

Applegater

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Photo: Barbara Holiday

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Rogue Valley horse whisperer tames the wild ones

BY ANNETTE PARSONS

Local horse trainer, Jani Zigray-Cochran has a reputation as a horse whisperer of sorts. She has a special talent for training wild mustangs to be solid, calm, and dependable saddle horses. She trains domestic horses as well, but her niche as a mustang trainer is set. "I didn't plan to specialize in mustangs, it just happened that way."

The native of Brookings, Oregon, grew up with horses and spent much of her time on her grandfather's cattle ranch along the Chetco River. After high school, Jani spent several years in Colorado, apprenticing at some large horse facilities. She returned to Oregon in 1989, coming to the Rogue Valley to go back to school and to be closer to her family. She has been active in many local horse groups and



Rue learns to cross a creek.

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What a GRREAT ride!

Tiger owner, actress and lifelong equestrian meanders down memory lane

BY BARBARA HOLIDAY

Grants Pass denizen Dee Arlen lived a grand life in Hollywood in days gone by. She gave up that life—as an actress and an interior designer to the stars—to live with her tiger, B.C. (Beautiful Cat), in southern Oregon near Wilderville. When I visited her equine property recently, she recounted her glamour days while pouring her guests vintage white wine in crystal glasses and serving home-made hors d'oeuvres. Dressed in a full-length designer gown, which still fits her some 40 years later, she recalled the glory days of Hollywood.

But first B.C. B.C. has been gone for a while now, a victim of kidney disease, but she is not far from her owner's mind. She was just six weeks old when Dee saved B.C. from a life in the circus. At their first meeting, B.C. kept biting Dee. Soon after, though, the biting turned to cuddling. The cuddling continued for 20 years.

It was B.C. who was responsible for bringing Dee to southern Oregon. Los Angeles bureaucrats wouldn't allow her to keep a domesticated "wild" animal, so she moved around and about LA several times in an attempt to keep B.C. there—even staying in a Travelodge for three weeks with B.C. and two dogs. B.C. enjoyed her life in LA, even visiting bars where "she used to bite the butts of pool players." But eventually they had nowhere to go.

At the time, southern Oregon did not require a permit for exotic animals. So it was here that B.C. lived out her days. Like any cherished pet, B.C. slept on her owner's bed every night. Dee and B.C. were together 24/7.

Photo top: Dee has the original of this sketch, by artist and friend Valerie Vrooman, framed on a wall in her office, and has had its likeness printed on note cards.

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Benefit for the *Applegater*

Art in the Applegate

Valley View Winery, February 28 and March 1
Saturday and Sunday, 11 am – 5 pm



Carol Taylor

Over many years we, as a community, have enjoyed our *Applegater*. With this issue the *Gater* is going into quarterly publication—downsizing due to current economic constraints. Now is our opportunity to join some of Oregon's premier artists as we come together for our Annual Art Benefit Show at Valley View Winery.

J.D. Rogers will be doing a book signing of his recently published book, *Rambling Rants and Doggie Tales*. Meet the author and get your copy of his book signed while enjoying a fine glass of Valley View's best wines.

This year we are proud to welcome Peggy Bjerkan from St. Helena, California. Peggy began making masks a few years ago as a result of her fascination with masks as ritual objects. These masks are a commentary on life and the human condition,

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