

'Horse whisperers' exchange notes

by Mechele Cooper, Staff Writer

Equine healer touts methods at trade show

AUGUSTA — Kingsley Barnes knows all about horses.

He's been racing them for 25 years.

So it wasn't a surprise to find him talking with Sheila Ryan at the Northeast Horsemen's Conference and Trade Show held in the Augusta Civic Center on Saturday.

Both take a holistic approach to healing horses. Ryan has been trained in spiritual healing techniques and learned hands-on healing with internationally recognized horsemen and trainer Monte Roberts (the celebrated "horse whisperer") and Olympic champion John Lyons.

From her home in Barrington, R.I., she operates a business called HorseSense:Communicating With Trust. She uses spiritual healing techniques in HorseSense, which is a holistic vehicle for horse owners, trainers and veterinarians who want to communicate with their horses through the use of hands-on intuition.

Barnes, 57, who lives in Pittston and has a horse farm in Wiscasset, says he rejuvenates horses that have raced too often without proper care.

He told Ryan as they stood in front of her booth at the show

about a horse he helped heal by using some of her methods: watching, listening and talking with the animals.

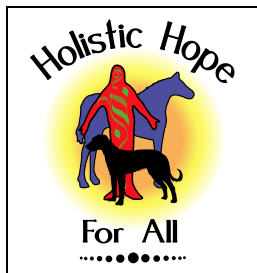
"There was this one young horse I paid \$1,800 (for) that nobody could do anything with," Barnes said. "I re-shoed him and rubbed his legs a lot and raced him at Cumberland (County Fairgrounds). He came in second, so I took him to Fryeburg and he won. After that, I took him to Scarborough and he won five times. You have to put the time into them and watch and listen. They'll tell you a lot."

Ryan chimed in, "You found out what's going on with out all the mumble jumble. That's what I do."

For more than 10 years, Ryan has been practicing hands-on healing on people. Her desire to better understand her own horse, Mijoi, started her on the path to HorseSense.

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Currently, she works with a couple of horse farms where Olympic-level competitors are trained. One of these is Kent Stable in Gorham. The owner, Lisa Kent, rides horses in jumping competitions and is rated 10th in the nation.

"Through my work with her I've met a lot of people in Maine," said the 43-year-old Ryan. "She (Kent) sets up seminars for me to do, and people truck their horses in. I also go to Florida a couple of times a year. I love what I do and will go wherever people want to send me."

She says her seminars help people get more in tune with their animals, and provide them with healing techniques they can practice at home.

The work she performs is not meant to replace veterinarians, acupuncturists or chiropractors, she said, but to coordinate with the owner and medical professionals to identify problem areas, emotionally and physically. Holistic healing leads to a healthier and happier relationship with the animal, she said.

She focuses her work on identifying painful areas, saddle fit, feeding regimens, training techniques and emotional problems.

"If an animal has an emotional problem, more likely it can be credited to people," she said. "I worked with a horse that acted up

every time he heard the truck come up the driveway. The truck represented the man that represented the saddle that represented the sore back."

Ryan said she is able to change the mood of a cranky mare with magnesium and manganese supplements. Mares need those elements in their diets to stay healthy, she said.

"If they're deficient in them, it throws off their cycles – periods – so they're moody," she said. "I've been able to bring around cranky horses by adjusting their nutrition."

Ryan is among the guest speakers invited to the two-day conference and trade show. She is scheduled to give a presentation at 1 p.m. Sunday called Communication Techniques: What Is My Horse Thinking?

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