

(Continued from page 22)

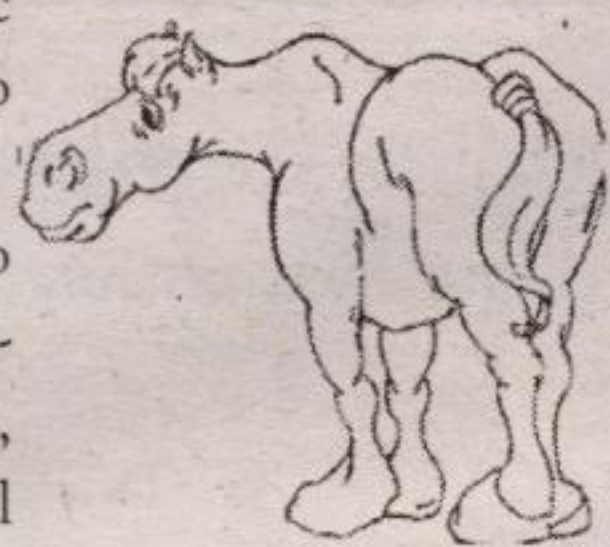
tional medicine.

"It's something extra you can use as a resource," she said. "I like to think of it as complimentary."

Dr. Frost also uses acupuncture to compliment both traditional and chiropractic treatments in order to obtain optimal results.

Though Ontario is full of human chiropractic practitioners, the equine field is still limited. The American Veterinary Chiropractic Association of Illinois offers the only certified program in the world. However, Dr. Frost is confident that in the future animal chiropractic treatment will continue to expand as people learn more about its benefits.

"It hasn't been around too



long (certified program) only about 12 years," Dr. Frost said. "As more and more people become aware of it (chiropractic treatment) it will become more popular."

Obviously animal owners are pleased with the chiropractic treatments but what do Dr. Frost's patients think about it? From her experience, they thoroughly enjoy it.

"I haven't had any bad experiences with my chiropractic on dogs or horses. Horses seem to love the whole chiropractic experience."

For more information on finding an animal chiropractic practitioner in your area contact the AVCA at 309-658-2958 or visit their web site at [www.animalchiropractic.org](http://www.animalchiropractic.org). To contact Dr. Frost call 519-821-8142.

## West Nile Virus threat to Ontario horses

by Dr. Paul Innes  
Special to The Compass

As of August 20, two dead wild birds in Ontario have tested positive for the West Nile Virus (WNV), based on initial screening. Confirmatory laboratory test results are pending.

The two birds, a crow from the Windsor area and a blue jay from Oakville, are among the more than 1800 such birds reported to Public Health Units across the province since May. All the others, so far, have tested negative. Because of the potential for serious illness from this virus in some people and horses, the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) want to remind horse owners of some basic information and preventative measures they can take to reduce the risks of WNV infection.

There are many causes of central nervous system disease in the horse, including viral, bacterial, parasitic, developmental or traumatic disease. The viral causes of brain or spinal cord disease affecting horses include: the arboviruses, herpes viruses and rabies. For more information on viral encephalitis in horses, refer to the information sheet Equine Viral Encephalitis at [www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/livestock/horses/health.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/livestock/horses/health.html) or contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre 1-877-424-1300.

The arbovirus diseases are the viral diseases that are spread by various arthropods, such as mosquitoes, biting flies and ticks. In general, the signs of arboviral diseases include fever, depressed demeanor, altered behaviour, incoordination, paralysis and death. The viruses are transmitted from insects, such as mosquitoes, to horses and occur during the seasons when the insects are active (summer and fall). Birds are the natural hosts for these viruses. Two such mosquito-borne disease of concern to Ontario are Eastern Equine Encephalitis

(EEE) and West Nile Virus.

In Ontario, EEE has been identified in horses that reside in the province or have become infected while traveling through other areas of North America. People, horses, pigs and birds may become infected, during periods of high mosquito populations. Eighty to 90 per cent of infected horses develop acute and lethal disease with survivors developing neurologic signs. From 1938 until the fall of 1992, there were no cases of EEE diagnosed in Ontario. Since 1992, there have been three sporadic EEE infections in Ontario. Cases have been diagnosed this summer in Michigan and Wisconsin.

WNV was first detected in North America in 1999, in New York. In 2000, the virus was detected in several states, and close to the Ontario border. This year, it has been found as far south as Florida, where three people and 23 horses have been diagnosed with the disease. The disease will first become apparent by causing mortality in wild birds, especially crows. The incubation period of a WNV infec-

tion is usually five to 15 days. Horses have a rapidly progressive disease.

### Prevention

While a vaccine for EEE is available, there is currently no vaccine to prevent disease caused by WNV. DEET-based fly-sprays, approved for use on horses, have limited duration repellent effect for mosquitoes (2-8 hours depending on the concentration). You can reduce the number of mosquitoes around your home and neighbourhood by reducing the amount of standing water available for mosquito breeding. Eliminate any area where water can pool, e.g. old tires, unused buckets, rain barrels or water troughs. Horses should be kept indoors or out of cool, shady, moist areas during dawn and dusk, the peak mosquito activity times.

Contact your veterinarian for advice regarding prevention of these and other disease. More information on WNV prevention is available from your local Public Health Unit.



## Riding Safety Equipment Becomes Law

Special to The Compass

If you operate a commercial riding establishment, Bill 12 applies to you and your clients. On June 28, 2001, after first being introduced to the Ontario Legislature in December of 2000, the Horse Riding Safety Act, 2001, passed its third and final reading with all-party support and a unanimous vote for approval.

Bill 12 requires all riders under the age of 18, riding a horse at a commercial facility, to wear a helmet that meets current standards for equipment designed and manufactured for use while riding horses as established by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM), the British Standards Institute (BSI) or the European Safety Standards; hard soled footwear with a heel of no less than 1.5 cm and/or safety stirrups (breakaway or hooded) as well as tack properly fitted on the horse.

The Bill has made amendments to the Highway Traffic Act that makes it an offense for anyone under the age of 18 to ride on a road, highway or trail without proper safety equipment. Ninety days after receiving Royal Assent from the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, Bill 12 will become law. Facilities found to be in contravention of the law can be fined up to, but no more than \$5000.

The sad and unfortunate death of 10 year old Elizabeth Hadar at Wagon Wheel Ranch in April 1999 strongly affected Thornhill MPP Tina Molinari and motivated her to introduce the Horse Riding Safety Act in order to help increase the safety of young horseback riders in our province. It is believed that an approved helmet and proper footwear may have prevented Elizabeth's death.

Although Bill 12 only addresses riders under the age of 18 and also excludes competitions, MPP Tina Molinari, the Ontario Equestrian Federation and the Association of Riding Establishments of Ontario believe that it is only a matter of time before this legislation is made stronger by people coming forward to lobby for amendments.

It is believed there are thousands of commercial riding facilities in Ontario and over 100,000 horses available to the general public for use in lessons or trail rides. Any and all efforts to ensure the safety of Ontario youth is a common goal of the equine community. Bill 12 is an enormously positive step in our continuing objective to create a horse industry in Ontario that demands safe, quality care and accountability.

For more information or a copy of Bill 12 please contact the Ontario Equestrian Federation 416-426-7232 or e-mail [horse@horse.on.ca](mailto:horse@horse.on.ca).

## Horse News and Views



- ◆ The American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) recommends that foals from non vaccinated mares receive their first vaccination for tetanus (tetanus toxoid) between 3 and 4 months of age. The second vaccination should be given between 4 and 5 months of age, followed by a third vaccination between 5 and 6 months of age. Foals from vaccinated mares should receive their first vaccination for tetanus at 6 months of age followed by booster vaccinations at 7 and 8 to 9 months of age. Tetanus vaccination should be repeated annually thereafter. Brood mares should be vaccinated annually 4 to 6 weeks before foaling. (AAEP - Guidelines for Vaccination of Horses, Jan. 2001)
- ◆ The second Annual Guelph Conference on Equine Nutrition will be held on Saturday, October 20, 2001, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm at the Lifetime Learning Centre, Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph. The program is designed to meet the needs of equine veterinarians and professional horse persons. It will address basic digestive physiology and anatomy, growth and development (with special emphasis on feeding of energy and minerals/mineral balance) and the use of specific dietary supplements in the management/control of musculoskeletal diseases. The conference speakers include: Dr. Laurie Lawrence, University of Kentucky, Dr. Harold Hintz, Cornell University and Drs. John Burton, Mark Hurtig and Henry Staempfli of the University of Guelph. For conference schedule and registration information, visit [www.open.uoguelph.ca/equine](http://www.open.uoguelph.ca/equine) or contact the Office of Open Learning, University of Guelph, tel: (519) 767-5000, fax: (519) 767-1114, e-mail: [info@open.uoguelph.ca](mailto:info@open.uoguelph.ca).

For further information contact Dr. Bob Wright (519) 846-3412 or visit our website: <http://www.gov.on.ca/omafra/english/livestock/horses>

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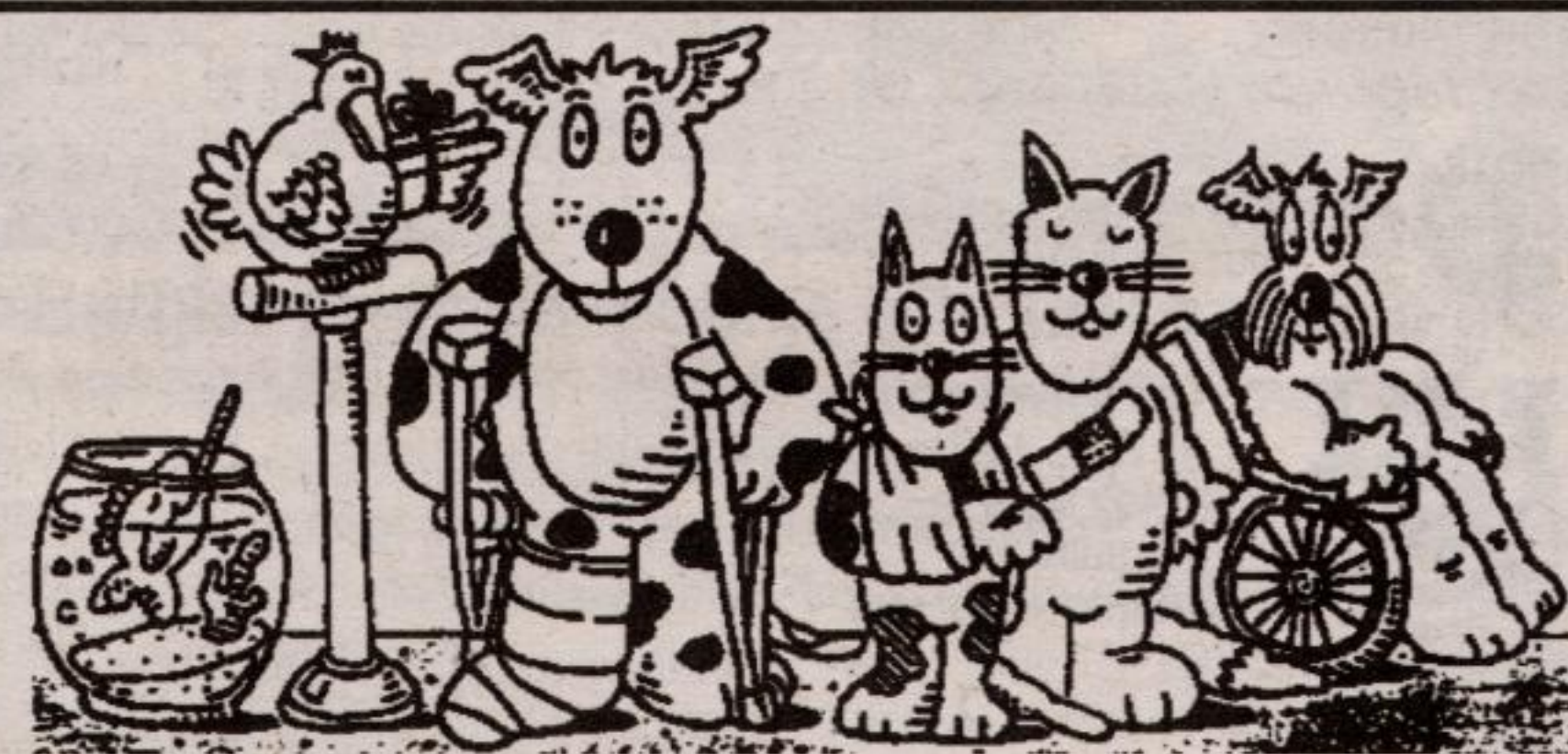
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