

Rocky Mountain Select Miniature Donkey Sale to Host Meredith Hodges
By Helen T. Hertz

The Rocky Mountain Select Miniature Donkey Sale in Castle Rock, Colorado, hosted by Loren and Marilyn Burlage, draws prospective buyers from east, west, north, and south, Canada and Europe to bid on some of the finest jennet stock available. For this year's event, July 10-11, they've invited mule and donkey expert Meredith Hodges to speak. Meredith's topics will be beginning training and the importance of balance. Meredith talks a lot about both of these subjects in her new training series, *Equus Revisited*, which will air for a second time on RFD-TV through the month of July (see your local television schedule).

In fact much of beginning training is about balance—for both equine and rider. Balance for the equine begins with groundwork and continues with work over obstacles and, eventually, in the round pen. For the rider, balance comes with consistent attention to posture and position in relation to the equine. Balance, awareness, posture, these create true partnership. They're the backbone of any training program and central to securing your equine's overall health and well-being and supporting his longevity.

In *Equus Revisited*, as in her comprehensive training series *Training Mules and Donkeys*, Meredith demonstrates exercises designed to build balance and explains how each works to build strength and form. Beyond that, she also looks at the foundation of form with assistance from a team of equine experts. Meredith's own farrier, equine chiropractor, equine masseuse and others look at the ways in which every aspect of an equine's physical form and condition affect balance and therefore performance.

“Proper medical and dental care, proper conditioning and training, and proper diet not only build strength and endurance, they produce the right attitude—an animal ready to do his best for you,” says Meredith.

Meredith adds that loss of balance can cause stress and even panic, leading to what we might perceive as bad behavior.

“Think about what happens to your mood when you're wearing an uncomfortable pair of shoes or your back hurts,” she says. “You most likely don't feel much like cooperating. That's what these equines so often deal with. We've got to be patient with them, let them find their balance and build the strength and coordination they need. If you master these fundamentals, not only will you avoid bad behaviors, you'll have an animal happy to take on a rider.”

The Burlage's famous jennet-only sale will be a great opportunity to bid on some truly outstanding stock and to hear Meredith and ask questions. *Equus Revisited*, airing on RFD-TV in July, answers all the “whys” of her famous training series and offers a complete approach to athletic conditioning. And if you've got a question you'd like to

ask, be sure to visit the “Ask Meredith” page at www.luckythreeranch.com. You’ll find an immense archive of questions and answers on a number of different topics and a place to submit your question, which Meredith will answer promptly.

Meredith will speak at the Rocky Mountain Select Miniature Donkey Sale on July 10, at 2 p.m. For more information about the sale, please visit www.mjbminiaturedonkeys.com. For more about *Equus Revisited* and Meredith Hodges’s other equine training materials, please visit www.luckythreeranch.com or call 800-816-7566.