



**August, 2020**

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*President's Message*

Hello All,

I want to start off by thanking our show managers for keeping us going this year!! A little mule showing norm is a great thing during this time. The first show of the year was double judged. A first for the AMA. I look forward to hearing what you all thought about it. We hoped it was a way to minimize travel expenses but maximize results. We have a few more shows coming up. I am thinking of adding a cattle show towards the end of the year, so give me some input if you would be interested. We have normal business we have to take care of this year too; election nominees for the board of directors need to be in and rule changes must be submitted by the end of the year. Our website is a great hub for all things mule and donkey and our association. Check out the forms to stay on top of anything you need to submit. These times have reminded me of the important things in life and my mules and donkeys and all my long ear loving friends are a much needed part of my life. I did get to see some of you at the packing clinic and will see ya all at the next show!



Casie Fairbanks



**American Mule Association**

**Proudly serving the mule and donkey community for over 35 years**

# July Packing Clinic



*The AMA sponsored packing clinic held in Templeton on July 11 was a huge success!*

*25 people signed up for the clinic given by Joe Gonzalez and organized by Emily Berman at Rick and Lou Jacobsens training barn in Templeton. Joe had assistance from Rick Jacobsen, Lou Moore-Jacobsen and Shane Fairbanks, all teaching small groups how to pack for both competition and the back country. Joe provided 4 mules and packs for everyone to get a chance to try their hand.*



*The temperatures were high but so was the enthusiasm for all that attended. The packing started at 8:00 and continued until noon when everyone enjoyed the delicious tri tip sandwiches barbequed by Emily. The clinic was free and memberships were given to all youth participants. AMA provided the tri tip lunch.*



*Many thanks to Emily, Joe, Rick, Lou and Shane for putting on this great event!*

## American Mule Association Mission Statement

A California non-profit benefit corporation that was founded in 1976. Since its inception, the AMA has been dedicated to building the reputation and integrity of mules throughout the United States.

MULES is published 6x per year, February, April, June, August, October, December

Advertising Rates

Full page \$110.00

½ page \$75.00

¼ page \$50.00

Business card \$18.00

Classified \$6.00

\$10/ photo includes up to 30 words, .25/word thereafter

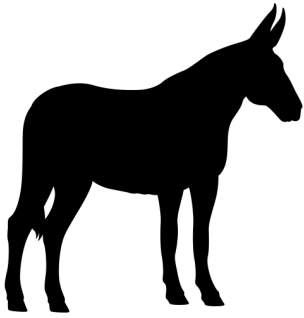
Deadlines: Advertising and articles are due by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.

Disclaimer: MULES does not accept any responsibility for any and all advertisements submitted to us.

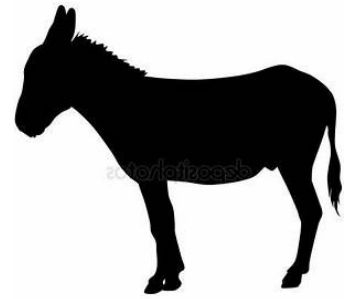


*The star packer of the day was Aspen Branco, 6 years old. She practiced on the barrel first, then packed "Pistol" all by herself with instruction from Joe, Lou and Emily and did a terrific job!*





Rule changes/proposed new rules are due by **December 31**.  
 Send info by email to Casie Fairbanks  
[52mules@gmail.com](mailto:52mules@gmail.com)



Elections are coming up! Look for biographies in the next newsletter. If you are interested in running or want to nominate someone, contact Casie [52mules@gmail.com](mailto:52mules@gmail.com) to get your name on the ballot.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 ★  
 ★ **COMPETITORS BE AWARE** ★  
 ★ To this point if you did not list **AMA** membership numbers for owners and exhibitor or registration  
 ★ number of your mule on your entry, I have looked it up for you. I will no longer do this, with double  
 ★ judged shows and more awards to keep track of, I have more work to do keeping points. If you do not  
 ★ put **ALL** the information on your entry you will receive **NO POINTS** for that show. Direct any  
 ★ questions to me, Maggie Moore [equines06@gmail.com](mailto:equines06@gmail.com)  
 ★  
 ★\*\*\*\*\*

*AMA sends our best wishes and a speedy recovery to Chris McParland!*



### *Calendar of Events*

Aug 19—23	Goldmine Battle of the Breeds, Reno NV see AMA website for info
Sept 18-20	Gold Country Mule & Donkey Show, Lincoln, CA info: (916) 390-1861 <b>**Double Judged**</b>
Oct 30-Nov 1	Gold Country Mule & Donkey Show, Lincoln, CA info: (916) 390-1861 <b>**Double Judged**</b>
Oct 30-Nov 1	Donkey Welfare Symposium, UC Davis, see AMA website for info
Feb 27, 2021	AMA Banquet, Harris Ranch

# Gold Country Mule and Donkey Shows 2020

*Judges to be determined, Double Judged BOTH dates!*

September 18, 19 & 20th

Newly added Cattle Events (Friday)

Timed events Friday

Western, Driving & Dog Races Saturday

Halter, English & Trail Sunday

October 30 & 31 and November 1st

Newly added Cattle Events (Friday)

Timed events Friday

Western, Driving, Packing & Dog costume class Saturday

Halter, English & Trail Sunday

**Reduced Class fee's. Prizes to all first place winners!**

Series Champion Awards for Division Winners

All first place winners entered into Grand Prize Drawing (to be determined)

Premium will be available on AMA website!

Please call (916)390-1861 or email [gcmds2020@hotmail.com](mailto:gcmds2020@hotmail.com) with questions or to request premium.



Previous Gold Country photos— dog races, mule and donkey fun times!



# *Training for trail riding animals vs. show animals*

## **Trail Riding question**

*This question was posed to Larry Trocha, notable reined cowhorse trainer who shares his thoughts on the internet.*

### **Question:**

Hi Larry:

I'd like to ask a question about head position and training/showing vs trail riding?

I've been working on my horse's head position and he's coming along just fine. However, sometimes I want to just take him trail riding and let him relax and go without constantly correcting him (with all of the new sights he raises his head to look around more than in the arena). Can I do this and not undo my head position training?

I'm concerned about confusing him if I don't correct him EVERY time he raises his head on the trail. I'm afraid of hurting my score in a show because I didn't correct him EVERY time.

Thank you in advance for your efforts and advice.

Lynn

### **Comments from Larry Trocha:**

Hi Lynn,

You asked a very good question.

I don't think you will have to worry about the head position while on a trail ride... unless it gets really bad.

Horses can tell the difference when you are just trail riding for relaxation and when you are seriously schooling.

Most horses realize that when they are in the arena they must work well or they will be corrected.

If you want to play it safe though, I'd suggest you do your trail riding with totally different equipment... maybe a particular bit that you will use exclusively for trail riding.

That way your horse will know when you put that particular bit on him, its relaxation time.

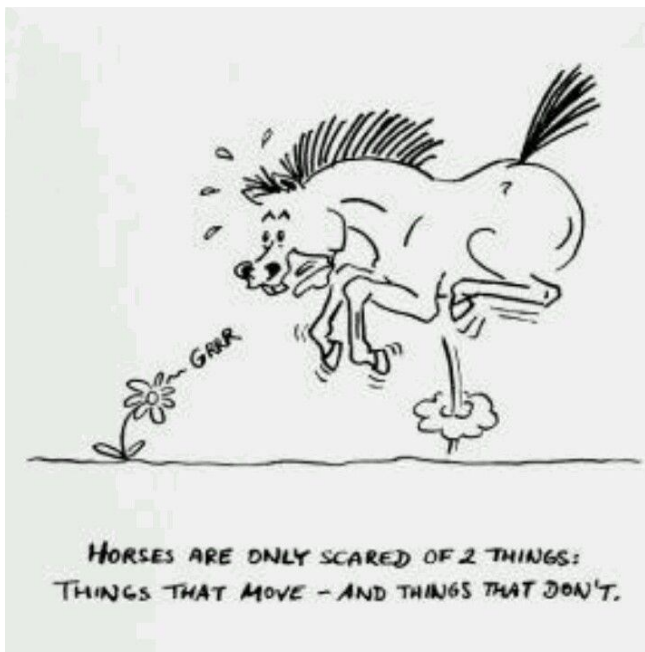
### **Side Note:**

Lots of riders believe if a horse is to be strictly a trail horse, he doesn't need much training.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. A good trail horse requires just as much training as any other kind of horse... maybe even more! The reason is because of SAFETY.

The American Horse Council in Washington D.C. tracks hospital emergency room visits throughout the United States. They estimate, over 80,000 horse related accidents happen every year... with the rider ending up in the hospital. Most wrecks which happen out on the trail are caused by "un-trained" horses. Horses which aren't well trained. Horses without much control.

If you want a safe trail horse, get him broke and well trained.



# Thoughts to Consider

Submitted by Lou Moore-Jacobsen  
Horse & mule trainer  
Cal Poly Equine Lecturer



The internet and social media are wonderful things...to an extent. Most of us have all been involved in a conversation on Facebook, or elsewhere, where half agree with a view and the other half don't, some friendships are formed, and some are lost. It is the way of the world right now, so it seems. I must admit that I find myself wanting to add to the conversation and throw my opinion out there only to have it come back and bite me you know where! As a trainer I find myself biting my lip more and more when I see or hear a question asked or a statement made that I know, through experience, is only going to cause more trouble in the future and the main one suffering is usually the mule or horse.

I am not writing about training tips or riding do's and don'ts but instead about owner awareness! Beware of all the opinions that are out there around every corner, usually (but not always), coming from someone that has spent limited time in the saddle and has owned one or two equine friends. Free advice is usually worth what you pay for it.... think about that. Example; I am in the business of training mules, horses and people, a few words here and there isn't going to hurt, might even get someone to send their animal to me or take some lessons. But I am not likely to give enough information, especially online, to help solve much of a problem and take work away from me or my fellow trainers or give anything but generic comments just in case someone or something gets hurt using my suggestions without guidance. So, consider these "free" suggestions.

Do your homework, preferably privately, so you can get an opinion that hasn't come through a heated discussion on social media. Talk to people you know and trust. If you are asking about possible trainers don't expect them to throw someone else under the bus. Ask ethical advisors if you are searching for ethical trainers, don't expect others to condemn someone else unless they have proof of a wrongdoing. Just because you or someone else don't like the way a trainer trains it doesn't mean that they are wrong, they might just be different. If you don't like it, go somewhere else, there is someone out there for everyone.

Turn on your BS meter. In other words, don't believe everything you hear just because someone is positive to the point of being forceful or they are a self-proclaimed expert. Acknowledge that there are as many ways to get to one result as there are brands of shoes and some work for some people, not for others. If someone makes a blanket statement – beware! I just received an email newsletter that stated that you should never use a crupper on a mule "it breaks their backs". I thought about responding immediately since I have used cruppers my whole career, with veterinarian recommendation, but that is not my nature. I am a ponderer, so I called about 5 different vets that I know and respect and asked if this was a true statement. Not only did they all agree it was not true, not one had ever heard of a case where a mule had broken its' back because of a crupper. One stated that it would be written up in a medical journal if it had ever happened because it would be so rare. My point, question some of the stuff you hear, your equine will be better off for it!

Lastly, consider your animal most of all, they are only in this because we have the desire to go show, trail ride, endurance ride, etc. Very few probably ever hit the ground as babies thinking that they would like to fulfill some

*Continued on page 7*

owners dream. Remember that it is our dream, not theirs, and it is their good nature that puts up with us, so our dreams can come true. Some jobs are easier for some than others, so consider what they are going through. Do they like their job, is it physically hard for them, mentally hard, are they bored to tears, or do they enjoy it, if you pay attention you'll know. If they hate it find them something else to do, even if it is with someone else. I don't mean if they flick an ear wrong or try to go to the gate once in a while, that is just the nature of the beast, but if you determine that they truly do not like what they are doing, then they need to find another job that they do like. If there are major issues going on it is usually easily identified, with help from a professional if needed. If you're having trouble because he or she is hurting, bored, hates life, or in many cases is being asked the wrong thing or getting asked the wrong way, that's when you ask the knowledgeable people of choice the questions.

All I am asking is that for the sake of your animals is that you ask the right people the right way!

*Editor's note: We have many talented trainers amongst our members, I would be very happy to publish articles from any one of our members on any subject that is of interest to you. Remember if you think it's important others will too. Email Maggie at equines06@gmail.com*

## Blossom Trail Summer Sizzle Mule and Donkey Show held July 17-19, 2020



Amateur pleasure

On a sunny summer California weekend, AMA members, friends, mules and donkeys hauled into Verde View Farms at Sanger, California to support our first American Mule Association sanctioned show of the year. Members from Nevada, Washington State, Southern California and Northern California happily made the trek to the Central Valley show grounds to reunite after what has been a very long and arduous spring season. We started promptly at 0630 every morning to try and beat the afternoon heat. Early mornings to get ready, but it was certainly a beautiful time of day to show. The photos of those pretty mules and elegant donkeys in the morning light are just lovely; thanks to Amy. Members and friends competed and showed their best to two Judges. Jando Guerra and Chris Slauson stood at opposing ends of the arenas and



Kellie Shields & Denim N Diamonds



Mariah Peterson & Sonny Boy



Claudia Stevens & Mr. Ear E Sistiable

Continued on page 8



**AMA**

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placed each class. Sometimes their cards were unanimous and other times they differed slightly, at any rate the new double judged format was fun and exciting. The arena gets small with all those eyes on you at once! A big thanks to Kathy Pettit and her office and gate staff for hosting our show, especially considering the outside circumstances and many hurdles of 2020. Kathy is always dedicated to a quality show environment and GREAT awards to all the winners. We did see some new faces showing and that was exciting, as well. Results for the show will be published soon and a huge thanks to everyone that supported the AMA by attending our first show of 2020. Keep on coming everyone! See you in September.

Kellie Shields



Driving class



Kellie Shields & Ok Big Iron



Dawn Marie Henderson & DM Onyx Lady