of these local equestrian shops

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Servicing the Bay Area to Sacramento

By John T. Miller



ReactorPanel Saddle Company.

bridle stores, with three different stories, have been created in the Lamorinda area to serve the robust equestrian community

Horsing Around

The first to arrive on the scene, the Orinda Village Horse Shop, was opened in 1995 by owner Linda Englestad. With a motto of "Everything for the horse and rider," Englestad has fashioned an independent, locally owned shop that can respond to requests and local needs.

The business was originally called "Horsing Around," but a dispute over naming rights led the local company to change its

the community for so long that we are familiar with the local barns, trainers, and riding programs offered," said Englestad. "Being a locally owned shop, we are able to easily adapt to requests or local needs."

Originally, the company focused only on English riding, which is the type featured in the Olympics and includes Hunter/ Jumping, Dressage and Endurance. Last year, however, they expanded into Western style, which includes Rodeo, Pleasure Reigning, and Trail. They also introduced a consignment program recently for customers to resell merchandise.

The company especially focuses on helping new riders and also carries items for the horse

lover who may not ride. A Patented Leather Saddle

Tucked into a small office space in the Moraga Executive Plaza, the ReactorPanel Saddle Company provides quality saddles to local riders, customers all over the United States, and some international clients.

Carmi Weininger bought the saddle business in 1999 from an English company, and has developed a product unlike any other.

While some of the buyers are local, most of the sales go to customers across the United States, and a handful of saddles are sold pany has decided to delay release of the product until it is patented. The saddle is for Englishstyle riding, but the newly de-

"After a further study, we found the heart rates of the horses were

lower without the flap." The com-

veloped flapless version fills the niche market for endurance riding. "These competitions are like ultra marathons," said Weininger, "with the horses traveling over 100 miles."

Commenting on the local equestrian scene, Weininger said, "The area is rich and deep with riders. Moraga is a great central location to reach them."

New Colt on the Block

While Dover Saddlery is a relative newcomer to the area, moving into the Moraga Shopping Center in the fall of 2015, the parent company was established in Wellesley, Massachusetts, in 1974 by the Power brothers. The Moraga store is the second West Coast location after Laguna Hills, and the next closest is in Colo-

Current manager Tracy Burke has been with the Dover Saddlery for 12 years and helps open new locations for the company. After receiving a law degree in Massachusetts, she decided to work for Dover instead: "Dover was my go to tack store while growing up, and then became my undergrad job. After I passed the bar I decided I'd rather work for them than be a lawyer."

The store serves English-style riding and also has veterinarian medicines, supplements, horse care products and basic barn supplies. They sell their own makes of saddles, including Circuit and Warendorf, and carry about 10 other brands of saddles.

Burke is here temporarily doing training and looking to hire a new permanent manager. "I am amazed at how tight-knit the horse community is here and how well they support each other," she said. "Everyone is invested in the community (of riders), helping the equestrian scene flourish."

Photos John T. Miller hree saddlery, tack, and internationally. Using video links, the staff can custom fit the saddle to the new owner's needs. Weininger says, "With the touch of a button, I can be work-

ing in Virginia in the morning, Colorado in the afternoon, and Tennessee in the evening." The company won't sell a saddle without a two-week trial. "We have technology for a remote fitting all over the globe."

The company is working on a new name -- since many think something nuclear is implied by the Reactor part of the current logo. More importantly, the local group is about to patent a new flapless saddle they helped develop for an endurance rider.

"We found that women in their "This shop has been a part of 50s and 60s had a better sense of connection to their horses without the flap," said Weininger.



Orinda Village Horse Shop.



Dover Saddlery.

homemade treats

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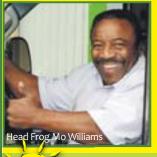
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Traffic lights hit temporary roadblock

... continued from page A3

"Preliminary estimates given to us range from 10-12 weeks, but we are aggressively pressing for this timeline to be shortened in the interest of expediting a public safety project."

At the same time the city staff is also exploring ways to install the rest of the equipment that has

the signal in a temporary configura-

The project had been slated for completion by the end of April 2017. Coe apologized for the delay saying, "A series of separate issues ranging from unmarked underground utilities to equipment short-

no conflicts and can safely operate age has had a cumulative effect on our ability to stay on schedule."

He says that although the current issue with overhead line clearance is "a significant obstacle" city staff is actively pursuing all strategies to speed up completion.