

# EquiNews

Genesee Valley Equine Clinic, LLC  
925 Chili-Scottsville Road, Scottsville, NY 14546

Phone: (585) 889-1170

January 2010  
Visit us online at: [www.gvequine.com](http://www.gvequine.com)

## Equine Emergencies and Colic Featured at This Year's Horse Health Seminar

**Saturday, February 6, 2010,  
8:00 am to noon**

**J**oin us on the first Saturday in February for the GVEC annual Winter Horse Health Seminar. This popular event will take place at the Wheatland Chili High School on 940 North Road in Scottsville, **free of charge**, thanks to the generous support of many national and local sponsors.

The seminar's **trade show** will run from **8:00 am until noon** in the gymnasium with a variety of exhibits designed to interest equine enthusiasts. The **featured talks begin** in the auditorium at **8:45 am**. Later in the morning, don't miss our presentation of the **Educator of the Year Award**, which will honor a local horse person for his or her service to the horses and riders of western New York. Throughout the seminar you will have lots of chances to win one of our many **door prizes**. **Light refreshments** will be served mid-morning.

This year's program will include an **update on the new targeted deworming strategy** that GVEC introduced in 2009. We will summarize

the rate of parasite egg shedding we have detected in area horses and give you some feedback on how the tactic of "more monitoring, less medication" is working out in our horse community. We will also talk about some real case studies handled by GVEC that relate to the presentations our seminar speakers will deliver.



*Dr. Grice*

**Dr. Amy Grice** will join us as one of our two featured speakers. Her presentation, "**Emergencies: Time to Call the Veterinarian**," will be

a lively discussion about the many things that horses do to get themselves into trouble.

Dr. Grice earned her veterinary degree at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. She has been a practicing equine veterinarian for nearly 20 years at Rhinebeck Equine, one of the premier veterinary clinics in the Hudson Valley.

A former pony clubber and hunter jumper rider, she still rides and enjoys her own horses while teaching introductory classes to students at Marist College in her spare time. Dr. Grice has special interests in many areas of equine practice, including neonatal care, ophthalmology, anesthesia, lameness, and internal medicine.

In her talk, Dr. Grice will discuss common emergencies such as lacerations, choke, fractures, sudden incoordination, sore eyes, swollen legs, and others. You will leave feeling confident that you know what problems you can handle yourself and what things should prompt you to call in the veterinarian.

**Dr. Susan Fubini** will give the second talk of the day, "**The Many Faces of Colic**."

Dr. Fubini is chief of the Large Animal Surgery Section at Cornell University. She has been a staff surgeon at Cornell for nearly



*Dr. Fubini*

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29 years and became a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons in 1987. She began her career with horses in her home state of Virginia, where she rode hunters on the show circuit.

In her lecture Dr. Fubini will explain how horses with abdominal pain are evaluated and how veterinarians determine what is causing the pain. She will discuss the various disorders that cause colic, citing real case examples. After her lecture you will have a better understanding of what colic is, how to recognize a serious case, and modern options for treatment.

We look forward to seeing you on February 6<sup>th</sup>! 

## Parasite Patrol!


Nowadays, savvy horse owners are monitoring more and medicating less in their stable deworming programs. Since April 2009, GVEC technicians have processed more than 1,000 fecal samples, measuring the number of strongyle eggs shed per gram of manure (EPG).

Our regional findings show that:  
**6.4% of horses shed >200 EPG**  
(high shedders)

**5.0% of horses shed 25 to 200 EPG**  
(medium shedders)

**82.6% of horses shed <25 EPG**  
(low shedders)

Our "Parasite Patrol" program is determining which horses are most genetically susceptible to parasites and which are more resistant. Many farms can now control parasite egg passage in their low shedders with just two deworming treatments per year.

Do you know what YOUR horse's "EPG Profile" is? **We advise testing ALL horses in March or April** before the first deworming treatment of the year. For more information, go to our website: [www.gvequine.com](http://www.gvequine.com). 

## DIRECTIONS TO THE

# GVEC Winter Horse Health Seminar



Wheatland-Chili High School  
940 North Road, Scottsville, NY

Saturday, February 6, 2010  
8:00 am to noon



### From the North:

Take Route 383 (Scottsville Rd.) south. At the stoplight past the Dollar General Plaza, turn right (west) onto North Road. WCHS is one mile down on the left.

**From I-390 and Thruway Exit 46:** Take Route 253 west to the Scottsville Rd. stoplight. (Watch the route signs carefully as Route 253 travels along many different roads.) At that intersection, continue straight (west) on North Road. WCHS is one mile down on the left.

**To receive specific directions from other areas,** please consult our web site ([www.gvequine.com](http://www.gvequine.com)), or call the office at (585) 889-1170. The high school is approximately a 15-minute drive from either Thruway Exit 47 from the west or Exit 46 from the east.


## Skin Cancers

Cancer awareness programs abound in human medicine. Virtually everyone gets screened for at least one type of cancer—breast, cervical, colon, or prostate. Cancers of the inside of the body are rare in horses, but cancers of the skin are fairly common. Fortunately screening for these tumors is easy. You can see them! Horse owners should be on the lookout for three common skin tumors: sarcoids, squamous cell carcinomas, and melanomas.

**Sarcoids** are the most common skin tumor. They show up in several different forms. Some are hairless circles, others are wart-like thickened bumps, some are smooth, firm lumps and still others are fleshy, ulcerated masses. Common sites for growth are on the ear or neck, or around the eyelids. They are caused by a virus that is spread by flies. No breed, age, or sex predilection has been found.

**Squamous cell carcinoma** is an invasive tumor that can affect areas of skin, skin mucosa (lining), and sinuses. It is most commonly found on the external genitalia and around the eyes, including the cornea and third eyelid. Some of these tumors look like tiny pink cauliflowers, while others are ulcerated pits in the tissue. They can be very aggressive locally and may harm the function of nearby structures. Horses with light skin about the eyes or genitalia are at risk. Ultraviolet light exposure is thought to be a frequent trigger for the cancer's growth.

**Melanomas** are common tumors of gray horses. More than 80% of horses over 10 years that are gray have at least one. Ranging in size from a blueberry to an orange, melanomas are firm, dark, spherical lumps that often occur in clusters. The most common locations are around the anus, vulva, tail, and sheath. They also can grow on the lips, near the salivary glands in the throat, and around the eyelids. Most melanomas grow slowly. An aggressive, fast growing form may spread internally, but rarely occurs.

For photos and information on diagnosis and treatment of equine skin cancers, visit our website [www.gvequine.com](http://www.gvequine.com) and click on the Educational Resources/Articles page. 

# Spotlight on Breeds: Thoroughbreds

*Racehorses, sporthorses, and so much more*

The Thoroughbred is one of the oldest breeds in the world and was originally developed in England in the 17th century. Traditionally Thoroughbreds are thought to be “hot blooded,” referring to their spirited temperament and speed. Thoroughbreds are probably best known for their careers as racehorses. However, they do well in a variety of disciplines including hunter/jumper, eventing, dressage, trail riding, polo, and foxhunting. Thoroughbreds are also popular for use in breeding programs as a lighter cross to help refine heavier built breeds such as warmbloods, draft breeds, and Quarter horses.



*On the way to the gate.*

The Jockey Club ([www.jockeyclub.com](http://www.jockeyclub.com)) is the official breed registry for Thoroughbreds in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. More than 30,000 foals are registered each year. Unlike other breeds, registered Thoroughbred foals cannot be conceived with the use of artificial insemination or embryo transfer. If the foal makes it to the racetrack, it will receive a tattoo on the inside of the upper lip to identify its age and reg-

istration. The tattoo begins with a letter, which corresponds to the year of the horse's birth, and is followed by a five-digit number. All registered Thoroughbreds receive a January 1<sup>st</sup> birthdate regardless of the month they were born in.

A typical Thoroughbred usually stands between 15.2 h and 17.0 h, and has a well-chiseled head; long sloping shoulders; a deep chest for exceptional lung capacity; lean, flat-muscled body; and powerful hindquarters. The Thoroughbred is designed first and foremost for speed and can maintain speeds of almost 40 mph for up to a mile. Their agility, fluid gaits, powerful athleticism, and “heart” also translate well to other horse sports. They are often excellent jumpers and keen competitors. Thoroughbreds tend to have relatively small feet with a tendency toward long toes and low heels, and are commonly thin soled. Proper shoeing and trimming can prevent the feet from bruising when worked on hard surfaces. With their higher rates of body metabolism, fine coats, and thin skin, Thoroughbreds are not always “easy keepers” and may need more hay or supplemental grain to maintain their weight.

Most Thoroughbreds start racing as two- or three-year-olds. Sometimes athletic injuries halt a racehorse's career prematurely. Superficial digital flexor tendon trauma is one of the most common injuries. The superficial digital flexor tendon runs down the back of the leg and attaches to the pastern. As the horse gallops, this tendon is strained if the fetlock overextends. Other injuries that can occur include carpal (knee) and sesamoid (small bones at the back of the fetlock joint) fractures in addition to stress fractures of the tibia, humerus, cannon bone, and pelvis. Although they may need to be retired from racing after injury, many horses go on to other athletic pursuits or serve as companions. Given their beauty, athleticism, versatility, and spirit, it is not hard to see why Thoroughbreds have remained one of the most popular horse breeds. 🐾

## Finger Lakes Thoroughbred Adoption Program (FLTAP) Gives Horses a Second Chance to Be Winners



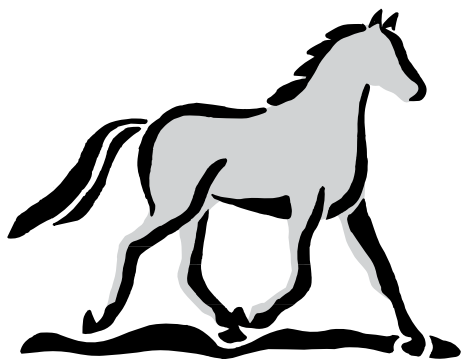
The FLTAP is the first adoption program in the United States to be opened at a Thoroughbred racetrack. The program is headed by a board of directors composed of local business people, veterinarians, owners, and trainers. Adoptable horses are housed at the Purple Haze Center, which is located on two acres at the Finger Lakes Gaming and Racetrack in Farmington, NY.

More than 200 horses have been adopted into new homes since the center opened in 2007. Horse profiles are listed on the FLTAP website [www.fingerlakestap.org](http://www.fingerlakestap.org) and [www.PetFinder.com](http://www.PetFinder.com).


Visitors are welcome 7 days a week between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm. For more information on the adoption process please contact the Purple Haze Center at FLTAP.

Purple Haze Center  
P.O. Box 25043  
5757 Route 96  
Farmington, NY 14425  
(585) 924-9510  
[www.fingerlakestap.org](http://www.fingerlakestap.org)

## Short Courses for 2010



**E**xpand your knowledge by attending one of our Short Courses this coming year. These in-depth classes are fun, interactive, and give you a chance to share your thoughts and experiences with our doctors and other horse people from around the area.

Classes are held at the clinic (925 Chili-Scottsville Road), and the fee is \$8.00, payable at the class. Light refreshments will be served. Class size is limited, so call us at (585) 889-1170 to reserve your space. 

### Tough Times, Hard Decisions

Monday, January 18, 2010  
7–9 pm  
Amy Leibbeck, DVM

Modern medicine has allowed our equine companions to live longer, healthier lives. Still, every horse owner wonders if she or he will know when to make the final decision for his or her horse.

This course will help you weigh the objective and subjective measures of your equine friend's quality of life. We'll describe the actual euthanasia procedure as well as the logistics of body removal and/or burial. Knowing these details well in advance of the actual decision can help you deal directly with your horse and your emotions when the time actually comes.

### The Lower Limb: Inside and Out

Tuesday, February 16, 2010  
7–9 pm  
Celeste Boatwright, DVM

Get up close and personal with the horse's lower limb. Using x-rays, ultrasounds, and an actual dissected leg, you will be able to see and



touch tendons, ligaments, joints, and bones. By the end of the evening you will know the names of the major structures in the horse's distal limb.

### Draft Horse Problems

Wednesday, April 7, 2010  
7–9 pm  
Heidi Schmitt-Weaver, DVM,  
Lake Immunogenics



Draft horses have many medically unique problems, some due to their super-sized bodies, and some due to genetic predisposition. Dr. Weaver oversees the health care of a large fleet of draft horses. She will discuss muscle disorders and special nutritional suggestions that can help alleviate the symptoms of muscle abnormalities. Common problems of the skin, eyes, and feet will also be covered. This is a special opportunity to have your questions answered about these big animals.

### Children's Basic Horsemanship

Saturday, August 7, 2010  
9–11 am  
GVEC Staff

Calling all children! Come and spend a summer morning with other horse-crazy youngsters learning some of the ins and outs of horse anatomy and basic veterinary science. You will learn how to take a horse's temperature, pulse, and respiratory rate. You will also listen to a live horse's heart with a stethoscope, learn how to weigh a horse and how to handle the feet. A fun time is guaranteed for all! Parents are welcome to watch from the sidelines.

### First Aid for Horse Owners

Tuesday, September 28, 2010  
7–9 pm  
Ann Dwyer, DVM

This course will cover basic horse emergencies. We will tell you what you can do to treat simple things yourself and show you how veterinarians can help your horse through problems such as simple colic, choke, lacerations, eye problems, and foaling trouble. Learn how to assemble a home first aid kit, and learn when and how to call for emergency help.



### Colic

Wednesday, October 13, 2010  
7–9 pm  
Rebecca Posner, MRCVS

"Colic" is a frightening word for all horse owners. Colic can be a mild condition that is alleviated by a few walks around the paddock, or a severe condition that requires surgical correction. In a worst-case scenario, it can even cause death. Come and learn more about this common but potentially serious malady—its causes, treatments, and how to prevent it from occurring.

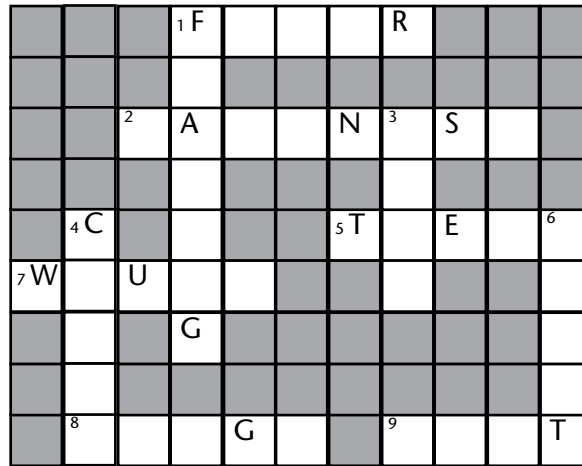


This crossword puzzle includes names of things that vets commonly treat or examine your horse for.

Just fill out the puzzle and send it back to us. Then come to our Winter Horse Health Seminar on February 6th. We will hold a drawing from all the correct entries, and the winner will receive a **PRIZE!**

Send your completed puzzle by **January 15th** to:  
**GVEC, 925 Chili-Scottsville Road, Scottsville, NY 14546.**

## Vet call?



### Across:

- High temperature
- A sore foot, knee, or leg
- These help your horse chew his food
- A cut or scrape
- Sign of an irritated throat
- Horses have four of these

### Down:

- The process of having a baby horse
- Your horse uses these to see
- Name for a horse's belly ache
- Organ that pumps blood through the body

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY, STATE, ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Case Study: Hoof Puncture

*Resist the temptation to take out the object until the vet comes.*

An evening page came through for the GVEC on-call vet. A horse had a metal object stuck in its foot. The vet immediately called the owner back to tell her **NOT** to remove the object, which, thankfully, she had not already done!

When the vet arrived, she found a 10-year-old Thoroughbred gelding standing on crossties with his right front foot barely touching the ground. On closer inspection, she could see the end of what looked like a large screw protruding from the frog of the horse's foot. The vet thanked the owner again for not pulling out the screw before she arrived,




and the owner stated that the farrier had also advised her to leave it in.

Although this does not seem logical, it is crucial to leave the object in the foot. By taking x-rays *with the foreign object in place*, the doctor can determine if the object penetrated any of the multiple important structures in the foot.

Digital X-rays gave an immediate answer, and to the owner's immense relief, the screw completely missed

hitting the horse's coffin and navicular bones, his coffin joint, his flexor tendons, and his navicular bursa, all important structures of the foot. The veterinarian performed a palmar digital nerve block to numb the gelding's foot. The area around the screw was pared out with a hoof knife, and the screw was pulled out.

A hoof abscess is almost inevitable in a situation like this due to the dirt and bacteria that easily becomes trapped in the tissues of a wounded foot. The horse was treated for a hoof abscess by daily soaking and wrapping the hoof. He was also given anti-inflammatory drugs, antibiotics, and stall rest, with a gradual return to exercise.

Fortunately, by keeping the hoof clean and allowing the screw's tract to drain, the gelding has healed and has begun to return to work. 



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Scottsville, NY 14546  
(585) 889-1170

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U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Rochester, NY  
Permit No. 1369

**Mark Your Calendar:  
The Winter Horse Health Seminar Is  
Saturday, February 6!**

## Vets Build Knowledge through Continuing Ed

**C**ontinuing education resources are abundant these days, and our veterinarians at GVEC use them to stay up to date on medical issues and treatments that affect your horses. By staying current, we can improve and enhance our services to your horses—our patients—and better to teach you how to care for them, too.

In 2009 **Dr. Erica Hutten** attended the very first conference of the Northeast Association of Equine Practitioners. Topics included new techniques for addressing mare infertility and how to choose the appropriate imaging tool (x-ray, ultrasound, MRI) for various medical cases.

**Drs. Ann Dwyer and Amy Leibeck** attended the annual American Association of Equine Practitioners meeting.

Equine vets from all over the nation gathered to choose from more than 150 scientific presentations, practice tip sessions, and panel discussions. Topics included evaluating lameness due to musculoskeletal vs. neurological problems, managing laminitis, and advanced dental techniques.

The New York State Veterinary Medical Association held its annual meeting at Cornell. **Dr. Rebecca Posner** attended labs on imaging the head for dental disease and sinus issues, and new therapies for tendon injuries. She also attended a lecture on new ideas for treating EPM (Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis).

**Dr. Megan Mongiovi** attended the Purina Equine meeting held in St. Louis. Dr. Mongiovi toured the research facility where feeds are developed and tested, and also attended lectures exploring current thinking on horse rations.

Some continuing ed offerings focus

on very specific topics. The International Society of Equine Locomotor Pathology offers intensive three-day courses on the use of ultrasound to detect abnormalities in joints. This year **Dr. Celeste Boatwright** completed the course that studied the pelvis and hip.

In addition to keeping ourselves informed, we reach out to share our knowledge with others. During 2009 we welcomed **Girl Scouts, pony clubbers, 4-Hers, pre-veterinary students, LVT students, veterinary students, and farriers** for tours and instruction on a wide range of topics. Our annual **Horse Health Seminar and Short Courses** are other ways that we actively strive to educate our clients.

Gathering new skills and information and sharing that information with the horse community are priorities in our efforts to provide the best health care for horses in the Genesee Valley region. 