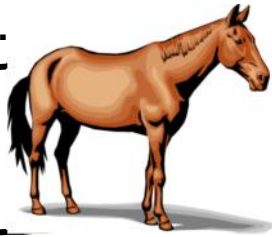


Notes from....



# Serrano Creek Ranch Equestrian Center

APRIL 2008

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*Oh, the old gray mare, she ain't what she used to be,*

*Ain't what she used to be, ain't what she used to be.*

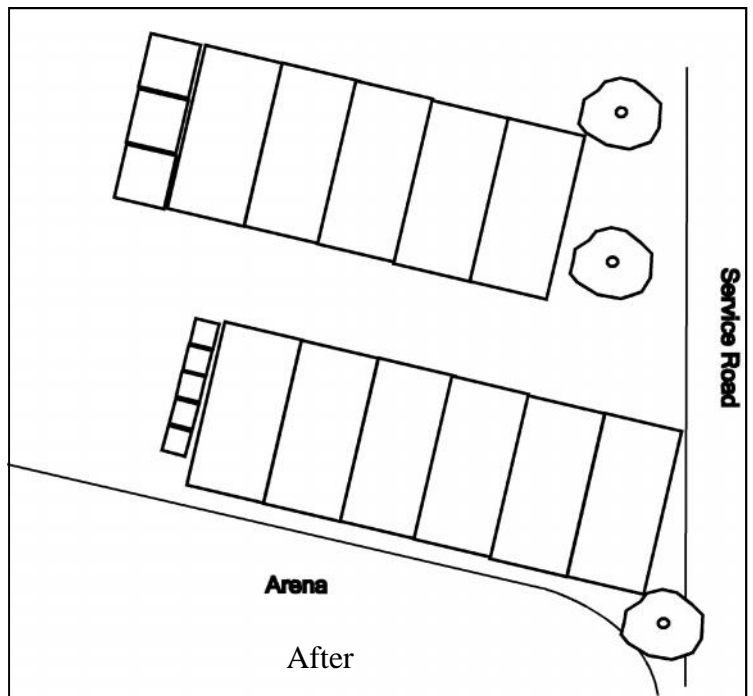
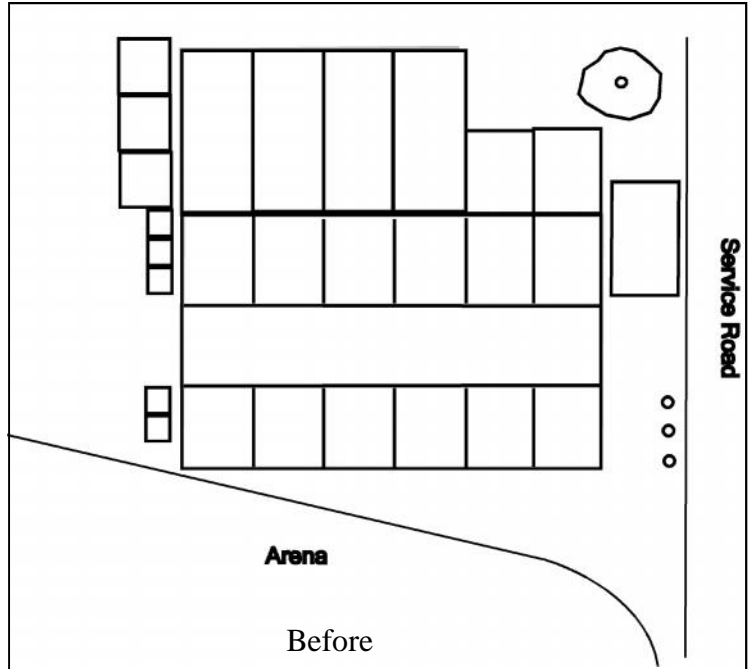
*The old gray mare, she ain't what she used to be,*

*Many long years ago.*

After years of dedicated service, the oldest structure at SCR will be moved into retirement. The B Barn, which has been around for longer than any living human can remember will be seeing its final days. A combination of too much rust, and new county regulations regarding minimum barn size have written the eulogy for this mighty and once proud home.

The few remaining horses will be transferred to the "A" barn and beginning in early April, it will be razed and sent to the recycler to become something new. Maybe the cinch buckle on your next saddle will be made from the door of B-12. (Oh please!)

In its place we will be regrading the pad to improve the overall drainage and installing 11 new pipe stalls. These should be in place by the end of April or early May. Drawing #1 is when we had in and outs. Drawing #2 shows the new corrals. The advantages of the new corrals is that the corner of B-11 which was within 2' of the arena is now a pipe corral which is 6' away, the 12' barn aisle is replaced with a 14' aisle, and the tack sheds are moved slightly away from the middle area to provide safer tie ups. Then everything works perfectly on paper, so there might be some adjustments when the work begins



There are 185 horse stalls and barns at Serrano Creek. Of those, approximately 50 are occupied by either a horse that is in training or a horse that is used in a lesson program. Training and lessons are key elements of running a stable. Briefly, and omitting much, these professionals play irreplaceable role in dealing with horses that are unsafe, unmanageable, as well providing advance training for those that wish to excel in competition, plus whole lot more. The various lesson programs at SCR give newcomers to horses a chance to experience their beauty in an environment that is safe and positive as possible. As a member of the community, we should take every opportunity to

allow the community to become part of the Serrano Creek family, if only for a short while.

Egalitarianism has always been my underlining principle in managing SCR. Ultimately what you are purchasing with each month's board check is an experience; not hay, shavings, and especially needlessly long, meandering newsletters. Hopefully that experience will be of value to your life, whether spiritual, relaxation, a sense of competition, who knows, that is up to you. Again boiling all this down, I believe that each person has the ability to have a wonderful time, and has a right to such a time,

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

regardless of the specific equine housing accommodation.

The structure of the various boarding costs, is a simply formula where we add a standard overhead expense of the running the facility plus the specific costs for that stall / barn. This means that the 12" x 24" pipe stall pays the same contribution for the bathrooms, parking, and arenas, as does the most expensive barn stall. The reason the barn is more is because there are more costs attached; not that these contribute more to the stable's general expenses. Every boarder pays the same for the general upkeep of the stable, and thus has the same entitlements.

That being said, all who board here should have use of the facility to pursue their individual dream (with the caveats of safety, respect for others, . . .the usual.) In a perfect world, we would be on 20 acres, full of arenas that could suit everyone's dreams. The reality is that we are crammed onto 7 acres, in a part of the world where land sells for \$2+ million an acre. Therefore we all must share the facilities that are available so that everyone gets a chance at pursuing their equestrian dream. For some it maybe a Saturday morning lesson, for others it may mean scoring higher on a dressage test, for others it may mean learning to bond with their new horse (read spirited) to finally be able to relax on a 2 hour trail ride.

Given my view of the stable, one of my charges is to make sure that the 135 that aren't involved with one of our professionals also has access to the facilities. Specifically that there is space available for them to ride in an arena, and they are not relegated to coming at bizarre times to be able to ride their horse.

This rebalancing of our main arenas means that generally they will be open to the greatest number of riders. Rather than dedicating an arena to a specific discipline, they shall be open to all disciplines for use. To accommodate both the 50 as well as the 135, specific preannounced times an arena will be reserved for use by the 50. For example in the past we have had sensory clinics, dressage clinics, and looking way back into the time machine, we had shows. Going forward, these times will be posted in the office window or in the newsletter, and will be announced in advance so that you can make your plans. Emphasis shall be placed on reserving arenas during low occupancy periods. Each reservation must serve a respectable number of riders for the time allotted.

Also during the normal day, any equipment such as jumps, dressage cones, trail course pieces, etc., may be brought into an arena in such a way that they are removed immediately upon completion, and that overall arena availability is not universally impacted. At this point we will be experimenting with the amount of equipment that can be placed within each arena, and the time and locations of the placement. Because of the weight of jumps a few will be stored in the center of the arena. Upon completion of their use, they shall immediately be returned to the center, stacked neatly and compactly. One thing is for sure, if equipment is left setup after it's use, it shall be removed. Again the governing principle is that arenas are for the use of the greatest number of riders, and shall not be for the benefit of the few.

The stable has been approached by a distributor of a product called Chaffhaye. I am unfamiliar with this type of feed, but speaking with a few of the vets, the claims seem possible. SCR is home to horses of a wide range of ages and conditions, and this hay substitute may be of value to your horse. The distributor has agreed to supply a small quantity for a trial basis. If you read the letter below, and are interested in being part of the trial, please contact the office to see if we still have room. If interest is large enough whereby we can feed at least 5 tons per month (20+ horses), and you are willing to spend the 29¢ per pound, we'll carry this as a feed. Obviously the distributor is eager to host an informational meeting with their scientist, and again if there is sufficient interest, we'll assist in that happening.

What makes a good quality forage? It must be low in fiber and palatable, easily digestible, nutritious, and free of harmful components. Early cut hay is best – it has the highest level of nutrients and is more palatable. So how do you know if you have good quality hay? Hay analysis determines levels of crude protein, fiber, carbohydrates, minerals and amino acid content. Chaffhaye is independently tested by Dairy One, the industry's leading forage testing facility and provides a guaranteed analysis of its premium quality.

Rich in nutrients, Chaffhaye is an excellent source of protein & energy. Protein is necessary for muscle, bone, tendons, red blood cells, skin, hair, hooves, enzymes and antibodies. Made with alfalfa (or grass) it is harvested at peak leafiness to maximize nutrients, palatability and digestibility. Within hours, it is chopped, lightly misted with molasses and compressed into air-tight bags. A natural fermentation process, similar to what takes place in the horse's stomach, converts it to a "pre-digested" feed with live yeast and beneficial bacteria. Both the yeast and the "good" bacteria help the horse to absorb more energy, vitamins and minerals. This improved absorption is immediately recognized with a marked reduction in manure production – nearly 50%. The probiotics in Chaffhaye help establish a healthy microflora in the gut and improve immune defense in stressed animals after travel, antibiotics, wormers and vaccinations.