

Chaparral Corporation Equestrian Program in Golden Gate Park

7/6/2021

Date: 7/6/2021

To: Brian DeWitt, Property Manager

Re: Chaparral Corporation Equestrian Program in Golden Gate Park

Please note that the below letter reflects a compilation of information shared by multiple former members of the Chaparral Golden Gate Park staff, who have wished to remain anonymous individually. While some subjective opinions were included to be thorough, we tried to provide dates, photos, and objective details whenever possible. We'd also like to note that our focus in this letter is on the wellbeing of the horses, rather than on the well-being or experience of the staff or the clients. Everyone who provided information that what they shared was accurate and truthful to the best of their knowledge. The intent of this letter is to raise awareness with appropriate parties who can improve the conditions.

We write this letter to document ongoing and previous instances of what we believe to be neglect witnessed while working at Chaparral Corporation at the Golden Gate Park location in San Francisco. These horses have been housed in Golden Gate Park at stables constructed near the Bercut Equitation arena since November 2019. While initially the business was intended to be a pilot program, it appears the program has been extended without adequate evaluation. The still-increasing popularity of the activity has attracted at least hundreds of new and returning riders, placing an unsustainable demand on the facilities, employees' ability to provide adequate care/maintenance, and on the horses, many of whom are older and come with existing weaknesses.

In my time as an employee, I have seen more injuries to horses than at any other facility I have seen and a lack of timely response by the owners. I have been to various facilities around the SF Bay area over the course of 15 years and have boarded a horse at 4 separate facilities, even spending a year as a working student at one of them. I have also interacted regularly with upwards of 3-4 other programs in that time. Chaparral's management is significantly worse with one exception (no longer in business).

On-site management changed 3 times during my tenure, and their responses and ability to act varied and was significantly limited by the corporate management's instructions. When I raised various concerns to the then immediate management (no longer working for Chaparral), they expressed that such things were expected at Chaparral and had happened before. And following, in my time employed (almost 11 months) I began to see many issues reoccur with greater frequency. The causes of these issues are multifold and overlapping, so I will do my best to address them in an organized manner.

To those reading, I have found [UC Davis' "A Guide: Minimum Standards of Equine Care in the State of California"](#) to be an invaluable lens through which to view the conditions at Chaparral GGP. There are helpful guides to many of the issues addressed here and for future management plans, including sheets in the back for investigators.

I would like to write in earnest that, under competent management, I believe Chaparral Corporation is capable of making these changes without disturbing much of the client base and that an equestrian program in Golden Gate Park can be run successfully for the horses and the community. This document is intended to improve the welfare of the horses, the professional appearance of the program, and to improve employee retention. I acknowledge the difficulty in managing multiple equestrian facilities remotely, yet hope that this document is taken as a clear indication that changes must be made. In my time there, it was rare to encounter clients who were anything but eager and devoted to their time around the horses and the community regularly inquired about their well-being and hopes that they were kept responsibly. Meanwhile, I saw many staff members resign due to the condition of the horses and what appeared as apathy from the owners.

I strongly recommend that negotiations with Chaparral include regular oversight by experienced horsepeople. To the layperson many aspects of horse welfare can be obscure and not immediately apparent.

Thank you for your attention.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Enclosures	4
Shelter	14
Equipment	19
Hoof Care	21
Routine Health Care	26
Dental Care & Ulcer Risk	27
Urgent Medical Care	31
Workload	34
Recommendations for Improvement	38
Individual Horse Recommendations	41

Enclosures

[California Code - HSC § 25988a](#)

(a) Any enclosure where an equine is primarily kept shall be of sufficient size to enable the equine to comfortably stand up, turn around, and lie down, and shall be kept free of excessive urine and waste matter.

Chaparral's "barn" consists of a block of 10'x10' temporary stalls as well as 6 12'x12' outdoor, unsheltered stalls. These indoor stalls are easy to assemble and only used at showing facilities such as Woodside Horse Park. They are intended to house horses for a maximum of 5 days, usually less. The use of these stalls has compromised the welfare of these horses in numerous ways.

The indoor stalls are, firstly, too small for most of the horses in them to be able to lay down safely and comfortably. Horses spend the majority of their day, naturally, in a standing position and can even sleep standing up. However, to achieve REM sleep horses must lay down for a minimum of 30 minutes per day, but have been observed to sleep laying down up to and



exceeding 2hrs/day. Horses that are not able to achieve this requirement suffer from recumbent sleep deprivation. Because of this need to achieve REM sleep (which aids in healing), horses suffering from long-term sleep deprivation will buckle at the knees and can even collapse as their body relaxes the muscles. They will also demonstrate a very low head carriage, resting their nose below their knees (*Left: Spirit demonstrating the posture of a sleep-deprived horse. She had recently injured her stifle joint which is a weight-bearing joint in the hind legs and was most likely unwilling to endure the strain that rising out of a laying down position would have caused her.*) Horses that are simply

resting will carry their head level, with a flat or slightly sloped line from their withers to their ears. In my time at Chaparral, I witnessed multiple instances of horses showing mild buckling at the knees (I particularly remember Abby, Spirit, Beemer, and Skye). Footage is available upon request of Abby nearly buckling and may exist for Spirit collapsing onto her knees. Each time I saw it the horses were able to catch themselves before they fell but the signs were clear. On the date of the above picture (February 2021) I saw Spirit nearly buckle once, and witnessed it multiple times since. In cases of long-term sleep deprivation, horses will literally collapse which makes them very likely to injure themselves.

The size of the stall plays a role in the horses' decision to not lay down. If they were to lay down and be unable to get up (become "cast") they would be extremely likely to sustain injury while thrashing. Additionally, it is dangerous for horses to remain laying down for too long,

as heavy animals they can crush their skin and even other organs, resulting in necrosis and even sepsis if not caught soon enough. In those cramped quarters being cast is quite likely for most of our larger animals. Skye, a tall chestnut horse with a white blaze and a blue eye, seems to be particularly affected by the size of the stall. Every morning she comes out of her stall and has to literally stretch her legs from standing all night. When brought out to the arena, she sleeps the longest and deepest. When ridden, her hind end trails behind her unless warmed up correctly, resulting in tripping--which can be hazardous to horse and rider.

Horses prefer to lay on dry, soft, compressible substrate. In most facilities, this is provided through shavings which serve dual purposes of keeping stalls sanitary and acting as

bedding for the horses. At Chaparral, the indoor stalls are sparsely bedded (usually only 1/4th of a bag). Due to the relative size of the horses to their stalls, the stalls rapidly fill up with waste causing the majority of the bedding to become soaked and dirty. As a result, the few horses that do lay down (on occasion) are found in the morning soaked in manure and urine. You can also observe the lack of shavings in the stall. (Left: Marshmallow the morning of May 29, 2021)



UC Davis in their [Minimum Standards of Horse Care](#) document recommends stalls at least as large as the outdoor stalls for most of our horses that run about 14-16hh. However, these stalls are not only unsuitable, but dangerous.

While the indoor stalls are insufficiently bedded, the outdoor stalls have no bedding at all. They stand on only rubber mats which are attached to the floor with long nails which have sharp heads. These nails risk scratching the horses legs, which in such unsanitary conditions make the possibility of contracting **cellulitis**, a painful, difficult to treat and debilitating infection of the legs very likely. With deep bedding this is a much decreased risk of scratches occurring. However, mats do not need these risky nails to stay in place, only to lay flat with some raised border to prevent them sliding. Horses kept in outdoor stalls have sustained bedsores visible on the front of their fetlocks. (I'm thinking of specifically Spirit and Beamer, Beamer being recently deceased) I have not recently checked for hock sores and only noticed bedsores on Spirit and Beamer, but would advise any investigator to do so for all horses. That



on almost every day horses kept in the outdoor stalls had clean, dry coats is evidence that they did not lay down to sleep at night like most adequately stalled horses do.



(Left: July 2, 2021, *Blondie*) Blondie in her stall. Note how the mats don't cover the entire floor and the stall is uneven. Her hind feet stand several inches below her fronts, making the mats a tripping hazard. Also evident is the limited space in the stall.)



The most relevant issue in the outside stalls is wetness. There is wetness from the urine, but also from automatic waterers that were poorly installed early spring and leaked continually, creating unsanitary standing water, (See p. 12). The auto-waterers were finally repaired on 7/3/21, though the issue had been reported to management for 4 months. The standing water issue resulted in two simultaneous abscesses in Abby's hind feet (**Above:** May 30, 2021 *Both of Abby's hinds were packed, wrapped and duct-taped the night before by on-site staff to draw out the abscess*) which made her lame and caused her to be taken out of work. It likely played a role in an infection on the wall of Spirit's right hind hoof (**Lower Right on page 5:** June 6, 2021). And may have contributed to a painful swelling in Sammie's right hind (began June 12th, 2021. It was not until the following week that she was taken for vet care.)



(Left: July 2, 2021. *The dripping from the automatic waterers created a puddle of foul water, urine, and feces that spanned 4 stalls, had a notable odor, and contained algae. You can see that Maisy barely has the space to keep her hooves out of the puddle.*)

The final issue causing sleep deprivation is lameness (injury compromising the movement of the horse). As will be addressed later in this document, a major point of contention between the staff and upper management is the sluggish or often lacking response by upper management in acquiring vet care. Additionally, most of our horses are old and/or have pre-existing injuries that flare up.

Due to these restrictions, the horses lie down and get their REM sleep in the turnout arena when provided the opportunity, which has space, pasturemates, and soft substrate. However, their access to this important time to stretch their legs, sleep, and interact socially is neither guaranteed nor frequently achieved due to the current camp schedule (which has horses standing in the arena, often being worked, from 8:30-4:45 for 12 straight weeks), and instructions from the owners. I am concerned that the amount of work that the horses do (especially during camp), their time spent standing in a stall and then standing tied, and their propensity to lameness in varying degrees, will mean that their welfare will worsen, resulting in structural and/or behavioral issues.

On Monday morning June 14th, two employees observed Skye demonstrating the low head carriage characteristic of sleep deprivation while tied. We also observed horses falling asleep while in active lesson. Spirit and Beemer both fell asleep on June 14th, 2021 at 12:00pm, while having clients on their backs. It is our opinion that these horses were physically exhausted. The whole day had lessons back to back and the horses had no opportunity to rest even in the turnout area. Guaranteed days off and/or daily turnout time exceeding 30-45 minutes would be a substantial improvement for these horses.

The instructions to reduce turnout time resulted in protest from staff. On or about Saturday April 24th, 2021 Sue visited the arena and instructed the staff to keep all horses tacked up for the entire day and tied to the fences, even when they weren't being used. Staff had previously taken every opportunity to turn out the horses and only tied them immediately before a lesson/trail ride, if at all. These instructions have significantly reduced the horses' time to move naturally, socialize, and lay down. Sue was not receptive to the staff's feedback, including concerns about their ability to get REM sleep during the day due to inadequate stall size. She stated that the horses were there to work and let us know that the schedule would be getting busier. During this conversation, a passerby in the park approached the staff and asked about the number of horses lying down and inquired about their well-being. Sue assured this individual that they were fine. Sue finished the conversation with "you guys will tie up the horses and that is final."

(Below: June 4, 2020. Shortly before summer camp; a majority of the horses getting their REM sleep in the arena.)



Stall size should be increased and matched by an adequate supply of bedding to prevent the rapid accumulation of waste, which creates unsanitary and odorous conditions (ammonia is a health hazard). As a result, all or almost all of the horses have moderate-to-severe [thrush](#), an easily preventable anaerobic infection that degrades the [frog](#) (this link gives an excellent overview). Feet that have been degraded by thrush have frogs that are diminished in size and pitted, white crumbling sole, and deep channels along the frog. Feet



undergoing an infection have a strong smell. (Left: Image of a healthy frog.) These horses' thrush will not resolve without fixing the stabling, as every morning they are pulled out their stalls their frogs are soft and constantly wet with urine and waste--the perfect environment for thrush. The urine even reaches up to the outside of the hoof.

Some form of shelter should be installed over the outdoor

stalls.

(Right: April 15, 2021. Stetson's hoof showing clear degradation and blackening of the frog & deep channels due to thrush--otherwise healthy sole. Note the wet appearance.)





Left: July 2nd, 2021. Pooling of urine in indoor stall, shavings above the urine are soaked (red color due to exposure to urine).

Below: Morning of June 20, 2021. Kona stands in straight muck from the night before. She is eating hay from the morning feeding. Any hay that lands in muck will not be consumed by horses.





Above July 2, 2021. Clear pools of standing urine (front) and water + urine (back) in the outdoor stalls. Some shavings placed in the back by staff (not instructed by upper management) but were unable to absorb waste or volume of water dripping from the waterers.

Below: June 18, 2021. In the below image the stalls had recently been cleaned to their best condition, leaving smaller pools of standing water and urine.



(Above) Standing pools remain even after long stretches of dry, sunny weather. Staff use a broom to spread the puddles thinner to help with evaporation while the stalls are vacant during the day.

(Below: June 26, 2021) A photo of wet urine and dung puddles from lack of shavings and leaking waters. Previously level mats have sunken due to wet conditions.)



Shelter

California Code - HSC § 25988g

(g) When not being ridden, a saddled equine shall have available adequate shelter from the elements, and have loosened saddle straps and girths.

(Below: Shay and Peanut standing out in the rain the afternoon of December 13, 2020. While most lessons chose to reschedule, these students decided to ride in the rain. As a result, Shay and Peanut were in these conditions for at least a couple of hours, which is evident by

how wet their hair is, as well as their tack. The depth and wetness of the arena under those rainy conditions can be clearly seen, though no student rode faster than a walk.)



There is no shelter in the arena. Horses move from their stalls and spend the duration of the working day in the arena, if not on trail. In summer, the arena has some shade in the NW end until about 11am, at which point there is no escape from the sun. This has been a particular concern since the recent decision (in action as of May 1, 2021) by Chaparral ownership to tie all tacked horses. On weekends and during the camp season, this means almost all horses are tied the majority of the day in the sun, which means they can only drink water when the staff unties them and brings them over to the trough which takes at least 30 minutes. This can be difficult to achieve between lessons/rides, and some horses do not drink adequately 'on demand'. Ownership has also instructed that the horses should not be unbridled while at rest and should drink with their bridles on. As several

of the horses refuse to drink with their bridles on, staff have disregarded this instruction for the horses' physical well-being.

On warm/hot days some horses demonstrate thirst and behavioral issues (unwillingness to go forward, stopping in the center of the ring by the mounting block where students get on and off) more frequently. During camp Peanut trotted off with her rider multiple times to drink at

the trough (Peanut typically refuses to drink in her bridle). I have also witnessed Blondie physically drag a staff member to the trough.

On rainy days we make it a practice to call lessoners ahead of time and ask if they would like to reschedule (despite pushback seen in the below emails). However, if clients want to attend their lesson (usually a few do on rainy days), per policy, those horses must be kept in the arena in the rain. Beamer (deceased) and Delilah have developed **rain rot** from these circumstances. The tack can also remain wet for several days after being soaked, further exacerbating the conditions.



(Left: July 2, 2021. Rain rot & other fungal infection on Delilah's forehead and hindquarters. Scarring from previous infections can be seen in the white hairs on her hip. While she is prone to fungal infections, current conditions (saddled and bridled all day with sweat sitting under the tack, subject to wetness, inconsistent treatment, and lack of time to roll and air out skin) encourage the progression of the fungus.)

On January 2nd, 2021, an employee recounts an incident where it was heavily pouring rain during a full work day. They had to work in dangerous riding conditions, using the horse Skye. The parent of the client insisted they still wanted a lesson, and the employee complied per the "rain or shine" policy. All the employees on staff unanimously agreed it was unsafe to ride.

Skye was visibly upset during this lesson, being alone in heavy rain (ears back, not moving, threatening to act up). As herd animals, being separated from the entirety of the herd can cause a horse to be more anxious and unpredictable, but staff did not want to subject another horse to the wet conditions.

Both the instructor and student were visibly cold, and the student was blinking away rain droplets from her eyes and using the sleeves of her jacket to cover her hands, (this is dangerous because she could not clearly see while riding and she wasn't properly holding her reins). Additionally, the wind and rain caused branches from the fragile eucalyptus trees surrounding the arena to snap and fall. This caused Skye to spook during the lesson almost causing the young student (around 11-14 years old) riding to fall into the mud. Luckily, no one was injured, but this was a dangerous situation for horse and rider that was easily avoidable.

See emails **below** discussing our "rain or shine" policy and changes to how tacked horses are used as well as a schedule from the first day the new policy went into place.

Weekly Staff Update 11/17 Inbox x



Jessica Pennell <jessicachaparralcorporation@gmail.com>

Wed, Nov 18, 2020, 5:54 PM



to Sue, Abigail, Susan, calvetti.micaela, Lauren, denisenguyent, Lisa, Bay, jessichayward, cbjohnso, mlaurenwright, ▾

Hi Everyone!

It is time for our weekly update and check in!

As we can all tell it is Winter time and we are getting into our **rainy** season. Our arenas hold up quite well in the **rain** and they tend to get muddy **or** deep. This is a reminder that we are a **rain or shine** facility 🌧️ ☀️.

Some of our clients drive far to attend lessons and trail rides that they do not want to cancel because of a little bit of **rain**. We also do not want to cancel any lessons unless the arena is too wet **or** unsafe. Please ask a supervisor (Shawn **or** Sue) if you need to cancel **or** reschedule lessons. If they approve for you to go on with lessons, please continue lessons per usual unless the client would like to reschedule their lesson.

(Note that Jessica instructs on-site staff to obtain permission from Shawn or Sue, who are not onsite, regarding safety conditions of the arena.)

Staff Weekly Update 11/10 Inbox x



Jessica Pennell <jessicachaparralcorporation@gmail.com>

Tue, Nov 10, 2020, 4:42 PM



to Sue, bcc: me ▾

Hi there!

I hope you all are having a great start to your week! As a reminder tomorrow is going to be an abnormally busy day at all of our locations because it is Veteran's Day.

As you know these emails keep us posted on any housekeeping for staff and any feedback.

Currently, I have not received any of the signed policy agreements for the new policies that have been implemented. Please send those over by Friday, November 13th.

Just a reminder that if you miss clocking in **or** out for a shift to reach out to Susan **or** myself to update this. It is a lot of extra management for Abby **or** Jess to update this information while they are running the facility.

We will also be implementing some scheduling expectations for our staff. Effective January 1, 2021 you will be required to work two shifts a week in order to be qualified as a part-time employee. If you are only working 1 shift a week right now, please update When I Work with a future shift that you are able to add on.

We need to make sure that we are utilizing our time and scheduling as much as possible. Our clients also love consistency and want to work with you. Having a min of two shifts a week will help us create a consistent schedule that clients can rely on.

Winter is coming! Which means it is going to start **raining** and getting colder in SF. Please come to work prepared with warm layers, gloves and possibly a warm hat for your ears. All of our facilities work through **rain or shine**, unless we have major storms.

(Below: Note that lessons and trail rides are booked 'back-to-back' with no time between the end of one event and the start of the next event. Staff requested transition time between events in the schedule; ownership insisted that keeping all horses tacked and tied was the best and only solution, despite the fact that this would mean horses needed to be hand-watered and the schedule does not provide time to do so.)

Saturday 05/01

Staff:

General Info
<p>Rezdy: Click the "Check-in" button after every client is checked in. Click the X if they are a no show.</p> <p>Check-In Riders: If you are not teaching a lesson or trail please help check people in and once it is time for their lesson (and if their horse is available/almost available) please bring them into the area and help with getting on. Helps the process run smoother. (More than two people can help with getting on! Especially with trails since they take a while)</p> <p>Water Horses: Please make sure horses are getting water!! Please check the water trough, see if it needs to be refilled or dumped and refilled if it's dirty.</p> <p>Clean Helmets!</p> <p>If you have nothing to do there is always something to do!</p>

Set-Up

Tack up times:	<i>Don't forget to pick feet.</i>
9:00 - Everyone - Beemer - western	<input type="checkbox"/> Tack for the day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Everyone except Sammie and Delilah<input type="checkbox"/> Beemer (Western am, English pm)<input type="checkbox"/> Curly english <p>Tacked up horses need to be tied with their bridles on (no bidle on if english) Do not bridle horses that are tied, unclip the lead rope and reclip them whence bridled. Beemer and Abby need to be tied either to a blocker or twine. If all three arenas are needed, all horses need to be tied, no loose horses mixed in with tied ones. If a horse is completely finished for the day they can be untacked and turned out.</p> <p>Please make sure everyone who is tied is getting water!</p>

Equipment

California Code - HSC § 25988e

(e) Tack and equipment shall be appropriate and fit properly.

California Code - HSC § 25988h, 1

(h) An equine shall not be available for hire or use if the equine has any conditions that violate subdivision (b) of Section 597 or Section 597f of the Penal Code or any of the following conditions:

(1) Sores or abrasions caused or likely to be irritated by the surfaces of saddles, girths, harnesses, or bridles. ...

No employee at Chaparral was trained in fitting saddles, especially Western saddles. Additionally, it was rare that time was available to try new saddles on horses. As a result, most of the tack is ill-fitting to various degrees. Ill-fitted tack is unbalanced and concentrates pressure on small regions of horse's back and occasionally girth area. This can lead to muscle atrophy, soreness, swelling, rubs, and behavioral issues while being groomed, tacked, or ridden.



(Left: February 2021.) Saddle sore on Delilah's (swaybacked chestnut QH mare) girth area. This was due to long hours with a tightly fitted worn out cinch that applies uneven pressure. Following a series of falls aided by the saddle slipping (**swaybacked** horses are notoriously difficult to fit), staff had been instructed to keep her cinch tight. I believe, the busy camp and weekend schedule plus uneducated staff led to this rub developing to this extent before it was noticed by an employee. Following this, Delilah was taken out of work until the rub healed. She was treated with Betadine baths and Desitin cream.

(Right: July 3rd, 2021) Hair loss from movement of the back of the saddle on Peanut (liver chestnut pony). Indicates a saddle that may be too wide. Poorly fit saddles can lead to back pain which can result in behavioral issues, such as bucking and an unwillingness to work and

resistance to being groomed, saddled, and cinched (biting and kicking risk).



(Below: July 3rd, 2021) Similar rubs on June, a horse that is backsore as of July 3, 2021 (and has been since at least fall 2020) and reactive to brushing, cinching, and saddling. She has kicked an employee, has threatened to kick campers bathing her, and often pins her ears and threatens to bite while being groomed--even with a soft brush. To reduce saddle fit-related discomfort she was ridden on trail bareback by staff until they were instructed otherwise by upper management.



(Right: April 17th, 2021) Girth gall on Maisy. Once spotted she was taken out of work and allowed time to recover naturally. Upper management recommended changing her cinch to a string cinch.

Chaparral's horses would benefit from having an experienced horse person, if not saddle fitter on staff or on call with the ability to evaluate and address saddle fit issues.



Hoof Care

California Code - HSC § 25988h, 3

(h) An equine shall not be available for hire or use if the equine has any conditions that violate subdivision (b) of Section 597 or Section 597f of the Penal Code or any of the following conditions:

...

(3) Improperly or inadequately trimmed and shod feet contrary to the standards published by the Cooperative Extension of the Division of Agricultural Sciences of the University of California.

As a staff composed of mostly young, beginner to amateur riders, there are limits on what we can identify, treat, and change. Many of the full time staff do not recognize or understand common ailments such as **colic** or **abscesses**, or know how to spot lameness. Those that can may recognize these issues, but are only able to inform the owners or possibly manage mild cases (due to a lack of supplies in some cases and veterinary training in most others). Staff do not receive additional training from ownership and must rely on their own knowledge and research, as Chaparral employs no veterinarian at its San Francisco location, staff must go through upper management to access professional care, even in matters of urgency.

This occurs in conjunction with horse management that puts the horses at risk of developing numerous ailments, while upper management being slow to respond to health issues as they come up. In addition, the farrier/handyman is not only unreliable, but consistently does a poor job. This has been noted by staff and even clients. One camper even asked if the horses' hooves ever got done within an hour of being around the horses.

Horses require their hooves to be trimmed and/or shod every 4-8 weeks by a skilled farrier (usually 4-6 if shod). When I joined Chaparral, I often asked about when this trimming would occur and was told that the horses were on a one size-fits all 8 weeks schedule. Typically an 8 weeks schedule is appropriate only for horses with bare feet that wear well or shod horses with slow-growing, strong hooves. This is not often the case for barns containing a multitude of horses. Additionally, it was rare that the horses waited only 8 weeks to be seen due to the farrier/handyman's unwillingness to schedule visits or perform trims while he was there (following the addition of beach rides to our schedule, this was weekly).

Horses' hooves grow continuously (at different speeds depending on season, nutrition, and genetics) and domesticated horses must undergo regular upkeep to keep hooves a length and shape that permits correct movement. Additionally, the height and shape of the hoof greatly impacts the balance of the horse: a properly trimmed hoof allows the horse to move in a way that reduces strain on their joints and allows a full range of motion, allowing the horses to use their body correctly. Good farrier work can actually help correct or mitigate movement issues. Poorly trimmed feet often develop undesirable and unnatural shapes that lead to tightness in the

joints, short-stepping, tripping, and can contribute to serious conditions like laminitis or coffin bone deterioration.

During this previous winter (approximately Nov-Dec 2020), Abby tripped multiple times in each lesson due to having extremely long toes. Skye also trips when her toes get long, as will any other horse. Trips can result in injury to the horse and rider, and even put the rider at risk of



being trampled. Simply unbalanced hooves can lead to strain and injury to the horse. A rough rule for a good trim is hooves even in height, with short heels and a line that matches the angle of the shoulder (front). Of course, there is a great deal of individual variation, and what works for one horse does not work for another. However, the trims on these horses

are obviously incorrect, worsening with late trimming cycles. **(Above Left: May 23, 2021.** *Notable high heels on Jack and Beamer due to gaps between trims (foreground).* Unshod hinds are shorter due to normal wear. Poor body condition (ribbiness, atrophy of topline muscles) due to neglect of dental care.)



(Left: April 21, 2021). *Notably long toes on Abby's fronts (hinds obscured).* These pose a risk to horse and rider.

(Right: April 17, 2021.) *Long heels and clearly uneven trim on Shay's hinds (shod, and unable to wear down).*



Of particular concern is Mocha, a pony rescued by Sean after she [founded](#) in her previous owner's care, (a painful disease common to ponies and overweight horses that impairs circulation in the hoof). Founded horses require specialized care and proactive, corrective hoof care, (typically by a qualified farrier in collaboration with an equine vet), which has not been provided by Chaparral.

(Right: Aug 19, 2021. Mocha shortly after arriving at Chaparral GGP. Both fronts have a characteristic laminitic bulge.)

While recovery from founder is known to be a long and difficult process, Mocha's progress is likely hindered by the extended trimming schedule (founded horses are typically trimmed on an abbreviated schedule, as often as every 2 weeks--more often every 4). In the below images, taken July 2, 2021, it is evident that efforts by the farrier have been unsuccessful in correcting the shape of the hoof (which is due to her condition). As a result of the lack of educated management, she remains founded and



often shows sensitivity in her feet. She is frequently resistant to walking on hard ground and will walk so slowly that it has been commented on by clients. She is also often tender to hoof-picking and will pull her hoof away unless picked gently and with caution. She is used in pony rides, which involves her walking several hours concurrently on hard pavement, though some staff have modified trails to allow her to walk in softer ground for as much of the ride as possible, (Mocha will pull towards these trails for softer footing). Weekend pony rides were increased from 8 to 12 per day in May, despite her ongoing condition.

(Below: Images of Mocha's feet July 2, 2021. See [here](#) for comparison to founded feet as well as a timeline of feet that have recovered healthy angles and shape with corrective trimming.)





(Above: July 2, 2021. Mocha's rear and front hooves: heel height, angle, toe lift. Prior to the farrier visit approximately 4 weeks earlier, her hooves were in even worse state, with the toes visibly lifted off the ground ('foundering'). The ferrier had forgotten to trim her feet during an earlier visit and repeatedly delayed returning. During this period, Mocha seemed to be in discomfort walking on the paved pathways that she must travel during children's pony rides, to the point that parents commented on her slow movement.)

Overgrown hooves also put a horse at risk of losing their shoe as the nails move further down the hoof. Losing a shoe often results in discomfort and degrades the integrity of the hoof wall. Cracked hoof walls open the hoof up to infection, promote further cracking, and can encourage proceeding shoes to be lost. Lost shoes pose a major hazard should an equine step on them and puncture their feet. They can on some occasions be lost at speed and flung from the hoof. Regardless, they cause discomfort and unbalance the horse (as shoes add additional height to the hoof), increasing the risk for tripping. It is uncommon to work a horse who has lost a shoe without in some other way caring for it (duct tape boot or hoof boot). As a result, it is typical to call on a farrier who arrives within a couple of days to assess and shoe the horse.

This is not possible at the GGP location, which relies on the current farrier. This farrier consistently does feet weeks to months late, which can aggravate normally mild issues in the wear of the hoof.



On or about June 26, 2021, Blondie lost a shoe. It has yet to be replaced and she is still being used heavily in the program. Per an employee, on July 2, 2021: “Blondie, a normally sure-footed horse, tripped multiple times on trail earlier that day.” (Left: July 2nd, 2021. A photo of Blondies left front after losing a shoe. The hoof shows significant deterioration (flaring, cracking) from her previous condition. Her hoof has cracked, while nails are still left on the top of her hoof.)

Left: A photo of Blondie’s front feet (July 2nd, 2021). Note the difference in length and shape, and the angle of the pastern. Blondie has a “club foot” which requires special and frequent care. Unbalanced hooves put asymmetrical strain on the horses legs, increasing the risk of injury to the horse. Additionally, the right front has a long sloped toe due to long gaps between trimming which not only strains the hoof but makes tripping extremely likely. A trip on the front feet is very

likely to result in a rider coming over the horse's head, putting the rider at risk of being trampled.

(Left: July 2nd, 2021) Blondie’s front left hoof (which lost the shoe) has become cracked, the edges are chipping away, and the frog has significantly deteriorated. Not pictured are the nails remaining in her hoof.



Routine Health Care

California Code - HSC § 25988j-k

(j) *Farrrier and veterinary receipts shall be kept and shall identify each equine treated.*

(k) *Veterinary, farrier, and feed records shall be made available during normal business hours to the law enforcement officer. Upon failure to provide these records, the equine or equines in question may not be used for hire until such time as the records are produced or an equine veterinarian shall certify that the equine or equines are fit for labor.*

Chaparral neglects other aspects of routine horse care. In fall 2020 (around October-early November), horses received vaccines for strangles, a highly contagious equine disease. I was told by on-site management that the horses had not received a strangles vaccine since entering Chaparral's care. And certainly the horses received no other vaccines in any of our time there. Many of the staff interact with horses at other barns and could have carried unknown pathogens to those stables, potentially resulting in the deaths of external horses. Besides that, Chaparral's horses are often older and could have succumbed to diseases spread through close quarters and shared grooming tools. In other equine facilities I have been at, as well as in the care of my own horse, vaccine boosters are given twice a year. Not only that, but horses typically get the day off after because vaccines often cause soreness in the neck. This avoids undue discomfort for the horse and reduces the chance of behavioral issues under saddle. Chaparral's horses on that day were immediately put into lessons and used for the duration of the day. This was the first and only time I have ever seen a vet at that location, and they were there for only about 30 minutes. These were logged in a brown notebook, though I don't know where that notebook is.

In one instance in the winter of 2020, Stetson began losing weight rapidly. According to the then onsite manager, it took over three weeks for tubes of ivermectin, a dewormer, to arrive at the location. Following being dosed by the dewormer, Stetson regained condition. While worming schedules vary greatly, it is typical to prophylactically dose horses several times a year, rather than waiting for them to show signs of deterioration. Chaparral did not factor this into their supplies for the location, when traditional horse care usually has horses wormed several times a year. Following, they did supply the location with a large volume of ivermectin.

Dental Care & Ulcer Risk

.California Code - HSC § 25988d

(d) Equines shall be supplied with nutritionally adequate feed and clean water, in accordance with standards published by the Cooperative Extension of the Division of Agricultural Sciences of the University of California.



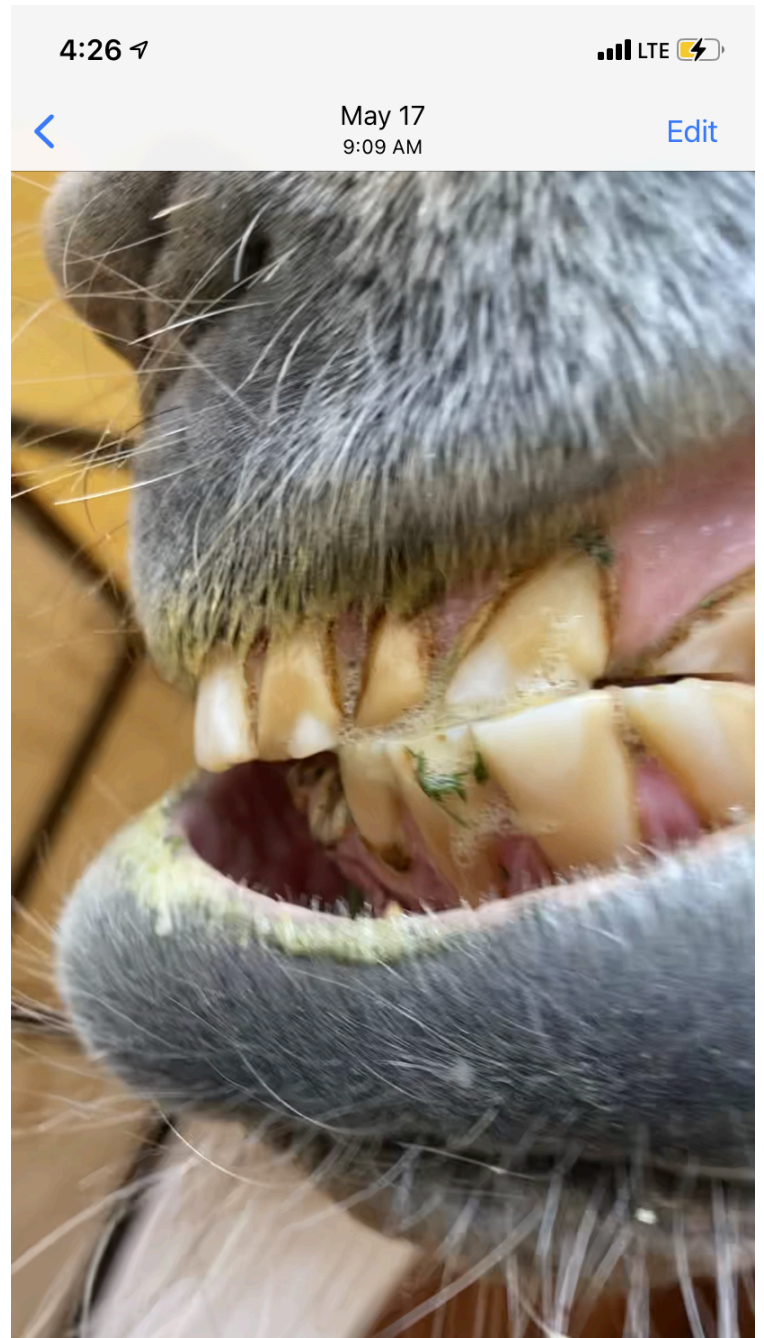
Chaparral does not employ a vet for their San Francisco location. As a result, a crucial part of horse care does not occur. This is a process known as “floating,” or equine dentistry. (Left: Dated February 1, 2019. An educational post from Chaparral Milpitas’ Instagram account, acknowledging that dental care is an important yearly occurrence.)

Horses are herbivores, using their teeth to crush fibrous grasses and help make those nutrients available. Chewing this fibrous feed also helps wear their teeth down, which continue to ‘grow’ their entire lives, but this wear can happen unevenly or at an incorrect rate, especially in domesticated horses. Regular floating removes sharp points that can discourage eating and cause mouth ulcers, and ensures a correct bite in which teeth make even contact to grind their food. Floating is especially relevant in the care of senior horses whose teeth can be so worn down that they are unable to obtain enough nutrients from hay. In severe cases they will do what is called “quidding,” or spitting out clumps of hay that is partially chewed (“quids”). They perform this behavior because they are unable to swallow the chunks. As a result, horses starve, unable to keep weight on without supplemental small-fiber hay (i.e. hay cubes or soaked forage pellets).

In his last few weeks at GGP, the horse Jack exhibited this behavior and became

notably thin (body condition score 2.5-3--skinnier than in the photo on page 20). He was

removed to the Woodside location on May 27th, 2021 and from what I've heard he is now in Milpitas most likely working; it is unknown if he has received dental care. He also exhibited signs of lameness frequently in the left hind, frequently struggled to rise from laying down (needing to pause in a 'sitting position'), and constantly wore an expression of [pain](#). (Delilah and Maisy also exhibit this, and Stetson to a lesser degree.) In my opinion he should urgently be examined and measures should be taken to improve his quality of life under the direction of a vet. Before Jack left, an employee was able to capture footage of his teeth. For context, horse teeth should meet evenly. This degree of abnormal wear is not something I have seen before and very likely indicates multiple missed yearly dental visits. See below for screen captures demonstrating the uneven meeting of his jaw and very unevenly worn teeth.



Chaparral's feed is often inadequate. At the onset of the rainy season of 2020 no tarp was provided by upper management and the haystack was rained on. This resulted in the hay molding. No replacement hay was ordered and staff was instructed to feed the horses moldy hay, (which can contribute to colic), until a new shipment and tarp arrived (which took multiple weeks). Communication between onsite management and upper management should be examined from this time as the then onsite management left the company.

Chaparral feeds 100% alfalfa as forage that is sticky/tough to chew. Alfalfa alone is not considered nutritionally adequate for horses. Most boarding facilities and lesson programs that I've seen feed a blend of grass (which is softer and easier to chew, as well as lower in protein) and alfalfa hay. Alfalfa is fed because it is cheap and high-calorie/high-protein, providing horses with a lot of energy relative to grass hay: it's the staff's opinion that Chaparral chooses this option to prioritize saving money over horse health. Ponies and horses prone to obesity are more often fed grass. Additional softer grass hay or hay cubes would likely improve the welfare of the GGP horses, as well as an individualized feeding schedule. Chaparral's feed program should be evaluated by a more experienced eye and changes recommended. Ideally this program would move to a more individual standard of care, in conjunction with immediate comprehensive veterinary exams, vaccines, and dental care.

In particular, this may benefit June who demonstrates signs of poor dentition (excessive chewing of her hay) and is slightly ribby; as well as Blondie, Peanut, Mocha, and Curly, who receive low quantities of alfalfa hay due to their size or propensity to gain weight and may benefit from grass hay.

In nature, horses are intended to constantly walk and graze small amounts of grass continually. Their stomachs produce high quantities of acid. When put in an abnormal feeding

schedule (e.g. two calorie-dense feedings of hay only twice a day), this leaves their stomach empty for much of the day. Under these conditions horses can develop **ulcers**, a painful condition that results in numerous behavioral issues as well as increases the risk of **colic**, (potentially life-threatening).

Behavioral issues commonly observed are sensitivity around the belly, particularly when the



girth is tightened. June, Maisy, Marshmallow, Peanut, and Beamer show extreme discomfort when the girth is tightened. It is my firm belief that these horses have/had ulcers and should be immediately scoped and treated (see *Beamer's story* p. 29). Other risk factors for ulcers are stalling and stress (these horses have heavy workloads). (**Lower Left on page 27:** A common sight: Maisy's reaction to the cinch tightening.)

Urgent Medical Care

[California Penal Code § 597b](#)

(b) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (a) or (c), every person who overdrives, overloads, drives when overloaded, overworks, tortures, torments, deprives of necessary sustenance, drink, or shelter, cruelly beats, mutilates, or cruelly kills any animal, or causes or procures any animal to be so overdriven, overloaded, driven when overloaded, overworked, tortured, tormented, deprived of necessary sustenance, drink, shelter, or to be cruelly beaten, mutilated, or cruelly killed; and whoever, having the charge or custody of any animal, either as owner or otherwise, subjects any animal to needless suffering, or inflicts unnecessary cruelty upon the animal, or in any manner abuses any animal, or fails to provide the animal with proper food, drink, or shelter or protection from the weather, or who drives, rides, or otherwise uses the animal when unfit for labor, is, for each offense, guilty of a crime punishable pursuant to subdivision (d).

[A Guide: Minimum Standards of Horse Care in the State of California - January 2019](#)

Veterinary care for emergency situations should be obtained by horse owners as quickly as possible but certainly within a few hours of such a condition being discovered. Medical conditions that may cause such pain include but are not limited to: colic, eye injuries, any injury or condition where the horse cannot bear weight on all four limbs or where the horse is not able to move, recumbent horses (horses that cannot get up off the ground), or fevers.

The reason Chaparral neglects routine care of their San Francisco horses became evident on that day they got their vaccines. Chaparral demands that their program run 6-9 hours/day, 7 days/week. They leave no room for such routine care to occur. Upper management has also proven themselves slow to respond to even urgent needs, likely due to their location in San Francisco. However, access to a qualified on-call equine veterinarian should have been ensured before the program began. Below are a series of stories.

JACK: On the night of February 8, 2021 Jack was found colicking in a recumbent position. Onsite care was unable to rouse Jack and the episode was beyond the scope of onsite care. Veterinary care is only obtained under the purview of Sue and/or Shawn, who are not onsite to assess or react. When notified, the response by upper management was that "Jack just has to work through it" as well as a thumbs-up emoji and no vet was acquired.

SAMMIE: On June 12th, 2021, Sammie, a bay Arabian mare with one sock on the right hind came up with lameness and swelling in the left hind preventing her from bearing weight on the limb for any significant portion of time. An employee alerted on site management on June 13th, 2021 who relayed the message to upper management. Upper management told them to wait and see if the condition resolved. Shawn came out to examine Sammie during the week, but did not contact a veterinarian. The leg was poulticed and wrapped and Sammie was taken out of work. However, she continued to show signs of pain on this limb and spent most of her time outside of her stall laying down. Sammie was finally removed to Woodside for treatment the morning of June 20th, 2021, after a full week of evident pain.

BEAMER: (pictured behind Jack on page 20) underwent two instances of severe colic in my time at Chaparral GGP. When the first episode occurred, she was found laying down at the end of the day, was unwilling to get up, and had white gums. As Chaparral does not employ a vet for their GGP horses, a staff member had to drive to the Woodside area to acquire **banamine**, an NSAID pain relieving medication from the farrier/handyman (a round-trip of about 2 hours). Upon administering banamine, Beamer recovered. Despite this, Chaparral did not acquire banamine for future events.

On the morning of Wednesday, June 30th, 2021 Beamer again colicked, following several weeks of weight loss, increased biting, and lethargy in lessons, which was noticed by myself and onsite staff. I do not know if the aforementioned physical/behavioral changes were relayed to upper management. On that morning, Beamer was reported to be somewhat less reactive to having her cinch tightened that morning, but staff was not aware that she was in duress until she collapsed in the middle of a camp session. Staff was able to remove the rider beforehand, but had to bring Beamer to her feet again to remove the saddle. She laid down repeatedly despite efforts to keep her standing and walking, which is evidence of extreme duress. Shawn made the drive from Woodside (about an hour one way) intending to trailer her to a vet in Gilroy. Attempts were made to contact a closer vet, but one was not found. According to reports by staff she collapsed again in the trailer before leaving. She was humanely put down at Woodside, which spared her a long journey with a likely poor prognosis. To the best of our knowledge, there was no autopsy to confirm the cause of her passing.

This tragic event may be related to at least a year of potential [ulcers](#), of which she displayed every symptom listed including significant resistance to being girthed or touched on her stomach. Ulcers left untreated increase the risk of colic. On one occasion Shawn instructed a volunteer to bridle Beamer and hold the outside rein before saddling her to escape being bitten, which indicates the duration of her condition and the fact that she has been handled by an experienced handler who overlooked the behavior. However, a veterinary examination is required to diagnose and treat ulcers. For this reason this document stresses the importance of proactive and preventative professional care.

JUNE, MAISY, MARSHMALLOW, PEANUT: Future investigators must secure examinations for at least June, Maisy, Marshmallow, and Peanut, who all exhibit similar behavior issues and pain expressions. Peanut is also prone to colic (I have heard of multiple occurrences in my time at Chaparral and witnessed one on April 17, 2021). Though her episodes so far have been mild, given what happened to Beamer, I am concerned that they may increase in severity. June, Maisy, and Marshmallow show extreme sensitivity to girth and leg pressure, with Marshmallow (a 'fleabitten' grey Arabian mare with a "31" brand on her left hip) being the most extreme. Marshmallow is prone to spooking and even bucking and has unseated multiple riders including a staff member. She also frequently has an expression of pain and drinks and excretes copious amounts of water, which may be a sign of ulcers or some other issue. Maisy bites when girthed and June has kicked and bitten staff members while being brushed. Regardless, ulcers are a very painful condition that resolve with treatment and lifestyle changes.

Staff members have repeatedly expressed frustration that their concerns with horse health are not taken seriously. This has led to a degradation in communication between staff and upper management and has compromised the welfare of the horses. Staff were discouraged from contacting Sue or Shawn for vet care by onsite management who said that upper management would be unreceptive to questions and requests for horse care. This lack of communication and trust may have contributed to Beamer's unfortunate passing as the early warning signs of her worsening care were overlooked. This is compounded with the issue that many of the staff members on site were not experienced horsepeople. They were largely uneducated in how to diagnose and treat common ailments. And all staff are incapable of administering veterinary care to help or ease suffering with one exception, (no longer employed).

Workload

There is no hard limit set by the company of how much a horse can be used in a day or week. Over Chaparral's tenure at Golden Gate Park, the number of clients has continuously increased. For most of summer 2020, horses only worked camp (about 4 hours/day). Following, days without camp were scheduled with a few lessons. Weekday schedules could usually be adjusted in a way that horses got 1-2 days off a week, and many spent the mornings turned out without tack. Weekend schedules require the use of all or almost all the horses for both days.

In 2021, Chaparral continued to add more events to the schedule including saddle club, advanced camp, and beach rides, which all increased the workload on horses and employees. As a result, horses became lame at a greater frequency. This was mentioned to Shawn by a staff member in person in early April 2021 specifying Shay, Jack, and Delilah as horses needing support. Staff have also observed that in the rarer times when the horses are turned out, they opt to sleep rather than socializing or engaging in play as much as they used to.

On June 1st, a staff member verbally told Sue the workload is too much for the staff and especially the horses. The employee requested that management reduce the workload, specifically on Saturdays, for reasons including helping the horses' physical health. Even so, upper management added additional events to Sundays rather than removing events from Saturdays, further increasing their workload.

Regardless of staff feedback, Chaparral continued to increase the workload, adding beach rides and adding to the camp schedule. Though they brought in three new horses in April (Marshmallow, Sammie, and Kona) two of those horses have become unusable in the program, (Sammie, through recurring lameness culminating in her removal to Woodside in June, and Kona, through recurring lameness that has caused her to be taken out of assigned lessons repeatedly and a colic episode on July 3rd, 2021, when she was removed to Woodside).

The addition of the beach rides also had a negative impact on the horses. Due to a lack of hours spent in training, several of the intended horses exhibited behavioral problems creating dangerous situations for the horses and clients (rearing, bucking, bolting, etc.) As a result, June began to be used for beach rides every Thursday even though she has a known injury in her left shoulder that is aggravated by working in soft sand, (she is infrequently used in the arena because of this). This is just one example of how increased scheduling/events without timely communication, feedback, or preparation results in existing Chaparral horses shouldering extra or inappropriate work. When a horse becomes lame unexpectedly, or is otherwise unusable, this usually means that another horse must fill in on top of their existing lessons.

At the time this document is being written, the horses are working every weekday including weekends (10-5pm) and as often as ever (approximately 40 clients/day). They are used for summer camp from 9-1:30 pm (about 40 kids/day). 5-6 horses are used for another 2 hours for advanced camp (2-5pm). Advanced camp is heavier work than kid's camp, usually having the horses trotting and steering. Some lessons, saddle club (3-6 riders), and beach rides

are also scheduled during the week. This is an unprecedented workload. As a result, horses are put under a great deal of stress, tied and tacked most of the day in the sun without shade, and some have been coming up lame or “off.” Additionally, horses have been exhibiting behavioral issues (biting, kicking, bucking, bolting). With proactive changes to horse management allowing horses adequate rest, veterinary treatment, and forage, as well as some reduction in workload, these horses may be able to recover and proceed with less injury.

As this schedule will continue for another 9 weeks, (a total of 12 straight weeks of heavy work with no scheduled rest days), staff members are concerned for the horses welfare. Preventative care including turnout, guaranteed time off, improved stalls enabling REM sleep, proper hay, competent hoof care, dental care, and medical attention should be implemented to give the horses the best chance to remain sound, usable, and safe; and to avoid and reduce behavioral issues. (*See p. 39 for recommended attention for each horse*)

On Saturday, July 3rd, 2021 staff pulled Spirit, Blondie, Delilah, and Kona all from lessons for the day due to evident gait abnormalities (Kona was also pulled mid-lesson the week prior). Spirit and Delilah are horses highly prone to injury. Delilah may have some chronic condition that should be investigated, (previous staff suggested navicular). Maisy (a senior palomino Quarterhorse) had been pulled the week prior due to lameness and the staff intended to give her additional recovery time, but they were encouraged by upper management to lightly use her due to the number of incapacitated horses on Saturday July 3rd, 2021. Also, on that Saturday staff canceled two English lessons to avoid overworking Curly (Bashkir Curly pony) in English lessons. (*See **below** the proposed schedule for the day.*)

Names highlighted in red are horses staff knew they could not use at the start of the day.

Schedule: 7/3

Time			
10:00 - 11:00	<p>10:00 - 11:00</p> <p>English - Employee 3</p> <p>Customers: Catherine (1)</p> <p>Horses: Curly</p> <p>Western - Employee 1</p> <p>Customers: Dayala (1) Paige (1) Jules (1) Jessica (1)</p> <p>Horses: Shay, Peanut, Maisy, Stetson</p>	<p>10:00 - 11:00</p> <p>Trail Ride - Employee 2</p> <p>Customers: Joise (2) Linlin (2)</p> <p>Horses: June, Marsh, Skye, Abby, Blondie</p>	<p>Pony Rides - Employee 4</p> <p>10:30 Customer: Emily</p> <p>Horse: Mocha</p>
11:00 - 12:00	<p>11:00 - 11:45</p> <p>Western - Employee 1</p> <p>Customers: Sue (1)</p> <p>Horses: Shae</p>	<p>11:00 - 12:00</p> <p>English - Employee 3</p> <p>Customers: Christina (1)</p> <p>Horses: Curly</p>	<p>Pony Rides - Employee 4</p> <p>11:15 Customer: Aya 11:30 Customer: Heng 11:45 Customer: Sam</p> <p>Horse: Mocha</p>
12:00 - 1:00 To bbrtrbrs	<p>12:00 - 12:30</p> <p>Western - Employee 2</p> <p>Customers: Rashelle (1) Madalina (1)</p> <p>Horses: <u>Delilah</u>, Shay</p>		<p>Pony Rides - Employee 4</p> <p>12:45 Customer: Hailing</p> <p>Horse: Mocha</p>

1:00 - 2:00	1:00 - 1:45 Western - Employee 1 Customers: Molly (1) Bergen (3) Horses: Shay, Peanut, Maisy , Stetson	1:00 - 2:00 English - Employee 3 Customer: Linda (2) Horse: Curly, Kona	1:00 - 2:00 Trail Ride - Employee 2 Customer: Casey (2) Stephanie (2) Horses: June , Marsh, Skye, Abby, Blondie
2:00 - 3:00	2:00 - 2:30 Western - Employee 1 Customers: Domingga (1) Sokunthea (1) Horses: Delilah, Shay 2:30 - 3:00 Western - Employee 1 Customers: Philip (2) Horses: Delilah, Shay	2:00 - 3:00 Western - Employee 5 Customers: Viktor (1) Jeff (1) Nicole (1) Horses: Blondie , Abby, Skye 2:00 - 3:00 English - Employee 3 Customers: Bee Horse: Curly	Pony Rides - Employee 4 2:45 Customer: Domingga Horse: Mocha
3:00 - 4:00	3:00 - 3:45	3:00 - 4:00 Western - Employee 2 Customers: Jonathan (2) Leslie (1) Shamir (1) Horses: Blondie , Peanut, Abby, Spirit	Pony Rides - Employee 4 3:30 Customer: Eleni 3:45 Customer: Denise Horse: Mocha
4:00 - 5:00	4:00 - 5:00 English - Employee 3 Customers: Julie (1) Horses: Curly		Pony Rides - Employee 4 4:15 Customer: Anna 4:30 Customer: Angela 4:45 Customer: Renan Horse: Mocha

Recommendations for Improvement

We have identified several actionable steps that can be taken to improve Chaparral's practices that we feel are reasonable, many of which have also been requested to management before:

1. **Increased ownership presence on site.**

- We suggest that either Boss (Sue or Shawn) commit to being on site for one full day each week at minimum.
- Limited upper management presence made it difficult for the staff to have confidence that they're fully aware of the condition of the horses, the daily workflow, and the challenges unique to this specific location.
- Increase communication about horse welfare with on-site management and the team through regular meetings, regular staff-wide email updates, and creating a clear emergency communication protocol to ensure management can be reached and will respond quickly.

2. **A clear plan and timeline for improving the facilities and conducting routine maintenance, including:**

- Installation of 10 larger stalls (at least 12.5x12.5', in accordance with UC Davis' Minimum Standards and horse height; other stalls may be smaller if appropriate for the ponies).
- Leveling the floors and replacing mats stalls if appropriate.
- Installing shelter for outdoor stalls.
- Adequate levels of shavings in all stalls (indoor and out) that will prevent the stall from remaining wet and unsanitary from the moment the horse urinates. A well-bedded stall should be able to keep the horses' hooves dry through the night as well as cushion a horse that lays down. Smaller stalls must be bedded deeper than most for this to be possible.
- Ensuring adequate drainage and bedding in all stalls to prevent unsanitary pooling liquid.
- Ensuring the recently repaired (as of 7/3/21) leaking/dripping water fountains remain functional and provide ongoing upkeep to prevent pooling water.
- Purchase a garden sprayer and regularly supply disinfectant (i.e. Pine-sol) to be sprayed at least weekly to help prevent thrush and other bacterial/fungal buildup.

- A monthly scheduled maintenance day to conduct routine inspections and non-urgent repair & upkeep, plus a budget for on-site to buy basic repair/maintenance supplies as needed.

3. A clear plan for the care and well-being of the horses, including:

- Thorough assessment of each horse (checking gaits, hoof health, following up on ongoing/previous conditions, etc.) during your weekly visit.
- Visits from a competent and reliable farrier every 6 weeks, who is capable of assessing hoof health and taking corrective measures in trimming and shoeing. Horses in need of more frequent farrier visits should be accommodate (recommend a staggered shoeing schedule).
- A veterinarian who conducts preventative care visits at least twice annually (for general care, shots, deworming schedule recommendations, etc.) and who can be called upon by staff and ownership for injuries/illness. Schedules of medication, treatment, and vaccination set by the vet should be adhered to by management.
- Clear protocol for when a horse needs escalated/veterinary care and faster response time when injuries/illness are reported by staff.
- An adequate stock of first-aid supplies including banamine, a thermometer, and vaseline.
- A schedule for adequate days off and turn-out time, with a minimum of one full day off every two weeks. Horses should be turned out at least 45 minutes/day if adequate stall size and bedding cannot be achieved.
- Additional horses (other than Blondie) that are capable of carrying heavier riders.
- A plan for retiring horses whose health no longer meets a minimum standard to perform regular work.

4. Improved event scheduling practices that support the horses' well-being.

- 'Buffer time' between events to ensure that staff are able to give horses water, to make schedule changes or swap horses if injuries or behavioral issues arise, and to assess rider physique and skill-level to make sure they can be matched with an appropriate horse for the safety of horse and rider.

- Proactively rescheduling or canceling events in reaction to changes in the horses' health. For example: on 7/3/21, management should have recognized that a single horse could not be used in 5 English lessons when the other suitable horses were lame (this was known in advance) and proactively cancelled at least two of the lessons.
- Room in the schedule for last minute cancellations due to hazardous weather or events beyond Chaparral's control (i.e. hazardous air quality, high winds).
- Provide on-site managers (a non-exempt/hourly employee) with adequate scheduled time to thoroughly assess horses, make changes to reservations as necessary, meet with ownership, coordinate ferrier/vet visits, maintain a nutrition and health log, order/request supplies, etc.
- New staff must be adequately trained in general horsemanship and horse health (common horse ailments such as colic, thrush, lost shoes, and abscesses and how to treat them, hoof health, recognizing lameness, etc.), as well as clearly informed about ongoing health issues or limitations of the horses (e.g.. Spirit's stifle issue).

Individual Horse Recommendations

ALL - Hooves trimmed and/or shod. Comprehensive vet checkup, including dental care (unless there are records of being floated that date back less than a year ago), and appropriate vaccines. Nutrition/diet schedules, and body condition assessment and plan.

ABBY - Backsore as of July 3, 2021. Evaluate fit and weight of saddle. May benefit from farrier examination of hinds following recovery from ulcers. Should be upgraded to a larger stall with adequate bedding as she has been seen almost collapsing due to sleep deprivation.

BLONDIE - Diet assessment, determine if she should be checked for ulcers. Hoof structure assessment and trimming plan may be advantageous by a qualified farrier given her club foot. Gait evaluation/evaluation for lameness may be appropriate.

CURLY - Moves heavy on her forehead, may benefit from bodywork. Diet assessment (currently on straight alfalfa). Otherwise a sound horse.

DELILAH - Requires a diagnosis encompassing her abnormal stance, continual stiffness and frequent lameness. Quality of life evaluation. Saddle fit evaluation (if not professional, at least by an experienced eye). Time must be set aside for staff or onsite management to ensure she gets regular betadine baths to control fungus. Potential for supplements or medication that may improve quality of life.

JUNE - New lighter saddle for saddle rub, Ulcer treatment, dental care, vet check, joint/muscle supplements, thrush treatment, soon hoof/frog trim (double check to add shoes), vet treatment for severe back soreness.

KONA - Vet care and evaluation for constant recurring lameness.

MAISY - Scoped for ulcers, dental care, evaluation of gait and potential pain management plans (URGENT). Maisy maintains her feet well without trims, but at times has been footsore on trail and has a soft sole prone to getting rocks stuck in it. She may benefit from a check over from a qualified farrier. Quality of life evaluation.

MARSHMALLOW - Scope for ulcers (URGENT), potential evaluation of kidney/metabolic issues due to excessive drinking and urination.

MOCHA - Corrective shoeing schedule in collaboration with vet, potential switch to grass hay (especially in a hay net). Thrush treatment.

PEANUT - Really should be fit for a different saddle, which may be difficult. Diet assessment (Eats only 1 flake/day alfalfa). Given her diet and also recommend scoping for ulcers.

SHAY - URGENT- saddle fit evaluation. Shay often comes up extremely backsore. Shay is also a stall-walker which puts strain on her joints. She frequently comes out of her stall with lameness on the left hind. Her use in a program that requires her to be stalled or stall conditions should be evaluated.

SKYE - Requires a larger sized stall in accordance with the UC Davis Minimum Standards of Care document. May need a saddle fit evaluation as reportedly has been bucking recently. Otherwise usually sound, except prone to tripping behind (may improve with greater space to move).

SPIRIT - Stifle joints are extremely prone to injury resulting in pain and sleep deprivation. She has laid down in lessons on numerous occasions (onsite management attributed this to exhaustion). Required to be in light work, but is always very near to re-injuring her stifle. Would benefit from a vet evaluation for management (no option may exist), stricter and more evident guidelines for use in the arena. May be inappropriate for this program if limitations cannot be maintained.

STETSON - Vet check and potential treatment for arthritis. He is very stiff in general, can be heard cracking when he shifts his weight, has an exceptionally choppy trot, and shows resistance when used multiple times on trail. May benefit from a softer bit. Head-tossing and resistance to the bit (including once getting his tongue over a ported bit) may also be due to issues with his teeth.