

Such
Great
Heights...
At Braymoore Stables



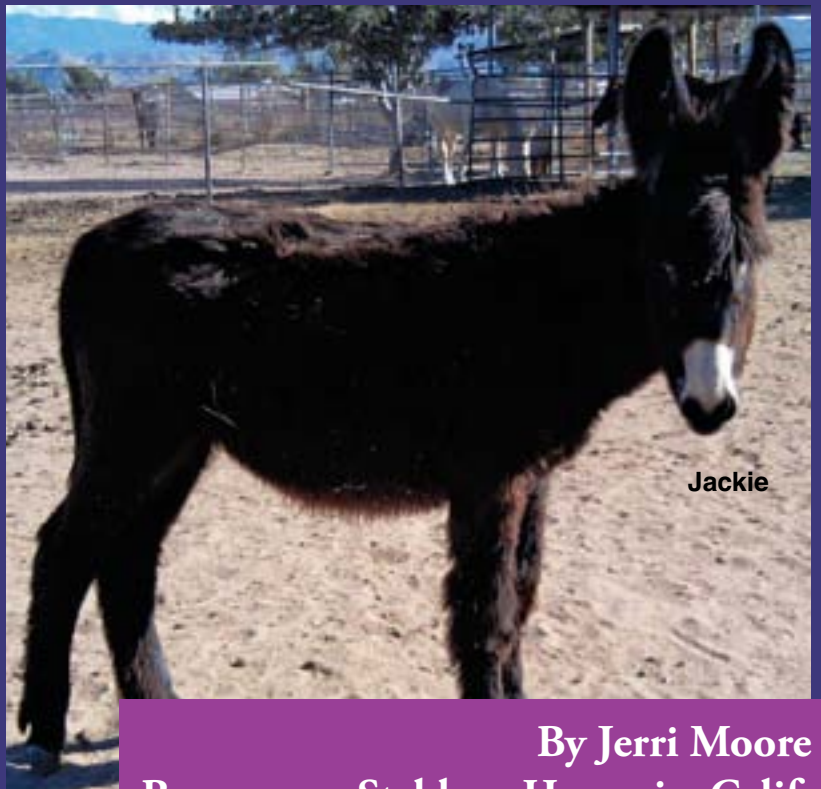
Cuddles



OnStar



Equine Dentist Melissa Shurr



Jackie

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The year 2011 started out uneventful here at Braymoore Stables. Charlie and I reviewed our plans for the coming year, along with the calendar from 2010. We went through the list of jennets to see who was open and when the others were due to foal; we were so busy cleaning up the ranch and shipping semen we didn't get any of our own stock bred. To our surprise only Martha was in foal and due in February, that was because we took her to breed to Jacque Benny. Our prayers were answered in February when she presented us with a beautiful black jennet, Jacqueline, named after her sire. Jacque Benny is owned by friends, Glen and Carol West of West Farms, Las Vegas, NV. If you have gone into our website you have noticed we seem to have a lot of black donkeys at the ranch. Our jack, Rooster has a very strong color gene.

We are pleased with the results of the cross between our stock and Jacque Benny and will be breeding Martha and her full sister Maggie to him this year.

Charlie and I weren't able to spend much time getting ready for Bishop Mule Days last year. I had a corporate project going and spent six days a week and 10-15 hours a day at work. This left very little time for riding. We decided to just prepare for halter classes and see if we could get in any riding

classes. Charlie was able to drive Condor to prepare him for pleasure driving events, and get him in shape for halter. We struggled with Condor's weight most of the winter; he kept going off his feed and we couldn't figure out his loss in appetite. By the time we got to Bishop he was fit, but still not carrying his normal weight. While at Bishop we met an equine dentist Melissa Shurr, and Charlie was talking to her about Condor. She was kind enough to check out Condor's teeth and showed us where he was literally chewing on the inside of his cheeks.

Melissa told us she was in our area a few times a year and if we wanted she could check out our stock. In June Melissa came by and evaluated all the stock in the yard.

She took the sharp edges off the ones that were in need of it. We had her do a full dental work up on all of riding stock. Condor was first; it was fascinating to watch Melissa and she explained everything she was doing as she went along. Charlie, as usual, was being the photographer and had the camera almost in Condor's mouth to take pictures of everything she was pointing out. Thank goodness Condor is patient. Melissa explained the difference between what we call getting their teeth floated and the full dental work up she does. We do the annual tooth check up with a vet, but what an equine dentist does is so much more. She explained



Corey, Charlie, their snowman, and the donkeys

how the alignment of the jaw and teeth can affect not only the animal's ability to chew food properly, but also the way they perform. We are convinced to use an equine dentist from now on.

As we mentioned, we spent most of 2010 working on the ranch. This used to be a racehorse ranch, which explains a lot. The tack room was elevated three foot off the ground, with steps going up into it. After spending over a year carrying heavy western saddles and harness up and down those darn stairs, we finally moved the tack room, which doesn't require steps. After moving the tack room we drew up plans to replace the area with an insemination and collection clinic in the future.

Charlie worked on outside turnouts; we had eight 40x60 foot turnouts along the racetrack that needed repairs. Charlie, assisted by ranch helpers Greg and Shawn, removed the fencing on the back twenty feet to convert them to 40x40 foot runs with shelters. In one day they used a rented hydraulic auger and made over 70 holes in the yard; most of the holes were used to reset the fence posts for the runs, while the rest were used to plant trees Charlie had ordered. He ordered 20 poplar to go along the race track, 20 hickory to plant along the fence behind the mobile home office, and a few sugar maples to put by the house, so we could enjoy the color change in the fall. Once they mature our place should look like an oasis in the desert.

Our son Corey turned 10 years old in September, and he is getting big enough to increase his chores. He has been responsible for keeping all the trees and animals watered, which takes over an hour every day. Charlie recently purchased automatic watering floats for the 150 gallon stock tanks in the larger pens. Corey told me the other day that the new watering things came in the mail and soon he wouldn't have to fill the big water tubs anymore. He was very excited. We added feeding to Corey's list of chores; he now rides on the back of the flatbed and tosses hay into the feeders.

Corey's cute little red donkey we purchased from Pete Cooper of Miami, Okla., has turned into quite a handful. Charlie bought her because the red donkeys tend to be a little more docile than the stock we raise. Cuddles has been living out in the field with our other young stock and is not as docile as we had anticipated. I think our girls were a bad influence.

In July we headed to Pittsburgh for Charlie's 41st class reunion. I was excited to finally see his hometown of Oakmont. We stayed with one of his old neighbors, Bill and Debbie, that still live in the area in an old 1800's farmhouse they renovated. They own Tennessee Walkers and we went riding several times out in the woods, along the golf course they used to own. The reunion was a blast with most class members in attendance. They came from all over the country, and some from overseas.

As fall approached we started to think about plans for 2011 and realized Rooster was going to be 25 years old. He is still pretty spry for an "old timer," so we plan to take him to Bishop Mule Days one more time in order for him to celebrate his birthday. Charlie purchased Rooster at Mule Days when he was only nine months old and we felt it would only be fitting to have his birthday party there. We have been driving him to get him back in shape and he seems to know something is up; he has the old twinkle back in his eyes. Rooster seemed so depressed when we retired him five years ago; he would see us packing the trailer to head out for a show and would start pacing in his pen in anticipation of going along. He seemed so mad

when the other animals were loaded and he was left behind. The folks that cared for the stock when we were away said Rooster would bray all day and night while we were gone. By the time we returned following a show Rooster would have worn a trench a couple feet deep as he paced in frustration. I know he'll enjoy being the center of attention at Mule Days. He was such a fierce competitor, always wanting to do more; it will be great fun to have him around again at the show. Everyone is invited to come by our stalls on Wednesday to visit Rooster and to enjoy birthday cake and help us celebrate.

The year ended with a torrential rainstorm; we received 27 inches of rain the week prior to Christmas, and the road in front of the ranch became a raging river. Luckily Corey was out of school and I had taken the week off work, so we didn't have to go anywhere. Charlie had spent the summer grading the place so we stayed as dry as we could. The front pasture did turn into a small lake since that is where all the water flowed into. The only issue we did have was when the high winds took a couple of sections of barn roof off and lodged them in the trees by the pool. We then received a nice snowstorm after the New Year; it was only eight inches, but Charlie and Corey were able to make a snowman that lasted about a week.

Charlie and I would like to pay our respects to Dr. Tex Taylor, who passed away last year. Dr. Taylor's dedication to the improvement of the American Mammoth Jack Stock will be remembered by all who love and support the breed. He will be greatly missed by all who have known him, and his legacy will live on in the the American Jack Stock breed he loved so much.

Dr. Taylor is the reason why Charlie and I started raising our donkeys, and we are blessed to have known him.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the folks that have purchased our fine animals and continue to breed their donkeys and horses to our jacks. We appreciate your business and hope all of you enjoy your donkeys and mules. A special congratulations to Jerry Rush of Sycamore Springs Ranch in Locust Grove, Okla. and his son of Rooster, Sycamore Springs Joe, on winning 2010 North American Saddle Mule Association's All Around High Point Donkey. Thank you to Peggy Reed on her purchase of a fine Rooster daughter; we look forward to seeing them compete at Bishop this year. We would also like to thank our farrier, Roger Rickards, who has been with us for the past 10 years and who has been instrumental in our success in the performance achievements we have accomplished.

Happy Birthday Rooster.....you have taken us to great heights!!

To contact Jerri and Charlie at Braymoore Stables in Hesperia, Calif., call the ranch at (760) 983-0480, email braymoore@msn.com, or visit www.braymoorestables.com.