

NEWSLETTER & UPCOMING EVENTS

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WORKING WITH THE FEARFUL HORSE

MEET "KEEPER"

Keeper is a 2 year old colt that had been a rescue from a PMU ranch in another state - The ranch had gone bankrupt so there were several colts and fillies that weren't being properly cared for.

He was brought to a professional training facility in California as were a couple of the other colts and fillies from that same ranch - the others flourished in their training, but Keeper was not moving forward in the program - just like people, some horses are more confident while others are more fearful and sensitive.

We offered to take him on - we were interested in him for a Reining Cow Horse prospect. I love working with the Fearful Horse - very rewarding. Once you get rid of their fear - they are incredibly trusting, grateful and dedicated to you as their leader. They feel safe with you and look for your guidance.

I wasn't prepared for the level of fear he had. Although he had been saddled several times - he would bolt and buck in a frenzy - I kept him on a lead line so that I could intervene to keep him safe. He would jump up and rear and fall over backwards, scramble to his feet and do it again, get to his feet and throw himself down on his side. All this time I was attached to him by his halter and lead and I all I could do is guide him in a different direction to keep
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Letting the saddle pad fall off until he handled it calmly on a loose lead



Moving the saddle until he was calm



Shaking the stirrups



WORKING WITH THE FEARFUL HORSE

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... him from landing on the round pen. Once the strings of the saddle touched his rump or legs, he would fire off his hind legs like a pair of guns. He would just check out. I wasn't sure I could fix this or if it was even humane to try. We decided we would try and lay him down.

LAYING DOWN A HORSE

There is a reason for laying down a horse - and its only something we do if we think it will make a difference in the horse. There is always a possibility that the horse may get hurt, especially one like Keeper with his level of fear.

The horse is so vulnerable when he is asked to lay down - they think they are going to die - not get hurt - but Die. In order to get a handle on his fear - we wanted him to experience his worst fear - and Survive. So we laid him down and once he was down I laid on top of him rubbing him everywhere I couldn't touch before, his flanks, hind legs, belly - everywhere. He held his breath and after what seemed forever - he finally exhaled. We kept him down for about 30 minutes with me on top of him until his breathing was normal. When we let him up - we turned him out in the arena to relax and he laid down and stayed down for awhile. We turned him out with our geldings and he laid down out there - he kept yawning which is a release of stress and then he would lay down again. This was another great sign because as long as he was here - we never saw him lay down. His worst fear came to pass and he survived. Laying down was now safe.

We left him out in the pasture with our geldings for a couple of months to get schooled by the herd on how to be a horse. At first - the geldings wouldn't have anything to do with him - they kept him at a distance - they sensed his abnormal fear level and rejected him.



Ground driving Keeper - letting the ropes touch his hind legs



Dragging the tarp alongside him ...

Getting him prepared to drag it behind him



WORKING WITH THE FEARFUL HORSE

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But gradually they let him in - the areas where he was most sensitive to touch - his hind quarters and hind legs - the geldings went for those specific areas - pushing him, nipping him - they desensitized him. Once he was fully integrated into the herd which took a couple of months - we felt he was ready to work again.

The combination of the laying down and letting our geldings teach him to be a horse made a huge difference. Now we can go back to training - although we were going to back up several steps. Instead of the saddle we worked him in the surcingle until he was completely calm - it took a week. Then we graduated to the saddle. Not one more buck when saddled and sending him off - no more rearing and throwing himself backwards, no more checking out and bolting in a panic. He has learned how to take pressure - pressure of the cinch tightening around his girth, the stirrups bouncing off his sides, and the strings of the saddle touching his rump. I can ground drive him, letting the ropes touch his hind legs and he doesn't kick out, I can drag a tarp, I can send him over the barrel saddled and he doesn't come out bucking. He is learning he will survive all of these new maneuvers and when he is calm - the reward is huge. Lots of breaks, lots of time and letting him soak - lots of rewards. Training takes time, backing up in the training to build confidence, and giving them the breaks they need to soak. Looks like we will be riding soon. Looks like Keeper has a home.

Will keep you posted on his progress.

I wish you all safe riding!



Getting Keeper to allow me to work from above him and put some weight on his back



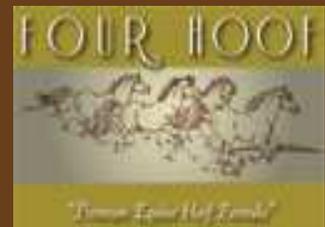
Getting off and on Keeper from both sides

Lessons & Clinics

Ultimate Camp Clinic

5-day clinic designed to give you the time you need to spend with your horse and improve and take your horsemanship skills to the next level. Learn what effective ground work can do to strengthen your bond, earn respect and gain control - we don't do anything from the ground that isn't designed to benefit us in the saddle. We go from the round pen to the arena - learn how to get that speed control, how to ground tie, learn to balance with your seat, control of the 5 body parts, stops and more. Then we go out on trail and take what we have learned and put it to the test - learn how to fix the jigger, the buddy sour mount and more.

Limited to 4 riders only
875.00 per rider
Monday thru Friday 9-4
Our Temecula Facility - you can stay on property if you have a trailer with living quarters



Got Cows? We do...



Working your horse on cows is an excellent training tool and gives your horse a reason for the training- the turning on the hindquarters, stopping off your seat, etc. In addition to taking the horses out on trail and getting them used to different terrain, hills, ravines, etc., working in the round pen, teaching them to drag, jump barrels, and emotionally handle tarps, and then to the arena to work on speed control, loping, lead departures, etc., cattle is another wonderful tool to add to your training program.

Lessons:

1 hour - \$50.00

1/2 day lesson - including cow work - \$125.00

We are available for full day private lesson - your date and time - call for additional information.

Sheryl Lynde

**John and Josh Lyons
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Rick Hoffman

AI Dunning Accredited Trainer

951-764-2274

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NEWS

Rick took another first with high scores in the reining work and cow work on Nu Ring of Cash owned by Troy and Kari Smith at the SCRCHA (Southern California Reined Cow Horse Association) Show held at Casner's Equestrian Center. I showed Machs Peppy Lena and took a first as well.

Kaylie Mason - 11 years old and a student of Ricks competed in her first event - an Obstacle Course put on by Stacy Kuhns - Redshank Riders. Kaylie brought home a third place ribbon and a smile. She overcame fear in her first run in Youth, signed up for Novice and did a better run and improved. Her Mom - Michelle also competed in the same event - it was a great place to build confidence and see what we need to work on. Going to events like this builds confidence and shows you what you need to work on - it really improves your level of horsemanship. Really proud of both Michelle and Kaylie.



FOR SALE

Skips Thunder Jack

Jack is a 9 year old Buckskin gelding that is double registered – Foundation and AQHA. He is 16.3 hands and stout. Very kind temperament – very trusting. I have ridden him out on trail by himself and with about 7 other riders where we all lope off in different directions and he has been a gentleman. He is good going out and coming home. We have him in a pasture with our other geldings including a couple of yearlings and there has never been a problem. I have ridden him in one of our clinics – and he did great. I've exposed him to cows and again – he was a good boy. His talent is trail riding – just a good ole trail riding horse.

We are asking \$3,500 to the right home – the best rider would be at an intermediate level.