

Publisher	Denise P. Hearst
Editor	Mary Jane Parkinson
Managing Editor	Kirsten Mathieson
Senior Sales Associate	Wendy Flynn
Sales/Marketing Consultants	Carol Earnest Jeffrey Wintersteen
Art Director	Melanie K. Davis
Art Production	John Johnson Donna Ellison Carol Kelsey-Frilot Sannie Ricasata
Editorial Staff	Louise Herndon Janet Van Hoorebeke
Circulation/Accounting Manager	Rhonda Hall
Computer Systems	Douglas Tatelman
Staff Writers	Steve Andersen Betty Finke Cindy Reich Genie Stewart-Spears

ARABIAN HORSE WORLD AG

Anita K. Enander
Chief Executive Officer

Anthony Templar
Technology and Information Services

Laura L. Harris
Market and Sales Development

Copyright ©2012 by Arabian Horse World AG

All rights reserved.

Reproductions of contents, either whole or in part,
not permitted without written consent of publisher.

Address all advertising and subscription related queries to:

ARABIAN HORSE WORLD

1316 Tamson Drive, Suite 101, Cambria, CA 93428

Phone: (800) 955-9423 or (805) 771-2300, Fax: (805) 927-6522

www.arabianhorseworld.com · info@arabianhorseworld.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES (NO REFUNDS): All residents of the U.S. and possessions \$40 per year, \$65.00 for two years. Canadian \$72 per year (\$128 two years) in U.S. funds. Foreign \$88 per year (\$160 two years), bank draft in U.S. funds must accompany order. For all subscription information contact 1-800-955-9423. Send new subscription and change of address information to *Arabian Horse World*, 1316 Tamson Drive, Suite 101, Cambria, CA 93428.

RENEWALS: Send to *Arabian Horse World*, 1316 Tamson Drive, Suite 101, Cambria, CA 93428. Allow six weeks for processing.

ARABIAN HORSE WORLD'S WORLDWIDE WEB ADDRESS:

- <http://www.arabianhorseworld.com>
- E-mail should be sent to info@arabianhorseworld.com

Arabian Horse World reserves the right to edit all written materials submitted for publication. Printed in the USA



WHAT IN THE WORLD

The Gift of Clarity

by Denise Hearst

“AT ITS BEST, THOUGHT IS BUT SPECULATION, A PASTIME SUCH AS THE MACHINE ENJOYS WHEN IT SPARKS. GOD HAS THOUGHT EVERYTHING OUT IN ADVANCE. WE HAVE NOTHING TO SOLVE: IT HAS ALL BEEN SOLVED FOR US. WE HAVE BUT TO MELT, TO DISSOLVE, TO SWIM IN THE SOLUTION. WE ARE SOLUBLE FISH AND THE WORLD IS AN AQUARIUM.”

— Henry Miller

The quote above was brought to mind by trainer Leslie Hammel-Turk's assertion that everything we want the horse to do, he already knows how to do. We just have to learn how to ask.

A couple of weeks ago, Leslie (author of the *Arabian Horse World* article and video series, “The Espejo Project” http://www.arabianhorseworld.com/videos/espejo_project/) called and said she'd like to come to my place and show me some things she'd been working on. She asked if I could round up a few horses with issues and riders who might need some help problem solving. Oh boy, could I!

So last weekend a few of us gathered at my place with two purebred Arabians, a three-quarter Arab, an Irish Hunter, two Appys, six women, one man, two teens, and a dog.

This little group watched in awe as Leslie brought her theories to life through her deft touch of the mecate rein and a soft leg. From a family of scientists, it's clear that Leslie spends sleepless nights analyzing the psychology of the equine mind and puzzling over the physics of movement. What's that got to do with our trail rides? Some of us may have wondered early in the day.

As she talked and rode, the influence of her studies with Ray Hunt shone through in comments like, “see how little it takes, but get a change” and “set it up for them to run into their own pressure.” She threw in some Buck Brannaman, explaining his tool for thinking about how and where to set up the pressure, as though there is an imaginary rectangle around the horse — a box with front, back, sides, four corners, and a top and bottom. When the horse runs into the walls of the rectangle, he runs into his own pressure because that is where the rider applies the pressure.

And the horse's “birdie,” a metaphor for the horse's attention, and how the horse is at peace when the birdie is in its nest a few inches in front of the horse's face. When something grabs the horse's attention, the birdie flies off to investigate — and the greater the distance between the horse and its birdie, the more intense the anxiety behavior.

All these mental journeys and years in the saddle have coalesced for Leslie into what she calls, “The Gift of Clarity,” based on the realization



PHOTO BY ALI

Leslie Hammel-Turk works with KH Pennington (AM Ben Dream x FV Aulana) and EVG Abigail (Llewellyn Fawr x Gae Guinevere). "What struck me most about watching Leslie was how quickly the horses settled into her rhythm, at ease and responsive," says Melanie Davis. "In just a few minutes with Abby she brought back her 'birdie,' something that flies away often when she is out of her comfort zone. And working with the horses in a strange environment, complete with large earth-moving equipment rolling by not 20 feet away and a chilly breeze, provided Leslie with plenty of opportunities to demonstrate the horses' willingness to get along."

that the horse wants to get along, but needs to understand what is being asked of him. Clarity can help the horse deliver all that the rider desires. You'll be reading more about this in her upcoming articles for *Arabian Horse World*.

It's one thing to read her words, but when she's sitting on your horse, you see the results of her finesse and impeccable timing. In a matter of minutes, that's your horse stepping across with his inside hind or fore and yielding in a way that makes it clear that he is asking, "I'm ready, what would you like me to do?"

Now that Leslie's flown back to New Mexico, my friends and I will tinker with the tools she left behind. Maybe we'll ask for our horses' attention in a new way, or be braver on the trail because we'll be more aware of "that thing that happened before the thing you didn't want to happen, happened."

My friend Joan observed, "The articles about Leslie's techniques are good, but words are always and only just more information to process. I was not able to appreciate her contribution until I

witnessed it. A horse's eyes tell the whole story. Her work is about transformation, consciousness, and communication. I think people have to experience what she does, by watching her do it in the flesh. It is impressive to say the least."

And as Ali said, "My life with horses was never more clear than when I watched Leslie establish a dialog with Willie, the Irish Thoroughbred in my life. She gave me clarification on the humanity involved in horsemanship, and helped put in perspective the trials Willie and I have had over the years. With the new lines of communication Leslie gave us, I look forward to being on the same page with Willie."

Maybe you won't be seeing us in the showing any time soon, and perhaps we'll struggle to emulate Leslie's timing, but we're all looking for harmony with our horses and aspire to be the leaders our horses deserve. A few hours with Leslie helped us get a little closer.

I think my friend Joni summed it up for all of us when she wrote, "I have a fabulous horse with no baggage. She is

honest, trusting, and happy. I want to be the one who allows her to stay that way. I want my hands to be the ones she looks forward to moving into. I want my legs to allow her to feel safe and supported. I want my seat to be steady and never jarring on her giving back. I want her to always be happy to see me getting the saddle and tacking up, and feel joy of the ride for each of us, both feeling free and safe as we continue to explore both new and well-traveled trails. The tools have been passed down from rider to rider throughout the ages, from classical dressage, to the Vaquero way of natural horsemanship. We strive to let the horse express with freedom, beauty, and grace what it can do naturally.

"I was privileged to spend time with Leslie this weekend, and watched six very different horses, including two of my own, feel totally at peace with her. They moved freely with purpose and without trouble or concern. I want to continue to work toward that goal. My fondest dream is to ride my horse with the trust and joy that she has already offered me, and to be that 'good deal' she looks for."