

# Horsemen's Association of Millstone Township

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Winter 2006

## Stroke of Luck ~ Equine Massage Therapy Presentation by Michelle Aaronson

~By Carol Strommen

Yes, equine therapy does work!

Having had my own personal experience with the benefits of equine massage, I can say first hand it does work. I have to admit, at first I was a bit skeptical and I didn't understand how effective equine massage therapy can be. After seeing how effective it was in helping my horse get through colic and decreasing the severity of it, I am a firm believer in equine massage therapy.

About 3 months ago, Shelly and I had planned to do an early ride in the Assunpink.

When I arrived at the farm, I noticed my horse was not his usual perky self. It was before his feeding time, so I had planned to give him a little grain and do some farm chores before the long ride. To my surprise, he just looked at his grain and didn't touch it. I took him out of his pasture and put him in his favorite grassy spot and still he just stood there looking very depressed. I immediately called my vet, who was very far away at the time and would not be at my farm for quite some time. While waiting for help to arrive, I walked my horse, Sage around the farm slowly. He did not want to move. In fact, he was trying to go down every time I stopped. Shelly came over to help and started to apply massage therapy on Sage. We used a combo of walking him with 10 minute intervals of massage in between for an hour. It was amazing to see the

change in my horse's profile and disposition as he slowly started to move with ease and without hesitation. He even tried to eat some of the grass, whereas before he was just standing there with his head hanging low without moving an inch. By the time the vet came, my horse was on his way to full recovery. Don't misunderstand me, I am not saying the massage is a replacement for the vet. What I am saying is there was a definite improvement in my horse as a result of the massage therapy. He still needed additional help when my vet came.

Before this experience, I had thought the benefits of massage were overstated and maybe just coincidental, but now I firmly believe in its effectiveness. During Shelly Aaronson's presentation at the HAMT meeting she explained how massage can decrease the severity of colic. Whether it was because of increased circulation that helped the digestive system function properly, or just some TLC, the massage definitely helped my horse. It was very interesting to hear her explain how all the different systems; muscular, digestive and skeletal are affected by massage. I learned how muscle tone, stimulation, circulation, relaxation and flexibility are improved through massage. I sat there thinking I want the massage, forget the horse! Only Manny got to have that opportunity, with his little

demo as a horse ... a very inquisitive one at that. In conclusion, if you want your equine athlete to perform at his/her top level with a pleasing disposition, I recommend equine massage therapy. Don't be as skeptical as I was, you will see an improvement in your horse's performance and well-being. It does work!



*Shelly and her horse at Rick's*

Shelly also did a seminar at Rick's Saddle Shop on October 29<sup>th</sup> for a group of twenty participants. She did a short visual presentation and then demonstrated her techniques on her equine subject, Mojoe, and of course he stole the show. He can schmooze with the best of them.

Shelly would like to thank Kate F for bringing Mojoe to Rick's, and Carol S for taking the pictures for her stretching display, and Valerie P for her brochure holders, and her family for their unending support.\*\*\*

## Allentown Mane Street Horse Parade

~ By Kim Mooney

On Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, horses from throughout the state gathered to hoof-it across a 3-mile parade route through Allentown to celebrate its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over 120 equines of various shapes, sizes, colors, and breeds strutted past the crowds, some carrying costumed riders, some pulling fancy carriages with local "dignitaries" on board, and some being led by their human companions. All equine, all beautiful.



*Mounted State Troopers Escorting Us*

About twenty HAMT members participated, many of them wearing their Horse Awareness Sign t-shirts. The weather was perfect and the parade was a huge success. Several HAMT members played a role in organizing the event, selling t-shirts, and manning the HAMT information booth. To avoid offending anyone by omitting their name, I won't mention any ... but you know who you are. Thank you!

Several articles and photos have been published, so I won't even attempt to expand on them. Check out Jane Meggitt's article in *Horse News*, as well as other articles and photos in the *Trenton Times* and the *Asbury Park Press*. \*\*\*

## Team Penning 2006

~ By Valerie Palluzzi & Frosty

TEAM PENNING "YOU CAN DO IT!"

From beginners to experts, a good day was had by all at Riataman Ranch for team penning. A group of HAMT riders and friends participated in a Team Penning Day on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup>. Carol Strommen organized the event and the Weather Gods gave us a warm, sunny 70 degree riding day (yes, it was November!). Our host Juan was gracious enough to pick up the horses that had no means of getting there (mine included). After getting tacked up and ready, Juan introduced horses and riders to the cows. He spent a great deal of time going over the finer points of herding cows. (He should have had a talk with some of those cows-especially #9). We broke into groups of three to get us and our horses used to the cows and the way to herd them into the small three-sided corral. After a few passes with three in a group we were eager to go two at a time, which is the way it is truly done. We all got to take turns herding cows. We switched partners to make it more exciting and fair (we just needed those cows to feel the same way-especially #9). We broke for lunch, which Riataman Ranch provided for us. So after a rest and full belly of pizza and drink (not alcohol-just water and soda ... though if it was your turn to get the #9 cow-you NEEDED a drink). We then got a little competitive.

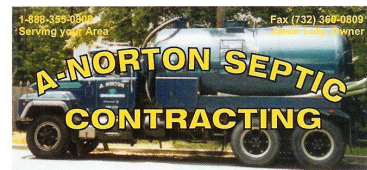
We went into teams of two to now be judged by the timer. In team penning the timer is not your friend. You and your partner (get a good one with a good horse) have to herd a specific cow (only one cow) into the small corral in the shortest amount of time. With that we all got serious and all our former training and lessons came down to this part of the day. Ribbons and awards for the fastest times! After several passes with different teams, Juan tallied the

scores and handed out the ribbons. (I didn't get one, although I thought I did real well especially since it was my horse's first time at this. He thinks cow #9 had something to do with this). We all had a good time, smiling all the way home. Carol will organize another day, weather permitting. Until then, the Riataman Ranch does have team penning on certain days. Call Juan at 732-919-1334 or check out the website at [www.RiatamanRanch.homestead.com](http://www.RiatamanRanch.homestead.com) Team Penning "You can do it" I did and had a blast!!!! \*\*\*

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## Tips & Tidbits

### ~ Winter Hoof-Care Tips

**Think ahead.** Meet with farrier to discuss any adjustments to the shoeing/trimming schedule.

**Eliminate hazards.** Remove anything that can be an under-snow hazard to a loose horse. Fence off areas where water collects and inspect fences.

**Create safe paths.** Decide in advance which barn and pasture areas you'll plow and where snow piles will go. Chart safest paths between stalls and turnout area.

**Stock up on traction aids.** Keep supply of shavings, old carpets and sand on hand to spread on icy areas.

**Increase turnout time.** Allow horses maximum time out to get used to footing changes.

**Check blanket fit.** Make sure horse's blanket fits properly and straps are snug. Remove excess strap length.

**Plow turnout.** Plow a small turnout area for your horses if area is accessible and snow is deep.

**Limit sand and salt use.** Use loose sand and salt for traction only on pathways NOT in your horse's turnout area. If horse ingests sand and salt grains, the horse could suffer *colic*.

**Let pastern hair grow.** Pastern hair protects the hoof head in winter.

Visit [www.standardbredpleasurehorse.org](http://www.standardbredpleasurehorse.org) for more "tips & tidbits"!

~ **Horsehair jewelry** website – custom made jewelry and barrettes made with your horse's mane & tail hair [www.suzannestorms.com](http://www.suzannestorms.com)

~ **West Nile Virus** information link <http://www.state.nj.us/agriculture/westnile.htm>

~ **Country Supply** Country Care Program will donate 5% of your purchase back to HAMT [www.countrysupply.com](http://www.countrysupply.com)  
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## Classified Ads

Classified ads are free to HAMT members. Business card size ads and classified ads for non-members are \$5.00 per issue, or \$10.00 per year. Please submit all advertising requests via e-mail to [HAMTNews@aol.com](mailto:HAMTNews@aol.com).

There are no classified ads at this time.

## Reminders

~ Don't forget to purchase your permit to use the bridle trails in the 14 wildlife management areas in NJ (i.e., Assunpink) for 2007. If you are stopped while riding in these areas and you don't have your permit on you, you will be fined! Call 609-259-2132 or stop by the Assunpink.

~ **T-shirts** with the **Horse Awareness Speed Limit Sign** on the back are available for purchase. The cost for HAMT members is \$10 for adult sizes and \$9 for youth sizes. Non-members may purchase shirts without the HAMT logo on the front for \$12 for adult and \$10 for youth. Please see Kim Mooney at HAMT meetings or e-mail her at [HAMTNews@aol.com](mailto:HAMTNews@aol.com) to purchase a shirt. They make a great Christmas gift for your horsie friends!

~ Watch for news regarding the newly formed **Manure Management Committee!** If you'd like to be part of this committee, please contact any HAMT board member or officer.

~ For trail ride schedule please contact the Trail Ride Committee Chairperson.

## Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, December 19** – HAMT Christmas/Holiday Party and Elections for 2007 Officers & Board Members – 7:00pm, Clarksburg Community Center

**Tuesday, January 16** – HAMT Meeting – 7:00pm, Clarksburg Community Center

**Tuesday, February 20** – HAMT Meeting – 7:00pm, Clarksburg Community Center

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