



## Second Chance Ranch Newsletter V. 2-12

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### Eastern Traditions That Can Improve Your Horsemanship

Midge

Most trainers recommend that riders do stretches and strength training at the gym to improve riding form and stamina. But did you know that Eastern practices such as yoga and tai chi can do the same, plus improve your balance, “centeredness”, and confidence in the saddle?

I took a zen yoga/tai chi class many years ago for fun. During this past year, when I was looking for a constructive way to deal with stress, I began practicing tai chi at home. While it certainly helped me deal with stress, I also noticed a change when I rode my horse.

Both tai chi and yoga focus on a deep connection to one’s “center” – both the physical center of gravity and your spiritual/emotional center. While mounted on my forward young Arabian, I tried recalling the sensation of centeredness that I felt when doing tai chi routines. Immediately, tension was released from my body and I settled into a natural balance point on my horse. I was able to achieve greater relaxation and balance than I had with other techniques, like mental imagery, because my body had developed “muscle memory” from doing tai chi. My mind also went to a place of deep calm, which allowed me to stay relaxed and confident during our training session.

Although yoga evolved as a spiritual tradition, and tai chi as a “soft” form of martial arts, their key elements are the same. *Balance* is developed through practicing movements and postures, *proper breathing* achieves relaxation and “centeredness”, and *meditation* increases mental awareness and focus. All of these elements are vital to effective horsemanship. One of the basic principles of yoga, *asana*, literally means “good seat.” *Asana* is the base from which all other movements arise. How often has your trainer told you that your seat is the foundation of your ride?

In addition, the movements and postures of yoga and tai chi increase muscle strength and flexibility simultaneously. In Western workouts, you have to lift weights and stretch separately to achieve the same results.

As I have said, yoga and tai chi are also excellent ways to counteract stress. Personally, I have a hard time finding the motivation to go to the gym after a long day at work or school. However, I can pop in my tai chi DVD at home and spend as little as fifteen minutes de-stressing and getting a great workout at the same time.

I recommend tai chi or yoga as a great all-around life enhancing supplement to anyone, especially busy horse people!

### ~ Paul’s Corner ~ ON CHILDREN...

If anything makes a child thirstier than going to bed, it is the knowledge that his parents have gone to bed too.

Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them.

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**IT’S NOT TOO LATE!  
SHOP NOW ON OUR ONLINE STORES  
FOR YOUR HOLIDAY GIFTS. ALL  
PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE HORSES IN  
OUR CARE. PLEASE VISIT OUR  
HOMEPAGE –  
[WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/SCRRESCUE](http://WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/SCRRESCUE)  
AND CLICK ON THE LINKS LISTED  
THERE TO GIVE US THE HIGHEST  
PERCENTAGE RETURN.  
IF YOU SHOP “IGIVE.COM”, LIST  
“SECOND CHANCE RANCH EQUINE  
RESCUE” AS YOUR CHARITY OF  
CHOICE**

Recently, we received an email from a generous woman who wanted to plan a party to benefit SCR – apparently, the woman wanted to teach her daughter the value of charity. Here is an excerpt from the email:

“To Whom It May Concern:

I was just visiting your site on the internet, and you've solved a problem for myself and my daughter. Let me explain.

For several years now, I have been preparing my daughter for her 8th birthday. I've made a deal with her that she can have a party for her birthday and invite as many friends and relatives as her heart desires. The exchange is that, her written invitations will read as follows: "In lieu of gifts, my daughter asks that each guest bring a check or money order made out to \_\_\_\_ [name of charity here] \_\_\_\_\_. After the party, we will mail all the donations to the charity, in my daughter's name."

Now, I've been searching for a charity that she might like, and she is like so many other little girls out there -- horse crazy. I grew up on horseback, have come from a ranching family, and horses have always been a huge part of our lives.

I came up with this birthday party idea when my daughter was born. I wanted to teach her the value of charity from a young age.

Her birthday is April 15th. Your web address is on my computer and in my address book. I think we've found our charity for our very first charity birthday party.

Thank you all so very much for what you do. My daughter and I wish everyone at SCR all the best this Christmas and next year.

Warmest Regards...”

**WE THINK THIS IS A GREAT IDEA!**

Not only does it teach a valuable lesson, but it helps the animals that cannot help themselves.

If you or anyone you know would be interested in putting together a “charity party”, please contact Amy at SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com

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**WE REALIZE THAT THERE ARE A LOT OF GREAT PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO WOULD LOVE TO HELP THESE ANIMALS, BUT SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE THE TIME TO VOLUNTEER. THE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO GET YOU INVOLVED IN THE CARE AND WELL-BEING OF THE HORSES, WITHOUT THE COMMITMENT OF TIME AND LABOR.**

**SPONSORING AN EQUINE GIVES YOU AN OPEN\_ENDED INVITATION TO VISIT YOUR “FUZZY KID”, A DETAILED HISTORY OF THE ANIMAL (AS MUCH HISTORY AS WE HAVE ON THE EQUINE) AND UPDATES ON HOW YOUR HORSE IS DOING. YOUR MONEY GOES DIRECTLY TO THE CARE OF THE HORSE YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO SPONSOR.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM OR TO MAKE A DONATION ONLINE, VISIT OUR WEBSITE**  
[WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/SCRRESCUE](http://WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/SCRRESCUE)

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"When your horse follows you without being asked, when he rubs his head on yours, and when you look at him and feel a tingle down your spine...you know you are loved."

**John Lyons**

"I have seen things so beautiful they have brought tears to my eyes. Yet none of them can match the gracefulness and beauty of a horse running free."

**Author Unknown**

"Riding is a partnership. The horse lends you his strength, speed and grace, which are greater than yours. For your part you give him your guidance, intelligence and understanding which are greater than his. Together you can achieve a richness that neither alone can."

**Lucy Rees**

**How many horses does it take to change a light bulb?**

This list was found on the internet, along with other equine humor at:

<http://jmatt.net/ElecEq/bulbs.html>

Warmblood: Light bulb? What light bulb?

Any foal: The sun is shining, the day is young, we've got our whole lives ahead of us, and you're inside worrying about a stupid burned-out light bulb?

Thoroughbred: Just one. And I'll rewire the barn while I'm at it.

Shetland pony: I can't reach the stupid lamp!

Saddlebred: Sorry, just had my hooves and mane done.

Morgan: Oh, oh, me, me! Pleeeeeze let me change the light bulb! Can I? Can I?

Quarter Horse: Let him do it, you can pet me while he's busy.

Trakhener: Light bulb? Light bulb? That thing I just ate was a light bulb?

Akhal-Teke: Zero! ATs aren't afraid of the dark!

Holsteiner: How DARE that light bulb burn out!! How DARE you ask me to change it!! OH!! [Flouncing off]

Appaloosa: No, don't change it. If it's dark, maybe no one will see me raiding the feed room.

Arab: That's what we pay the help for. I'll just chew on his shirttail while he's at it.

Connemara: We'll just be after havin' a nip of the Bushmill's, we will, and then we'll not be noticin' the light.

Andalusian: Let the maid do it, I need to go roll in the mud.

Clydesdale: Och, and ye'll just be usin' up the lectricity, ye' will, better tae use a wee bit of candle ... better yet tae not waste either and just gae tae sleep when the sun gaes doon ... electricity is verra dear.

NSH: [fidgeting all the while] Lights?

Lights? Where? Do you want me to pose?

This is my good side ... no wait, let me get my mane straight... no wait, this angle is all wrong. No, wait, maybe this is my good side. Do you want dramatic ... or bold ... or maybe sensitive ...

Shire: (Yawn) Who cares?

**FEATURED HORSE:**

**Bongo**

Bongo is a chestnut Arab/Paint gelding, approximately 24 years old. Bongo came to us with three other horses, but was by far in the worst condition.

Bongo's biggest problem was that due to neglect, old age, and lack of some teeth, he was severely underweight. Furthermore, his feet were in bad shape and he was not stable enough to stand on three legs for the farrier to help him.

Once Bongo was in our care, we immediately moved him to one of our Monson, MA foster farms. That foster barn is the home of one of our board members, certified massage therapist Lee Williams. We wanted Bongo to have the one on one individual attention of a private farm. Furthermore, around SCR, Lee's barn is known as "the fat farm" and we were confident that while in Lee's care, Bongo would put weight on quickly and safely.

Upon arrival at Lee's barn, she said that Bongo was so weak he wouldn't make any noise. All of his energy was put into surviving. Lee started him on a mix of Vintage Senior, hay stretch pellets, and a 10/10 sweet feed, all soaked to a mash due to his missing teeth. Bongo gets 5 meals per day, free access to water (of which he drinks a lot!) and although he cannot eat regular hay too well, she gives him a little bit to keep him busy. She says that on this regimen he has put some weight on and his coat is improving.

Although Bongo is still thin, he is now in stable condition. He now has the energy to "whinny" for his grain every day, and call to his "girlfriends" – the mares on Lee's property – over the fence.

SCR is looking for a companion only home for Bongo. If you or anyone you know is looking for a companion, please contact Amy at [SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com](mailto:SCREquineRescue@yahoo.com)

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*SCR WOULD LIKE TO GIVE SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DONATED TIME AND SUPPLIES TO AID IN BONGO'S RECOVERY. WE CERTAINLY COULD NOT HAVE GOTTEN HIM BACK TO A STABLE HEALTHY WEIGHT WITHOUT YOUR HELP!*