

## **PROTECTIVE ATTIRE AND INFORMATION**

We recommend that program participants wear suitable clothing for the environment at Bit O'Luck Equine Rescue, Inc. Please wear ONLY hard-soled, fully enclosed shoes or boots and socks (leather is recommended over canvas); blue jeans or long pants are highly recommended to protect legs; and tops conducive to the current weather (i.e., tank tops or t-shirts for warm weather and layers of turtlenecks or long sleeves for cold weather) are acceptable.

Domesticated, well-trained horses are usually obedient, docile and affectionate. However, it is important to understand that their survival instincts are what have allowed the horse to survive throughout history to present day.

The following is a list of facts regarding the nature and physical character of the horse of which we felt you should be aware and respectful:

- 1) Horses are unpredictable by nature, with minds of their own, as are all animals both domesticated and wild.
- 2) Horses are prey animals and often somewhat high strung or nervous by nature which drives the "flight instead of fight" mentality.
- 3) Horses are extremely heavy, weighing on average between 600 to 1300 pounds.
- 4) When a horse is frightened, angry, under stress, or feels threatened, natural instincts are that the horse may jump and/or run in any direction away from the danger, attaining a speed at a gallop of up to 35 miles per hour; or it may kick with tremendous force back, sideways, or forward; or rear up with both front legs, strike with one or both front legs, bite with teeth, throw the head up or from side to side, or run directly over whatever it fears.

Humans must ALWAYS approach a horse with confidence but calmly with caution and talking soothingly, preferably approaching the horse's shoulder or lower neck.

7) Loud and/or sudden unexpected movements, dropping of objects, and moving around corners near a horse; approaching vehicles and/or animals and/or people; and ill-fitting equipment or physical pain to a horse can provoke a domesticated horse to react according to natural protective instincts.

8) When angry or fearful, horses may suddenly tense their muscles, lay their ears flat back against the head, quickly toss or raise the head, or snort through their nostrils.

9) Horses can see independently with each eye ~ actually looking in one direction with one eye and another direction with the other eye ~ and may focus on one thing with both eyes.

10) *Horses have two blind spots ~ directly behind them and directly in front of them under the mouth. For this reason, it is best to approach a horse from the side at their shoulders or lower neck.*

*I have read and understand the recommended protective attire and horse information sited above.*

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*Signature of Volunteer*

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*Date*