

Who and What

- According to figures published in World Grain, 2008 was the worst year for **grain bin entrapments (22) and fatalities (10)** in the last nine years. The numbers reflect only incidents at commercial facilities, excluding occurrences on private farms.
- **The garland of roses** placed over the withers of the horse winning the **Kentucky Derby** requires about **80 hours** of preparation. The final assembly is done the night before the race and takes 10 to 12 hours. More than 400 roses, each with its own small vial of water, are hand-sewn to the fabric.
- In preparation for the 2010 **World Equestrian Games**, the Kentucky Horse Park is putting the finishing touches on a **new air-conditioned indoor arena**. More than a dozen **new events** are already booked into the facility through 2014, and many events that already take place at the park will move into the indoor arena when it is completed.
- Recent research suggests a possible relationship between **thyroid function and anhidrosis**, the inability to sweat. In a study in North Carolina, anhidrotic horses showed a different reaction to thyroid releasing hormone than did control horses, and the difference was more pronounced in winter months. The importance of this finding is **not clear as to the need for supplementation with thyroid hormones or iodine**, and does not prove that anhidrosis is caused by thyroid imbalances.
- American **ethanol** facilities produced over **9.2 billion gallons** of ethanol in 2008. This **figure was up more than 40%** from 2007 totals. The United States fuel ethanol industry is based largely on corn.
- **Skeletal turnover in horses** produces molecular entities known as biomarkers. Found in the blood or urine, biomarker levels can often be an **indicator of impending fractures** as much as six weeks before the horse show any signs of lameness or discomfort. In a study involving 145 California racehorses, about half the horses developed bone chips or stress fractures during the ten-month study period, and biomarker levels predicted these injuries in 70% of the subjects.
- A system developed in Australia and tested in the United Arab Emirates promises to produce large amounts of **high-quality animal fodder using only 5% of the water** required in traditional growth systems. The technique uses a 12-meter shipping container to produce 700 kilograms of fodder, roughly equivalent to the amount grown on 20 hectares of land.
- Information found on www.greenerworking.com indicates that companies can see **multiple benefits** if they “go green” by **letting employees telecommute**. Research reveals that employees who work from home are 15% to 45% more productive than office-bound workers, according to a note on this site.

- **Jockeys have the most dangerous job**, according to an article in the American Quarter Horse Racing Journal. On average, **two jockeys are killed each year** out of a pool of around 2250 who ride at least an occasional race. Firefighting, listed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health as the most dangerous occupation, has a death rate only one-tenth as high, and that figure is based only on full-time professional firefighters and does not include huge numbers of volunteer or part-time firefighters.
- The Equine Research Foundation in California conducted a **study to investigate how well horses remember things they have learned**. Horses were taught to choose open-centered shapes over solid shapes, larger objects over smaller objects, and a picture of a particular thing such as a football out of a series of pictures of various objects. Horses **retained the learned skills when tested six, seven, and ten years later**. Trainers need to consider this long-term memory as they work with horses that may continue to react to signals, sights, or situations encountered in past years.
- Tack 'n Togs reports that, in a recent twelve-month period, the **average horse owner** responding to a survey conducted by the American Pet Products Manufacturer's Association spent **\$1,103 on feed**; \$168 on bridles and bits; \$149 on blankets and wraps; \$138 on medications and supplements; and \$130 on boots, bandages, and accessories. **Cost of feed exceeded total expenditures** for the next nine categories combined.

Wins and Wows

- In Argentina's equivalent of the Eclipse Awards, **Life of Victory** was named Horse of the Year and also champion stayer and champion older horse at the Carlos Pellegrini Awards ceremony. **La Gran Portada**, dam of Life of Victory, was named Broodmare of the Year.
- The Peruvian Superior Council of Sporting Justice and Sporting Honors has awarded its highest honor, the Sporting Laurels, to jockey **Edgar Prado** in recognition of his outstanding achievements in racing. Prado won an Eclipse Award in 2006 and was the first Peruvian inducted into the Racing Hall of Fame in 2008.
- At the annual meeting of the United States Equestrian Foundation, **George Morris** was named USEF Coach of the Year and **Eugene R. Mische** was honored with the USEF Lifetime Achievement Award. Both men have devoted decades of effort to the growth and development of equestrian sport in the United States.
- The Sovereign Awards recognized **Fatal Bullet** as Canadian Horse of the Year and also Champion Sprinter. **Van Lear Rose** was named Champion 2-Year-Old Filly, **Mine That Bird** was Champion 2-Year-Old Male, **Ginger Brew** was Champion 3-Year-Old Filly, **Not Bourbon** was Champion 3-Year-Old Male, **Rahy's Attorney** was Champion Turf Male, and **Callwood Dancer** was Champion Turf Female.
- **Somebeachsomewhere** was named Horse of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association and North American race secretaries. **Deweycheatumanhowe** was runner-up for the honor. The two Standardbreds were also named Pacer and Trotter of the Year, respectively. **Ray Schnittker** was honored with Trainer of the Year and Haughton Good Guy awards.
- **Chase the Wind**, an Arabian gelding, was named Distance Horse of the Year by the Arabian Horse Association. Owned by Suzanne Huff of Gardnerville, Nevada, Chase the Wind completed nine endurance races during 2008. He was named best conditioned horse in two of those races. The gelding has completed a number of races in the 50- to 100-mile category and has competed every year since 1997.