

TO: SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE
FROM: Martin Hill
RE: SB 835, THE BILL TO STOP HORSE TRIPPING
DATE: April 8th, 2013

My name is Martin Hill and I was a boarder from October 2011 until January 2013 at a horse boarding facility located in Cornelius Oregon. This barn and arena is located 1085 Flaxplant rd. It is owned by Emmert International and is leased to the Orozco family. The main Orozco's are three brothers, Jose Orozco, Ivan Orozco and Raphiel Orozco and also their father Noe Orozco. I was a boarder at this facility for about a year and a half. There were also several other boarders. While I was at this barn, I was witness to some pretty horrible treatment of horses and cattle.

The Orozco's wanted to have an arena so they could put on Mexican rodeos and make an income along with the board money of many boarders. When they introduced me to bull tripping, I was not impressed, especially when one of the bulls got its hip broke from being rolled over so violently. A business in Yamhill called "Cows-R-Us" and owned by Ken Stone supplies the cows and one of the conditions of leasing these cows is that if one is injured, they have to buy it. Ken stone was also a witness to the horrible conditions of the pens and horses and had turned it in to a veterinarian to report.

When the Orozco's first started tripping the horses, I was appalled. They would take horses that were less then 2 years old and use them since it was easier when they are small. They set up a shute to run the cows and horses through at the end of the arena. When the horse comes out, there would be four to six Charro's lined up on horse back with 100ft ropes.

As the horse is ran out of the shute with a cattle prod or just whipped, they would run down the arena next to a wall, and as it passed by each cowboy, they would try to throw their ropes and rope the legs of the horse and then dally the rope on their horn until the rope went taught and the horse either breaks free with the rope still on their leg or they slam into the ground. If the horse is tripped and all four feet come off the ground, they get ribbons to score their points.

I had seen several horses get tripped and also roped and have to run with 100 ft ropes still on their legs. When these horses get to the other end of the arena, the Orozco's had removed some of the walls where some stalls used to be, and they would chase the horses out through them and into the alley way where the stalls with the boarders horses were. This is an asphalt alley way and the horses are chased and whipped down the alley and chased back into the cattle shute for the next round.

When a couple of the horses caught on to when they were supposed to go into the shute, they knew it was bad, so they tried to run back and blow through the chasing cowboys. This was a horrific sight to see as the cowboys and the Orozco's would hit and stick the horses with cattle prods and whips.

I watched one of the Orozcos beating one of the horses in the face and head, with a bamboo rod, to try to make it go down the alley way and into the shute. This horse refused to go and kept trying to get back into the pen, so he kept beating it until the bamboo cane he was hitting her with broke on her face.

I took pictures of the shattered bamboo on the floor, and I also got pictures of the blood on the floor.

One of the trip horses was so badly injured on the back legs that it could no longer run. When they injure horses, they put them away and wait until the rodeo is over and have the

person who supply's them to come get them when no one is around and take them away. The Orozco's got smart after awhile and would have the injured ones taken away at night while no one was there to see and that way if they were turned in, the horses would not be there.

One of the horses that was badly injured from the ropes on its back legs was going to be taken away, but we told one of our friends about her and they wanted to save her. I told Jose Orozco and he said they could have her for free and that would save him the bother of having her removed.

So I wrote my friends up a sales contract and had them buy her for 1 dollar to make it a legal cash sale. This horse they bought is a Grulla colored and its back legs were so swollen that you could not tell where the ankles or knees were. The gashes from the ropes were so bad that it had a massive infection and had puss running down its legs. We had our vet, Steve Vredenberg from Banks veterinary in Banks Oregon, come look at her and treat her. She was lucky and did not ruin the tendons, and with stall rest and medical treatments for several months, she is now a nice looking horse except where the scars are on her legs from the ropes.

Another one of these trip horses was extremely skinny and had both hips skinned of the hair and hide due to being tripped and rolled several times. I have pictures of her hips after the rodeo and no one was there to stop me from getting pictures.

Our vet was there a couple days after one of the rodeos looking at our horses, when Jose Orozco came by with one of the skinny trip horses. We pointed it out to our vet and Jose Orozco told the vet that he could not understand why she was so skinny since they feed them all the time. (this is not true.) He tried to tell the vet that the horse was about 6 years old and our vet looked at the horse and its teeth and said that this horse was not 6 and was actually closer to 27 years old. I told my vet that they do not feed them all the time and he said he could already figure that out due to their condition.

I know for a fact that they do not feed them like that, because myself as well as other boarders saw how little they got. Some of us were starting to give them some of our own hay, and I was seen, and was told not to give them anymore.

The father, Noe Orozco told me not to give them hay because the Charro's do not like the horses to be fed a day or two before a rodeo and no feed the day of the rodeo because it gives the horses too much energy.

I find this appalling to not feed the horses three days a week! And they say they can't figure out why they are getting so skinny.

I have also seen one of the cowboy's hit a horse in the head with a shovel because it was too calm and would not run.

When people started to turn them in, Ivan Orozco warned everyone and told me that if I or anyone else called anything into 911 or the police, that he would find out and be told who it was, because his wife works as a 911 operator and her and her friends would look for any reports and let him know who it was.

His threats were founded when someone called one of the incidents in and all of a sudden they were telling the cowboys not to trip a horse because his wife had told them that someone called them in and someone would be at the rodeo watching for tripping, so if they roped a horse, let go of the rope before it tightens.

I even tried to get videos of Jose Orozco whipping the old horse in the face with a halter that has brass buckles. They finally got smart and stopped tripping horses and bucking yearlings at the rodeos. They now have private horse roping and tripping at night for when the public is not

welcome and the boarders go home for the night.

Some of us have come in late to see this. And when we come in late and they see us, they watch us very closely to make sure we were not taking pictures or videos.

I have taken several pictures of the bad conditions the horses were living in and of skinny horses and of the blood and broken bamboo. I also tried to get videos of the yelling and beatings and bad conditions. I even added a photo of one of the cows with a bloody head from being rolled. Also pictures of the deep manure in the pens and the horse wet and matted from all the urine and manure. Also added pictures of the yearlings they use for tripping and bucking.

This is not a sport like regular rodeos, this is a sport where there is no concern for injuries. I have nothing against rodeos that portray events recognizing ranching of old calf roping, team roping, bull dogging, and bronc riding. These are events portraying a way of life from our past of ranching and were not done in a cruel or harmful manner just for sport and no regard for injury.

It was done in a way to not injure, because this was a ranchers investment and income, and you can't make money if you injure all your stock for sport. And our ranchers would not rope a running horse by the legs to knock it down for sport, they rope them around the neck to stop and train to ride. Roping of horses legs just for the sport of knocking them down and tripping of cows by grabbing their tails while on a horse to just roll them over is not a sport for real cowboys. It is just cruel and inhumane.

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