

# BACA HORSE NEWS

April 2017

I am so excited to write this newsletter ... Cori (Querencia) had her foal, a colt, on Tuesday April 18th! What a beautiful little boy – a grulla now but may change to black, and a perfect white triangle on his forehead. This is a historical occasion as it is the start of our Baca Colonial Spanish horse preservation at Blue Oaks Center.



And just think, we have 3 more babies still to arrive:

May 30 – Adelina

June 4 – Corazon (an El Rosio daughter)

June 8 – Coloradita

Unfortunately, in early February we found out that Annabelle was not pregnant. Not to be held back, Carol is currently breeding Annabelle with Savache and Catalina is with Relampago.

As Carol tells me “from the sounds of it, the mating seems to be successful” or (love is in the air). We are also very excited to have made contact with Pam Stanyon from Vermont. Pam is a friend of Stephanie Lockhart and owns Rosalinda – who she helped to bring to Vermont in 2013. She is looking forward to breeding her with Relampago this year. We are also hoping to have Relampago and a pregnant Annabelle return home to Renee Clark in Texas this year.

Carol is working closely with Drs. Cothran and Sponenberg on the next breeding matches. We are limited due to only having two 100% Baca stallions to breed with the mares. It will be at least 2 years before any colts that are born can be bred. We want to preserve this breed correctly and are paying attention to 3 main factors: genetics, confirmation and character. If we are forced to breed out to a non-Baca, we want it to be as close to our lineage as possible, meaning a probable Barb horse. But this is why we are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Sponenberg (Virginia Tech), Dr. Cothran (Texas A&M) and Drs. Amy McLean, Murray and Myers (UC Davis) assisting us.

I would like to offer a huge THANK YOU for everyone who participated in doing hair pulls on their Bacas. It is this information that our doctors are using to determine the genetic makeup of these horses. We are very happy to have the DNA included for El Nino Frio (Nan Boffa of Vermont), Tostone (Mary Phillips of New Mexico), and Rosalinda (Pamela Stanyon of Vermont). I will forward the results of this study as soon as I get a copy.

El Nino Frio & Nan



Pamela on Rosie with Rosalinda



Mary – I need a photo of Tostone!



Now that our preservation program is under way, Carol has been working on a Foster Satellite Preservation Farms program which will qualify the people and their property to foster some of our Bacas. Blue Oaks Center for Equestrian Arts & Education is a 501c(3) corporation which will allow tax write offs for these foster families and others who donate. Blue Oaks Center is a division of Charis Youth Center.

Destiny Bradt got first-hand experience with the Bacas when Tim Hayes, renown author of Riding Home – The Power of Horses to Heal, came out to California and held a horsemanship class which she attended. Destiny has now expressed her desire to be our first foster parent and would like a mare and her foal! Destiny is such a warm and compassionate person ... our horses will be very happy with her. She is very interested in learning more of the history of the Bacas. She has already contacted a local paper and asked for permission to write a column or series of articles to develop the Baca story. She is also an artist – a talent we will greatly appreciate! We are looking forward to having Destiny on our team.

I have also had the pleasure of adding two new names to our Friends of the Bacas data base: Kendra Chavez from New Mexico who is the owner of Dream Keeper, a 50% Baca mare whose mother is Lindita, and Karen Kelley from New Hampshire who has contacted us and is interested in a baby Baca!

Kendra and Dream:



On May 6, Blue Oaks Center will participate in Simply Country in Penn Valley, CA. This is a terrific opportunity to present the Bacas to the community.

Hooray – I have completed our Baca Heritage spreadsheet! This is a phenomenal data base of all our known Bacas. I owe a huge Thank You to Stephanie, Carol, Annette and Virginia for their help with this information. If you have not received a copy of this, please let me know and I will email it to you.

Stephanie and Carol have been talking about the need to start collecting semen. Collection and AI may be the best means of breeding mares out of the area (ie: Rosalinda in Vermont). We are hoping to have Amy McLean of UC Davis assist us with this.

Speaking of Amy McLean, we have some more phenomenal news to share with you from our University contacts. Amy informed us that she is working with an equine geneticist at UC Davis - Dr. Jim Murray who is one of the geneticist known for developing the horse genome. He has worked on saving a lot of different wild life species including the Florida panther and the California condor. Amy also said that they have teamed up with one of the leading equine reproduction specialist and are using reproduction techniques such as embryo transfer and ICSI (intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection). You can take an egg from a Baca and then breed to a Baca stallion or another stallion and then transfer the embryo to a recipient mare. Wow! Amy invited Carol to UC Davis to talk about this and to meet Dr. Murray and Dr. Stuart Myers. We hope to gain more information about our breeding program and how to sustain the line outside of the current limited Baca horses. This meeting will be so critical to the breeding process and how we can best continue on the Baca line. So much has been learned in just a short amount of time! The most valuable is that the Baca Spanish Colonial horse is not necessarily of 100% Iberian descent as previously thought the lines go back much further and are descendant from the Barb Horses of the North African Coast. According to Dr. Cothran, the additional hair samples will give even more information. More research is being conducted and more information to follow.

On March 12, Virginia Baca had several family members over and requested a conference call for a nice catch up. Annette was on the phone as well as her sister Dorothy and Virginia's sister "Aunt Mary Phillips". During this call, they reached out to our group to find good homes for their 4 remaining Bacas. Eliza (aka Penny) is our only breedable mare that is related to El Tejon (she is a granddaughter). Carol offered to take her with plans to breed her to Relampago this year. On April 19, Mark Baca (Virginia's son) drove 20 hours to deliver Eliza to Blue Oaks Center. Thank you to Mark and James for that journey! Eliza is adjusting very well and will soon share a pasture with other Bacas. We have also learned that she had a filly and we are attempting to locate that horse now. There is a possibility of the filly's father being either Savache, El Rosio or El Pinon. If you have any information on this horse's whereabouts please contact me, Marina.

Eliza:



And there are more Bacas on the move! Cara Blanca, currently at Kelly's, is our only connection with Motita. Cara Blanca is the daughter to Motita and El Pinon. After consulting with our contacts at the University, it was agreed that she should be bred. In order for this best to occur, Stephanie will be bringing her back to Vermont in May to oversee her breeding.

Cara Blanca:



The Baca family was asked if they would like to provide us with Spanish names that Joty would approve of as potential names for the new foals. Some of the names are:

Milagro (Miracle)

Bendito (Blessing)

Dulce (Sweet Daughter)

Cruz (Carrying a Cross)

Enrico (Ruler of the House)

Carino (with Affection)

Alma (Caring, Fostering)

Isa (Promise of God)

Domingo (Lord's Child)

On April 12, Carol and I participated in a webinar class for grant writing. I'm asking all of you to say a little prayer for us as this is all Greek to me! In reality, this is so critical to the ongoing preservation of our Baca program.

Stay tuned for Adelina's foal – due end of May!

Sincerely,

Marina Bigongiari

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PS – Please let me know of any news you may have regarding your Bacas: history, questions, funny stories, adventures, etc. Send me a quick email and I will save it for our next newsletter.

Thank you and have a wonderful day!