

# Birth and thriving of twins a rarity

## WAYNORA MARTIN'S

**LIFE** is two-riffic with twins.

The lifelong equestrian was astonished to find her mare Breezy Belle had given birth to a healthy boy and girl in the wee morning hours of April 7.

The chances of birthing healthy twins are one in a million, according to Martin, the owner of Waynora's Hair Care in Carlsborg.

"The first was born healthy, about 3 in the morning, and had a star on her forehead," she said.

"I checked her out and then went to the house to get some iodine.

"Came back and saw the blaze on the face and wondered if my eyes were playing tricks on me."

She soon discovered it wasn't a trick.

She had twin foals.

The stud, owned by **Dan and Molly Dickson** of Port Townsend, is Cimarron Isle.

According to a study of multiple equine pregnancies by Mina C.G. Davies Morel, the mare's uterus is designed to only support one fetus at a time.

Hence, only 9 percent of twin pregnancies survive to term: 64.5 percent of which result in two dead foals, 21 percent in one live foal and 14.5 percent in two live foals.

Once born, it's even more unlikely both will live beyond the first few days.

And if they both survive the birth, usually a mare will only allow the healthiest one to nurse, an instinct frequently referred to as "survival of the fittest."

"I think it's a good thing I didn't know she was carrying twins," says Martin.

"I probably would have freaked out with worry."

Lily and Billy are multizygotic, or nonidentical, offspring resulting from multiple ovulations.

Identical twins are very extremely rare, with the first case in England being confirmed of twin foals born in 2002 to a mare owned by Britain's Queen Elizabeth.

## PENINSULA HORSEPLAY

Karen Griffiths



Thankfully, at more than a week old, the twins are thriving.

Martin is having a blast watching their antics.

The foals are Belle's first delivery.

I heard one gentleman's

hypothesis is that because it was Belle's first time, she didn't know it was not normal to have two, so she's feeding two.

His theory may not be scientific fact, but it sounds good to me.

In the meantime, Martin helps Belle out by hand-feeding bottles of milk to the twins.

## Earth Day

■ **On Saturday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.**, Backcountry Horseman will have a work party in the Olympic National Park to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Earth Day.

Members will meet at the Whisky Bend trailhead.

If attending, contact Sally Coates 360-457-1626.

■ **North Olympic Land Trust's** first Earth Day celebration is Friday through Sunday.

Activities begin at 6 p.m. Friday at Peninsula College's Little Theater with aerial photographers Dave Woodcock and Russ Mellon showing images and signing their new book, *From the Air: Olympic Peninsula*.

A screening of the 2009 documentary film, "Home," will begin at 7 p.m.

On Saturday, there will be a bike tour, with cyclists traveling from Robin Hill County Park, near Sequim, at 9 a.m. to five properties: Jerry and Mary Schmidt's Freedom Farm, Steve Johnson's Lazy J Tree Farm, Cheryl Smith and Judy Winthrop's Windsong acreage, Ruth Jenkins and John Warrick's Dis-



KAREN GRIFFITHS/FOR PENINSULA DAILY NEWS

**While it's unlikely that twins Billy, left, and Lily know how rare they are, spectators enjoy double the giggles and grins watching them frolic. Poking her head through the tail of her mother, Breezy Belle, Lily looked over to owner and surrogate grandmother Waynora Martin of Carlsborg as if to ask, "Do I look good as a blond?"**

covery Trail Easement and Nancy McLaughlin's Rancho VERIP.

All are "conservation easement" properties, protected permanently through legal agreements with the Land Trust.

On Sunday from 10 a.m. to noon, there will be a tour of Serenity Farm, which is located on Gellor Road, off Blue Mountain Road.

Owners Ken and Sue Sweeney host camps for Pony Club members and have built an equestrian cross-country course.

More information is available at [www.nolt.org](http://www.nolt.org) and 360-417-1815.

## Events

■ **Friday, 9 a.m.:** Baker Stables schooling show, 164 Four Winds Road, Port Angeles.

■ **Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.:** Cow-working at Freedom Farms, 493 Spring Road, Port Angeles. Phone Mary or Jerry Schmidt at 360-457-4897.

■ **April 23-25:** Backcountry Horsemen Leave No Trace training in the Port Townsend area.

For more information, e-mail Sherry Baysinger at [baysinger@centurytel.net](mailto:baysinger@centurytel.net).

■ **April 24-25, 1 p.m.:** Playday at Chimacum Saddlery & Tack, 1091 Chimacum Road, Port Hadlock. Contact Bethel Moore at 360-301-1547 or e-mail [bambam@olyper.com](mailto:bambam@olyper.com), [www.chimacum.saddlery.com](http://www.chimacum.saddlery.com).

■ **April 28, 6 p.m.:** Arabian Horse Club meeting hosted by Debra Hinds, 110 Coppertop Trail, Port Angeles. Phone 360-457-5399.

■ **May 1, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.:** Tack sale and educational talks hosted by Backcountry Horseman and 4-H horse groups at Clallam County Fairgrounds.

Sellers can reserve space in advance at 360-683-3306 or 360-582-7526.

■ **May 8, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.:** Tack and rummage sale and equestrian demonstrations, co-hosted by Buckhorn Range Chapter-BCH and Chimacum Saddlery & Tack, 1091 Chimacum Road.

For information, donations and table reservations, phone Judith Hoyle at 360-732-5042.

■ **May 8:** Freedom Farm Horse Show & Play Day, 493 Spring Road, Port Angeles. Contact Mary Gallagher at 360-457-4897; Web site [freedomfarms.net](http://freedomfarms.net).

■ **BCH Peninsula** Chapter meetings are the fourth Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at Clallam County Courthouse (this is a new location) in Port Angeles; phone Betsy Wyatt 360-457-3102.

■ **Cow-sorting** at 6 p.m. Saturdays at Chimacum Saddlery & Tack, 1091 Chimacum Road, Port Hadlock. Contact Bethel Moore at 360-301-1547 or e-mail: [bambam@olyper.com](mailto:bambam@olyper.com).

Karen Griffiths' column, Peninsula Horseplay, appears every other Wednesday.

If you have a horse event, clinic or seminar you would like listed, please e-mail Griffiths at [horse.play.kbg@olympus.net](mailto:horse.play.kbg@olympus.net) at least two weeks in advance. You can also write Griffiths at PDN, P.O. Box 1330, Port Angeles, WA 98362.