



# BC Bulletin

June 2018

## Canyon Highlights June 1 - July 1

- ♦ June 4, 4PM: Knitters and Crocheters
- ♦ June 5, 7AM: CA Primary Election
- ♦ June 8, 5PM: Food Truck Rally
- ♦ June 12, 7PM: BCAC meeting
- ♦ June 14, 7PM: BC BOC meeting
- ♦ June 20, 10AM: Book Club
- ♦ June 23-24, 9AM: Pony Camp #1
- ♦ June 25, 7PM: CSD meeting\*
- ♦ June 26, 7PM: BCAC meeting

\*Subject to change

## Save the Date!

Bell Canyon  
Broadway presents:



July 21, 6:00 PM

July 22, 5:00 PM

Tickets will be available at the door.  
For further information, please email  
Gloria at [bcbroadway23@gmail.com](mailto:bcbroadway23@gmail.com)

## Horsing Around: Meet the BCRA

Since its inception over 30 years ago, the Bell Canyon Riding Academy has gone through many variations. This past year, under the careful stewardship of trainer Kelly Jennings and BCA Board Directors Lisa Riccomini and Geoff Abadee, it has seen steady growth into a true community resource. Anyone, regardless of experience or horse ownership, can learn to ride in a caring, fun environment with the BCA. We sat down with the BCRA instructors to find out a bit about where they came from, why they chose Bell Canyon, and their inspirations.

**BCB:** Tell me a little bit about yourselves and how you made your way to Bell Canyon.

**Kelly Jennings:** I grew up on the East Coast, working and competing. I started working with horses at 12, and worked



all the way up to college, where I majored in Equine Studies. I moved out to California after graduation and worked as an assistant trainer for a bunch of barns before starting my own barn. I came in when Kris de Graaf was managing the stable; we seemed to like each other and she offered me a spot, and I've been here ever since. I've really grown to love the community and the horses here, it's been an amazing opportunity. *(continued on page 2)*

## Ready to Rally?

Come June 5th, the Bell Canyon Community Center parking lot will spring to life with sizzling smells and tantalizing tastes during the annual Food Truck Rally. Confirmed savory trucks include Meat the Greek, The Grilled Cheese Truck, and Rodney's Ribs, while LA Donut, and Daddy's Best FroYo bring sweet treats for the evening.

Whether you plan to sample each truck's unique fare or go wild on one menu, plan ahead and make sure to hit up the ATM before coming—this is a cash-only event. Tables and chairs, as well as sweet tunes by DJ Darius, will be provided, so bring your appetite (and a bottle of wine, if you're 21+) and get ready to enjoy one of Bell Canyon's most popular community events. The trucks open their windows at 5 PM sharp and will be cooking until 10 PM. ■

# Meet the BCRA, con't.

*(continued from page 1)* **Dakota Hokanson:** I grew up riding in Utah, starting with Western and then moving to jumping. I moved out to California and joined Pony Club, going up to level C2, and I also helped fix up off the track thoroughbreds for quite a while, with a little bit of eventing here and there. After college, I moved to L.A. and found Kelly as a teacher, so, when she began at the BCEC, I followed, and she brought me on as an assistant.

**Kiana Galli:** I started riding horses when I was 5. My mom was like, "It's time to start lessons. Do you want to run barrels, or do you want to jump?" I looked her in the eyes and said, "I want to JUMP!" and I've been riding English ever since. I moved out from Connecticut to California to study music business; after I got my degree, I was riding at a lot of different barns, posting on Facebook looking for other horses to school, which is how Kelly found me. I started taking lessons from her, then came on as a teacher here at Bell Canyon.

**BCB:** It's great how you all came from such different backgrounds but ended up here teaching at the academy. Can you tell me a little more about the work you do at the BCRA and Pony Camps?

**KJ:** When I first started, there were a couple of Bell Canyon residents who had kids and wanted them to take lessons from me, but I didn't really have an appropriate horse. The BCRA went through a couple different iterations, with different people running it, but then it was really when Lisa Riccomini and Geoff Abadee came in and really advocated for it, with the help of Diane Rossiter, that we were able to turn it around. We've made it into something that serves the community really well and is a lot more available, professional, and complete.



*Dakota takes on a jump with Mouse*

**BCB:** So what can campers expect from Pony Camp?

**KJ:** We have a lot of fun things planned for the kids! There will be riding lessons every day, combined with horse care and horse education. They'll also be setting jumps and learning to jump them on foot. We want to focus on learning through play.

**KG:** We really want to incorporate the learning with a lot of fun, so they'll be doing things like scavenger hunts with horse colors or markings and tack pieces, races to assemble tack, and games that identify the horse body parts. They'll also be making shirts, stall cards, and painting horseshoes.

**BCB:** One last thing before we go: what is your favorite thing about teaching or working with horses?

**DH:** For me, seeing kids learn things in the horse world that they'll be able to apply to the real world. They don't know it now, but then, years down the road, it clicks.

**KJ:** Yeah, there's so much there. I grew up riding and training, and there's just so many life skills I learned and so many good relationships I created—horse friends are the best friends. For me, the best thing is watching the relationships form: the relationship that I build with the horse, as well as the relationship between the owner or rider and the horse. They begin to trust each other, to understand each other's languages, to work together in just this really magical way that creates so much more in each of them. Being able to see that transition into a really strong team is just so rewarding as a trainer.

**KG:** For me, I think it's the joy, from the little kids and from the horses. I love the joy that happens when a kid gets something right, and I'm always learning from both the kids and the horses. I love to tell the students, the horses aren't really learning from you; they're really teaching you. *(Answers have been edited or condensed for clarity.)*



Lessons for residents start at \$60 per 30-minute, private lesson; anyone, from tiny tot, to experienced rider, is welcome to join. Interested parties can check out the Academy online at [bellcanyonequestriancenter.com/riding-academy](http://bellcanyonequestriancenter.com/riding-academy) or email [bcecacademy@gmail.com](mailto:bcecacademy@gmail.com) to arrange a lesson. Online Pony Camp reservations opened May 10th for BCRA students and Bell Canyon residents. ■