

Wildwood Farm
CLIPS & CLOPS
Oak Harbor

October 2026

YOUR NEIGH-BORHOOD HULLABALOO CREATED & EDITED BY HEATHER CARDER

Montana's BLEU HORSES

By Angela Upperheimer

A herd of 39 steel horses awaits your pleasure on a hill overlooking Hwy 287, three miles north of Three Forks on Wheat Montana property. Conceived and built by sculptor Jim Dolan of Belgrade," Montana is infinitely richer for this permanent gift.

As soon as the Three Forks Herald article about the horses appeared on Facebook, a friend and I made plans to visit this site. One can pull off the road and get out to look at the horses or take the first westward driveway (Hilltop Vista) and circle around in back, then walk up the hill and mingle with the herd. The horses look so realistic we nuzzle noses and put our arms around their necks. A spectator says, "Seeing them is one of the most moving experiences of my life."

Artistry is at work here. Dolan says, "They're not horses; they're images of horses. If I had tried to do actual horses, it would have been a horsey project, not art." The horses are painted blue with slashes of black or white paint, creating shadows and a three-dimensional effect. Some look thinner than others. Several foals lie down. One is nursing. The horses have manes and tails made of 4,000 feet of de-braided polyester rope, which blow in the wind. Heads rest on ball bearings so they can move. Some horses graze. One poops; stones simulate droppings. Several are placed on the ridge looking at the Tobacco Roots. Others look down at the road with perked ears.

On the hill the horses are bolted down. Dolan put some of the larger ones in back, the next in size near the front, thus using foreshortening to affect the viewer's perception. Across their backs he painted a light shade of glossy blue enamel that shines in sunlight.

Gary Bates, the (national and local) award-winning sculptor and long-term friend of Dolan, said that he was amazed at how superbly Jim installed the horses on the hill. "Usually, a museum will use models and move them around the space to get the display just right. Not Jim. He took his loads of horses up there and placed them, using his innate knowledge." Anyone who knows horses recognizes in this installation the qualities of an actual herd.

Jim Dolan has known horses most of his life. Now 65, in good physical condition, his white hair frames a friendly face. He says that he did not make a sketch of these horses, he just used his imagination, creating them out of steel. Hooves are pipes, eyes are made from capped pipe. He needed them to be solid so they wouldn't blow over when installed. He says, "If I created just five or six horses, that Wouldn't look like much. I just wanted enough for viewers to stop and say, 'Oh my God'".

Continued on page 11

WHAT'S TRENDING NOW

Epiony Heat Pad

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The Epiony heat pad is lightweight, battery operated and gives a gentle heat perfect for horses and humans, keeping you both comfy and warm!



The Epiony Heat Pad has been made from a light weight super soft leatherette fabric combined with heat resistant insulation wadding to trap and reflect the heat back onto the muscles to soothe and relax them.
We have safety as our first thought; the battery has a special built in thermostat to prevent over-heating. If the battery becomes too warm, then the battery itself will turn off automatically.



Heat therapy dilates the blood vessels of the muscles. This process increases the flow of oxygen and nutrients to the muscles, helping to heal the damaged tissue and increase the elimination of carbon dioxide and metabolic waste.

Heat therapy will decrease stiffness, increase flexibility and improve overall feeling of comfort. Especially around the saddle and poll area on horses and lower back and shoulders on people.

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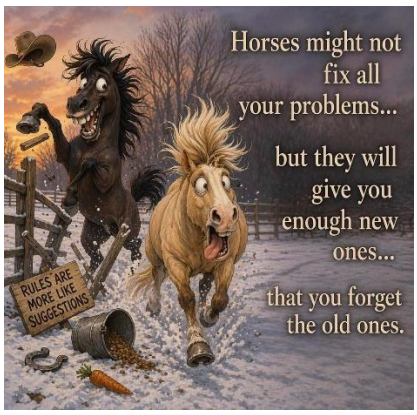
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New Items for October

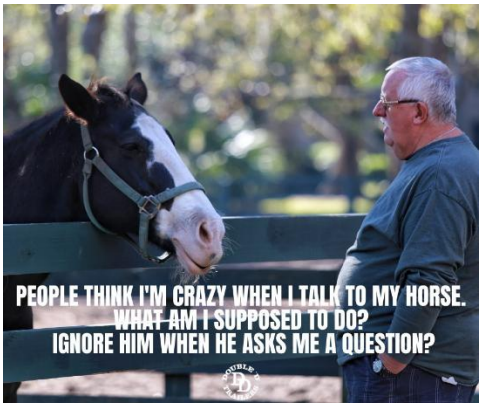


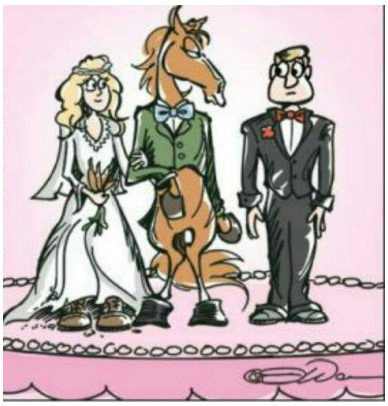


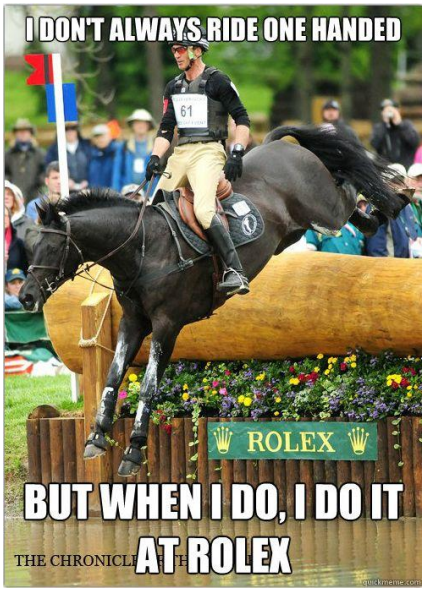








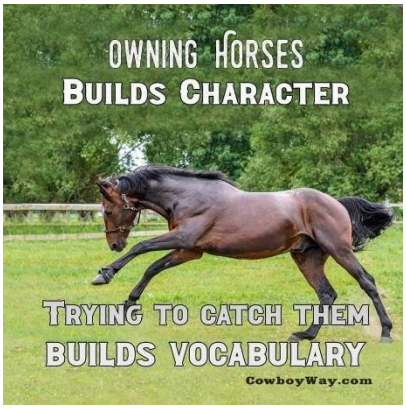




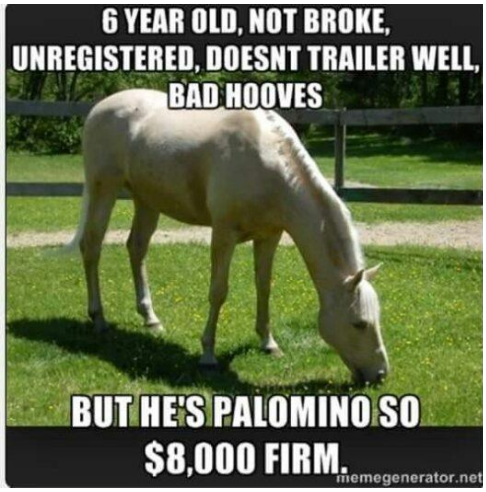


When you go to the tack store for a new hoof pick and your total is $279.65









horse: *takes off running*
other horse:





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New World Screwworm Confirmed in Texas Horse

September 10, 2026

This marks the first equine case of New World screwworm as part of the current outbreak.

On Sept. 10, the USDA confirmed New World screwworm (NWS) in a horse in Presidio County, Texas. According to the United States Equestrian Federation, NWS was found on the hind limb of a working ranch horse. This is the first equine case in the United States this century.

EDCC Health Watch is an Equine Network marketing program that utilizes information from the Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) to create and disseminate verified equine disease reports. The EDCC is an independent nonprofit organization that is supported by industry donations in order to provide open access to infectious disease information.

About New World Screwworm

New World screwworm (NWS) is not actually a worm, but the larvae of blow flies (*Cochliomyia hominivorax*) that feed on the living tissue of horses and other warm-blooded animals. Adult flies do not bite. Females lay their eggs in open wounds or mucous membranes, and even a tick bite can attract them.

Clinical signs include painful, rapidly growing wounds containing maggots; extensive tissue damage; foul odor; secondary bacterial infection; reduced appetite; and weight loss. Larvae in limb wounds can burrow into synovial structures such as tendon sheaths and joints.

Animal health officials eradicated NWS from the United States in the 1960s and pushed it back to Panama, but the parasite steadily marched north, and the USDA began reporting cases in early June 2026. Officials reported NWS in cattle, goats, sheep, and a dog before it was detected in a horse in early September 2026.

If you suspect New World screwworm, contact your veterinarian immediately. Veterinarians must report suspected cases to state animal health officials and the USDA. Affected horses need prompt examination and treatment, and larvae must not fall to the ground, where they can mature and continue the life cycle.



Nutrition Corner

Free Fecal Water Syndrome

One reason a horse might have manure soiling his rump and rear legs is free fecal water syndrome (FFWS). Alicia Long, DVM, of the University of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center School of Veterinary Medicine, in Kennett Square, explains how FFWS differs from diarrhea: "Diarrhea tends to be frequently passed loose or watery feces lacking in solid fecal matter. In contrast, a horse experiencing FFWS defecates a relatively solid pile of manure, which is then followed by wet feces or liquid. The liquid phase doesn't always come just at the end—it may also pass at the beginning of or during defecation."

FFWS is mostly just bothersome to owners, making it difficult to keep horses—especially show horses—clean. "There are not many significant effects to the horse," she says, "other than possible irritation or scalding of skin (dermatitis) from manure adhered to the hind limbs, tail, and perineal region around the anus. Some horses seem irritated while passing manure, likely due to fluid dripping on their legs.

Horses with FFWS often show no other clinical signs, appetite changes, differences in weight or body condition, or discomfort aside from irritation/tail-swishing when voiding fecal water, says Long. "The amount of water lost does not appear to be substantial enough to cause clinical dehydration," she adds.

What Might Cause FFWS?

Leaky Gut Syndrome: Leaky gut in horses results from altered intestinal permeability due to damage to tight junctions between intestinal cells that line the hindgut (the cecum and large colon)

Dental Health Veterinarians have often considered dental health to be a potential cause of FFWS. Higgins says excessive forage fiber length—1 inch or longer—is more difficult for hindgut microbes to ferment for appropriate digestion.

Intestinal Parasites: internal parasites are unlikely to be the biggest causative factor of FFWS."

Stress: Stress elicits a variety of health issues in horses. Stress, both physical and mental, affects the microbiome diversity of horses and may increase hindgut motility, with less time for processing of feed material and resorption of water.

WILDWOOD FARM AND TRIPLE CROWN FEEDS. Our partnership with Triple Crown began in 2014 through a promotion with the USEF encouraging farm members to compare their current feeding programs with Triple Crown products. We have found the TC products to be superior to other products primarily because of the EquiMix technology and the research support of a leading-edge team including independent representatives of Equine Universities, Medical clinics and top-level riders and trainers

From the 2009 Wildwood Farm Archives

BONNIE SPOOK



In the spring of 2009, we came across an ad on Craig's List that read "Need Gone – Deaf Paint Mare". We were intrigued.

The owner told us that they were moving out of the country and needed to find a home for Bonnie. She had once been a very competitive Western Pleasure horse and had had 3 babies to boot. But, about 3 years ago they noticed she didn't move her ears like she should, and they had her examined by their vet. Sure enough – she was deaf. It didn't seem to bother her, and she was well disciplined with tons of training. After consulting with our own vet, we decided to give her a try.

We observed that Bonnie was not bothered by much at all; other horses whinnying, the feed cart, the tractor – and she settled in nicely and went to work in our lesson and trail riding program. After 4 weeks we made the decision to keep her.

Born in 1989, Bonnie was 20 years old when she came to Wildwood Farm and she had Cushing's; so, she was not turned out on pasture but turned out in a paddock up by the main barn.

One day, about 3 months after she came to Wildwood Farm, our neighbors decided to clear-cut their property and all day trees were falling and chain saw sounds cut the air. Most of the horses were on edge, but we did not see any anxiety from Bonnie.

When it came time to turn her in, I offered to help and grabbed her and another mare from their paddocks and made my way to the barn. Just as we were passing the parking area, one of our boarders slammed the trunk of her car - and Bonnie Lost it. She bolted and took my shoulder with her – dislocating it in a fraction of a second. It wasn't the sound that disturbed her, it was the vibration. All day she had been feeling the vibration of the trees falling and that trunk was her last straw.

Sadly, we could not keep Bonnie in our riding program knowing she could react this way. We found her a home at a retirement farm in Wenatchee where she was cared for until she passed at age 24.

Libra – The Peaceful Pony (September 23 – October 22)



Libra
Sep 23 - Oct 22

Strengths: Fair. Trusting, Intellectual
Weaknesses: Indecisive, Grudgy, Meek
Around the Stable: With you on her back, she'll work extra hard to enjoy your laughter!

Charming with a desire to be liked, Libra horses are the flower children of the barn. A seeker of balance, they enjoy the company of horses and people alike.

Libra horses born will do whatever it takes to keep the peace, and you'll see them avoiding conflict in the herd whenever possible.

This amiable horse will enjoy intellectual and physical challenges. They are happy with every rider and have the patience and kindness to help the less experienced. These horses will go out of their way to please their human companions and expect nothing but fairness in return.

The Libra horse is quick to trust and conform to its surroundings, often realizing they have made a bad choice when it's too late. Reassuring music, affection, or a lavish soapy bubble bath can ease your Libra horse's raving emotions.



We celebrate these Birthdays in October!

Clara Beier October 24th

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Halifax, Nova Scotia

Sable Island

This crescent-shaped sliver of sand is a magical haven for a herd of feral horses.





Imagine an uninhabited island shaped like a string bean where feral horses roam free and you'll have a decent idea of Sable Island's odd reality.

Located about more than 180 miles southeast of Halifax, Nova Scotia, the island, which is nearly 25 miles long and made entirely of sand, is a low-lying stretch of land in the middle of the ocean. Due to the island's low profile and isolated placement, the oversized sandbar also has a long legacy of shipwrecks thereby earning the island the moniker, "Graveyard of the Atlantic."

In addition to shipwrecks, Sable Island is known for its population of some 400 feral horses that have lived there ever since their ancestors were introduced in the 18th century. In addition to the Sable Island Ponies, harbor and grey seals breed on the island’s shores without any human interference.

Although this is one location where tourists don’t flock to, many are becoming fascinated with the island’s mythical description and interest in the site is growing. Luckily the island and its horses are protected by the Canadian government as a national park. At the moment, only a small number of scientists live on the island to study more about the island’s flora and fauna. Any potential visitors must actually clear their visit with the Canadian military.

Not even wild horses could drag travelers to the island without permission. The island has an odd mix of two climate categories, humid continental, and the milder end of sub-polar oceanic, due to Gulf Stream influence, summers are also kept below 75 degrees Fahrenheit almost always by the cold Labrador current. One could compare its climate to that of a coastal environment in maybe a country like Denmark.

In the early 20th century, many trees were brought from Ottawa to plant experimentally back before anyone cared or was aware of what this could do. Only a single Scots Pine (a native of northern and alpine Europe and western Siberia) has survived and grows in the research station as a pathetic-looking sort of natural bonsai, dwarfed by the elements. Brackish pools exist in the interior of the island where the ocean is about one mile away on either side, and are home to a unique species of sponge. Despite the relatively mild temperatures, the island is often subject to snowfall as heavy as it is on the much colder mainland, due to high atmospheric moisture and heavy precipitation.

The Kerry Bog Pony





The Kerry bog Pony almost became extinct. By 1994 there were only 20 ponies left in the whole of Ireland.

The Kerry Bog Pony is quite small - almost like a Shetland Pony - about 10 or 11 hands high, with a distinctive dish or curved face, rather like an Arab. The Kerry Bog Pony is commonly found in chestnut, grey, and bay with a black mane and tail.

To establish whether or not these ponies are truly survivors of a rare breed, the stallion Flashy Fox was tested for genetic markers by Wetherbys Ireland and was satisfactorily blood-typed in 1994. Now the Kerry Bog Pony Society has been formed.

Traditionally these little ponies have been used for bringing out peat, i.e. turf, from the bogs. The original method of transporting was in baskets placed on crudely constructed wheel-less slides, which consisted of two shafts made from the holly or birch trees which grow in the bogs. Later, small, wheeled carts came into use, particularly in the less boggy areas. The turf was kerry thrown into baskets and transported by the ponies for use as domestic fuel in houses.

It was about 10 years ago that Mr. John Mulvihill of Glengeigh, Co. Kerry first acquired a little chestnut stallion and recognized it almost immediately as a Kerry Bog Pony. The grandson of that pony is Flashy Fox whose dam is known as Purple Heather. Other stallions along with the Flashy Fox, Old Peat and the Bogman, are the nucleus of the breeding herd in Kerry.

To symbolize the pony's link with the heritage of the bog, these ponies are named after bog flora and fauna. As well as those named above The Badger Queen, Bog Cotton, the Brave Badger, Bog Oak, are just some of the names.





Cont'd from page 1

He created them all in 15 months. Once as he was sculpting them, he grouped a bunch in a semi-circle around him. There are no stallions — "too sensational or Hollywood-ish."

Dolan arranged with Dean Folksvord to put the horses on Wheat Montana's property. Installing the horses a crew used a jackhammer, long thick stakes welded to the horse's hooves, and a tractor to move the sculptures into place. In the spring poppies and blue flax will decorate the meadow. However, the horses will be beautiful no matter the season. Definitely a destination milestone.

The Artist

Jim Dolan is a metal sculptor based out of Bozeman, MT. For the past 40 years, Jim has created over 170 large-scale public pieces world-wide as well as hundreds of private pieces. Jim's style of welding steel and other metals into realistic representations is unique among sculptors. He is particularly well known for his western wildlife, the realism of which has been evidenced by live wildlife mistaking Jim's sculptures for part of the herd. These pieces have ranged from table-top size to a golden eagle with a 36-foot wingspan, installed in Osaka, Japan.

Horse Heist

But some of the horses did briefly leave that spot, albeit against their will.
Shortly after the multi-day ordeal of hauling the herd to the hill in 2013 and situating each horse in place with the help of a bunch of heavy equipment and jackhammers, three horses went missing.

Word quickly spread and thanks to the community's vigilance, the horses turned up days later about 10 miles away. After some repairs, the horses were returned to their hillside home.

Even if the "real goofball" of a thief didn't make it far, the story did — newspapers in Europe even reported on the horse heist — and that helped raise the profile of Bleu Horses. In the decade-plus that the horses have been hanging around that hillside, they've become so beloved that Dolan made smaller replicas to commemorate them and is currently making even more.

"It's pretty well-known now, which is cool," Dolan said.







“Trust” Oil on Panel by artist Michael Dumas