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Experience Horsemanship From the Heart!

The MMR Newsletter

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Attendees visit and shop at the H4H Tack Sale before sitting down for a great BBQ.

Harry Whitney Clinic: A Two-Week Equine Thought Experience



Harry Whitney Clinic participants (Left to Right) Joan Marie, Bill (auditor); Evelyn (auditor); Helen, Harry, Julie Carpenter; Stella; Mike, Susan, Kati (auditor) & Julie K.

MMR changed the format of this year's Harry Whitney Clinic. It went from individual one-hour sessions each morning and two five person classes each afternoon, to seven riders for the entire two weeks. (This is how Harry structures his week-long clinics in Arizona.) It meant fewer people attending and less access. But from a participant's point of view, it went from short hectic sessions splitting Harry between 14 people a day, to a relaxed focused atmosphere where everyone took the time it takes to truly progress with their horses.

The change was magical. The small group shared questions, moments of enlightenment, and funny stories mixed in with insights on the heavy duty learning that went on.

It was just like Julie's clinics. "You just hang out and work with your horse with Harry's guidance, and then watch each other and ask questions," notes Susan. "All of a sudden you realize that you learned something and are doing things better. You don't even notice the point where it all comes together. It just happens."

As Harry puts it, "We come to a clinic to work on the pieces of a dance, and then practice putting them together." Whether it's your first time or 50th, each person continues to add new and more intricate steps." MMR owner Julie adds this is why she rides with Harry at least twice a year. It is part of a lifetime of improving our equine dance.

A waking:

One of the biggest changes in the clinic was for **Helen & Regalio**. This was her first clinic with Harry. She had owned and ridden Reg for two years and even done some endurance rides with him before becoming frustrated that something wasn't right – or safe – in their rides. Her friend Mike got her signed up for the clinic. The first thing she learned was that her horse was not paying attention to her.

"Being aware of what my horse is feeling and focusing on makes all the difference for me," Helen says. "Now, I have begun to see the difference, and can help my horse feel better about what I am asking."

Helen elaborates on her realization that many horses are doing everything their owners are asking, but they are worried that they might end up dead because of it. So they hold back



Mike & Shaw

Julie Hits The Road to Help Clients

In 2005, MMR Owner/Trainer Julie Carpenter began travelling further from home to provide her 'Horsemanship From the Heart' style of training to clients who can't easily travel to Jackson, CA. 2006 hosted clinics include four in Washington, two in Oroville, CA, and four in Santa Cruz, CA. (See article on page six for Santa Cruz details.) Following is a Clinic report Washington clinic host Sue Sheckett made to her riding club.

When I say I try to practice Natural Horsemanship, I get a strong response. Mostly it is interest and agreement, but all too often it's a shrug. Unfortunately, many horse people are turned off by the hype and showmanship of some of the more well-promoted clinicians, and do not look deeper to consider the value of the ideas and techniques being promoted.

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The Miracle Mountain Ranch newsletter is produced and distributed quarterly. Its mission is to share MMR news & happenings and to supply continuing knowledge to help everyone improve their equine partnership skills using *Horsemanship From the Heart*.

Please let us know what you think of our content and what else you would like to see. Contact Newsletter Editor Susan Hartje at ACTsusan@earthlink.net or 209-245-3789 or contact the ranch at MMRI@MiracleMountain.com or 209-223-4421.

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Harry Whitney Clinic (continued from p.1)



Above: Helen rides with no hands in order to help her get the feeling of moving with Regalio instead of sitting on him and pulling his head.

A Thoughtful Habit

Although Mike & Shaw had attended another Harry clinic, he also advanced his understanding of focus. "Until now, I was mainly concerned with *what* my horses were *thinking*. But if you consider *where* your horse's thought is instead, it is a whole different focus."

Harry agrees. "Too many people are just sitting on top of their horses. Most people think that riding should not be hard. But **you need to be present for your horse to help them understand what you want.**"

Joan Marie brought her new Halfflinger, Muffin Man, and a young Lusitano to start on groundwork.

She has worked with Harry for years and owns some of the most finished horses of the group's riders. Yet she adds "when I change my focus from what their feet are doing to what their thought is doing, it's a whole new game."

Harry expands that thought, "The mechanical move is the request, but having it

be the horse's idea to perform that move is more important. If you don't get the thought then the mechanical movement doesn't matter."

"I prefer a horse *bend* and *want* to move (instead of *yielding* and being *forced*) so that the horse takes responsibility for finding his own balance and straightness and physical correctness. Otherwise they will never learn to balance and think through the movement themselves and we will always have to do it for them."

We need to wait on our horses to find correctness. "That means I might have to abandon my planned line and wait for the horse to get correct in his response to my rein," he says. *The key is to make sure what is happening now is correct.* A horse needs to know how to yield to the rein and be correct. We want to direct the horse, not pull or lead him.

Direct the thought, not the horse.

The good news is that it is easier than you think to get the thought to go where you want it to. But it does take the rider's focus.

Focus on the Feeling

Julie Carpenter chose an especially resistant horse to work in the clinic. Cassie, a big quarter horse, had a lifelong habit of pushing people around. Cassie's owner Bill audited the clinic. He was happy with how much better his horse was after a month of Julie working with her. But on day one of the clinic, as soon as she was asked to do some-

thing, everyone could see this was still a dangerous horse. She stuck her nose up and looked for ways to escape.

After observing her resistance, Harry took the lead rope and asked for her attention. "This horse doesn't know she doesn't need to feel this bad around people," he explained. "It may take a lot to get her to understand that's just not necessary. It may even get a lot worse before it gets better."

Of course Cassie laid back her ears and threatened Harry. That's when Harry got really big, and Cassie got really mad. She squinted her eyes and snaked her neck and tried to back and to lunge and rear; everything she could think of to get back to her own thoughts.

Even though Harry got big with his requests, he never directed any pain at her. He wasn't correcting her for feeling the way she did. He cracked a whip on the ground, but not at Cassie, explaining, "I get big to get her to search for a different way of feeling."

And he rewarded her smallest attempt to feel better. He got quiet when she looked at him with a quiet eye instead of a wide white eye. He stopped asking her to move when she offered an ear in his direction. Eventually the release came when she lowered her head, then when both eyes turned softly in his direction. The resulting change was dramatic. Cassie finally stood quietly facing Harry and following his direction.

Right: Harry and Joan Marie watch as auditor Madeline helps show why Muffin Man needs to know the advanced 'haunches in' movement in order to pull a cart safely.



in order to always be ready to preserve themselves (ie: check out, bolt, startle, buck, or run home). "I think there are a bunch of people riding bunched up horses. But they think they are collected."

Harry explains that this happens because the horse's thought is not with its rider and it doesn't feel good. "A horse has to turn loose of all his own thoughts before he can have room to listen to and go with what we might be asking," Harry says. "Horses don't have to be troubled by what we are asking. They won't if their thought is here with me. But I have to ask for that and wait for him to get with me."

"We need to notice and fix the spots where our horse's thought leaves us. It leaks out the gate, or over to another horse," he explains. "If we don't stay aware of where their mind is and get it back, our horses won't stay with us mentally." We do that by asking her to give to a rein, or sending her forward or directing her elsewhere. We have to offer a chance to go with our direction.

If your horse is not with you, your requests become an annoyance that they brace against, even while doing what you want. That resistance can make them get tight and use themselves incorrectly. Tightness leads to many physical issues including a weak, swayed back, pockets behind the shoulders, and often a bumpy ride for the rider.



Above: Harry and Julie work with Cassie to help her stay relaxed and focused on her rider, and to resolve her dislike of other horses being near her under saddle.

Below: Harry tells his favorite travel stories around the table after an evening BBQ. The story of the night was about Tennessee the muleskinner.



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MMR 2005-2006 Calendar



Date	Events	Cost	Notes*
Dec. 19; Jan. 16; Feb. 20 & Mar. 3	One-Day Four-Pack	\$500	Work on groundwork, seat and riding skills with Julie one day a month. ***
DECEMBER	Individual Instruction & Training		Julie will be available for individual private sessions and horses in training.
Jan. 9 - 14	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Jan. 21 - 22	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Feb. 13 - 19	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Feb. 24 - 26	Three-Day Clinic	\$375	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Mar. 5 - 9	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Mar. 13 - 30	3-week Apprenticeship	\$2,300	Concentrated, advanced learning & skills practice.
April 1 - 2	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Groundwork, seat and riding skills. FULL
Apr. 3, May 15, June 2 & July 17	One-Day Four-Pack	\$500	Work on groundwork, seat and riding skills with Julie one day a month. ***
April 8 - 11	Four-Day Clinic	\$600	Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat & riding skills. Includes board.
April 12 - 15	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
April 22 - 23	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
April 26 - 30	Five-Day Clinic	\$625	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
May 8 - 12	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
May 16 - 17	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
May 20	Day at the Ranch TACK SWAP, CRAFT FAIR, BBQ Hearts for Horses Fundraiser		
May 22 - 29	Eight-Day Trail Camp	\$1375	Work on groundwork, seat and riding skills on the trail. Includes food and board.
June 3 - 7	Five-Day Clinic	\$625	Seat, collection, riding & refinement skills.
June 10 - 13	Four-Day Clinic	\$600	Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat & riding skills. Includes board.
June 17 - 18	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Oroville, CA: Contact Tracy Johnson 530-534-5815
June 22 - 25	Four-Day Clinic	\$500	Seattle, WA: Contact Sue Shecket 206-860-5068.
June 27 - 29	Three-Day Clinic	\$375	Seattle, WA: Contact Sue Shecket 206-860-5068.
July 3 - 7	Youth Camp	\$850	Groundwork, riding skills and trail rides, plus food, fun and games! Includes all food, supervision and a bed in the bunkhouse. Participants arrive July 2nd, by 6pm.
July 10 - 14	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
July 26 - 30	Five-Day Clinic	\$625	Seat, collection, riding & refinement skills.
Aug. 12 - 15	Five-Day Clinic	\$750	Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat & riding skills. Includes board.
Aug. 16 - 19	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Aug. 25 - 27	Three-Day Clinic	\$375	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Aug. 28, Sept. 18, Oct. 2 & Nov. 20	One-Day Four-Pack	\$500	Work on groundwork, seat and riding skills one day a month. ***
Sept. 1 - 3	Three-Day Camp Clinic	\$450	Camp and ride in Pioneer. Practice riding skills on the trail. Includes food & board.
Sept. 7 - 10	Four-Day Clinic	\$500	Seattle, WA: Contact Sue Shecket 206-860-5068.
Sept. 12 - 14	Three-Day Clinic	\$375	Seattle, WA: Contact Sue Shecket 206-860-5068.
Sept. 25 - 30	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Oct. 6 - 8	Two-Day Clinic	\$250	Oroville, CA: Contact Tracy Johnson 530-534-5815
Oct. 16 - Nov. 3	3-week Apprenticeship	\$2,300	Concentrated, advanced learning & skills practice.
Nov. 11 - 14	Four-Day Clinic	\$600	Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills. Includes board.
Nov. 15 - 18	Individual Sessions		Santa Cruz, CA: Contact Julie. Groundwork, seat and riding skills.
Nov. 24 - 26	Three-Day Clinic	\$375	Groundwork, seat and riding skills.



MMR assistant trainer Evelyn Looney leaves Jackson in December to attend Veterinary School. She will be missed. But we wish her the very best, and hope to see her back here as our Vet.

GOOD LUCK EVELYN!

*All Clinics cost \$125/day plus \$15/day horse board unless otherwise noted.
 *All Clinics run from 9 am - 5 pm unless otherwise noted. *Deposits are required to hold your space in all clinics & camps. If you need to cancel, and we can refill your space, we will refund your deposit. If we cannot fill your space, your deposit is non-refundable. *We maintain a waiting list on all camps & clinics. *Camps include horse board, a bed in the bunkhouse and food unless otherwise noted. ***Due to the time constraints of a One-day Clinic, all horses must be under saddle to participate.

Three-Week Clinics: A Journey Of The Heart, Mind & Spirit

by Leslie Brinskele

Miracle Mountain is a place where magic happens.

I know this first hand. I have witnessed amazing transformations of both horses and riders. I am one of those riders who 2.5 years ago, after 2 bad wrecks, was looking for help with my horse (he needed the help of course, not me). My friend suggested I check out a trainer in Jackson who was having a Three-Week Clinic. With a last minute cancellation, a supportive family and an eleventh-hour find of someone to care for my ranch, I started an unexpected journey of the heart, mind and spirit.

I arrived with Reb, my old, much-loved, broken-down, anxiety-ridden rodeo horse, a treeless saddle, and a lot of insecurity. My heart sank when I realized I was the only green rider in the group. I soon discovered that at MMR, miles and experience didn't matter. Each rider and her horse were on a personal journey unique to them. Julie was able to focus on each rider and horse as individuals. I learned as much by watching the other women work with their horses as I did working with my own.

Evenings at the bunkhouse were filled with warmth and horse talk. Time spent with others who share my passion for horses was rejuvenating. I left with a softer, more relaxed horse, a ton of information about a new way of interacting with my horses, and most importantly - hope. After a string of scary trainers, I had found a safe place to build a partnership with my horse.

So began the journey of my heart.

I was so full of enthusiasm for what I had learned that I signed up for the next Three-Week session. I arrived with my problem horse, Squire, who had bitten me, kicked me and generally had me terrified of riding him. I still had a new found sense of purpose, but soon

realized how little I really knew and how far I had to go.

Squire was the perfect teacher. He began with ears pinned, teeth bared and feet striking. He taught me to back up, move off and cower. *My lesson in confusion had begun.* I learned about how we



create confusion in our horses by our underdeveloped understanding of body language.

Julie and Squire showed me that confusion clears when

we develop a more concise vocabulary and a better sense of timing using our intent and body in the horse's language. I even sat in the saddle for a minute, shaking with fear, only to realize that Squire was willing to wait for me to clear up my own anxiety. I took home a horse filled with more curiosity than confusion, more willingness to try than anger, and the beginnings of a partnership of mutual respect.

While riding Dorsey, my 30-something tried and true back-up horse, I learned how much my saddle added to the confusion quotient. On our first trail ride we stopped to let another horse work something out. As I was watching them, my saddle slowly began listing to the left. Dorsey just parked, planted his legs and waited for my saddle and me to slide underneath him.

My lesson in saddle fit had begun. It never occurred to me what part my unstable saddle, my lack of balance and the saddle's inability to support me played in my two wrecks. Goodbye treeless saddle! Hello to two 'new' used saddles fit to my horses' backs.

So began the journey of my mind.

Two years passed. Caught up in the mechanics of life, I felt my new skills had atrophied. I was so worried about "doing it right" that I hadn't done it at all. Time for a tune-up!

I arrived for my third Three-Week Clinic with the same two horses, my new saddles, and performance anxiety. I figured after two clinics I should know more. But here I was again with five more-experienced riders. But this time three of them also had big fear issues. It surprised me that Reb, was still full of anxiety at the sight of a saddle. My fear that he would fall apart again got so big, that I was afraid to ride.

As we each worked through our daily challenges, we found ourselves talking of letting go, and asking for help. After one particularly frustrating session in the round pen, Julie reminded me:

"Things don't have to be better than yesterday; they just have to be better than when you started today."

Wow, talk about an epiphany!

As I watched the others work with their horses, I realized again that it makes no difference the number of miles or years of experience we have. Sometimes we have to start from the beginning again.

I watched Tony, who had ridden all her life, go from disliking her new horse because he'd bucked her off, to turning into mush hugging her now soft and attentive gelding. Terry got the award for tenacity for hanging in there with her mare, Cassie, who had big opinions about everything. For the first time, Mary was able to feed her 2-year old Halfinger in his stall as he waited respectfully without a thought of kicking her. With Katie, I learned to breathe, and sit deep and balanced.

And, I *finally* had a calm ride with Reb.

This third time around, the nickel finally dropped. The path is now clear. I know that my equine journey has been one of the spirit all along.

Harry Whitney Clinic (continued from p.2)

Calm Doesn't Mean Focused

"It really struck me as I watched Cassie, that (minus the animosity) these were the same issues I was facing with my young, bomb proof horse **Taz**," says **Susan**. Taz would face up and follow her like a puppy wanting attention. But she had developed so much self confidence lately that she just didn't have much need to listen to Susan when riding. "She felt better with herself than with me," Susan admitted. So they worked on helping Taz feel better focusing on her owner.

Harry explains sometimes horses that are calm by nature are actually harder than those with a lot of 'flee' instinct. "Ones who are fearful by nature will hunt up their person sooner than one that is more self confident," he

says. "The fearful ones quickly come to see their owner as a source of calmness and protection." That's not bad, but Harry would rather see a horse be OK in any situation and just *want* to be with their human.

The time we spend with our horses affects them the rest of their lives, Harry reminded people. That lesson had sunk in for **Stella & Angelique**. Stella had done all the prep work, but saved her first rides on Angelique for this clinic. Angelique was perfectly happy to stand facing Stella for hours. But surprisingly, her big issue was the same as Cassie and Taz. She wasn't really focused on Stella. As soon as that got cleared up everything else became easier.

Getting forward was another recurring theme for every horse and rider. Forward has to come from inside, Harry emphasized. **Julie K.** captured the thought, "If their thought isn't with us, then the feet don't count." Even though her Peruvian, **Bendito**, was always rushing, he was really just rushing to *anywhere that might feel better*. "That's exactly right!" Harry exclaims, "You've got it. You just need to help him send his thought to where you want his feet to be. Help him focus where you want him to be."

Harry smiles big: "Once you get that communication going, the joy and the freedom you both get is the most rewarding thing a person could imagine!"



Above: Stella and Angelique take their first trotting steps together.



Left: Joan Marie teaches her young colt to back when she pulls his tail. She begins by standing safely behind and to the side, and supports her request with a rope to which he already has learned to give.

Below: Julie K. enjoys some focus and speed on Bendito. After working to get more in tune with him, Julie finds that he can turn on the speed without getting tight and worried.



See additional comments & photos from this clinic on our website: miraclemountain.com

Above: 5 year-old Taz doesn't feel she needs to focus on her owner or Harry. She resists a long time before deciding standing relaxed and quiet with Harry is the best idea. Once she does, she releases tons of stress with big yawns, licks, chews and deep breaths. Her experience is similar to many during the clinic.

Once Taz feels good focusing on her owner, many other behavioral

issues clear up on their own. Above: Under saddle, Susan focuses on being clear in her requests and directing Taz's thoughts to where her feet need to go. Firm follow-through (not nagging) is what this self confident horse needs.



Julie T travels (cont. from p.1)



Sue Sheckett & Tazo

I consider myself a pragmatist, and certainly not a groupie – handsome cowboy or not. So I was not easily swayed until I was invited by my sister to spend a week at 'horse camp' in Jackson, CA, offered by her trainer Julie Carpenter.

Her methods focus on natural solutions to common problems that happen between horses and humans. The goal is developing a trusting, respectful relationship, and a safe, balanced and responsive horse. What she was doing and saying made sense to me - and clearly to the horses as well. In one short week I found myself thinking about and reacting to my horse in a very different way, and determined to try to un-learn my old ways.

I came home pretty psyched, raving to anyone who would listen, and convinced that these concepts can indeed benefit horses and riders of any age or experience. But it was clear that the best one to demonstrate and explain these ideas was Julie herself.

It took two years to get it together, but in June, Julie flew up to spend 3 productive days with a group of us who board at Overlake Farm. Our clinic was a combination of demonstration, discussion, individual coaching (equally useful for those watching) and riding in the park and arena. It was fun, interesting and a real eye opener, that was both exciting and frustrating - everyone wanted more!

We all had such a good time up here in the great Northwest that she returned in September to work with our group again. And now we have her scheduled for more visits in 2006. *Horsemanship from the Heart*, we're on our way!

Jade's Ranch Hosts Clinics with Julie

Since the beginning of 2005, Julie has been doing a few individual sessions at Jade's Ranch in Santa Cruz as it was being built by Erica and Rusty Berg. Ever since Julie relocated Miracle Mountain Ranch to Jackson, clients have wanted her to return to do clinics and individual sessions. Julie did a 4 day clinic there in November. It was a huge success, according to participants.

"Erica has so kindly invited me to extend my stay in 2006 and do clinics every other month along with some individual sessions at her new ranch," Julie says. "I am thankful to them for the opportunity to teach out of such a beautiful place."

Four clinics are scheduled at Jade's Ranch in 2006. They are already fill-

Hearts for Horses 'Day at the Ranch' is Big Success!



The first annual *Hearts for Horses* "Day at the Ranch" fundraiser raised \$2,500 and was a big hit with attendees. The September 18th event included a Tack Swap & Craft Fair, Horsemanship Demo, Barbecue, Auction and raffle. It drew more than one hundred participants and many more donated items.

"It was much more successful than we expected for our first time," notes *H4H* founder Julie Carpenter. "It shows how much people really care." Volunteer **Toni Ford** (pictured at right with Julie awarding prizes) coordinated the event in a very short timeframe with the help of some other key people.

Please visit our website, www.miraclemountain.com, and click on *Hearts for Horses* to read all the details and see more photos of the day.



ing up with clients who don't want to trailer up to Jackson as often as they have been.

Jade's Ranch is on the Coast next to Wilder Ranch, just west of Santa

Cruz. It offers a wide variety of training opportunities outside the arena. Contact Julie directly if you are interested in working with her while she is at Jade's Ranch.



Visit us for more news and information at our website: MiracleMountain.com

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