



Saddle Up

By Betty Swanson
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Know The Enemy As The Fly Wars Continue

With the complaints I have heard recently about the amazing number of flies that have appeared following local rains, I think that it is time for my annual column on the "Fly Wars." This term refers to the ongoing and never ending battle I wage each year with the flies populating my property and doing their best to make my horses' lives miserable.

I have a particular interest in eradicating these little – out of my back yard because, as I have mentioned before, I own a little bay Arabian mare that is allergic to fly saliva and, as the summer stretches on, her legs and body become a mass of itchy bumps, sores and scabs. It is a condition called allergic dermatitis and it is painful to watch – a true equine curse if ever I've seen one. I have seen this condition before on horses, but never as bad as her situation, despite my best daily efforts to protect her.

I use insect sprays of every type, salve, masks, leg guards, and eventually, bandages. Fly predators (wasps), released monthly, patrol my stable areas, numerous fly traps filled with little black fly corpses make my yard smell beyond bad, and a feed through Rabon fly control block is always available for licking.

I can only guess how bad the fly situation would be if I did nothing.

There is an old saying: Know your enemy. So, in effort to do just that, I recently spent a couple of hours researching facts on those most hated of flying creatures – flies. I will share this info, but I must warn readers to abandon any attempts to eat while reading the rest of this column: some of this is not very appetiz-

ing. Flies belong to the order of Diptera. That means two wings rather than the four that insects generally have (we're dealing here with freaks of nature). On the bodies of flies, over time, the second set of wings evolved into small knobs located behind their wings that help them fly steady and balanced and make them very agile and able to maneuver intricate flight patterns, hover and even fly backwards. Not only that, but when the hairs on their bodies sense movement, the message goes straight to their wings enabling them to zoom off (no wonder they're so hard to swat).

They also taste and smell with this hair, particularly the hair on their feet enabling them to taste whatever they land on before their mouths even touch it (all their taste is in their feet).

Like all insects, they have six legs and segmented bodies: a head, a thorax and an abdomen. There are houseflies and stable flies (difficult to tell apart when you can't ask for ID). Neither type can chew. They must suck up their food in liquid form.

Houseflies have sponging mouth parts and eat garbage, human food, etc. When a housefly lands on foods, it spews saliva with digestive enzymes on it which breaks down the food to a liquid form so that they can eat it through their proboscis. (is this gross or what?) Although they don't bite horses, they carry the larvae of stomach worms (Habronema) which can cause a worm infestation known as "summer sores" in



wounds. Stable flies have piercing, sharp, stiletto-like, sucking mouths. Stable and horse flies require blood meals. When they land to bite a horse, they actually cut or saw the skin to expose the blood needed and then they secrete saliva with an enzyme that keeps the blood from clotting while they suck it (evil little vampires...). They feed several times a day and prefer the belly and leg areas for their meals, hence the stomping of hooves accompany their presence. The average adult lives 28 days, during which time the female can lay 500-1000 eggs in four separate batches.

Face flies, yet another type of fly, do not bite, but feed on the secretions from horses' eyes and look more like house flies.

All varieties are strong fliers (are your neighbors controlling their flies?) They can travel miles.

Now for some "fun" fly facts:
1) Scientists estimate that houseflies carry around 1,941,000 different kinds of bacteria;
2) Stable flies can roam as far as 70 miles;
3) A single pair of flies beginning operation in April, if all were to live to adulthood, would result in 191,010,000,000,000,000 (191 quintillion, 10 quadrillion) flies by August (discouraging, isn't it?).

Do these flying menaces have any purpose whatsoever? What good are they? Well, experts say that they are an important part of the food chain and furnish food for birds, bats and spiders (I think we need more birds and bats), as well as assisting in the pollination of plants.

OK, they're here to stay. What is the next battle maneuver in my ongoing war?

Feed-through larvicides can stop the little beggars before they grow into adult flies. At least two different products are currently on the market that prevents larva from developing into adult flies by interfering with the production of chitin, a key component of the adult insect's exoskeleton. The only problem is that it gets expensive when treating more than one or two horses.

But, my resolve is strengthened, the war continues. Where is my flyswatter?

My name is Peter, and in eight years I'll be an alcoholic.

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Ad Council

AJ Mounted Rangers Hold Memorial Service

Ranger Grover Place passed away on May 7

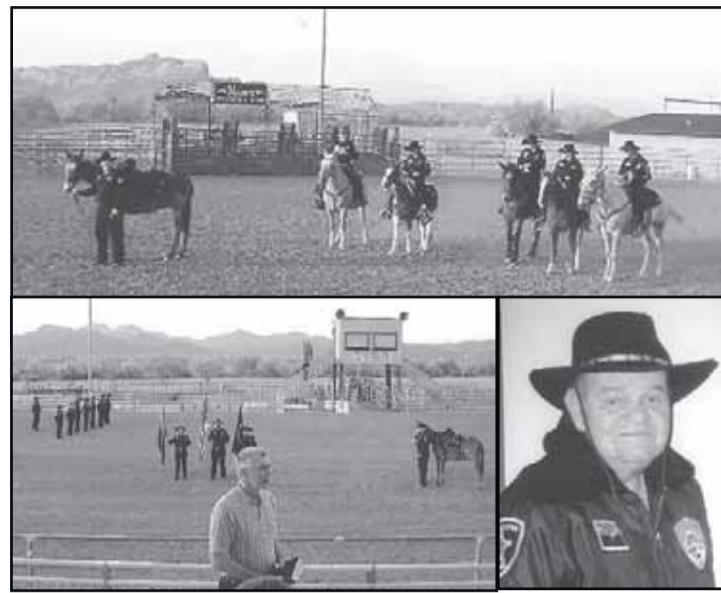
By Meghan McCoy
The News

The Apache Junction Mounted Rangers held a special Memorial Service for one of their own on Saturday, May 10, 2008 at the Apache Junction Rodeo Grounds.

Apache Junction Mounted Ranger Grover Place passed away on Wednesday, May 7, 2008 of Lymphoma. He was born in Ann Arbor, Michigan on July 11, 1935.

David Walker from Hospice gave the eulogy and his daughter Victoria spoke as well.

Place is survived by his wife Marilyn (Billie) Place, his son Gregory Place and his daughter Victoria Kern. He has three sisters and two brothers Myrt Cather, Shirley Gordina, Jean Klinski, Stanford Place and Leroy Place. "It was a moving ceremony, the



The Apache Junction Mounted Ranger held a special memorial service for Grover Place (inset) at the Apache Junction Rodeo Grounds.

rangers remember their own in a wonderful way," Mounted Rangers Public Relations Officer Joan Felkner said.

Breakfast With Resolution Copper Company

Friday, June 6 at 7:30 a.m.

On Friday, June 6, the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce will host a breakfast with Resolution Copper Company at Gold Canyon Golf Course, 6100 S. Kings Ranch Road in Gold Canyon at 7:30 am.

The featured speaker will be President and CEO of Resolution Copper Company David Salisbury, who is in charge of the Superior project. The informational breakfast will present a forum for attendees to learn about and address the major economic powerhouse, the effects of which will spread far beyond Superior.

Resolution Copper's plans for the re-development of copper mining in the area of Superior have received great fanfare and no little controversy. Land acquisition and usage issues have



been hotly contested while the massive economic promise is impossible to ignore. By the most conservative estimates, renewed mining will pump 46.4 billion dollars into the Pinal County economy over the next 66 years with federal, state, county and local tax revenues in excess of 10.7 billion dollars. Yet there remain concerns about the flip side of this bonanza ranging from the environmental, esthetic and recreational. The Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce invites community and state leaders, business professionals and residents from throughout the area to come meet Mr. Salisbury and become fully acquainted with Resolution's plans as well as receiving answers to whatever questions those plans might raise. The cost is \$20.00 per person with pre-paid RSVP required with the Apache Junction Chamber of Commerce at 480-982-3141 or by registering online at www.apachejunctioncoc.com.

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