

On Call With Dr. Lin Judy

BY ALLISON SCHULTZ

"On Call With" is a series in The Horse's Mouth which candidly features Boulder County veterinarians. This series will focus on the featured veterinarian's locality, their vet-life history in the Boulder County area, their favorite challenges in the field, their concerns about horse's and horse care in our area, their personal involvement in horses, and of course, why they chose to become a large animal veterinarian.

On a crisp early September morning, I arose at what I thought was bright and early for a Saturday to meet up with Dr. Lin Judy at his home base in Broomfield. I left the warm sun as I wandered into the clinic and was greeted by a tall guy with a warm smile whom I presumed to be the Doc himself. After the proverbial handshake and introductions were exchanged he said, "Please just call me Lin. No need for the 'Dr.' part"

Once we sat down in the office and began talking about all things veterinary and practical, I learned that he had been on a colic call at 1 a.m. and had taken care of his own horse chores by 5 a.m. – two and a half hours before I got out of bed. Two things were made clear to me then: 1.) Having been horseless for obviously too long, I had momentarily forgotten about the late night extravaganzas and stressors of horse ownership; and 2.) Equine veterinarians must totally love what they do with endless passion for the horse, or else they would wither under what could seem to an outsider (or my husband, at least) as an incessantly demanding and fruitless sport. But we know all too well, in the instance of those among us with horse sense tied in our genetic structure, that there is no real separation between work and life and horses. Lin belongs among these ranks.

"I started riding as soon as I started walking" Lin says. He grew up in western Kansas working in feedlots and team roping and calf roping through college. Having no family support for his love of horses, he worked his way through school, which at one point found him making saddles.

Dr. Judy has been working on horses for over 20 years after graduating from Kansas State University. A keen and devoted veterinarian, he makes no airs about his private practice at Centennial Valley Equine Hospital and the love he has for his job. "It's all I ever knew," he said. "I just grew up that way. It's what I was around – I never investigated anything else."

Being an equine veterinarian is not an 8-5 job, so it carries with it an unavoidable unpredictability. But Dr. Judy feels that is the best attribute of his job because every day is different – lameness issues, metabolic issues, reproductive issues... as well as the usual: cuts, colic and routine treatments. He also enjoys the convenience of having his clinic facility at his home base. Lin has a special interest in reproduction, and the clinic is set up with a surgical suite and reproductive facilities.

While the time to remain dedicated to his equine clients can run Dr. Judy around the clock, he still spends time with his two kids and his wife Peggy, an accomplished dressage rider and instructor. At their own Caduceus Farms, Lin and Peggy breed and raise their own warm-bloods. "We breed between 4-6 mares a year and raise the foals. We have about 20 horses right now... 3 would be ideal," he added with a smile.

As our conversation ended and Lin was on his way out to take his son to a football event, I was told I was welcome to look around the barns and visit the horses. "You can take one of those little ones home with you," he said in jest. I laughed. "Oh, if only it would fit in my Subaru..." I thought to myself.

You can learn more about Centennial Valley Equine Hospital online at www.caduceusfarm.com.