse.

But with the help of an unlikely trio of men, the knobby-kneed colt overcame his poor start in life to become one of the most popular racehorses of all time. His rags-to-riches story inspired those who were struggling through the Depression.

The first of the three men was Charles Howard. As Seabiscuit was finishing his two-year-old season, Howard decided to enter the world of horse racing. When he was younger, he'd enjoyed horses and even served in the U.S. Cavalry. But then, he'd turned his attention to the latest invention.

In 1908, Howard pronounced, "The day of the horse is past, and the people in San Francisco want automobiles. I wouldn't give five dollars for the best horse in this country."

In 1919, Howard's automobile dealership was so successful that he purchased the 5,000-acre Ridgewood Ranch in Willits, California[1]. Automobiles made Charles a millionaire, but in 1926, one took the life of his son. When fifteen-year-old Frankie swerved his truck to miss a rock, he lost control, and the vehicle flipped into a canyon.

As a memorial to his son, Charles donated money to build a local hospital, the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital in Willits. Charles lost interest in his dealership and turned to horse racing. His second wife, Marcela, designed the Howard's crimson and white racing silks that featured an "H" inside a triangle. Next, Charles began looking for the best trainer. It didn't take long to find him.

In fact, Tom Smith, the second member of "Team Seabiscuit," was already on his way to California. Smith was the polar opposite of Charles Howard. Born in Georgia, Smith spent most of his early life in the West training horses for the Cavalry and working on cattle ranches. The man spoke so infrequently that some believed he was mute. But Tom was simply a man of few words, preferring the company of horses to people. Most recently, he had worked as a trainer for a Wild West show. When the tough days of the Depression brought the show to an end, Smith headed to the racetracks of California.

Nearly penniless, he lived in a horse stall as he searched for work. A friend recognized Smith's uncanny ability with horses and recommended him to Charles Howard. After a brief conversation, Charles hired the trainer on the spot.

The next step in developing Howard's racing stable was to locate a few fast horses.

In 1936, three-year-old Seabiscuit began his second racing season. One race took him to Suffolk Downs in Massachusetts where Tom Smith first saw

[1] *Some sources say Ridgewood Ranch was 5,000 acres; others say 16,000.*

Seabiscuit. As a groom led the colt down the track, the bay stopped and looked Smith directly in the eye. Tom stared back. He couldn't have said exactly what it was, but he saw something in Seabiscuit no one else had. "I'll see you again," he told the colt.

Two months later, at Saratoga in New York, Charles and Marcela Howard watched Seabiscuit win a race. They liked the horse, but didn't want to buy him without Smith's approval. When the trainer arrived at Fitzsimmons' barn to examine the prospect, he recognized the colt that had impressed him at Suffolk Downs. The normally reticent man nearly gushed his approval to the Howards. "Get me that horse. He has real stuff in him. I can improve him. I'm positive."

The Howards purchased Seabiscuit for $8,000 and moved him to the Detroit, Michigan fairgrounds. There, Tom Smith studied the angry colt, devising a plan to rehabilitate him. Seabiscuit was underweight and continually paced back and forth in his stall. He lunged at, and attempted to bite, anyone who passed too close to him.

Smith applied liniment to the horse's legs and wrapped them in thick, cotton bandages to ease his soreness. He brought in a goat to keep Seabiscuit company. The colt picked the poor goat up and tossed him out of the stall. Smith tried again; with a sturdier animal—Pumpkin, a palomino gelding. Seabiscuit liked the horse. Eventually, they shared a stall and became lifelong friends. Pocatell, a small dog with huge ears, and a monkey named Jo Jo joined Seabiscuit's menagerie.

It was time to add the third human member of Seabiscuit's team. This time, it seems Seabiscuit made the decision.

A few days after the horse arrived in Detroit, twenty-six-year-old Johnny (Red) Pollard walked into the barn, looking for work as a jockey. Tom Smith had run into Red out West and recognized him. When Red held out a sugar cube, the cantankerous Seabiscuit took it gently from his hand and nuzzled the young man's shoulder. The colt had selected his jockey.

Smith and Pollard agreed gentle techniques were the best way to gain Seabiscuit's trust. The first time they exercised the horse, he fought Red, doing the opposite of what the jockey asked. Smith suggested loosening the reins, not forcing the horse to do anything. With nothing to fight against, Seabiscuit relaxed.

Born in Canada in 1909, Red Pollard was one of seven children. The young man had been on his own since fifteen, when a family friend abandoned him at a racetrack in Montana. He'd struggled for a decade, trying to make a living racing horses. Pollard, at five-six, was tall for a jockey. He loved to read and often quoted Shakespeare to his fellow jockeys. He arrived in Detroit with a dismal six percent winning ratio, only six firsts in a hundred races. His previous racing had been at small tracks where there was little chance of riding a great horse. When he wasn't racing, Red tried unsuccessfully to pick up money by prize fighting.

A few weeks after arriving in Detroit, Smith believed Seabiscuit was ready to compete again. In his first time back on the track, he finished fourth, followed by a second in the next race. Then, in August, Seabiscuit and Red had their first win.

At the end of the 1936 season, Charles Howard moved his staff and horses to Ridgewood Ranch for the winter. They worried about how Seabiscuit would hold up during the four-day trip by railcar from Michigan to California, but the horse had grown content with these people he loved and trusted. He walked calmly into the boxcar and lay down on the thick bed of straw. Other than occasional stops to stretch his legs, he slept most of the way.

To gain attention for the new Santa Anita track, built near Los Angeles in 1934, the 1937 Santa Anita Handicap offered a prize of $100,000. The race became known as the Hundred Grander. Over 60,000 people attended. Even more listened to it on the radio (in the days before television). Seabiscuit pulled ahead, and it seemed he would have an easy win. But inexplicably, toward the end of the race, Red Pollard slowed the horse, allowing Rosemont to come up on the outside to win by a nose.

Smith, Howard, and the media blamed the loss on Pollard. Red, threatened with losing his job as Seabiscuit's jockey, revealed something no one else knew. He was blind in one eye. He hadn't seen Rosemont coming up on his right until it was too late to speed Seabiscuit up again. In his early days as a jockey, a stone thrown up by another horse hit Pollard in the head, blinding him in his right eye. He'd told no one, knowing that if the track authorities found out, they would ban him from racing. Smith and Howard kept Pollard's secret and allowed him to continue as Seabiscuit's jockey.

Rather than diminishing Seabiscuit's fame, his loss made him more popular with racing fans across the country. They found it encouraging that the little horse with a big heart had almost beaten the larger, more expensive one.

Following the Santa Anita, Seabiscuit went on a streak, winning seven races in a row. By then, news reporters were hungry for information about the horse. But the tight-lipped Smith often refused to answer their questions. He exercised the popular horse at night so reporters couldn't monitor his progress. The Howards also owned Seabiscuit's brother, Grog. The two colts were almost identical. Smith worked Grog during the daytime to fool the reporters.

Seabiscuit's fans compared him to the 1937 Triple Crown winner, War Admiral. War Admiral, a son of Man o' War, was named Horse of the Year. Many claimed Seabiscuit was faster. The Triple Crown races were open only to three-year-olds. Since Seabiscuit was four, the two horses had never faced each other. Fans clamored for a match race between the favorites. Charles Howard agreed, but Samuel Riddle, War Admiral's owner, refused. He didn't consider Seabiscuit a worthy competitor of the great War Admiral.

In February 1938, Pollard suffered a terrible fall when riding another Howard horse, Fair Knightess. The mare clipped a horse's heels in a race and somersaulted over the jockey. Red broke his collarbone, shoulder, and several ribs, as well as suffering internal injuries. He hovered near death for several days but then began to recover. The mare recovered fully as well, and later that year, Pollard rode her to a win.

The 1938 Santa Anita race was coming up in March. Smith and Howard wanted to scratch Seabiscuit because of Pollard's injuries. In the time Howard had owned Seabiscuit, Pollard was the only one to ride the horse. Seabiscuit's trainer and owner both worried he would not run well for anyone else. But Red insisted his friend, George Woolf, a successful jockey, should ride in his place. From his hospital bed, Red filled Woolf in on how to ride Seabiscuit.

A horse bumped Seabiscuit early in the race, and the pack boxed him in. Despite his terrible start, Seabiscuit came on strong at the end, however, Stagehand edged him out by a nose in a photo finish. The close loss again increased his popularity.

Charles Howard was a wonderful promoter. Soon, all kinds of merchandise, such as Seabiscuit board games, wallets, and ladies' hats were sold. In 1938, the horse appeared on magazine covers and in newsreels. Seabiscuit was the subject of more newspaper articles than President Franklin Roosevelt.

By May, Red Pollard was back in the saddle. In June, at a track in Massachusetts, another trainer asked him to exercise a green two-year-old, Modern Youth. Thinking nothing of it and wanting to do a favor for a friend, Red hopped on the colt. When they were partway down the track, something spooked Modern Youth. He bolted toward the stable and slammed Pollard into the corner of a barn, shattering his lower leg. Doctors gave Pollard bad news—he would never walk again.

Meanwhile, Samuel Riddle had relented to the pressure for a match race. With Pollard injured, they turned again to George Woolf to ride Seabiscuit. Since War Admiral didn't like starting gates, Riddle requested a walk-up start instead. He believed that would give his horse an advantage. In preparation for the race, Tom Smith trained Seabiscuit to leap forward from a standstill upon hearing a bell.

The showdown between the two champions occurred on November 1, 1938, at Pimlico Track in Baltimore, Maryland. War Admiral's jockey was Charley Kurtsinger. When the officials couldn't find a bell to signal the start, trainer Smith offered his. Seabiscuit would start the race at the sound of the same bell he'd practiced with for weeks.

When the bell rang, Seabiscuit surprised everyone by jumping into the lead, where he remained for most of the race. Red had advised Woolf that midway through the race, he allow War Admiral to come close so Seabiscuit could get a good look at him. Pollard believed that looking into the other

horse's eyes gave Seabiscuit the fire to run faster. When War Admiral caught up with them, Woolf looked over at the other jockey and called out, "So long, Charley!" He loosened the reins and Seabiscuit shifted into a higher gear.

The little horse pulled ahead and beat the Triple Crown winner by four lengths. When reporters interviewed Woolf in the winner's circle, he stated that Seabiscuit was the best horse in the world, and he wished Red could have ridden him in the race. Seabiscuit was named the 1938 Horse of the Year.

In mid-November 1938, after months in the Massachusetts hospital, Pollard traveled to Ridgewood Ranch in California to recuperate. In his haste to prove he could not only walk but also ride, Red tossed his crutches aside. His foot came down wrong, and his leg snapped. Pollard was rushed to the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital. The surgeons determined the first doctors hadn't set the leg correctly. They broke the jockey's leg again and reset it.

In March 1939, Woolf was still riding Seabiscuit, this time in the Los Angeles Handicap. When the horse injured his left foreleg in the race, a veterinarian suggested putting Seabiscuit down. Smith and Howard wouldn't hear of it. They brought the horse back to Ridgewood, realizing he might never race again. When Seabiscuit joined Red at the ranch, the jockey joked that they only had four good legs between the two of them.

No one expected Red Pollard to ride again or Seabiscuit to race again, but by early 1940, Red convinced Smith and Howard that he and the horse were ready. Charles now viewed Pollard as a son and was reluctant to let the young man race. Another injury would likely ruin him.

But Howard also sensed the horse wanted to run. He had one more goal for Seabiscuit. The horse had lost the Santa Anita Handicap twice, each time by a nose. He wanted Seabiscuit to have one more chance to win that race. Although not fully healed, Red was certain he could ride. He created a stiff, leather leg brace he laced over the boot on his injured leg. When mounted, the brace relieved most of the pressure on his leg. Pollard and Seabiscuit ran three preliminary races before the Santa Anita, finishing third, fourth, and first.

In 1940, Seabiscuit was seven. In his third attempt at the Santa Anita, he faced horses half his age. The race drew a record crowd of 78,000. Mrs. Howard remained at the barn when Seabiscuit was led to the track. She couldn't bear the thought of seeing her horse or Red Pollard injured again.

Mrs. Howard needn't have worried; Seabiscuit finished his racing career in a blaze of glory. Not only did he win, he set a record and gave Red Pollard his biggest win.

Smith, still a man of few words, said, "Red, you put up a great ride today."

The jockey replied, "The greatest ride I ever got from the greatest horse that ever lived."

The people's horse retired from racing after the Santa Anita win, with a record of eighty-nine starts, thirty-three wins, fifteen seconds, and thirteen thirds. His total earnings were $437,730. During his first year of retirement, he sired seven foals—called the seven little biscuits. Both Seabiscuit and his grandfather, Man o' War, died in the same year, 1947. Man o' War was thirty; Seabiscuit was only fourteen. It's believed he died of a heart attack.

Christ's Church of the Golden Rule purchased Ridgewood Ranch in 1962. The church is working with the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation to preserve Seabiscuit's bloodline.

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Man vs. Horse

One evening, a Welsh pub owner, Gordon Green, found himself arguing with a customer who believed that over a long distance, people were as fast as horses. Green believed they were not. The two agreed on one thing–a race was the best way to resolve the matter.

In June 1980, fifty runners and fifteen horses lined up for the first Man vs Horse race, in Llanwrtyd Wells, a small town in Wales. The twenty-two-mile race covered rough terrain across rivers and through steep ravines.

Rider Glyn Jones won the first race easily on his horse Solomon. The event was so popular it became an annual race. Bicyclists were permitted in the race from 1985 to 1992. For safety, runners start fifteen minutes ahead of the horses, and the time is adjusted for that at the finish.

Sue Thomas was the first woman to win (1982) riding Simon. It wasn't until the twenty-fifth race that a human beat the horses. In 2004, London marathon runner, Huw Lobb, finished in two hours and five minutes, beating the fastest horse by two minutes. Lobb won twenty-five thousand pounds. The prize money increases by a thousand pounds each year a human does not win. The 2004 race had the highest number of participants—500 runners and forty horses. Additional human winners are Florian Holzinger (2007), Ricky Lightfoot (2022), and Daniel Connolly (2023).

Trophies are awarded to the top three finishers in the categories: male runner, female runner, and horse and rider. Veterinarians check all horses at the beginning, midpoint, and end of the race. Any that fail the vet check are not permitted to continue.

An American version of this concept is the Man Against Horse race in Prescott, Arizona. The first Arizona race was held in 1983, the result of a bet made in a bar. Gheral Brownlow bet cowboy Steve Rafters that he could outrun Steve's horse.

The race is held in October over steep, rocky trails that traverse Mingus Mountain. The course begins at an elevation of 5,200 feet, climbs to the top at 7,700 feet, then drops down toward the finish line. There are a variety of race distances—fifty-mile, twenty-five-mile, half marathon (thirteen-mile), and a kids' quarter-mile race.

Horses are vet checked roughly every five miles. The humans are on their own. Horses must be at least five to enter the fifty-mile race and four for the twenty-five-mile one. Because of the rough terrain, all horses have to be shod or wear hoof boots. There is no minimum age for riders; however, those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.

Time spent at vet check stations is subtracted to determine a horse's final race time. Everyone who finishes the fifty-mile course under a specified time receives a buckle. Additional awards go to the first-place finishers in each category, and to the top ten riders and runners.

In 2022, the Steel Cup was created for the horse finishing in the top ten who is in the best condition at the end of the race. The award is in memory of 2021 Man Against Horse winner, Steel, an Arabian owned by Susie Kramer. Steel died after a fall in July 2022, during the 100-mile Tevis Cup ride in the Sierra Nevadas.

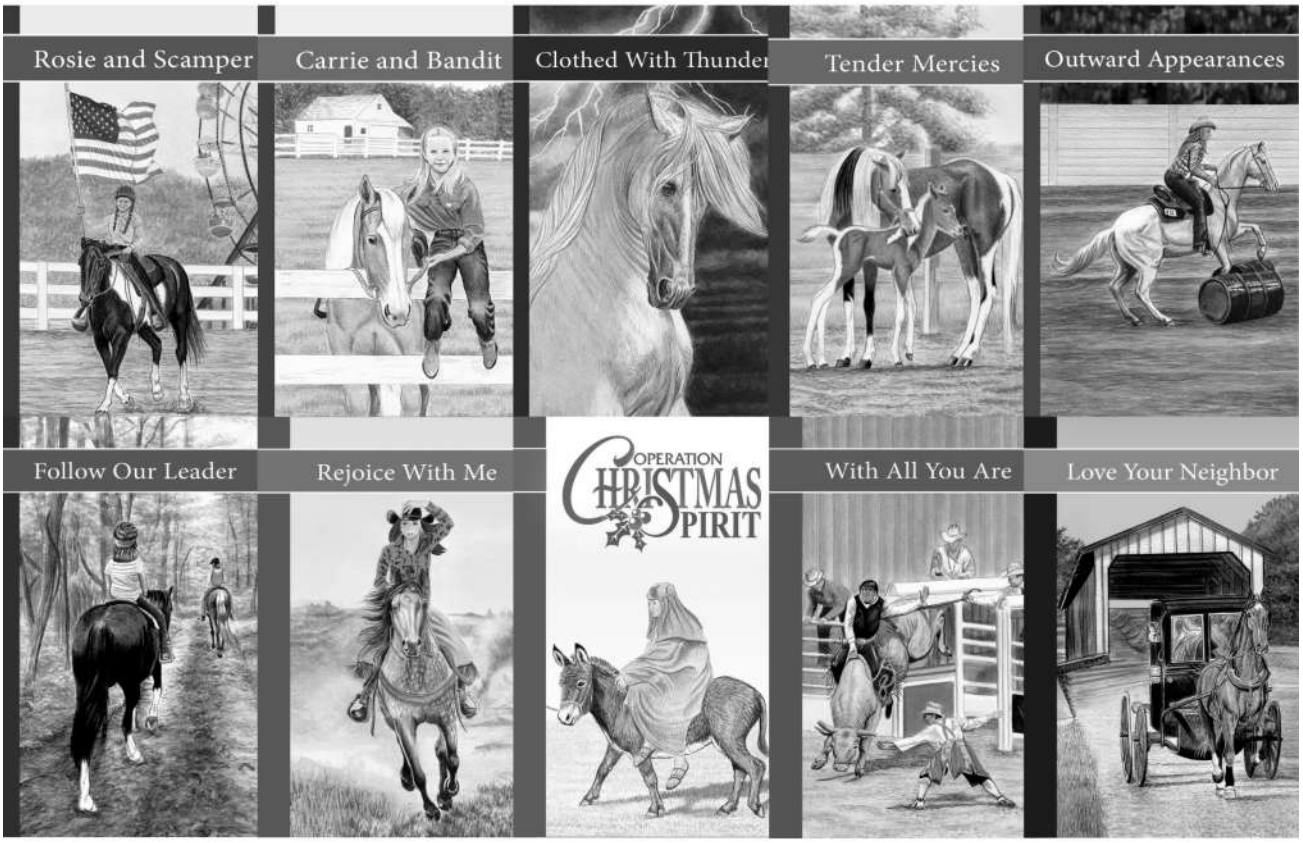
Kim Abbott was the first to win the Steel Cup in October 2022, on her Arabian Justa Strike of Fire, nicknamed Goat. Abbott has won the race on horseback four times, the first in 2008 on Sea Spot Run.

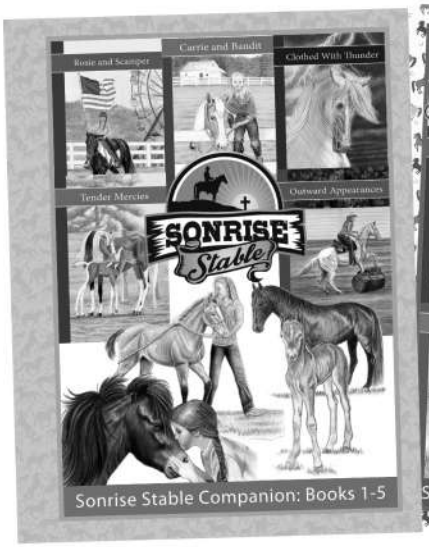
Humans have an advantage over the horses on the steep downhill sections of the course. Hopi Dennis (Danny) Poolheco was the first runner to win the race. He won the race six times, from 1999 to 2004, and finished second in 2005.

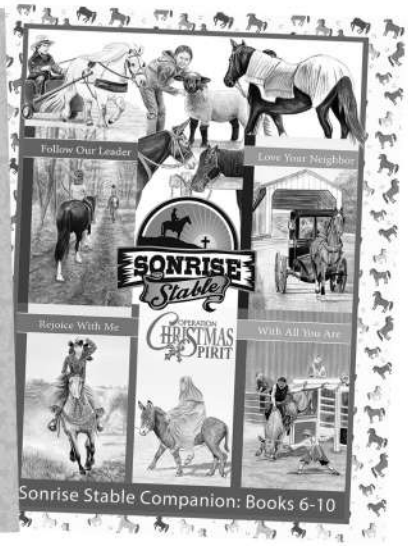
Susie Kramer on Steel

SONRISE STABLE

Wholesome and horsey with strong Christian themes, the Sonrise Stable series is unique among modern children's literature.







Read the books alone or use the Companion Guides for additional activities to supplement the series.

SONRISE Stable

sonrisestable.com

HORSESTORY

Through their bond with humans,
horses shaped our past in ways no machine ever could.
Their contribution has been all but forgotten—
until Horsestory!

In **Volume I,** follow horses from the time they arrive with early explorers to the Americas to post Civil War.

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Pit Ponies at Work

A pit pony driver's day began early. He would rise before sunup, eat a quick breakfast, then set off for the mine in order to have his pony ready when the miners arrived. Former driver, Tony Banks, recalled one of his ponies.

I used to have a pony called Ted. He was a great pony to drive. I used to give him a nice brush down before we left the stable before I fitted his collar and mohs. Then the next job was his nose bag for snap [lunch] time. He would get a mint or spangle [a boiled candy] just before we set off on our way. I used to whistle on my way up to his stall and he knew it was me. It was a sad time when I had to give him up when I went coal face training.

After grooming his pony, the driver would harness him, in some places called "gearing up." The mining harness was similar to a regular horse har-

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Equine Moving Company

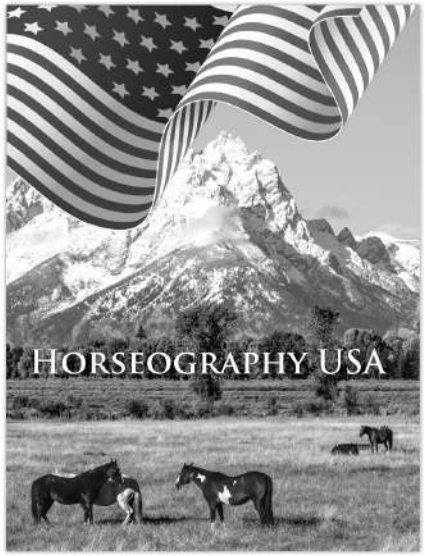
For centuries, horses have pulled carts, wagons, sleighs, and cannons, but in the past, they pulled something even bigger—houses! In fact, in the late 1800s, horses moved fifty-five houses from the old location of the village of Katonah, New York to its new location a half mile away.

What made an entire village move?

It wasn't totally voluntary. Either they moved or the village would be underwater. Katonah, about forty miles north of Manhattan, stood in the middle of the construction site for the new Croton Dam and reservoir. They needed the larger system to provide water to New York City—home to more than a million people and growing.

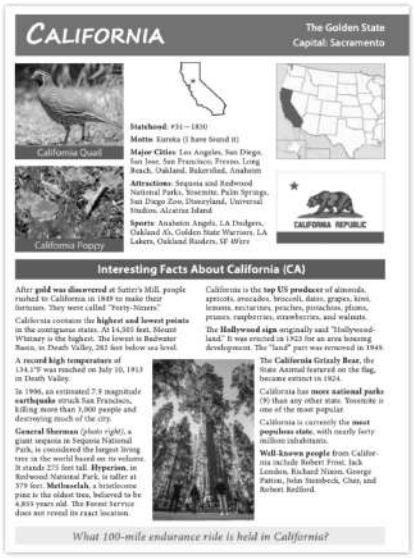
The Horsestory series continues with **Volume II,** beginning with the cattle drives in the old West to the 1920s.

sonrisestable.com/horsestory



HORSEOGRAPHY

The colorful **Horseography USA** is an interesting way to study the US states and capitals. Horse information and general facts are provided for each state. Write-in pages allow interaction with the content.


CALIFORNIA

The Golden State
Capital: Sacramento

California Quail

California Poppy

Statehood: #31—1850

Motto: Eureka (I have found it)

Major Cities: Los Angeles, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Fresno, Long Beach, Oakland, Bakersfield, Anaheim

Attractions: Sequoia and Redwood National Parks, Yosemite, Palm Springs, San Diego Zoo, Disneyland, Universal Studios, Alcatraz Island

Sports: Anaheim Angels, LA Dodgers, Oakland A's, Golden State Warriors, LA Lakers, Oakland Raiders, SF 49'ers

CALIFORNIA REPUBLIC

Interesting Facts About California (CA)

After **gold was discovered** at Sutter's Mill, people rushed to California in 1849 to make their fortunes. They were called "Forty-Niners."

California contains the **highest and lowest points** in the contiguous states. At 14,505 feet, Mount Whitney is the highest. The lowest is Badwater Basin, in Death Valley, 282 feet below sea level.

A **record high temperature** of 134.1°F was reached on July 10, 1913 in Death Valley.

In 1906, an estimated 7.9 magnitude **earthquake** struck San Francisco, killing more than 3,000 people and destroying much of the city.

General Sherman *(photo right)*, a giant sequoia in Sequoia National Park, is considered the largest living tree in the world based on its volume. It stands 275 feet tall. **Hyperion**, in Redwood National Park, is taller at 379 feet. **Methuselah**, a bristlecone pine is the oldest tree, believed to be 4,800 years old. The Forest Service does not reveal its exact location.

California is the **top US producer** of almonds, apricots, avocados, broccoli, dates, grapes, kiwi, lemons, nectarines, peaches, pistachios, plums, prunes, raspberries, strawberries, and walnuts.

The **Hollywood sign** originally said "Hollywoodland." It was erected in 1923 for an area housing development. The "land" part was removed in 1949.

The **California Grizzly Bear**, the State Animal featured on the flag, became extinct in 1924.

California has **more national parks** (9) than any other state. Yosemite is one of the most popular.

California is currently the **most populous state**, with nearly forty million inhabitants.

Well-known people from California include Robert Frost, Jack London, Richard Nixon, George Patton, John Steinbeck, Cher, and Robert Redford.

What 100-mile endurance ride is held in California?


California's 100-Mile Ride

The **Western States Trail Ride**, known today as the **Tevis Cup**, held annually since 1955, is the grandfather of horse endurance races. Its founder, Wendell Robie wanted to prove horses could cover the rugged hundred-mile trail through the Californian mountains from Lake Tahoe to Auburn.

Rules require one rider on one horse to complete the journey within twenty-four hours. Many have taken on the challenge, the highest number of entrants was 271 in 1987. Two years later, a new rule limited the race to 250 horse and rider teams. Statistically, only half finish the race each year.

The minimum rider age was set to twelve in 1958, however Gail Gilmer completed the ride in 1964 at eleven. The girl's true age wasn't discovered until later. At the other end of the spectrum, eighty-one-year-old Peter Davies finished in 2021.

Equine participants must be at least five to participate. The oldest horse to complete the ride was PI. Mercury, a twenty-seven-year-old Arabian, ridden by Claire Godwin in 2018. The youngest horse to win the Tevis Cup was six-year-old Chief of Tahamont, ridden by Paige Harper in 1962. The oldest winning horse was seventeen-year-old Asli Feswa, ridden by Tennessee Lane in 2017.

Although any breed of horse may compete, as of 2018, eighty percent of the winners were Arabian. Another eleven percent were part Arabian. Donna Fitzgerald won the Tevis Cup six times on her Arab, Wintarif. An 11.2 hand Blackney pony, Piece of Perfection (Flash), ridden by Kyla Law, completed the ride in 2021.

Vets inspect the horses at several checkpoints throughout the race, and horses are "pulled" if any serious issues are observed. At the end, a team is only considered a finisher if they pass the final vet check and are deemed "fit to continue." Unfortunately, horse deaths have occurred. Two horses died due to injuries during the 2022 ride—Ali Asref "Steel", a gray, twelve-year-old Arabian and Jamboree, seventeen, also a gray Arab. Both were severely injured after falling off the trail.

The iconic photos of the Tevis Race are from Cougar Rock *(photo below)*, one of the most intimidating sections, about twenty-five miles into the ride. Riders have the option of going over the rock or taking a narrow by-pass trail around it.

The **National Pony Express Association**, NPEA, headquartered in Pollock Pines, California, is dedicated to the preservation of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, as well as the Pony Express rides and history.

The spirit of the Pony Express is kept alive by the annual NPEA-sponsored Re-Ride in June. In odd years, riders travel from Sacramento to St. Joseph, Missouri. In even years, the route is reversed.

About 600 riders, ages fourteen and up, complete legs of the journey averaging two to five miles. The riders carry actual mail in the mochila that is handed off to the next rider.


State _____ Capital _____ Nickname _____

☐ I've visited this state.

I know these people who live or have lived in this state.

Border states:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

If I could visit this state, I'd like to see or do the following:

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

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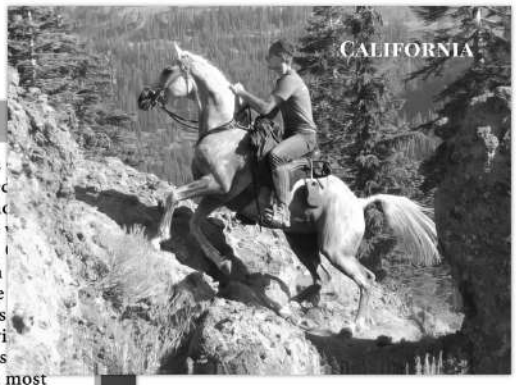
The optional card deck features a horse from each state!

The 100-mile Tevis
durance race started
One rider on one ho
complete the route
twenty-four hours.
finish the race each
minimum rider age
Equine participants
at least 5. 80% of wi
horses are Arabians
Rock *(photo)* is the most
challenging part of the race.



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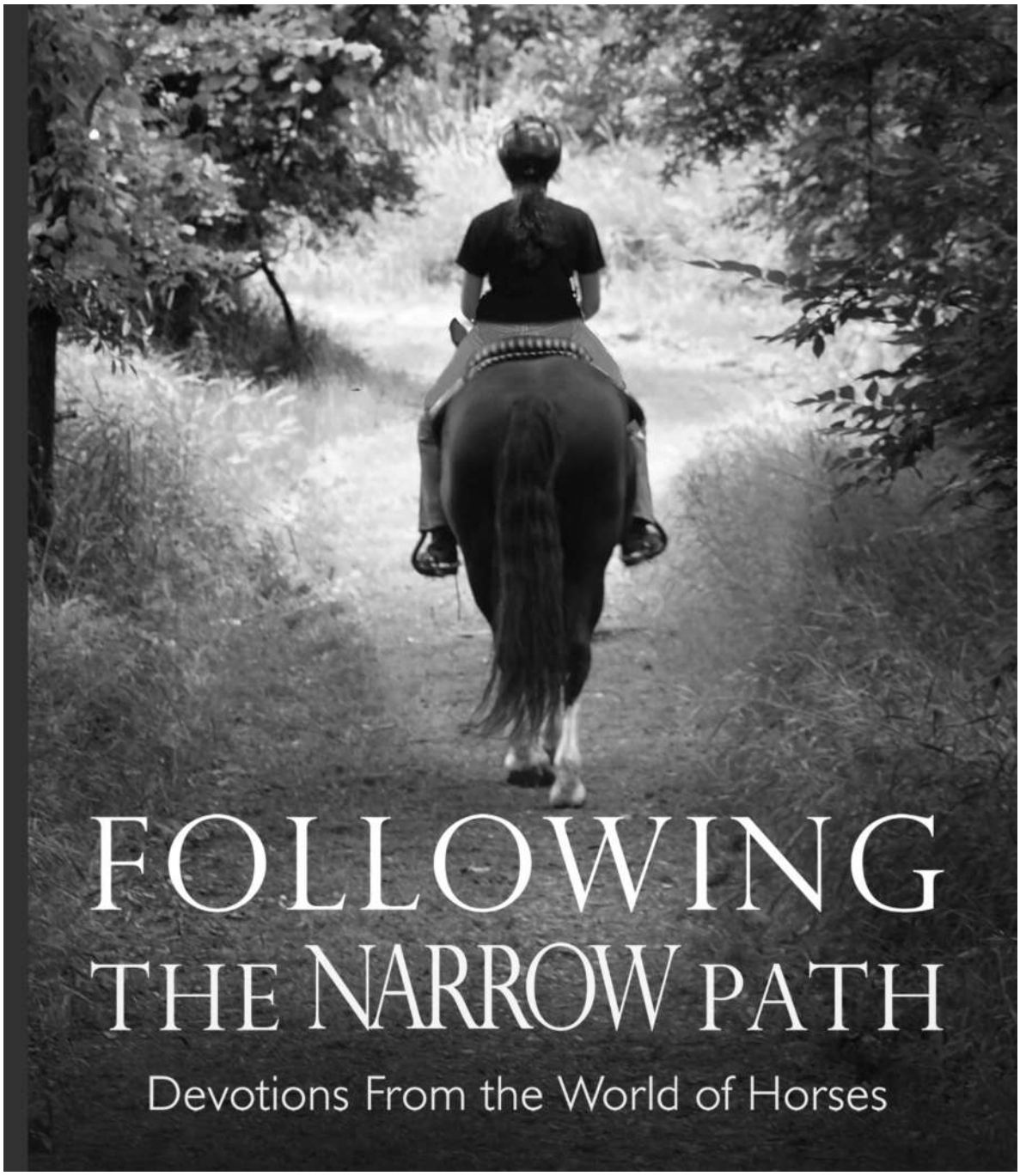

Horses, one of God's most magnificent creations, offer many insights into the nature of our Creator as well as our relationship to Him. This full-color, Christian devotional features a variety of stories, drawn from the author's experiences with her horses and Sassy, a lovable but cantankerous mule. Other famous, and not-so-famous, horses help illustrate Scriptural principles.

Available at sonrisestable.com