



days at
Dunrovin

April 2019



**Ranch
Talk**



The Horses Return

Like the ospreys migration home to Dunrovin each Spring, our horses come home, as well. However, their journey is measured in minutes, not weeks, and in feet, not miles, and human intervention is required. During this period when the melting snow gives rise to green pastures and blooming wildflowers, our relaxed and well-rested horses are brought back to the ranch to begin their season of teaching horse-crazy children the joy and wonder of connecting with another sentient being, albeit a four-legged, furry one.

In the wild, horses are always on the move, walking and eating 20 hours out of every day. Being loose in a large pasture is something they truly enjoy, and they make good use of the space.



Horses are social beings, as we are. In order to thrive, they need to “be a horse,” at least some of the time. That means living in a herd and interacting with each other as their brains and bodies are meant to do. During the winter, the horses live across the gravel road from the ranch on a 20-acre pasture. They have access to food and water, and most days, are not intruded upon by us humans. Then, while working the Spring and Summer seasons as Dunrovin’s lesson horses and trail mounts, they are kept in stalls during the day. Being stalled gives us easy and quick access to them, and in fact, they seem to enjoy the time away from the sometimes aggressive behaviors required to maintain their place in the herd pecking order.

Meet the “Tried & True” Kids’ Horses

You will notice that approximately half of our herd will return to the ranch first, leaving the rest to come back mid-May. Ranch Manager Kelli and our own Paula will lead them back to the ranch from the pasture on Tuesday morning, and you can watch on our cameras. That is because we need our “tried & true” kids’ horses for Dunrovin’s Pony Clubs, Home School Programs, and Apprenticeship Programs that run April 15 through May 24. On Thursday’s “At The Corral,” you will meet stand-outs Whiskey, Rocket, Butte, Dugan, Razz, and Mickey. These gentle horses have taught many a youngster the ins-and-outs of horsemanship, safety, and compassion. The instructors can trust these horses to take care of the children, even though the students may occasionally give the horses incorrect and confusing signals.

On Tuesday, the horses get cleaned up from the long winter months living in the pasture. Their manes will need detangling, their thick hair shedded out, and their bodies checked over for any sign of injury or discomfort. They must be in tip-top shape for the upcoming busy season at the ranch.



The instructors also know that these horses will kindly tolerate all manner of grooming and hair braiding by horse-crazy kids! You will also see our big boy Erskine and young Mystery ridden by our instructors during some of the lessons, training them to take their place as trail mounts during late Spring and Summer.

Matching ponies Captains Lewis & Clark will also make a return appearance as the gentle teachers of our three- and four-year-old Pony Clubbers. Be sure to look for the pink boots and pink cowgirl shirts—there will be plenty!

Broadcast Date: _____ **Time:** _____

Location: _____