

# Beloved horse provides rough ride

**HORSE LOVERS GATHERING** for horse talk makes horse sense says equestrian **Nancy Johnson**.

The Port Angeles native is trying her hardest to invite everyone with a love of horses to Olympic Peninsula Zone's potluck dinner at Clallam County Fairgrounds on Saturday, July 11, at 6 p.m.

The evening coincides with the second annual **Jean Iverson Memorial** and Zone Benefit Show at the fairgrounds July 11 and 12.

"It doesn't matter which riding discipline individuals enjoy, we all share a love of horses, and we're constantly at risk of losing riding trails and horse facilities," said Nancy.

"Really, it's just an opportunity to help people with a love of horses to bond more."

## Indy 500

Lately, I've been kicking myself for not getting out and riding my own horses.

The weather's been wonderful, yet I find myself thinking I have more important things to do.

Sadly, I can count on one hand the times I've ridden my bay horse, Indy, since February.

During the fall and early winter, I'd kept him in shape by taking him for training and lessons at an indoor arena with my neighbor, **Jeanne Wolf Johnson**.

When Jeanne took time off to have her baby, a beautiful bouncing cowboy, **Derek**, I stopped spending time with Indy (hey, it was freezing outside).

He's now gotten fat and lazy from having pasture grass available to him 24/7 (shame on me).

I decided to take Indy to Sunday's game show at Quarter Moon Ranch.

I didn't intend to race him. I just wanted to ride him around a bit among friends.

While Indy is not a baby anymore, he's still young and can sometimes be a handful.

I wasn't worried though. I figured he'd gotten so fat and lazy I'd have no problem hopping on him and loping around a bit.

Actually, the term "hopping" isn't accurate.

At 16 hands (one hand equals 4 inches) Indy's taller than most quarter-horses, and I'm shorter than most people, so I use a stepstool to help me clamber on his back.

## PENINSULA HORSEPLAY

**Karen Griffiths**



Quarter Moon's arena is very large. I walked Indy around a bit and then cued him to lope in a corner of the arena

away from other riders waiting their turn to race.

Did I mention the racers were running their horses on the opposite side of the same arena?

Riding with two hands on the reins, I gathered Indy up and cued him to a slow lope.

"Oh, good," I thought, "he started right up on his correct lead."

## Surprise

I was totally relaxed and ready to enjoy Indy's smooth lope when suddenly he hunched his back, and I felt his powerful legs bucking high behind me.

With his back arched and forelegs stiff, he lurched forward, twisted and bucked in an attempt to throw me off.

His change in demeanor took me off guard. Instead of shortening the reins and yanking his head tightly to his side to thwart his moves, I held both hands high with my fingers gripping tightly on the reins.

With each buck, my behind rose up, down and around the saddle.

As I felt my right foot get caught in the stirrup, I envisioned falling off and Indy dragging me by my leg, my head bumping on the ground like a ragdoll while he ran wildly around the arena.

## Out of the stirrups

The thought motivated me to yank both feet out of the stirrups.

With my feet flying free and fingers still on the reins, his next buck sent my bottom even higher.

As my backside landed partially in the saddle and partly on his, I wondered how I was going to get off this bucking bronco without getting hurt.

I thought of sliding gracefully off his haunches and landing upright on my feet — ha.

After the next buck, my rump landed on his soft rump.

Releasing the reins, I gave a quick push off his



KAREN GRIFFITHS/FOR PENINSULA DAILY NEWS

**Skilled youth rider Madison Ballou, 7, leads Buckaroo Fiona Orloff, 4, on her pony, Mindy, instructing Fiona on how to place the flag in the barrel for points when competing in the Flag Race during the Patterned Speed Horse game show held Sunday at Quarter Moon Ranch in Carlsborg. PSHA emphasizes helping one another learn — from beginners to advanced — in patterned game events the entire family can enjoy.**

rear end and then found myself lying flat on my back staring directly at rear hoofs ready to fly in my direction.

Quickly, I rolled to the right — the same moment Indy realized I was within kicking range.

Loving me as he does, Indy leaped forward and away from me before he continued kicking and running wildly in his own version of the Indy 500 race.

Apparently, our antics didn't go unnoticed. The show was stopped, Indy quickly caught and I heard people yelling at me not to move until someone could see if anything was broken.

Ignoring them, I sat up and yelled, "I'm OK!"

Friend **Pam Crosby** yelled back, "You were so close to 8 seconds! You should have ridden it out!"

A chuckle rippled through the crowd because 8 seconds is the time needed to stay on a bucking bronco in a rodeo for a winning ride.

Really, I didn't hurt — then.

Today, I ache all over. Needless to say, on Monday Indy started back in training with Jeanne.

## Reining news

Congratulations to the reining equestrians from Baker Stables for their outstanding rides at the Washington Reining Horse Association Classic Show at Evergreen Fairgrounds in May.

**Dana King** and her horse, Gunddealer, tied for first place in Ladies to Ride, plus fourth in regular non-pro, fifth in intermediate non-pro and seventh in limited non-pro.

**Tom Gillotti** and his horse, Peppy Freckle Chex tied for third in beginner rider.

**Lexi LaBelle** rode Major Smokin Wind, placing second in Beginner Rider, fourth in Ladies To Ride and third in the Rookie division.

## Events

■ **Saturday, June 20** — BCH Buckhorn Range Chapter Ride at Sleepy Hollow Trail.

For more information, phone **Bob Hoyle** at 360-531-2337.

■ **Saturday and Sunday, June 20 to 21** — Jefferson County Horse Project and Wild Angels 4-H

Club "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" Breast Cancer Awareness Open Horse Show at Jefferson County Fairgrounds.

For more information, phone **Marian** at 360-301-5433 or 360-385-6313.

■ **Sunday, June 21, 9 a.m.** — OPZ performance show at Baker Stables, 164 Four Winds Road in Port Angeles.

For more information, phone 360-457-6039.

■ **Mondays through Fridays, June 22 to 26, June 29 to July 3 and July 6 to July 10** — Freedom Farm summer camps sessions.

For more information, phone **Mary Gallagher** at 360-457-4897.

■ **Wednesday, June 24, 6:30 p.m.** — Arab Horse Club meeting at the Poor's house.

For more information, e-mail **Jeanette Leino** at [JMLeino@centurytel.net](mailto:JMLeino@centurytel.net).

■ **Thursday, June 25, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** — Pasture management and horse care classes with speaker **Alayne Blicke** at the Tri-Area Community Center in Chimacum.

For more information or to register, phone **Rosie**,

Jefferson County Conservation District, at 360-385-4105.

■ **Friday and Saturday, June 26 to 27** — BCH Peninsula Chapter Campout at Littleton Horse Camp and Camp Creek Ride.

For more information, phone **Betsy** at 360-457-3102.

■ **Sunday, June 28, 9 a.m.** — Silver Spurs 4-H open performance horse show at Clallam County Fairgrounds.

For more information, phone **Theresa** at 360-457-6028.

■ **Saturday and Sunday, July 4 to 5, 9 a.m.** — PSHA game show at Crosby's arena, 122 Franson Road in Port Angeles.

For more information, phone **Pam** at 360-670-3906.

**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 [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.