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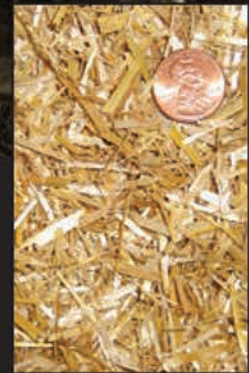
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SUMMER 2021

- 4 Trail Trekking**
- 12 Breeds & Steeds**
- 20 Competitive Mounted Orienteering**
- 26 Vet Ed**
- 30 Things You Should Know**
- 34 The Young Equestrian**
- 35 Events**
- 36 Directory**

Summer 2021:

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*Hermit's Harlaquin Moon of
 Lace Feather Gypsies
 6 year old breeding stallion
 Photograph © Janice Fischer*

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Summer is here and time to shake things up a bit.

For years now Debra, our trail guru, has been trying to get me to go on a competitive mounted orienteering (CMO) ride with her. I have always politely declined. Visions of athletic Arabians galloping effortlessly up mountains and through streams, riders fervently studying compasses in order to find hidden objects while racing against an unknown clock, just did not seem appealing to me. But this Spring serendipity struck. Our columnist, Sarah Aldridge, mentioned doing an article on CMOs the very same day Debra asked if I wanted to ride in a local intro to CMOs. I could not say no. Actually, I just wanted to try something different, to shake things up a bit. I guess things were becoming a bit too complacent for me and my horses.

So, with visions of sleek muscled horses, I set to get Ruby in shape. Ha Ha. She had not had a saddle on her in more than a year, but that doesn't mean that she had not been ridden, I just don't ride much with a saddle, especially during winter. Well, I kind of did my best to get her in shape and Debra assured me she would be ok, so off we went.

We pulled up to the event and were greeted with a relaxing vibe. Riders of all disciplines with various breeds of horses were leisurely getting ready for the day. We did the introductory meeting, many of us receiving a crash course in compass reading and then groups were formed. Our group was super friendly and we had two riders with young horses. As we rode, we studied our compasses and looked for objects. Through the course of the day, each rider's specialized skill started to unfold and we managed to find all objects as a team. Needless to say, my CMO experience was not what I envisioned. It was a wonderful time and I look forward to riding in one again.

This summer, why not shake things up a bit? If you compete, maybe try taking a leisurely trail ride. If you are a trail rider, why not spend an afternoon at Lamplight Equestrian Center to glimpse some beautiful dressage or cheer the hunters?

Most events are back on and we are blessed to have such diversity in the Midwest. Think outside of your box and take advantage of these.

Happy summer. Enjoy long rides, leisurely trails, and outside horse shows. And, of course, enjoy *The Midwest Equestrian's* Summer 2021 issue.

Best wishes and ride on.

Janice

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p/c Carrie Dodt



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Trail Trekking *in the* MIDWEST

By Debra Rubel

FRANKLIN CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA

Live in flat, northern Illinois? Looking for a horse trail with some hills? Franklin Creek State Natural Area in Franklin Grove may be for you.

Franklin Creek has 12 miles of trail through hardwood forest with views of bedrock outcroppings in low spots along the creeks. Trails vary from wide, mowed grass trails through prairie to narrow, twisty, steep dirt "mountain goat" trails among the trees. Situated on 882 acres in Lee County, Franklin Creek is located just east of Dixon, IL, near the town of Franklin Grove.

The trailhead and equestrian campground are located across the road from a restored grist mill. The campground is large and though primitive, there are multiple campsites and ample room to park.



Campground

This park has a fantastic equestrian campground. There are 20 official campsites. Eleven sites are arranged in a loop at the front of the campground.

Five sites are located along the tree line going down the hill to the trailhead with five more behind the outdoor arena. These five can be accessed by a path behind the announcer's stand. The final site is in front of the arena, behind the park superintendent's house. Campsites are identified by a set of highline poles, a picnic table, and a fire ring. Four manure bunks are spaced around the campground. Two water hydrants

This is a park where the use of a trail map is highly recommended.

are located near the entrance to the park; one is next to the dump station. There's a picnic shelter with picnic tables and counter space. The shelter has electrical outlets. There is a pit toilet located in the center of the campground.

Besides the designated campsites, there is enough

open field to accommodate the additional trailers of day-riders. A kiosk at the front of the campground houses paper maps in a map box. Register for camping here. There's no fee to use this park but camping is \$8/night and signup is first come, first serve. Payment is by envelope and drop box.

Maps and Trail Markers

In the past, the maps available at the park kiosk were a satellite photo of the park with the trail markers. The individual trails were not identified on the map. This map, though informative with all the markers clearly identified, made for an interesting trail ride. Now, a satellite photo map with trails, generated with a tracking program, is available. Be aware though that not all the trails and markers are identified on this map. When I ride, I still carry a copy of one of the old marker maps. Unfortunately, many of these old markers are missing but the map is still of great use. You can download the different horse trail maps for this park using the links at the end of this article. If you have a printer, it's a good idea to print a map for the ride in case the map box at the park is empty. This is a park where the use of a trail map is highly recommended.

The majority of the trail markers are at trail intersections. However, some are just markers placed randomly on a particular trail. Old markers are yellow fiberglass planks with mailbox numbers. Many are missing or have been knocked over by the mower. New markers are metal fence posts with white signs. Make use of the trail markers to identify where you are in the park. It's easy to get disoriented when you're in the trees as the trails twist around and sometimes double back on themselves. This is a park where, depending on where you're riding, if you get lost, you may be circling for a while to find the correct trail leading out of the area you're in. The trail markers



alone are a start but knowledge of the topographical features of this park also helps as there are ridges and low spots that affect the trail locations. I'll cover a few of these features in this article, which will be helpful for your ride.

The Pipe and the Happy Field Trails

The front of the campground, alongside Twist Road, is at a high elevation. The open campground then gradually rolls to a lower elevation at its backside, alongside Franklin Creek. To access the trails, ride to the back of the campground and look for a wood fence. Beyond this fence is a wide, shallow water crossing. This water crossing is the entrance to the trail system. To avoid the water crossing, an alternate way to access the trail system is to ride north down Twist Road over the bridge and catch the first trail crossing at markers 18 and 19. Twist Road is a gravel road with light traffic on it.

Following the water crossing at the campground, there is an open grass area beyond which climbs in elevation and is flanked by trees on both sides. I refer to this area as "the Pipe" as it's a distinctly cleared area with a pipeline underneath. For orientation purposes, always ride to the Pipe to return to the campground.

If you ride straight up the Pipe to the field at the top, ignoring the trails to the left and right, the elevation variation levels off at

a field I refer to as "the Happy Field." I recommend riding around the edge and taking a good look at the features of this field. This field is also good for orientation as many key paths connect to it. Finding the Happy Field and the Pipe are your ways back to the campground, if you get lost. The back, north end of the park is a pretty ride. It's

Franklin Creek offers 12 miles of trail through hardwood forest with views of bedrock outcroppings in low spots along the creeks.

framed by a fence on the north and northeastern edges. The fence can be used for orientation. The area framed by markers 65, 63, 72, and 69 has some hilly spots in the middle. Ride the perimeter for a more level trail. The northwestern edge of the park has a field along Twist Road. This field, framed by markers 47, 44, and 58, I refer to as "the North Field."

Directly west of the Pipe, the trails are at the same high elevation as the Happy Field. If you decide to take trails off the Pipe and to the left when starting, they'll climb more steeply than riding to the Happy Field to reach this elevation. Trail 3 to 5 has log steps. There's a steeper trail before this that travels directly to 12. The line drawn by markers 43, 42, 7, 11, 13, and 14 is at a higher elevation and the land drops in elevation as the trails approach Twist Road. The trails from 18, 16, 15, and 13 follow a ridge above

Franklin Creek. From marker 14 to 1 is a very steep trail along the edge of the ridge. This trail's low spot comes out on the opposite side of the water crossing from the campground.

Much of this park is in trees. The fields of this park are ideal for identifying where you are.

Trails West of Twist Road

If you're looking for an easy ride, the trails west of Twist Road roll slightly but are fairly flat. There are enough trails to keep you busy for about an hour to an hour and a half. There are some very pretty views from the trails alongside Franklin Creek.

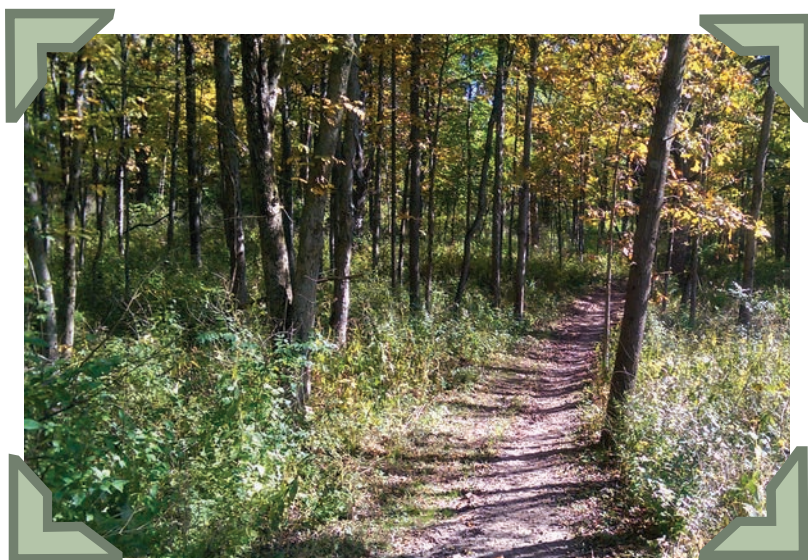
There are two crossings to access the trails west of Twist Road. One crossing is at marker 18 and will be the first you come across when riding from the campground. The other crossing is further north at marker 41. There's a trail running from 18, 17, 9, and 8 that parallels Twist Road on its east side, which can be taken to reach marker 41. Currently, marker 41 is missing. The north 41 crossing is just south of a steep upward hill leading to the North Field. There's a house on private property among the trees just north of the crossing, on the east side of the road and in the southwest corner of the North Field.

The trails west of Twist Road are flanked by private property to the north, a fence to the west, Franklin Creek to the south and Twist Road to the east. There are dense tree areas with twisting



trails and there are beautiful fields with lush green undergrowth. The area around markers 30 and 29 has some beautiful views through the trees. When you reach 26, you can see the grist mill through the trees. These trails roll but there are no really steep spots. There's a good compliment of dense trees and open areas. Furthest from the road, the trails are straight and easy. Closer to the road, the trails twist around among the trees. If you're going to get lost, it will be on the cluster of trails closest to the road.

West of the line drawn from markers 20 to 19 is a shallow canyon with no trails that cross over it. When returning from the west side trails, ride north toward 20 to catch the location where the trails pass through a shallow spot in the canyon, allowing you to return to the road. At this spot, the missing marker 41 road crossing will be obvious. You can only get to 19 from 20 so when at 20, take the trail that doubles back to 19 for the second road crossing.

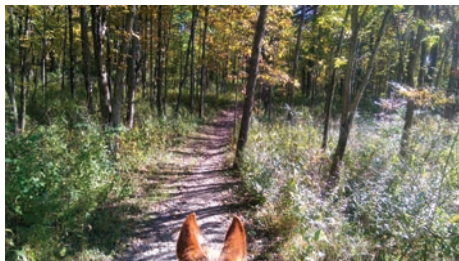


Advice for Orienteering

- The Pipe (pipeline field) can help direct you back to the campground.
- The northern edge of park has a fence line on both sides of Twist Road.
- Old Mill Road marks the southern edge of the horse trails. It's a paved road.
- Twist Road runs through the park from north to south. It's a gravel road.
- There are only two Twist Road crossings, one at markers 18/19 and one south of private property on the east side of the road (the missing marker 41 crossing).
- Trails west of Twist Road are easy but the only way to get to the Twist Road crossings when on those trails is to ride north to cross the low spot west of Twist Road first.
- Trails south and east of the Pipe are hilly and twisty.
- There are more hills in the trees at the north end of the park.
- If you're riding hilly trails through little creeks with rock outcroppings, you're in the area south and east of the Pipe.
- If you get lost on these hilly trails, it's best to ride north to an open field to get out. Then ride west to get back to the Pipe. While in the hilly area, there's a ridge to your west with a limited number of trails passing over it. Many of the trail markers in this area are missing. There are more trails than those shown on the maps. Unless you're familiar with the trails, it's tricky to catch the right trail out going west.
- There are two large prairie fields, the Happy Field north of the Pipe and the North Field alongside Twist Road.
- The eastern edge of the horse trails is delineated by a uniquely shaped farm field.

The Hilly Trails

If you've come to ride hilly, narrow, challenging trails, those east of the Pipe and in the trees are the ones you're looking for. Franklin Creek runs along the north side of the field southeast of the campground. Smaller creeks



come off Franklin Creek and feed into this area. The creeks are at low elevations and much of the remaining trail is at a higher elevation so this area is rich with steep hills and creek crossings. It's also a very pretty area as the low spots have exposed limestone. In some areas, you cross the creek and in others the trail travels through or alongside the creek. These trails are the ones most people come to the park to ride.

There's a ridge directly south of the Pipe. The trails drop down to various creeks south of this ridge.

The trails then climb in elevation afterward further south and east. The trail from marker 97 to 106 is at the higher elevation of the farm fields beyond it.

When riding these trails, keep in mind that only a few connect to the Pipe. If you get lost, it's best to ride north and find the field near marker 92 to get yourself out. It's tricky to find and use marker 134 to exit this trail area. I've

had better luck finding marker 94 and riding north to get out than attempting to ride west and find trails back to the Pipe to get out of the low spots. The reason for this is many of the trail markers, which help in identifying the trails, are missing in this area and you ride blind if you attempt to exit by riding west. If you're familiar with the trails, you'll have no problem. This is advice for new people riding these trails for the first time.

If you plan to ride the trails west of the Pipe and alongside Franklin Creek, I recommend riding into them from the Pipe via marker 35 or 134 so you know how to exit from them. Keep in mind that



The Franklin Creek Grist Mill is the only completely water-driven mill of this type in Illinois.

there are many more trails than those shown on the map and many trail markers are missing. The trails twist about. This will disorient you. Making use of a compass while in the trees will help. If you get lost on these trails, ride north to the top of a ridge and look for a field beyond. Don't try to exit by using the trails alongside Franklin Creek unless you're familiar with them.

The field north of marker 92 has some beautiful native grass. The grass changes color in the fall and contrasts with the trees. This is a wonderful field to ride in the fall.

The eastern edge of the hilly area rises in elevation to match that of the farm fields to the east. If you ride far enough south, you will encounter Mill Creek Road. The trail from 106 to 105 runs alongside it. At marker 107 you'll come across a back yard to private property.

The Grist Mill

Across from the equestrian campground is the Franklin Creek Grist Mill. It is used to grind grain, such as wheat and corn, into flour. The current mill, constructed by volunteers beginning in 1992, is built on the site where an old mill, built in 1847, existed.

This mill is the only completely water-driven mill of this type in Illinois. The original mill was the largest grist mill in Lee County, during its time. During construction, the mill site chosen was half a mile from the water source, so a feeder canal and mill pond had to be excavated. This was done by hand, using shovels, and using horses to move the excavated soil. After years of successful operation and multiple owners, the original mill was abandoned in 1896.

Unlike the original mill, the current mill construction is designed to allow visitors to view the inner workings of the mill while in action. The 2.5-acre spring-fed mill pond supplies water to a 4-ton water wheel on the side of the mill house. The wheel powers gears in the basement which, through

a combination of various gears, pulleys, and belts, drive the vertical shaft to turn the grinding stone.

The Franklin Creek Grist Mill is open Friday through Sunday from noon to 4pm, April through October. The second floor of the mill contains an interpretive center with displays showing the construction and explaining the operation of the mill. For more information, call ahead or check out the website: www.franklincreekgristmill.com to find out when a docent will be on-site for the corn grinding demonstration. The demo corn meal produced is sold for \$5/bag.

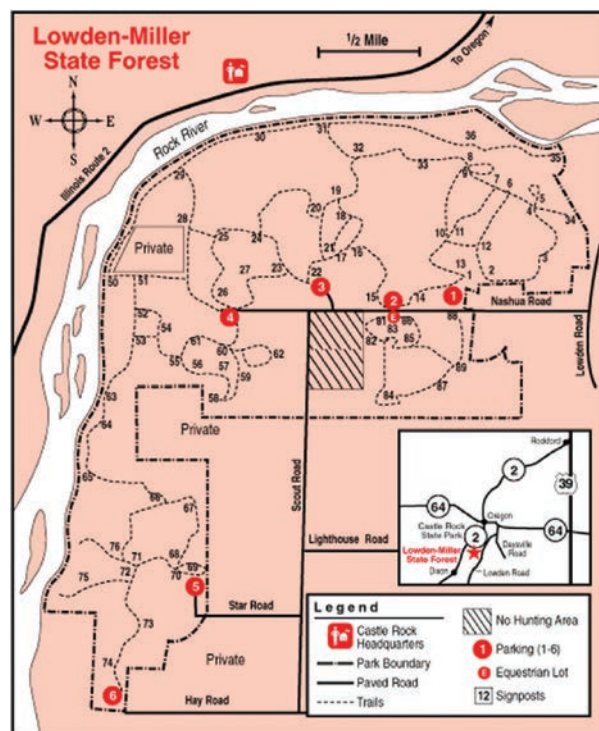
Directions

The best way to approach this park is to take Daysville Road north of Highway 38 in Franklin Grove. Turn onto Mill Creek Road, a paved road, and take this to Twist Road, a gravel road. Turn north on Twist Road and drive until you see the Franklin Creek Grist Mill. The equestrian campground and trailhead are across the street. You can access this park from

the north off of Naylor Road or from the south taking Twist Road off of Highway 38 but the Daysville Road route is best because it minimizes the narrow, gravel road driving distance.

This is an amazing park to ride in the Fall because the hardwood trees change and display various colors. The wild grasses in the fields also change in color. The rocky bluffs flanking Franklin Creek and the various smaller creeks on the trails are one of the beautiful and unique features of this park. Because of all the elevation changes, these trails will take you a while to ride. There are few horse trails in northern Illinois with beautiful, exposed bedrock in creek bottoms that you can ride next to.

If you're not local, plan to camp at the campground as these trails will keep you busy all weekend.



You'll find that you may be able to ride through all the areas in one weekend. But if not, come back to enjoy riding them all.

Happy Trails!

PARK SUMMARY

LOCATION: Lee County, IL. East of Dixon. Northwest of Franklin Grove.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: 12 miles. Mowed grass and packed dirt. Majority of trails are under tree cover but there are open prairie areas, too. Shoes on horse not necessary.

TRAIL DIFFICULTY: Moderate to difficult. Rolling hills. Some narrow, steep, challenging trails.

CAMPGROUND: Well maintained. 20 sites. \$8/night. High lines, pit toilet, water, manure bunks.

2019 GPS Track Trail Map:
Trail Marker Map:
Trail Map North:

dordal.org/franklin
rrtha.tripod.com/carp1.html
franklincreekconservation.org/trails.html

PARK AND TRAILS:

Site Superintendent:
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Irish Import **The Gypsy Vanner**

*By Sarah M. Aldridge, MS
Photos by Janice Fischer*

Irish Roots

This light draft horse was developed to pull caravans, the mobile homes of the Romany people (also called travelers or gypsies), nomads who moved from place to place in Ireland, Britain, and Europe. Because the horse was towing the family's home, it had to be bombproof, hardy, and gentle with children, who often handled the horses.

To develop such an ideal family work horse, the Romany people crossed several breeds: Clydesdales, Friesians, Shires, and Dales ponies. The result was a small, but strong, cob-type draft horse that was friendly, calm, and quiet.

Although the horses were selectively bred, their lineage was not recorded. Instead, it was passed orally from one generation to the next. Mean-spirited or spooky horses were excluded from breeding stock, as such behavior could jeopardize the family's home or health.

Before World War II, Gypsy Vanners were solid colors. But during the 1940s, to avoid having their horses confiscated for war duty, the Romany people bred them with white in their coat, making them more visible to the enemy and less desirable as army recruits.

The Emerald Isle lures tourists with home-grown Celtic music, hand-knit fisherman's sweaters, and historic castles. But you don't have to go all the way to Ireland to find another alluring Irish native, a relatively new horse breed with an intriguing history: the Gypsy Vanner.

First imported into the US in the late 1990s, Gypsy Vanners are not only handsome as all get-out, but also have heart. They are safe, family-friendly mounts for riders young and old. And they shine in the show ring, winning ribbons and trophies in hand, under saddle, and in driving competitions. Let's explore this colorful character, the Gypsy Vanner.

The name "Gypsy Vanner" was coined by Dennis and Cindy Thompson. On a trip to England, they were awestruck by a stallion out in a field. The owner wound up inviting them to the Appleby Horse Fair, the oldest horse fair for gypsies in the world. Fascinated by the breed, the Thompsons learned as much as they could during the fair.

After returning to the states, the Thompsons established the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society (GVHS) in 1996. That same year they imported Bat and Dolly, the first two fillies in the US. In 1997, they imported Cushti Bok, that captivating stallion, and The Gypsy King, the first two stallions in the US.

Breed Standards

According to GVHS, a Gypsy Vanner should resemble a Shire but have more color and feather, and a sweeter head. In the Gypsy Vanner world, the thick hair on the legs is called feather, not feathers. It reaches from the knee and hock to the hooves, covering them completely. The horse has an impossibly long mane and tail. Owners are discouraged from trimming the hair, advised to only braid for neatness or when showing. And, no, those photos on the Internet are not doctored—these horses can sport beards and mustaches.

Any coat color or pattern is acceptable. The most common include piebald (black and white); skewbald (red and white, brown and white, or tri-color); blagdon, a solid color with white splashed up from underneath; and "odd-colored," which is all other colors and patterns.

Most Gypsy Vanners are 13.2-15.2 hands, but shorter or taller horses are accepted. Horses 13.3 hands or shorter are called Mini Vanners; those 15.1 hands or taller are Grand Vanners. Stallions should have good muscling, carry themselves with pride, and show a "look-at-me attitude." Mares should display feminine traits, be sensible and willing.



Quinn, a 15-year-old gelding owned by Diane Zimmerman, shows the conformation to look for in a Gypsy Vanner: square, boxlike dimensions chest to haunches, short back, and strong legs.



The feather on a Gypsy Vanner should cover the hoof.

The breed is noted for its strong, arched neck; powerful chest muscles, deep barrel, short back, well-rounded hips, and heavy to medium bone in the legs. Like any draft horse, the Gypsy Vanner, built for pulling, should have a powerful walk. The GVHS calls its ground-covering trot a "trademark" of the breed. A collected three-beat canter is possible when the rider balances the horse's frame.

Health Issues

Gypsy Vanners are among the 20 or so breeds that can inherit polysaccharide storage myopathy (PSSM). To exhibit symptoms of this rare disease, horses have to inherit two copies of the mutation. Because horses with PSSM cannot metabolize sugar and starch, they store too much sugar in the form of glycogen in their muscles. This can cause muscle tremors and cramps (tying up) after exercise. The good news is the symptoms can be controlled with diet and exercise.

The thick leg feather predisposes the breed to several skin conditions. The first signs of scratches (pastern dermatitis) are redness and swelling usually on the lower hind legs or on white skin and hair. They then progress to oozing and crusty scabs. Mallenders and sallenders are crusty growths behind the knee on the front foreleg and on the front of the hock on the

hind leg, respectively. They are caused by excessive production of keratin, which stimulates the growth of the thick feather on the legs. Chronic progressive lymphedema is a thickening of the skin on the lower legs, leading to the buildup of lymph. There is no cure and the disease worsens with age.

Horses with Heart

What sold Lisa D'Avignon on the breed is their disposition. She was looking for a horse her son Ethan, a quadriplegic, could take to the county fair for his 4-H project. The family drove from their Somers, Wisconsin, home to upstate New York to meet WHR The Queen's Justice, a 2-day-old piebald filly. "It was the perfect fit," says D'Avignon. The breeder worked with the filly until she was weaned from her dam at 6 months, to accept a chair next to her, preparing her for Ethan's wheelchair. But Justice did more than simply tolerate her new owner. "She would come and put her head in Ethan's lap," D'Avignon says.



Ethan and Justice are friends forever.

Now 10 years later, D'Avignon has 12 Gypsy Vanners on her Lace Feather Gypsies breeding farm. Over time, her estimation of the breed has only increased. "They take on anything, even at a young age," she says. "They are well-mannered and easygoing."

Chris Baehnman bought her first Gypsy Vanner in 2011. Alexis of Lexlin, a piebald mare in Tennessee, met the breed standards. "I've never been the same

since," says Baehnman. Now she has more than 40 Gypsy Vanners on her breeding farm, Feathered Horse Farm in Fremont, Wisconsin. "They're so kind and silly," she says. "They have great personalities." A trip to the pasture sets the herd vying for her undivided attention. "They love their humans," Baehnman says. Clearly, the feeling is mutual. "They've stolen my heart," she admits.

Color Palette

For those who are suckers for color, this breed boasts a lot of eye-popping combinations. Baehnman's stallion Caramel Popcorn is a sooty spotted buckskin with a blanket on his rump. She imported him from Ireland in 2012. "He is the star of my show," she says proudly.

And then there's Don King, a piebald stallion and former perennial favorite at the Minnesota Horse Expo, whom Baehnman purchased a few years ago. His sire was Lion King, an English stallion some Gypsy breeders contend was the best stallion who ever lived. "Don King is the ultimate showman," she says.

Other colors you'll see include cremellos, perlinos, and bay, blue, and strawberry roans. Although D'Avignon breeds for personality and conformation, she says color is the icing on the cake. "I like the creams and pearls. They shimmer in the sun." Her stallion Hermit's Harlaquin Moon is a smoky silver dapple LP gypsy.

Taming the Hairy Beast

You can't help wondering how owners cope with all that mane and tail hair. For D'Avignon, salvation comes in a bottle. It's a moisturizing product



Macrame-like braiding on Flare, a 9-year-old palomino blagdon mare owned by Lisa D'Avignon, is both beautiful and functional.

made from natural ingredients that adds shine and helps repel water. "I go through a lot of it around here," she says with a chuckle. She brushes the hair with a bamboo hairbrush. "Moon's hair is past his knees, so I braid it most of the time."

Multi-Talented Multi-Purpose

Gypsy Vanners can do more than pull a cart or flounce their Rapunzel-like hair. Name the discipline, they do it. "The taller, leggier gypsy is good for dressage," says Baehnman. All six of her stallions drive. "My show stallion, The Milkman, is going to do well in Western pleasure, trail, and ranch riding-type classes on the Gypsy circuit," she adds. For amateur riders like she is, Baehnman says they make a fun, all-around horse. "They are a multi-talented, multi-purpose breed."

D'Avignon gussies up her Gypsy Vanners for the breed demonstration at the Midwest Horse Fair in Madison, Wisconsin, each spring. But she's most often trail riding with friends. She can put inexperienced riders on her horses, and head out with confidence. "Everyone will safely get to the end of the trail," she says.

Nelle Rogers, an equine gestalt practitioner from Madison, Wisconsin, uses her Gypsy Vanner, Magic, for gestalt therapy, liberty work, and horsemanship.



Gypsy Vanners have pulling power, as shown by Brugger of Finnegan's Fields at the Midwest Gypsy Show at the Jefferson County Fairground. He is driven by Alecia Babich of Maple Plain, Minnesota.



Gio, 8, confidently leads Shimmer, a 13-year-old Gypsy Vanner mare, while stepdad, Jase, coaches from the sidelines.



Parades are the ultimate test of a horse. With noisy ambulances and marching bands, some horses will come unglued. But not D'Avignon's Gypsy Vanners. When a fire engine sprayed an arc of water over the street during a parade, her horses never wavered. "They didn't blink an eye," she says. "They are reliable."

People Pleasers

On D'Avignon's farm, the Gypsy Vanners are equally at home as schooling horses for children in the round pen and as steady mounts for middle-aged buyers. Although they may look large and lazy, she points out, looks can be deceiving. "They will do anything you ask them to do—they can jump, pole bend, barrel race—anything. And they will do their darndest to please you."



Josh, 11, is learning to ride on Shimmer, getting riding tips from his stepdad, Jase, at a farm in McHenry, Illinois.



Fun Facts

- Other names for the breed include Gypsy Cob, Irish Cob, and Tinker Cob.
- The ornately carved wooden caravan Gypsy Vanners pull in Ireland is called a vardo.
- The horses were trained to never stop pulling while going uphill.

LEARN MORE

- Gypsy Vanner Horse Society: vanners.org.
- Feathered Horse Farm: featheredhorsefarm@hotmail.com.
- Lace Feather Gypsies: luckyone@wi.rr.com.



The feather is flying at Lace Feather Gypsies in Somers, Wisconsin.



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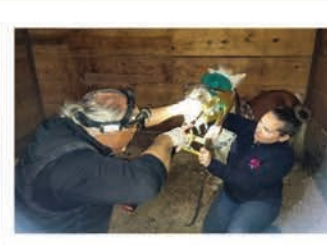
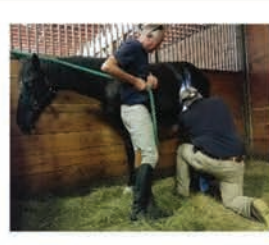


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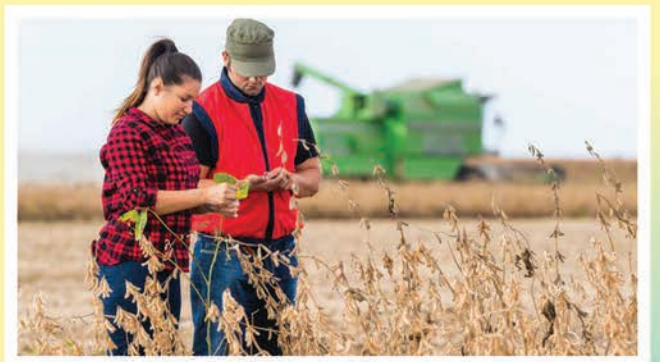
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A team of riders consults maps and compasses.

Competitive Mounted Orienteering

A Race with a Twist

By Sarah M. Aldridge, MS

**Compass.
Map.
Paper plates.**

What could these possibly have to do with horses? Everything, if you engage in competitive mounted orienteering (CMO). If you are clever, perceptive when it comes to reading maps and compass points, and also enjoy teamwork, this could be your next horsey endeavor. But even if you're directionally challenged, you can still have fun and make a bunch of new friends at this family-friendly event.

LOST IN THE WOODS

All it took was a man and his family lost in the woods on a trail ride in Minnesota for the idea of CMO to become reality. Cliff Pladsen founded the National Association of Competitive Mounted Orienteering (NACMO) in 1981 as a way for horseback riders to enjoy what he dubbed "the thinking horse sport." CMO combines trail riding with orienteering. Riders compete individually or on teams in a timed event, using a map and compass, to locate 5 or 10 numbered paper plates hidden in the woods, depending on whether you do the short or long course, respectively. The 9" plates have letters written on them, which riders jot down on their maps. Riders and their horses can earn points for local and national prizes and awards.

Since its founding 40 years ago, NACMO has grown to 10 chapters, from Alabama to Washington state. At the Indiana/Illinois chapter's CMO in April at Rock Cut

State Park in Rockford, Illinois, Marti Caldwell, DVM, NACMO president and Indiana director, welcomes attendees with a big smile and a warm handshake. She got into the sport after seeing a demonstration at her daughter's 4-H club meeting 30 years ago. "The best thing about it is that it attracts people you'd really like to get to know," she says. Having moved several times, for Caldwell CMO has provided a shortcut to finding friends.

As horse trailers pull into the park, people from all walks of life spill out. "We have bus drivers, truck drivers, PhDs, lawyers, and doctors," says Caldwell. "There are a lot of endurance riders

and competitive trail riders." Rounding out the participants are dressage riders, eventers, Western trail riders, and people out for a fun trail ride.

Looking around the park, one sees a variety of horses. A piebald Gypsy Vanner, a Fjord Pony, and a pinto draft cross are all tied to trailers, munching on hay. Quarter horses and ponies are being unloaded. "Some ride mules, one rides a donkey, and Arabians are popular," Caldwell says. "One gal rode a Percheron." As riders unload their gear, some wear jeans and ankle boots, others are in English breeches and knee-length boots. No matter the rider or horse, what makes CMO an equal opportunity event is the skills



9" paper plates serve as markers with clues along the trail.

it requires. "It's all about good horsemanship and training," Caldwell says.

Riders planning to ride the CMO at a good pace have to ensure their horses are conditioned. "To do it competitively, you have to be good at finding the plates and your horse has to be conditioned for long periods at a trot or canter," says Debra Rubel, an electrical engineer from Woodstock, IL. She competes on Rainman, a 14.3-hand Tennessee Walking Horse gelding, and Bella, a 15.1-hand Quarter Horse mare. "In the spring you have to hit the trails, working your rides up to longer periods, incorporating trot stretches that gradually increase in duration." That helps build endurance. The folks at CMOs who complete the long, 10-plate rides in under 2 hours have conditioned horses, she says. "Many are riding horses used for endurance competitions that are conditioned for 25-mile rides."



- Rock Cut Invitational Intro CMO
Saturday, April 24, 2021
- 10. 18P from trail beside pine tree 15' E of trail with large broken off top beside it pointing at trail. TTM.
 - 11. 10P [X] in a pine tree with a large broken off branch beside it, in an open area.
 - 12. 20P from 8' tall, closed whiteberry with pine cones, S of trail. TTM.
 - 13. 10P from white log S of trail with a pine cone in its hole. TTM.
 - 14. 20P from trail beside heart shaped group of rocks E of trail. TTM.
 - 15. 24P from trail beside heart shaped group of rocks E of trail. TTM.
 - 16. 34P from center of green pine. TTM.
 - 17. 22P from spruce tree in trail, and Y shaped dead tree, wood positioned with 2 pine cones and 4 oak. TTM.
 - 18. 18P from beneath log starting over trail from W/E. TTM.
 - 19. 20P from 12' diam tree E of trail with vine, pinecones, and dry white branches hanging down. TTM.
 - 20. 10P from between 2 upright 2' tall cut log sections S of trail. TTM.
 - 21. 27P from ends in trail between mossy logs and a tall dead Y tree with shedding bark. TTM.
 - 22. 38' from 4' diameter along base W of trail with 2 pine cones. TTM.
 - 23. 12P from 88 sign. TTM.
 - 24. 28P from beneath tree that leans over trail from S/E and hangs in a tree on the 80' from Y tree S of trail, with pinecones. TTM.
 - 25. 30P from white dead branch lying parallel to E side of trail and caught between 2 dead evergreen trees at corner. TTM.
 - 26. 20P from tree with black plastic trail stabilizing material in trail. TTM.
- Emergency Call #s: 219-243-3126, 763-545-1287. Watch for rain, some trees and holes. Ride safely, no assistance in other states, trail for orientation. TTM is the marker, TTM is from the marker. Take readings from the trail BEHIND the bearings.

Clues for recent Intro to CMO at Rock Cut State Park. Yellow compass is a sighting compass, clear is an orienteering compass.



Dave Caldwell (far left) conducts a pre-ride clinic.

GETTING YOUR BEARINGS

At the Rock Cut State Park event, ride directors gather the newbies in a semi-circle near the check-in station to guide them on a mock trial on foot, using a map and compass to find a few markers, the numbered paper plates. Caldwell has a few tongue-in-cheek reminders to share, such as "Electronics like GPS are not allowed out here. If you pull out your phone, you better be bleeding."

A group of four riders pours over the compass directions with Rubel, a self-described "map geek" who demonstrates the use of two different types of compasses. "I enjoy introducing people to the sport and trying to get some of them hooked," she says. "I show them the nuances of what they can do with each type of compass." Riders can then decide which type feels the most comfortable to use on the trail.

Pretty soon, the newcomers are trying their hand at using the orienteering compass and the sighting compass. The orienteering compass has a direction arrow and a needle, plus a clear base plate, made for use with a paper map on a table. "The clear base and ruler lines on it are for extrapolating bearing lines onto the paper," says Rubel. The advantage of this compass is that you can take a reading without being pointed in the direction of the bearing. Its downside is that you have to turn a bezel to set the reading, so it takes two hands to use. In contrast, the sighting

p/c Debra Rubel

compass has a viewfinder with the bearing angle indicator on a floating dial. "I like this type better because it only requires one hand to take the measurement," says Rubel. In addition, she says, it is more sensitive. "But your horse has to stand quietly until the dial settles." Its downside is that your body must be pointed in the direction of the bearing.

The clues for a station might say something like "180° from a 15' fir tree with a red ribbon. 32° from a red X on a log." Where those two compass bearings cross, is the general location of the marker. "Our goal is to hide them well enough so riders have to do the compass work to find them, but they shouldn't jump out while you're riding along the trail," Caldwell says. Markers can be hidden in everything from a tree stump and culvert to a gully or under a rock.

Patience is a virtue where CMO is concerned. "It's a race with a twist. If you're not a patient, attentive person, CMOs are going to be hard for you," Rubel says. That's because the ride directors are notorious for hiding the plates in odd places. Seasoned CMO riders learn to think like the people who hide the plates. "One of my favorites was a tall, thin sapling with a plate located 20' up," she says. They must have bent it over to set the plate so high, she says. "The joy of the sport is finding the really hard ones."



Vickie Wancho and her horse maneuver a log after finding a marker.

TEAMWORK

Riders can compete individually or on teams. Most join a team, where inexperienced people are paired with more experienced competitors. "A team is so much better," says Rubel. "You can find the plates faster." Plus, she enjoys having people to talk to. Rubel's ideal team consists of four riders: one person goes to one clue and shoots a line, while another does the same with the second clue. "The other two walk the line. Where they come together is where the plate is expected to be, and we start searching for it." But families with children often simply ride for fun, finding as many plates as they can.

After Florence Mathieu moved to Illinois from Belgium, she sought something comparable to

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the obstacle course type trail riding she did in Europe. She found her match in CMO. "I like that the riders come with competitive backgrounds, that the horses are well taken care of, and the etiquette on the trail," says Mathieu, a 2nd grade dual language teacher from Mahomet, Illinois. "It's riding with a purpose—finding all the plates and getting back in a certain amount of time."

Now in her 6th year of riding in CMOs, Mathieu has become an ambassador for the sport. One time she brought an older gentleman she met at the barn where she boarded her horses. "He was 88 years old and came on a gaited horse."



Some markers are harder to find than others.

When school is out, Mathieu's daughters accompany her on CMOs. She rides Lance, a 20-year-old grade gelding she uses for dressage, with her 7-year-old daughter Alice riding double. Her 10-year-old daughter Claire guides Polka

Dot, a 22-year-old unregistered Pony of the Americas.

Mathieu coaxed her partner, Jared Isaac, into trying CMO at an event held at a state park in Indiana. "I had no clue what I was getting into," says the HVAC contractor with a laugh. With 15 years of map and compass reading, thanks to Boy Scouts and hiking, plus his experience riding horses years ago, he was a confident participant. Midway through the event, Isaac turned to Mathieu and said, "If we're going to do this, we're going to be competitive and go all the way." Lo and behold, they finished first, 10 minutes ahead of the next team.

CMO gets Isaac's competitive juices flowing, but it also gives him a sense of awe. "For me, it's being out in the woods on an animal that when you ask them to

do something, they respond," he says. "It's being out on the trails, walking up on deer and turkeys, seeing the beauty of nature."

LASTING BONDS

CMO devotees enjoy the bonds that are formed. At Rubel's first

CMO at Big River State Forest along the Mississippi River a decade ago, she didn't know a soul. "The ride manager and competitors were really friendly and encouraging," she says. Rubel and four other newbies formed The Dixie Hunters team, named for the paper plate brand. They competed as a team for a number of years. Other teams with amusing names include Babes of the Woods, Boonie Whompin' Yee-ha Chicks, and Run a Muck.

Because of CMO, Mathieu has found people to ride with in her area. "I've developed long-lasting lifetime friendships, for sure," she adds. One rider gave her Polka Dot, the POA her daughter and partner ride. Further, sometimes love is in the air at CMOs. "We've had quite a few romantic relationships develop, including a wedding proposal at one of the events," Caldwell says. With four CMOs under his belt, Isaac has already



Newbie Kirsten Gimm (left) learns how to read a compass as mentor Debra Rubel provides tips.

acquired some newfound friends. "You see the same faces over and over, and it becomes community, a little family," he says.

COME ONE, COME ALL

The nice thing about CMOs is that it's not as strict as a horse show, Mathieu says. You can find the plates in any order. You can walk the entire course or do it at a trot or canter. "It's a good sport for anyone who wants to try something between trail riding and endurance," says Mathieu. "It's a great sport for families with horses." But what Isaac wants to know is: where are all the guys? The ratio of women to men competing in CMOs is close to 10 or 15 to 1. That's a statistic that befuddles him. So he's laying down the gauntlet. "For the guys, they need to go with their wives or girlfriends and do this," he urges. "It's fun and you get an adrenaline rush. If you have any competitiveness in you, it's well worth it.



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Open Your Eyes to Horse Ophthalmic Conditions

Emily Weathered, DVM

The equine eye, the largest of any land mammal, is an amazing organ inside and out. As a prey animal, horses have evolved with unique adaptations affording them the ability to constantly keep watch on the world around them. Not only do horses have excellent night vision, their laterally placed eyes give them a 350-degree visual field. Compared to human eyes with a 180-degree visual field, horses can see far more of the world around them at any one time than humans can.



Dr. Emily Weathered performing an ophthalmic exam using the cobalt filter on the ophthalmoscope and fluorescein stain to check for a corneal ulcer.

Eyesight is paramount to overall horse well-being, and as a horse owner, it is important to pay close attention to your horse's eyes. There are numerous ophthalmic conditions that commonly occur within the horse population. Being a very delicate structure, any ophthalmic pathology

must be quickly identified and addressed by a veterinarian. This article will focus on three of the most common reasons veterinarians are called to examine a horse's eyes: equine recurrent uveitis, corneal ulcers, and squamous cell carcinoma.

Equine Recurrent Uveitis

Equine recurrent uveitis (ERU), also known as moon blindness or iridocyclitis, is a chronic immune-mediated disease characterized by recurrent inflammation within a portion of the eye called the uvea. These episodes of inflammation are followed by periods of quiescence (a quiet, comfortable eye), which can last weeks to even years. ERU can affect just one or both eyes, and Appaloosas, Draft breeds, and European warmbloods tend to be more at risk. In the US, ERU has an estimated prevalence of 2%-25%; it is the most common cause of blindness in the horse.

During the acute episodes of inflammation, the eye will be painful. You may observe squinting, eyelid swelling, tearing (epiphora), a blueish color to the eye (corneal edema), or a small pupil (miosis). In other cases, the inflammation is more insidious and may go unnoticed. The exact cause of ERU is very complex and not completely understood. However, there appears to be a variety of inciting factors that initiate subsequent immune dysregulation within the eye, resulting in recurrent bouts of inflammation. A variety of things can trigger ERU with Leptospirosis, a systemic bacterial infection, being one of the more commonly suspected triggers.

Treatment during an acute episode includes systemic anti-inflammatories (Banamine®), topical

corticosteroids (neo/poly/dex), and topical mydriatics (atropine). If Leptospirosis is suspected to play a role, antibiotic treatment is initiated. There are more invasive treatment options available that have reports of producing more favorable outcomes in certain cases. One of these treatments is a cyclosporine ophthalmic implant, a sustained release immunomodulatory drug. The other is injection of the antibiotic gentamicin into the eye. Both treatments aim to decrease the frequency and severity of episodes, with the goal of long-term maintenance of vision. If your horse is diagnosed with ERU, it is important to work closely with your veterinarian to ensure timely and appropriate treatment, particularly during acute episodes.

Corneal Ulcers

Unfortunately, many horse owners are quite familiar with corneal ulcers. Corneal ulceration occurs when there is disruption to the surface of the eye (cornea). One can think of this as a "scratch" on the eye. This typically occurs due to direct trauma, such as a stick brushing the surface of the eye as a horse walks through brush or a horse bumping its head against the stall door. Whatever the inciting factor, the horse will display signs of ocular discomfort including squinting, tearing, a small pupil, or having a hazy blue color to the cornea.



Fluorescein stain adhering to, and highlighting, a corneal ulcer

Your veterinarian will perform a full ophthalmic exam, including applying fluorescein stain to the surface of the eye to provide a definitive diagnosis of a corneal ulcer. When the outer layer of the cornea is disrupted, it exposes the inner layer. Fluorescein stain "sticks" to this inner layer while it is repelled from the outer, intact layer of the cornea. This effectively highlights the ulcer for the vet to see. In acute, uncomplicated cases, treatment involves a topical broad-spectrum antibiotic to prevent secondary infection (neo/poly/bac), topical mydriatics (atropine), and systemic anti-inflammatories (Banamine®). Some horses require eye protection, such as an EquiVizor™ to prevent them from rubbing the eye. It is necessary to have the eye rechecked 5-7 days later to fluorescein stain the eye again and ensure the ulcer has completely healed. The prognosis is very good for complete resolution and long-term vision for uncomplicated corneal ulcers.

Squamous Cell Carcinoma

Another common ophthalmic condition is squamous cell carcinoma (SCC), the second most common tumor in the horse. SCC develops due to abnormal growth of squamous cells. While SCC can be found on multiple areas of a horse's body, in the eye it tends to develop on the eyelid, third eyelid, or limbus (junction of cornea and the white part of the eye). Halflingers, Appaloosas, Belgians, and American Paints have been shown to be at an increased risk for this condition, as well as horses who lack pigment around their eyes. Increased UV exposure as well as chronic tissue irritation can also increase a horse's risk for SCC. This type of tumor is very slow to metastasize (spread) to distant parts of the body but unfortunately, can be quite locally aggressive. Diagnosis is made through a combination of the clinical appearance, cytology (study of the cell type), and biopsy of the mass.

A multimodal treatment plan is very important in producing the best outcome, and in limiting and



Eyelid squamous cell carcinoma prior to treatment.

preventing recurrence. If possible, complete surgical excision (removal of the cancerous cells) is preferred. A pathologist will review the submitted tissue to determine if the margins are "clean," meaning the abnormal cells do not extend beyond the edges of the sample. In addition, there are a multitude of adjunctive (additional) therapeutics available, including cryotherapy (freezing the tissue), CO2 laser ablation, plesiotherapy (radiation), immunotherapy, or chemotherapy. At our veterinary practice, we

commonly prescribe a topical chemotherapeutic 5-fluorouracil after removal of a SCC mass. In advanced cases that do not respond to treatment removal of the eye may be the best option.

Prognosis is variable, depending on the part of the eye affected and the individual horse's response to treatment. Whatever treatment option is pursued, careful monitoring is essential to identify any signs of recurrence and to treat accordingly.

There are many other disease processes of the equine eye not covered in this article. However, the most important thing for an owner, is to know when to call the vet. Whenever a horse displays signs of ocular discomfort including tearing, squinting, a change in the appearance of the eye, or rubbing the eye it warrants further investigation. Keeping the horse out of bright direct sunlight can often provide them some relief until the vet arrives. With early veterinary intervention, many equine ocular conditions can have a very favorable outcome and keep your horse looking on the bright side of life.

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"Let me be as a feather. Strong with purpose yet light at heart, able to bend. And, tho I might become frayed, able to pull myself together again."
 -poem by Anita Sams

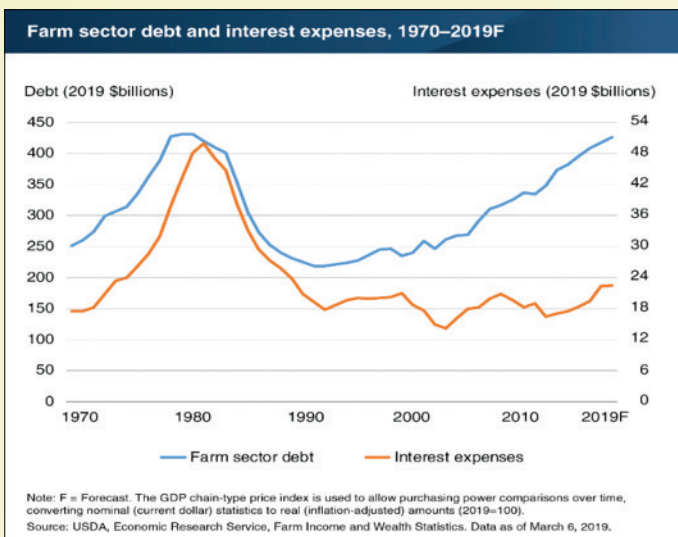
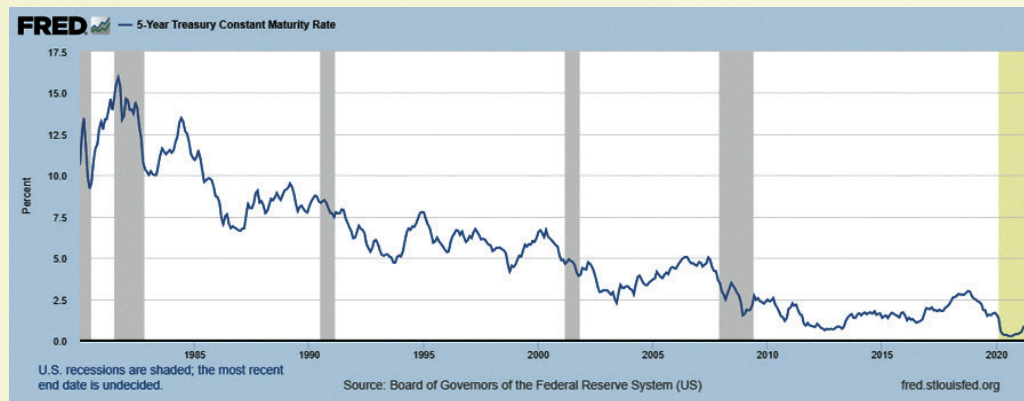


RIDIN' THE POWER CYCLES

In any industry, the urgency of the day-to-day operations can distract business owners from recognizing broader and longer-term key strategic shifts. For owners of farmland, these longer-term cycles, while playing out over not just years, but decades, are currently aligned to provide substantial opportunities for those who are paying attention to these “power-cycle” trends.

Interest Rates

The first of these long-term cycles is interest rates. It is well known and forms the key foundation for reinforcing the effects of the other long-term shifts. Interest rates have been on a 40-year declining trend, albeit with several intermediate “bumps” along the way. While arguably the current level of rates are at or near a lower limit, it is not clear how long this condition will persist. However, in the meantime, the opportunity to lower and extend



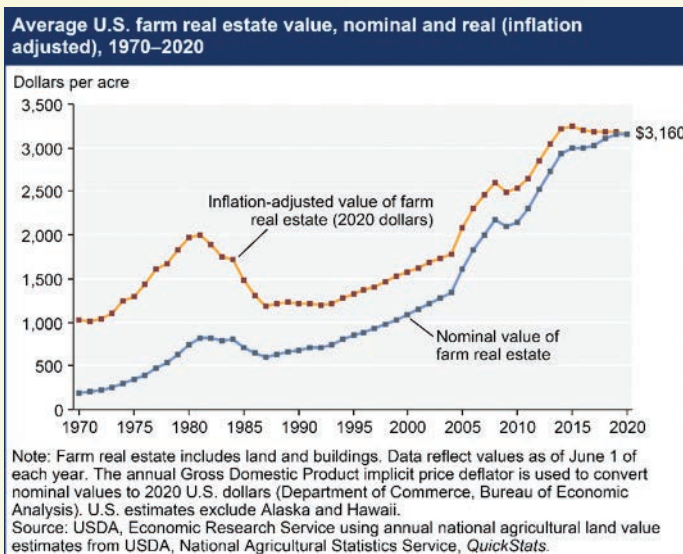
fixed rate terms to improve the cash flow of the farm/ranch is substantial.

Increased Leverage for the Same Costs

The second long-term cycle represents the slow re-leveraging of the average farm balance sheet since the farm crisis of the early 1980s. The total dollar amount of outstanding farm debt has now matched the amount outstanding in 1980 (measured in current dollars). While this increasing leverage might seem concerning in its own right, the aforementioned declining interest rate trend has held the servicing costs for this debt close to constant over the last couple decades.

Farmland Value

The third power-cycle is the increasing value of farmland, on both a nominal and inflation-adjusted basis, over the last 30 years. This increase in value has kept the debt-to-equity ratio nearly constant, even as debt levels have increased, indicating the increased debt amount is not stressing the owners' financial capacity. While the lessons of the excess debt levels of the early 1980s still resonate deeply in most corners of agri-business, there remains substantial untapped value to prudently support the needs of effective farm operators.



Capital Markets

The fourth, and final, power-cycle is the unusual state of the capital markets. Investors are simultaneously concerned about a) high levels of equity valuations and b) bond markets (the traditional "hedge" to equity risks in a portfolio) with remarkably low returns and vulnerability to rising rates if/when inflation takes hold. For most investors, the search for alternative asset classes that are not directly correlated to the stock and bond markets remains unfruitful, as raw commodities are difficult to invest in efficiently. Increasing evidence of rising inflationary pressures further motivates this quest for safe haven investments.

So how do these four power-cycles come together for you? For those already involved in farming with a base holding of farmland, it is hard to imagine a better time to review your financial structure to align it with your financial objectives. If your objectives are more generational in nature, you should be able to use the low rate environment to shorten the maturity of your farm mortgage without increasing payment levels. If your objective is to prudently grow the business and work or rent out more land to generate more net income, the

expanding asset values, lower rates, and improved cash flow provide a unique opportunity to grow your landholdings while maintaining substantial cushions against short-term adverse events.

While no business in any industry should expand debt just because it can—debt can be a tough task-master—making appropriate adjustments to the debt-to-equity ratio can materially accelerate your capacity to achieve your long-term financial objectives.

Now is a great time to take control of your financial future and review the opportunities and alternatives for refinancing the mortgage on your farmland or financing the acquisition of additional land at historically low long-term fixed rates.

A good lender should be able to listen intently to your objectives and help you select the loan terms that best permit you to take advantage of today's exceptional rates and structural alternatives. While many banks can't offer the full range of long-term fixed rates currently available, McHenry Savings Bank, through its relationships with FarmerMac and other leading farm lenders, can provide a full menu of attractive financing alternatives. Please feel free to contact Tim to discuss your situation or address any questions you may have.

*Authors: Don Wilson, CEO, McHenry Savings Bank
Tim Kempel, SVP NMLS# 586675 – Agribusiness Banking,
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Math Problems

By Mary Jacobs

Question #1:

Pucka, a Tennessee Walker, gaited 15 miles over 1.5 hours. At this rate, how far could Pukka gait in 30 minutes? What was Pukka's speed in miles per hour?

Question #2:

A Connemara pony, Smokey, loses 6 out of 24 of its jumping competitions.

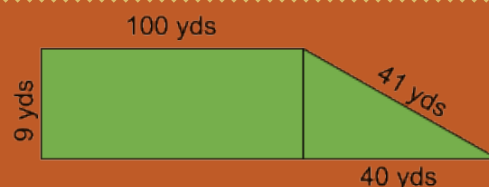
What percentage of competitions did Smokey win?

Question #3:

A very nice horse owner wants to buy her Mustang, Tingo, some apples as a treat. A 10-lb bag of Honeycrisp apples costs \$31.99 plus 6% tax, but is on sale for 30% off, what does she end up paying for the apples?

Question #4:

A herd of geldings' pasture is made up of a rectangle and triangle as shown to the right. What is the area and perimeter of their pasture?



Math answers on page 36.

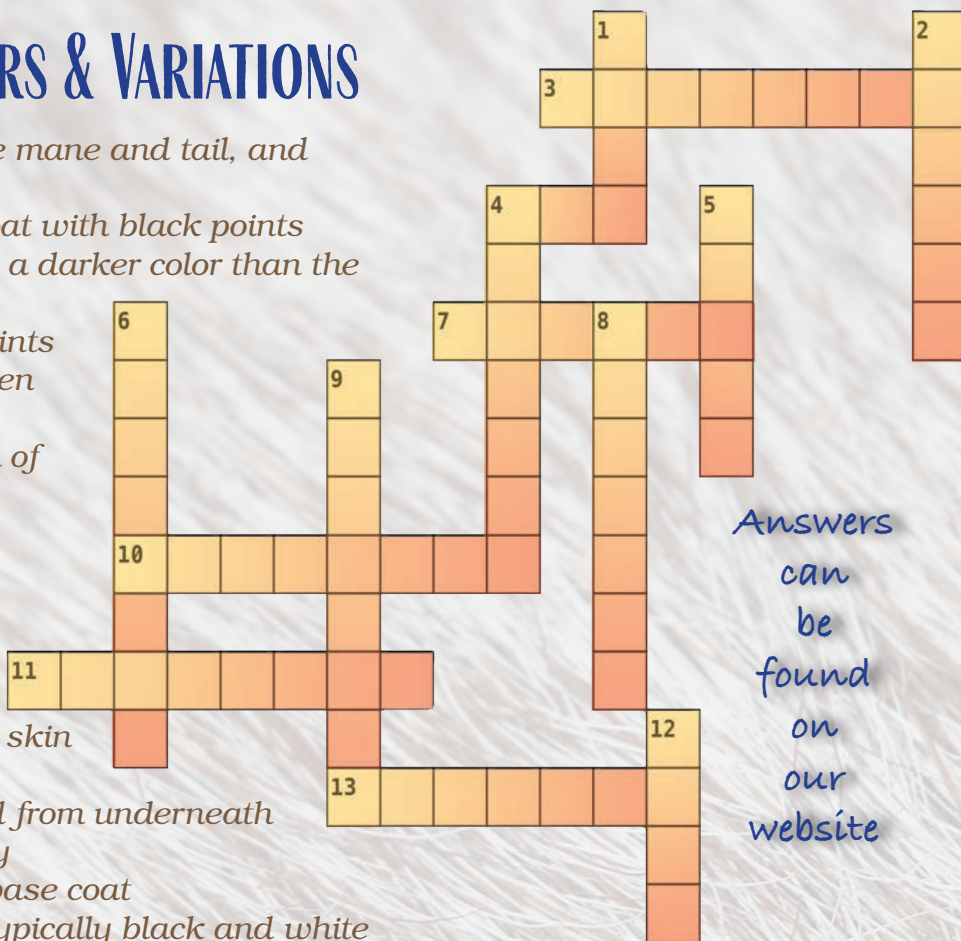
COLORS & VARIATIONS

ACROSS

3. Cream coat with pink skin, white mane and tail, and blue eyes
4. Reddish brown to dark brown coat with black points
7. Round spots or patterns that are a darker color than the underlying coat
10. Cream or light tan with black points
11. White mane and tail with a golden colored coat
13. Spotted pattern in which a patch of white crosses over the spine, anywhere between the ears and the tail

DOWN

1. A white colored horse with black skin
2. A reddish shade of chestnut
4. A solid color with white splashed from underneath
5. White markings over a dark body
6. White markings on a non-black base coat
8. Irregular patches of two colors, typically black and white
9. Reddish to brown colored coat with mane and tale of the same color or a bit lighter
12. Chestnut, sorrel, or bay colored horse with white hairs sprinkled throughout



Answers can be found on our website

SHOW TIME - AGAIN

By Mattie Hoard

A cold, rainy Sunday in May, horses lunging and being schooled. Courses are posted, draws are posted. Men and women watching each horse take notes of the one they will be riding later that day. It is show day, finally. Some riders are about to put on their show coats for the first time in more than a year.

Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (SMWC), located in Terre Haute, Indiana, took COVID-19 on as a challenge. When determined head coach Tabatha Taylor of Amarillo, Texas, found out that the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) had no plans to host a post-season again in 2021, that sparked a fire deep down inside her.

Tabatha jumped to action and decided she could not let this happen again this year. She was helped by Terri Foreman, the Regional President of Zone 7 Region 1 and head coach of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign equestrian team, along with the committee formed from IHSA coaches across the country, and her show managers and students Mattie Hoard and Drew Arnold. In just a short time the team put on a show.

"The idea was established in conjunction with the Youth Development Equestrian Association (YEDA) Collegiate Celebration," says Taylor. The committee that brainstormed these two events consisted of several coaches from IHSA colleges. "The committee was passionate about these events because they gave upperclassmen the opportunity to compete," she added. "That was a primary consideration."

For some of the riders, this was the only show some of them have competed in this season. The show consisted of 54 over fence rides around a stylish course and 15 flat classes. The first six riders in each class received prizes. Grand Champion Tack & Saddlery Inc. in Indianapolis helped provide some remarkable prizes for competitors along with McCauley Feeds located in Versailles, Kentucky.

Throughout the day riders competed on some familiar rides such as the Champion Horse of the Show Nashville, and the Reserve Champion Horse of the Show Marco, both owned by SMWC. Other familiar mounts included Diamond Dazzle (D.D.), Owen, and Max.

The competition was run in a draw format that highlighted 11 teams from across the country. Illinois All-Stars, and West Texas A&M University tied the day for first. That tie was broken by the number of blue ribbons won by each team, and was given to the Illinois All-Stars. The University of Minnesota Crookston was third, by less than 5 points. Other colleges that competed included Black Hawk College East, Indiana University, Tennessee Tech, University of Illinois, North Dakota State University, Murray State University, Taylor University, JG All-Stars, and Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

There is talk about keeping these two events--the Collegiate Equation Celebration and the western show in conjunction with YEDA--in place in the future. You can stay abreast of all IHSA activities by visiting its website: ihsa.com.

WHILE SOME SHOWS WERE A GO LAST YEAR, SOME WERE NOT. MOST EVENTS WERE A NOT, BUT FOR CLEVERNESS THEY WERE NOT FORGOT. THINGS ARE PICKING UP AND AND THIS YEAR WE MAY GET A LOT.

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MidWest Renegades
Equestrian Drill Team

August

McHenry County Fair - Woodstock - Friday, Aug 6 - (All Teams)
NIO Shoot - Boon County Fair - Sunday, August 15 - (Renegade/Rebels)

September

Peppers Legacy Show - Harvard - Sunday, September 12 - (Dirt Devils)
Spring Grove Show - Saturday, September 25 - (All Teams)



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WHEN: Sunday. Morning group. Pre-ride meeting 10:00 am. First riders out 10:30 am. Afternoon group. Pre-ride meeting at 2:00 pm. First riders out at 2:30 pm.

FEES: Official ride sanctioned by NACMO. \$12/adult rider, \$6/junior rider. Non-members of NACMO will pay \$5 additional for one-day membership to cover insurance.

This is an IL McHenry County park. Day ride only. No camping facilities at Brookdale. Horse camping facilities available at Rock Cut State Park, approximately 1 hour away.

Trailhead at Paulsen Road parking lot. Picnic tables, pit toilet and mounting block available. No water. 7 miles of trail through prairie and forest. Easy trails on mowed grass. Ride through the remnants of the old Woodstock Hunt Club. Excellent terrain for plate hiding. Small park. Small parking lot (10 trailers). Come early for AM or PM ride to guarantee parking spot.

For more information, visit our IN/IL CMO Facebook page or contact Ride Manager:
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Math Answers:

**Question #1:
5 miles. 10 miles per hour**

Question #2: 75%

Question #3: \$23.74

**Question #4:
Perimeter: 290 yards
Area: 1080 yards**

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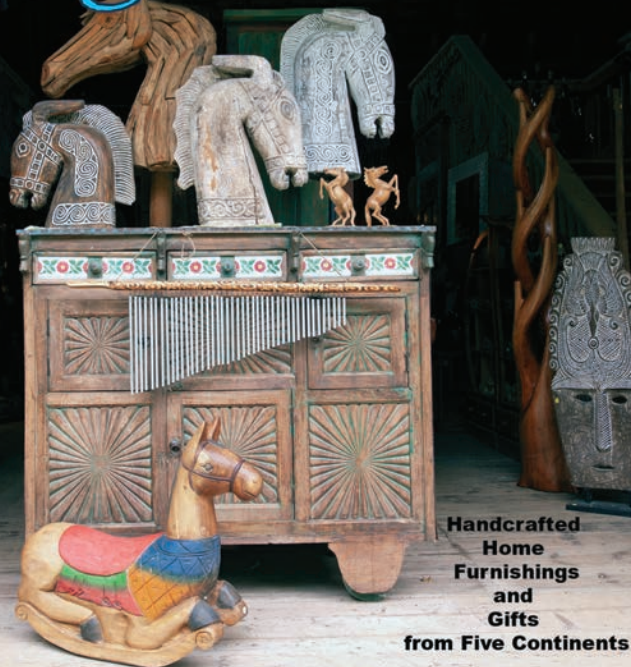


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