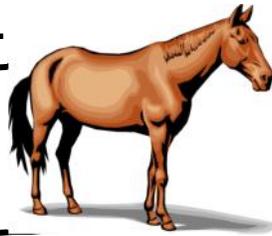


Notes from....



## Serrano Creek Ranch Equestrian Center

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Since the stable began selling feed, compost, etc., it seems that the perfect (at least in my mind!) accounting system is breeding some confusion. Before, in order to give ample notice of the upcoming month's charges, we'd post the next month's charges late in the prior month. This gave plenty of time to complete the billing and mail it out early. The schedule generally went something like this:

- 1<sup>st</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> Changes posted on account.
- 24<sup>th</sup> Boarding charges for the upcoming month posted.
- 25<sup>th</sup> Bill generated and sent.
- 1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> Board Due.

In order to get the bill to show the charges for the upcoming month, we use the 1<sup>st</sup> as the statement date to generate the bill. But remember this was a trick because the day we ran the statements was not the 1<sup>st</sup>, but actually the 25<sup>th</sup>. With the numerous sales (timothy, compost, wire, etc.) that now take place throughout the month, there is a reporting gap between when your bill is generated (25<sup>th</sup>) and the artificial statement date of the 1<sup>st</sup>. To a rational mind, the balance on your bill states that the balance due as of the 1<sup>st</sup> is \$XX and that is what you pay. You pay the amount, and then next month you find out that you have a previous balance due. Wait a \*^!#%! minute you say, I paid my board bill in full, how can I have a balance due?

That's a very good question, and worthy of a solution. Part of the historical reason for using the 25<sup>th</sup> is back then all bills were sent through regular mail. With holidays, Sundays, etc., there could be as much as a four-day delay. Now with the majority receiving their bills via e-mail, that time lag is no longer a problem. Therefore we'll be posting the next month's boarding charges later in the month. This means that you will be getting your bill a few days later, but this will give time for

more of the charges to be posted in the correct month. If you receive your bill via e-mail, you'll be getting your bill near the time you would have received it under the old mailing program.

Secondly any charges from the time we prepare the bill and the end of the month will now be posted on the following month on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Therefore you might see timothy bill for two days in a row. This is because you actually received the first bale on the 28<sup>th</sup>, but that wasn't posted until the 2<sup>nd</sup>; then you received another bale on the 3<sup>rd</sup> which shows up on the 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Also you might have ordered wire, stall mats, or something else before the 28<sup>th</sup>. But because it takes time for the work order to wind its way back to the office after the completion of the work, the actual charges may be billed in the following month. Statements will be run for a start period of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the month. The previous balance shown on the current statement will now correspond to the prior month's balance due. Though this isn't a perfect system, at least we have eliminated the gap where mysterious charges appear with no explana-

Whenever large groupings of single species are formed, the opportunity for diseases increases exponentially. Whether its corn fields, preschool children, hospitals, or horses, increasing the density allows parasites, viruses, etc. to jump from one host to another because they are close. This is because infectious parasites need the environment of the host to survive, not the outside world. Greater distances between hosts means that the parasite must overcome more challenges to survive until it reaches the next host. For example a cold virus can live outside of the human body for 6 hours. If you're alone on a mountain top, and then sneeze, the chances of the expelled virus finding another human (host) are very remote, and that virus will die. On the other hand, sneeze in a crowded subway, and that virus has an excellent chance to make it to another host.

Public schools require students be vaccinated to gain admission. For example, Irvine Unified School District requires a child be vaccinated against: Polio, Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Hepatitis B, Chicken Pox, and Tuberculosis. How serious is the District about these? Their slogan is

**NO SHOTS, NO SCHOOL!**

[http://www.iusd.org/education\\_services/health\\_services/Immunizations.htm](http://www.iusd.org/education_services/health_services/Immunizations.htm)

There is the joke about the man that sells his services of keeping elephants out of the a neighborhood. The urbanite begs off saying services are not required for there are no elephants in Manhattan. The con artist's reply is that is because up to now, he has performed his services so well. The same response is true with vaccinations. Why should I vaccinate when there are no "elephants?" But unlike the joke, there are elephants even if you don't see them.

Annually there are 300,000 deaths from whooping cough. Despite the availability of a vaccine, whooping cough is one of the leading causes of vaccine preventable deaths world-wide. In 1974, Japan had a successful vaccination program. That year only 393 cases were reported in the entire country, and there were no deaths. But then rumors began to spread that the whooping cough vaccination was no longer needed, and by 1976 only 10% of infants were getting vaccinated. In 1979 Japan suffered a major epidemic, with more than 13,000 cases of whooping cough and 41 deaths. In 1981 the government began vaccinating, and the number of cases dropped considerably. For those 41, they died not just from being unvaccinated, but from all those other infants that could have broken the chain that help spread the disease that allowed the virus to reach the 41. Vaccinations change hospitable hosts to inhospitable hosts, and break the communicability of the disease.

Serrano, like all concentrations of hosts, is an ideal setting for outbreaks. But we have been fortunate because of our strong vaccination monitoring policies. The "contract" is that as you vaccinate your horse, you trust others are doing the same. In a sense, each horse is a wall to preventing communicability. The only reason that trust works with contracts is that ultimately there is enforcement of the terms of the contract if it is not followed. In society we have law enforcement and the courts. At Serrano we have Susie. Being the vaccination police is not one of the appeals of her job.

For the 95% that somehow are able to regularly and effortlessly vaccinate their horses and provide documentation, she is very grateful. For that small minority that is oppositional, Susie endures more than her share of abuse. For these laggards, Susie sends multiple notices. Responses, if any, run the gambit of, "I took care of that", "oh, you call the vet", to "I don't authorize anyone to touch my horse", "your policy is wrong". This effort will go on for months. Eventually we vaccinate horses, and things really blow. "I won't pay because I didn't authorize", "you're a bitch", etc.

Just in case there is any confusion remaining; all horses are required to be vaccinated per the policy of the stable. The stable does provide a courtesy notice for the convenience of the boarder. If after 30 days the horse is not vaccinated, the stable will vaccinate the horse as per the boarding agreement. If you were given notice, it is your responsibility to vaccinate and provide documentation. Unsure if the documentation was received? It seems that a follow up e-mail, letter, or phone call just might be a reasonable action.

Here's the hard nose part. Ultimately if one disagrees with the boarding contract, they have the option of going to a facility that has no vaccination policy. Even in these hard times, I'd rather lose a few horses who disagree with value of vaccinations, than to jeopardize the health of the 95% who follow good health practices. If a school district can deny an education to children who choose to remain unvaccinated, then I feel that I'm on

safe ground denying boarding. As harsh as it seems, going forward our slogan is

## NO SHOTS, NO STALL!

We have changed our barn cleaning schedule to the following:

Wednesdays- every barn stall to receive 4 bales of shavings.

Thursdays – Tuesdays barns cleaned of manure and urine, no shavings added.

In the past there was some confusion as to when shavings were added, and if the stable was providing its portion. Now with the standardized date, all the stable employees will know what the schedule of replenishments is. Thus if an employee goes on vacation or is sick, your stall will be properly maintained. Also for those who wish to purchase additional shavings through the store, you'll know when a good time to do so is.

In reviewing the 2008 shavings usage and resales, a very large amount was being "liberated" from storage. This may be from errors on SCR's part, or theft. To control the "flight to freedom", the tack store will carry a supply in its the front storage area. The remaining shavings are being locked. With the new program, SCR staff only needs to access the shavings storage once per week for the barns, or to transfer a pallet to the tack store. This will allow the staff to monitor the shavings storage, since there is no need for anyone to be there.

Included for the Luddites that don't have e-mail is the 2008 stall-a-gram. Please fill out and return so that we can begin prepping for winter. Thanks!

What better yet provide us your e-mail and you won't be left behind!