



West Wind Stables NEWSLETTER

January/February 2026

Happy New Year!

We hope everyone had a lovely Christmas break. Thank you for continuing to be part of the West Wind family. We appreciate each and every one of you for helping make our facility feel like home.



Year of the Fire Horse

February 17, 2026 marks the Lunar New Year. It's the end of the Year of the (Wood) Snake and the beginning of the Year of the (Fire) Horse of the Chinese Zodiac. Last time the Year of The Horse was in 2014 and after this year the next one is in 2038!

Each year the animal of the Zodiac is paired with one of the following elements Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal and Water. Wood represents growth, compassion, sociability, adaptability and strong morals. Fire represents passion, energy, courage, change, warmth and outward expression. This year the Horse is paired with Fire.

Horse is the 7 th animal in the 12-year cycle of the Chinese Zodiac. The other animals are Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. Horse is considered to be passionate, dynamic, courageous, independent, adventurous and innovative.

According to Chinese legend Horse is placed 7th because of a race. The Jade Emperor who ruled over the Heavens organized this race. He decreed the first 12 animals that made it across the river would receive this eternal honor.

Horse was a crowd favorite but had a slow start because it was enjoying the crowd and their cheering too much. Horse started the race too late to win the way everyone expected. However, it still beat Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig.



West Wind Stables is starting its 16th year in business at its current location. We are one of the largest lesson facilities within the city of Winnipeg with 48 large box stalls! 13 of our horses are privately owned as boarded horses and 21 school horses are owned by West Wind. Of course we can't forget our 1 miniature horse...making that 22!

As well, we must include our barn cats, Simon, Calvin, Luna and Jimmy. Not to be outdone by Max and Cassie (Chris and Shawn's dogs) who never want to be left out of the animal family.



Test your Arena Etiquette

Riding with others safely and effectively requires practice. When the arena is busy it can become challenging to stay focused and share the arena safely. We've noticed some bad habits showing up in our arena. This makes it less safe and more difficult for everyone to navigate the arena effectively.

Can you correctly answer these questions?

1. If you have a phone, water bottle or crop should you
 - a. Carry them into the arena with you and place them on the penalty box
 - b. Bring them into the arena - placing them on the penalty box - before you bridle and come in with your horse
 - c. Ask your parent, coach or friend to grab them once you're mounted because you forgot
2. If the arena gate is closed when you come to the arena with your horse do you
 - a. Open it and walk in
 - b. Check for traffic before opening the gate
 - c. Check for traffic and if it's clear call 'Door' before entering
3. Once you have entered the arena do you
 - a. Stay in the corner at the gate and complete tack adjustments
 - b. Move to the rail and complete tack adjustments
 - c. Move to the center of the arena – as long as it does not interfere with current rider's lesson or pattern – and complete tack adjustments
4. You are sharing the arena with a lesson of two or more riders. Can you ride with earbuds in?
 - a. Yes, I can ride with one earbud
 - b. No, I cannot ride with earbuds
 - c. Yes, I can wear both earbuds
5. When is it not the best time to stop and chat with your friends at the barn?
 - a. In the lobby
 - b. In the barn
 - c. In the arena while sharing the arena with other riders or lessons
6. When do you pick up your horses' manure when walking in the barn?
 - a. After you are done riding
 - b. After you are done grooming/bathing/tacking up your horse
 - c. Immediately. Before you continue on with your task
7. When do you pick up your horses' manure in the arena when you are unmounted?
 - a. Immediately. Before mounting and before leaving the arena
 - b. After your ride
 - c. After you've put your horse and tack away
8. When do you pick up your horses' manure during a ride?
 - a. After your ride. Once you have dismounted
 - b. You don't. Leave it for someone else or let it be trampled into the sand
 - c. Immediately. Dismount during your ride to pick it up then remount and continue your ride
9. When is the best time to sweep the transitional hallway after your ride?
 - a. After you have groomed your horse, cleaned your tack and put them away
 - b. Immediately. Once horse is in their stall and un-tacked
 - c. Never. I always forget or have someone else sweep



**Answers are at the end of this newsletter.



West Wind Stables

HORSE SPOTLIGHT

Flynn

Quarter Horse &
Thoroughbred Cross

Born in
2006

Has zebra
stripes on
his legs

Competed in Hunters
and Dressage!



Take
Note

Some upcoming dates to mark in your calendars

January

- January 18, 2026- MHJA AGM 2:00pm Red River Exhibition Place
- January 27, 2026- WWS Summer Camp Registration Phase 1
- January 31, 2026- Sheath/Udder Course 3:30pm
- Now til Feb 8, 2026 Prairie Strides Super Bowl Pool tickets-\$5 each
- Jan 26 - Feb 11, 2026 Prairie Strides Pucker Up Fundraiser

February

- February 1, 2026- MDC AGM 1:00pm Breezy Bend
- February 3, 2026- WWS Summer Camp Registration Phases 2
- February 21, 2026- Yearly Training Plan Class 4:00pm February 28, 2026- Horsemanship Class 4:00pm
- Prairie Strides Art & Adventure Auction- watch for details

March

- March 14, 2026- Easter Photo's Fundraiser
- March 22, 2026- WWS Fun Show
- March 28- April 4, 2026- Brandon Winter Fair
-Tack Cleaning Extravaganza



"We want to hear from you!"

Have a great idea, story or topic you'd like to submit or have covered in upcoming newsletters?

We'd love to hear about a special lesson, moment spent with your horse or just things you enjoy being at the barn. Or if you have a question you've been dying to know the answer to...send it our way and we'll do our best to answer it in an upcoming edition. Submissions can be answered anonymously. Send your ideas, requests or stories to kelly@westwindstables.ca