

# Acupuncture can help hurting horses

**AHHH, TO BE** free of pain. Wouldn't that be the best gift possible to one suffering?

Just as sports athletes often have a scheduled regime, such as massage, chiropractic, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine to help keep them in tip-top condition, and we regular folks enjoy and benefit from the same treatments, why not your horse?

Recently, I was introduced to veterinarian and equine sports and alternative medicine specialist, **Michael Salewski**.

I watched him give a chiropractic adjustment followed by acupuncture therapy to a horse owned by local trainer and national performance horse competitor, **Jeanne Wolf Johnson** (congratulations to Jeanne and her husband, **Larry**, on the birth of their son, **Derek**).

## Relief from pain

Jeanne's young paint horse, Sissy, suffered a major injury to her pelvis as a youngster.

While Sissy has recovered, Jeanne provides scheduled chiropractic and acupuncture work to help with fluidity of movement and to provide joint support to the injured area.

"It loosens up her hind end and smoothes out her lope," said Jeanne. "Otherwise her lope tends to be short-strided, which can be an indicator of pain."

"The idea behind any of these treatments is to reduce, or rid, the body of pain," said Salewski. "Just the same as with human injuries, pain is caused by chemical changes in certain meridian points in the body, which, of course, are connected to the brain."

"Acupuncture's goal is to break the cycle of pain because, when in pain, muscles will tighten up, and the patient is less likely to move. Movement helps rebuilt muscles and lends itself to healing."

Salewski said acupuncture is a catalyst for healing the body.

He embraces Taoist principles, the system of traditional Chinese medicine that has been in practice for more than 2,000 years.

## PENINSULA HORSEPLAY

**Karen Griffiths**



Acupuncture practitioners insert extremely fine, disposable needles with rounded tips just below the surface of

the skin. This stimulates "chi," the body's cyclic energy flow (pronounced "chee").

By balancing and redirecting chi, an acupuncture practitioner encourages the body's natural capacity for self-healing. In turn, this improves the way the body functions.

## Chi flow

How does acupuncture work?

Chi flows through the body along channels known as "meridians."

The body contains nearly 500 different acupuncture points located along these meridians.

Modern science has actually shown that the body gives off slight electrical charges at these points.

An imbalance or blockage in the flow of chi at these points can cause many ailments.

Imbalances in chi flow can be caused by stress, anxiety, anger, fear, poor nutrition and even changes in the weather.

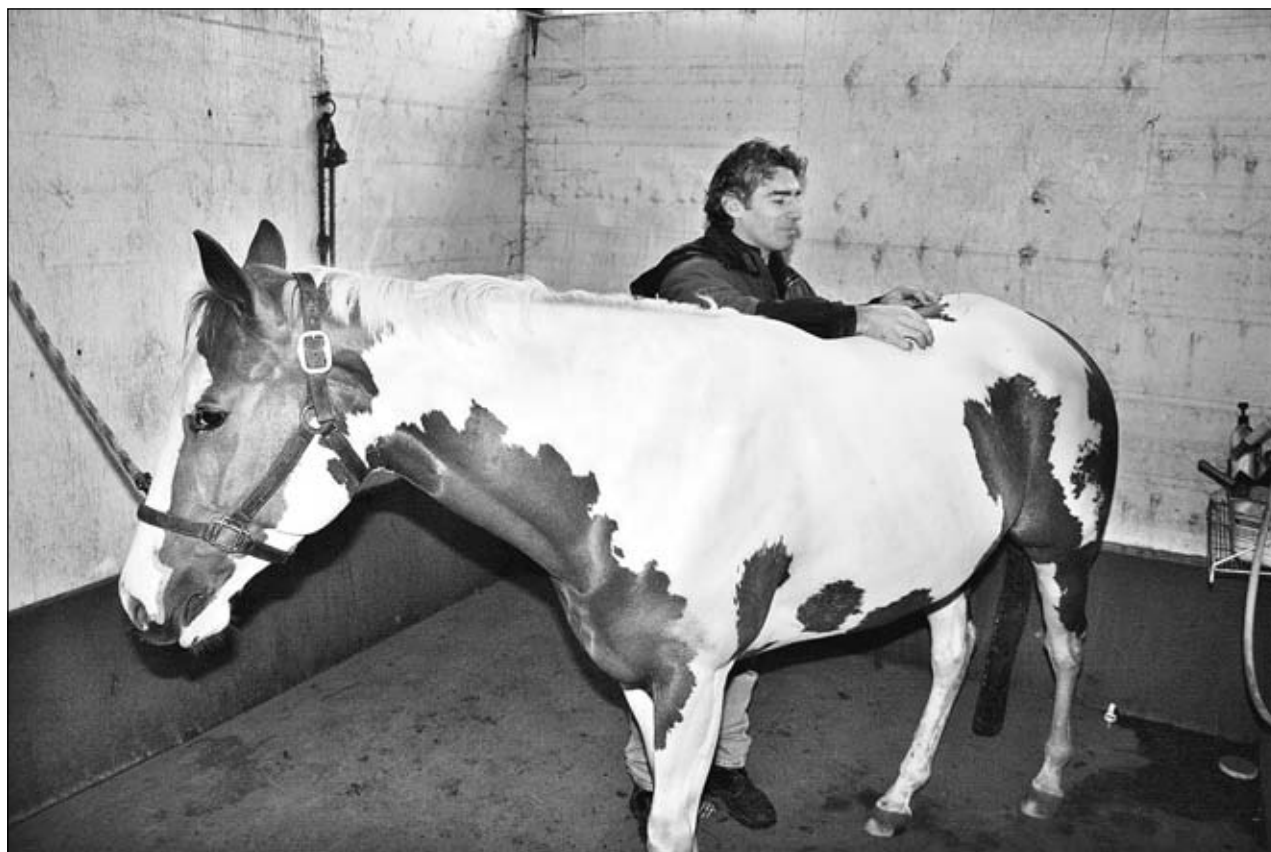
Acupuncturists concentrate on stimulating the body's energy flow by unblocking these meridians.

By restoring chi balance and flow, acupuncture allows the body to heal itself naturally rather than through the more invasive use of synthetic drugs and injections via the bloodstream.

Some people may scoff at the idea that these strategically placed needles can relieve pain and discomfort, thus resulting in increased range of motion.

To them, I suggest viewing an animal before, during and after treatment to see for themselves that treatment can and does provide relief.

After all, an animal's



KAREN GRIFFITHS/PENINSULA DAILY NEWS

**Sissy receives acupuncture treatment by equine veterinarian specialist Michael Salewski of Snohomish. Owner Jeanne Wolf Johnson of Sequim started scheduling Sissy, a registered paint horse, with regular chiropractic and acupuncture care after injuring her pelvis.**

body language does not lie.

For more information about Salewski, visit [www.pilchuckvet.com](http://www.pilchuckvet.com).

## Lopper Awards

Congratulations to **Larry Baysinger** for winning the Backcountry Horsemen of Washington's 2008 Lopper Award.

This award is given to the outstanding trail volunteer in the state of Washington.

Baysinger, a member of the Peninsula Chapter, was given this award at the annual BCHW Jubilee Awards program in Ellensburg in March.

The Peninsula Chapter of BCHW was also recognized for putting in 3,189 volunteer hours on the trails of Clallam County in 2008.

In labor, stock use, trucks, trailers and power equipment, that translates into an \$82,792 gift to the citizens of the Olympic Peninsula.

According to BCH member **Marc Reinertson**, statewide the BCHW volunteer hours came to 70,531 hours, which is a gift of \$1,532,218 to the

trail users of the state of Washington.

That is tax money that did not have to be spent.

## Camps

■ **May 9 and May 30** — Chimacum Farm is holding horse day camp.

For more information, phone **Paula Stingle** at 360-710-5812 or e-mail [chimerk@embarqmail.com](mailto:chimerk@embarqmail.com).

■ **June 22 to 26, June 29 to July 3 and July 6 to July 10** — Sign up now for Freedom Farm summer camp.

For more information, phone **Mary Gallagher** at 360-457-4897 or e-mail [freedomf@olypen.com](mailto:freedomf@olypen.com).

## Events

■ **Thursday, 7 p.m.** — BCHW-Buckhorn Range Chapter meeting at Chimacum Grange Hall.

The program for this month is useful knots for equestrians and includes demonstrating and practicing knot-tying skills.

■ **Friday, April 17, 9 a.m.** — BCH Peninsula Chapter's annual Olympic National Park Mule Barn Day at the Elwha Whiskey

Bend Road mule corral.

Learn packing and backcountry skills from the people who make packing their way of life.

**Larry Lack** is inviting other trail user groups to participate.

There will be packing demonstrations, LNT presentation and a chili dog lunch provided by Peninsula Chapter.

Wear your long johns. It's usually very cold.

For more information, phone Betsy Wyatt at 360-457-3102 or e-mail [sbwyatt@olypen.com](mailto:sbwyatt@olypen.com).

■ **Saturday, April 18, 10 a.m.** — BCH Buckhorn Range Chapter ride on the Coyle Peninsula from East Toandos Road.

For more information, phone Bob Hoyle at 360-732-5042 or e-mail to [bobhoyle@usa.net](mailto:bobhoyle@usa.net).

■ **Saturday, April 18, 9 a.m.** — The County Mounty's 4-H Horse Club and the Jefferson County 4-H Horse Project are hosting their third annual Open Schooling Show at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds in Port Townsend.

Performance classes start at 9 a.m., and West-

ern games will begin following performance.

Classes are \$4.

High Point prizes awarded for all divisions.

For more information, contact Joy at 360-379-1941.

■ **Sunday, April 19, 9 a.m.** — Baker Stable Schooling show. [www.bakerstablespa.net](http://www.bakerstablespa.net)

■ **Saturday and Sunday, April 25-26** — Jefferson County Fairgrounds, WSA system B performance show during the Jeffco Expo.

The show will be co-approved Canal Zone, American Paint Horse Association and Olympic Peninsula Zone.

■ **Saturday, May 2** — Jefferson County Fairgrounds schooling show.

■ **Saturday, June 6** — PSHA game show at Jefferson County Fairgrounds.

**Karen Griffiths'** column, Peninsula Horse Play, appears every other Wednesday.

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