

# Horse sense

By  
ERNEST V. JOINER



• Now that the country's best cowboys are assembled in Heppner for the Fastest Show in the West, it is time to acquaint them with the saga of Horace The Mule. I wrote this whimsy a couple of years ago after hearing it recounted at a gathering back East somewhere. After several hours of merriment and story-telling (interspersed with a few horns of bourbon and branch water), Vernon Sechrist of the Rocky Mount, N.C., Telegram recounted a story about a friend of his, Mrs. Grace Wood, that should have Mark Twain chortling in his sarcophagus. My memory is understandably hazy, but the story went something like this.

• Mrs. George Wood, now deceased, of Chowan County, had a mule named Horace. One evening she called up Dr. Satterfield in Edenton and said to him, "Doctor, Horace is sick and I wish you would come and take a look at him." Dr. Satterfield replied, "Oh, Fannie Lamb, it's after 6 o'clock and I'm eating supper. Give old Horace a dose of mineral oil, and if he isn't all right in the morning, phone me and I'll come and take a look at him."

• "How'll I give it to him?" she inquired. "Through a funnel." But he might bite me," she protested. "Oh, Fannie Lamb, you're a farm woman and you know about these things. Give it to him through the other end." So Fannie Lamb went out to the barn and there stood Horace with his head held down, and moaning and groaning. She looked for a funnel, but the nearest thing she could see to one was her Uncle Bill's fox hunting horn hanging on the wall. A beautiful golden-plated instrument it was, with gold tassels hanging from it. She took the horn and affixed it properly. Horace paid no attention. Then she reached up on the shelf where medicines for the farm animals were kept. But instead of picking up the mineral oil, she picked up a bottle of turpentine, and she poured a liberal dose of it into the horn.

• Horace raised his head with a sudden jerk. He let out a bawl that could be (and was) heard for a mile. He reared up on his hind legs, brought his front legs down, knocked out the side of the barn, jumped a five-foot fence, and started down the road at a mad gallop. Now, Horace was in pain, so every few jumps he made, that horn would blow. All the dogs in the neighborhood knew that when that horn was blowing, it meant that Uncle Bill was going fox hunting. So out on the highway they went, close behind Horace.

• It was a marvelous sight. First, Horace—running wide open, the hunting horn in the most unusual position, the mellow notes issuing therefrom, the tassels waving, and the dogs barking joyously.

• They passed by the home of Old Man Harvey Hogan, who was sitting on his front porch. He hadn't drawn a sober breath in 15 years, and he gazed in fascinated amazement at the sight that unfolded itself before his eyes. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. Incidentally, he is now head man in Alcoholics Anonymous in the Albemarle section of the state.

• By this time it was good and dark. Horace and the dogs were approaching the Inland Waterway. The bridge tender heard the horn blowing and figured that a boat was approaching. So he hurriedly went out and uncranked the bridge. Horace went overboard and was drowned. The dogs also went into the water, but they swam out without very much difficulty.

• Now it so happened that the bridge tender was running for the office of sheriff of Chowan County, but he managed to poll only seven votes. The people figured that any man who didn't know the difference between a mule with a horn up his rear and a boat coming down the Inland Waterway wasn't fit to hold any public office in Chowan County.

• The rodeo came into being with the growth of the cattle business in the U.S. Nobody seems to know when or where the rodeo began, but the first historical reference to it comes from Santa Fe, N.M., in 1847. Bulldogging or steer wrestling was introduced as a rodeo event by Bill Pickett of Oklahoma in 1903. The most money ever won in a single rodeo season was by Larry Mahan of Brooks, Ore., in 1969 when he racked up \$57,726. The meanest, oneriest steer in rodeo circles was a cross between a Brahma and a Hereford named Aught. He busted 476 out of 482 riders in less than 8 seconds each. But he loved children, and played with them until his death in 1964. The greatest bucking horse was Midnight, owned by Verne Elliott of Colorado. From 1923 to 1930 he was ridden by only four riders, and one of them was Frank Studnick at the Pendleton Round-up of 1929. None of the other three riders ever was able to ride Midnight a second time, and the only reason Studnick wasn't subsequently thrown was because he refused to mount him again! The fastest time ever recorded for bulldogging a steer is 2.4 seconds, by an old Texas buddy, James Bynum, at the Marietta, Okla., rodeo in 1955. That'll give you tigers something to shoot at in Heppner, Saturday and Sunday. Good luck.

• Every time riders hang around the rodeo chutes they start talking about horses. Smart horses and dumb horses. They'll recall Old Baldy and his exploits. But the smartest horse in the world was owned by Buffalo Bill, if one takes him seriously. The old buffalo hunter fell from this horse of his one day right in the path of a charging buffalo herd. The horse dragged his unconscious master to safety, spread a blanket, built a fire, and pushed a pack of provisions next to him. Then the horse took off to find a doctor. Bill used to say there was only one hitch: the horse came back with a horse doctor.

• Eva Padberg Griffith was Queen of the 1923 Heppner show. She was a top rider and a good hand with a lariat. That was 50 years ago, and she still lives in Heppner. She will be honored at the Wranglers' Breakfast Sunday at 9:30 a.m. at the City Park. She will also ride in Saturday's parade down Main Street, and she will be introduced to the crowd at the 1973 Rodeo Sunday.

• Dick Gorham works for Kinzua Corporation, and he has never ridden a bull. But the boys at Hamlin's Tavern put up Dick's entry fee at the rodeo, and he will take his first ride this weekend. His friends will be there to give him their moral support, all of which he will be needing.

"If you hombres are in Heppner looking for trouble, I'll see you down at the rodeo pen!"



## The mail pouch

EDITOR:

The following letter was written by Carroll Tufts Keys of Fossil, and was published in the Oregonian recently. I think it is appropriate for Rodeo Week:

I have seldom been so shocked as I was on reading the letter of July 18 by Mrs. Eddy about the so-called mistreatments of rodeo horses. There is not one iota of truth in her accusations. She is flatly stating as true things that she obviously has no real information about.

I have lived for 40 years on a sheep and cattle ranch in Central Oregon and my husband was raised on the ranch 67 years ago. We have attended at least a hundred rodeos. My son has been a top rider, and both my husband and my son have worked in the chutes and have never witnessed any of the things Mrs. Eddy charges are common practice.

In our business we are required to raise a great many horses, and we love horses. I have never failed to marvel at the fact that most horses are willing to be ridden. But there are always some that will put up a real argument and try to get rid of the rider by bucking him off. These are the ones that end up in the rodeos and become trained buckers.

Our cow horses spend many days packing men over these mountains in search of strays, etc. Consider the life of the rodeo horse. For a really few days during the summer he comes out of the chute once a day for eight or 10 seconds. The rest of the year he leads a carefree life in pasture. He is well fed because he has to start the spring in top condition, full of vim and vigor, to be in shape for bucking.

I have seen too many horses in our barnyard simply explode with the sheer joy of bucking not to realize that some horses enjoy bucking. They certainly don't have to be tortured to cause them to buck. And horses are not stupid; they soon realize that they are supposed to try their best to get rid of that rider and come out of the chute in a fury of bucking jumps.

Yes, the electric prod may be used but not as Mrs. Eddy suggests. And the horses would never be starved or not watered except for three hours before bucking, because they wouldn't buck well. The flanking strap is there to annoy, not hurt the horse. If the only way you could get out of your girldle was by bucking, I'm sure you would buck.

MERLYN ROBINSON,  
Heppner



## A salary scandal

By  
LESTER KINSOLVING

"The United Presbyterian Church pays a national mission employee as little as \$6,000 per year base salary -- and a General Assembly employee as much as \$37,500 per year," observed a petition ("overture") to that denomination's recent General Assembly in Omaha.

"All servants of the church are important and deserve to be equally treated on their dedication to Christ, as opposed to a secular system of values," contended this overture, from Alabama's Birmingham Presbytery.

A similar, if more conservative, overture came from the Presbytery of Philadelphia, which asked that headquarters salaries be limited to 250 per cent of median clergy income.

Both of these provocative petitions were submitted for further study (virtually killed) by the General Assembly -- understandably, because it is rare indeed that anyone but headquarters staff and other high paid personnel can afford to take 10 days in May to attend General Assembly.

Yet it is significant that this proposal for a 250 per cent limitation should come from the Philadelphia Presbytery, because this area is the residence of both of the denomination's \$37,500-a-year men, Stated Clerk William P. Thompson and Mission Council Director Leon Fanniel.

On a lower level, there are three men at h.q. who are paid \$32,500 -- including the Rev. Oscar McLeod. The Rev. Mr. McLeod took a leading part in the \$10,000 Presbyterian donation to the Angela Davis Defense Fund.

Just how much this \$10,000 gift (or, as the Presbytery of San Francisco concluded, the headquarters' highly questionable attempt to conceal it) had to do with the United Presbyterian Church's present and desolate condition is conjectural.

It must, however, be particularly galling to the \$6,000-a-year missionary who is musing in the Arctic or

EDITOR:

I heard you on Jim Eason's Show over KGO Radio, San Francisco, Friday from Heppner.

They tell me you are now publishing the Heppner Gazette-Times, and you are willing to accept five dollar Federal Reserve Notes (of no intrinsic value) for a one-year subscription. Here is my check for five dollars that you can exchange at your local bank for the said notes.

JAMES E. FANSLER,  
Sebastopol, Ca.

EDITOR:

I heard Jim Eason of Radio Station KGO, San Francisco, read your Aug. 2 Horse Sense column over the air in its entirety. I was so impressed I wanted to read more...

My granddaughter, Glenna Seward, went to Oregon State three years and loved Oregon and the people. She had a classmate from Heppner. My daughter and her husband are reading the Gazette-Times and are enjoying it. The granddaughter says it is just "like home."

MRS. JERRELL K. JOHANSON,  
Alameda, Ca.

(ED. NOTE--Thank you for the California dollars and your kind comments. If I'm ever in your neighborhood again I will accept your invitation to visit with you.)

EDITOR:

When we were camping near Heppner I bought your paper and feel I should tell you how much I enjoyed your column, Horse Sense. Your use of words is excellent and the sentiments expressed on capital punishment and exporting wheat are exactly like mine.

A subject that gripes me at present is taking off the camping fees. We have greatly enjoyed not only the caretakers, but also the clean toilets and campsites. We certainly don't regret the dollar a day we paid.

I think I'll write to Sen. Packwood about it, for all the good it will do.

MRS. C.E. PEARSON,  
Florence.

(ED NOTE--Although use fees for 29,000 campsites are discontinued as of Aug. 1, it is still possible to make reservations for campsites through American Express Reservations, Ramada Inns and Hertz Rent-A-Car counters. American Express charges \$1.50 for such a reservation, and it insures one of having a desirable campsite. Thank you for your letter.)

sweltering in the jungle to know that upon the Biblical criterion ("Where the heart lies, there will lie the treasure also") he or she is worth only one fifth as much as McLeod.

Moreover, the present desolation of the United Presbyterian Church (a loss, since 1971, of more than 2 per cent of its entire membership -- the worst of any denomination) is surely more the fault of national headquarters than the missionaries. For the missionaries have to live down the actions of the national headquarters infinitely more than vice versa. And while total giving to all local Presbyterian churches is up by 11 million, giving to the national headquarters is down by 8 per cent, or two million.

There is, however, some hope in sight. General Assembly elected to its highest post (Moderator) an apparently good man, the Rev. Clinton Marsh of Omaha. Among other things, the Rev. Mr. Marsh:

Promised that he would seek to find out just how the controversial \$10,000 Presbyterian donation to the Angela Davis Defense Fund was spent -- which information the national headquarters has not heretofore been disclosing.

Expressed fervent hope that his race (Negro) had nothing to do with his election. (This contrasted sharply with his predecessor in the Moderator's chair, Dr. Willard Heckel, of Rutgers University Law School in New Jersey. For Dr. Heckel told a press conference that blacks are more entitled to preferential treatment in admission to law school than are Jews -- even though he declined to offer any theory as to why Black Panthers have insisted upon being represented by a white attorney.)

Told the General Assembly just before they elected him (and decisively defeated another candidate, retired World Council of Churches General Secretary Eugene Carson Blake): "There are little people all over the nation who feel that those at our national headquarters are not colleagues, but a vague 'they'."

Understandably. Look at the salary differential.

## Mayor of Hardman

DEAR MISTER EDITOR:

I want to remember what the folks that run that Wimbledon tennis game in England said about players that wouldn't play. They said that Wimbledon was bigger than the boycotters.

I think they were right, and I think what they said works for all the ball players in this country that git the idee the game can't live without em. I hope the same applies to politicians in both countries, cause both have been having their share of trouble with em lately.

The fellers took this matter up during the session at the country store Saturday night. Josh Clodhopper, that don't talk much unless the subject is the mail and his Social Security check is a day late, surprised everybody by coming out foursquare for England-type scandals.

Josh was of the mind that American politicians git in hot water over greed and power, but them in England has trouble with the wimmen. It's a man's duty to serve his country, allowed Josh, and he, fer one, would rather pull his political hitch in England.

That's when Ed Doolittle got the floor. Ed was a Republican before, during and after it was somepun you could brag about in mixed company, and he called Josh down fer poking fun at the troubles we're having.

Ed said he had studied politics a long time and when it comes to throwing rocks, jest about everybody lives in a glass house. One party pointing a finger at the other is the pot calling the kittle black, was Ed's words.

Fer instant, he said, he saw a few weeks back where the only difference between Nixon's and Johnson's telephone recording hookups was that Johnson could cut his off.

Clem Webster was agreed with Ed that this country not only has lived, it has grown strong and rich operating on two sets of facts--Democrat and Republican. Clem said both have a record of bending history to suit their campaigns, and it ain't to frequent that one will take the risk of jumping on the other fer their idee of the truth.

Furthermore, both parties is equal guilty of handing out federal aid in such habit-forming doses that we got to the place we think we can't git along without it.

Back afore Congressmen was convinced their job was to figger new way to take our money and give some of it back, Clem said there was a law of nature about survival of the fittest. Nowadays, went on Clem, the Government has improved that rule to where everybody survives and nobody's fit fer nothing.

Well, Mister Editor, turning to your business I see weddings in your paper has slowed down some, so I reckon the peak marrying season is over. My old lady allus enjoys reading about the weddings course she likes the funerals to, and she don't never miss the divorce cases.

Personal, I got great respect fer marriage. It teaches a feller to keep regular hours, to keep his mouth shut and other good habits he wouldn't need if he stayed single.

But we've got worse problems what with the Fair and Rodeo in Heppner comin next week, when they is going to be more heads hung under the pump shaft, and more eyes lookin like roadmaps, than has been seen in this county since the same folks met the same problem headon this time last year.

Yours truly,  
MAYOR ROY.

## Retirement. Plan for it now

David E. Mitchum, Mental Health Director

A few years ago I had the pleasure of attending a conference of health and welfare people in the Ozarks, where the subject dealt with plans for retired people and the problems associated with old age.

During this meeting, elaborate plans were unveiled concerning large retirement centers in the Ozark area and everyone seemed to have clever ideas about what to do about the "problem of the old people." We were conceiving all types of programs to help the "old people" as though we talked about what we should do about Cambodia.

Finally, in the middle of the discussion an 80-year-old man rose to be recognized. As he began to speak the room became quiet and few of us will forget his comment.

"You have wonderful ideas about programs for the people who retire 20,30 and 50 years from now. You seem to assume this category of old people to be helpless. Well, my friends, you're talking about yourselves. Start planning now for your own retirement."

Needless to say, we were stunned by the sudden realization brought forth by this man's words.

How many of us make the similar mistake of thinking that old age and the problems of retirement are in some other dimension? Indeed, we are talking about ourselves.

Planning for retirement is a life-time activity and one facet of life which cannot be put off. When we reach retirement age, it is too late to profit by our mistake. How many of us expect that elaborate governmental health and welfare programs are going to take care of us?

Planning for retirement is more than providing financial security. If you are one whose life is made of summers in which you do not get to do enough fishing, or if you have always yearned to travel, paint, write or sew, then these are activities which can fill your life with happiness in your final years.

We cannot assume that the world will end for us when we retire because we know that many people live as long as 20 or more years after they retire.

Some people consider retirement so important that they have planned sufficiently ahead of time to be able to do what they want, live comfortably, and even retire earlier than the traditional age of 65. The number of years we spend in retirement could possibly comprise one-fourth of our total life time; and for many, it is a time of boredom, frustration, and loneliness.

If you do not want to be financially and emotionally insecure and frustrated in your later years, then now is the time to make some preparations.

What does this have to do with mental health? Visit some of our elderly citizenry and see for yourself. I hope you and I do not have to find out through our own experience.



"Now there's two good sides to this ranch -- one is straight up and the other straight down!"

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