



Thank you for inviting me to share my story with all of you. Just like many of you, my journey to learn more about equine health was fueled by a fire in my heart to do better for the special horses and other animals in my life. My Barefoot Trimming journey was fueled by my QH stallion, Bud. My Dentistry journey by my QH Pal and my holistic horse health by my QH Riel.

I was the stereotypical stable owner. I operated a boarding and recreational riding academy for 18 years and at one point had 21 horses under my care. I did it all, the lesson horses were wearing steel shoes, annual Veterinary visits for vaccinations & dental and fed high quality alfalfa/grass hay, oats and salt and soy based protein based supplements. Slowly my herd health began to fail and I was at a loss as to why. I consulted with my Vet and his only advice was herd management.

In 2000 my Farrier married one of my borders and moved away. Trying to find a new farrier who would work on 21 horses as well as 5 draft horses was very difficult. This led to me having to learn how to maintain my herd's hooves for myself.

I attended a 2-½ year Equine Podiatry School in South Carolina. While I was taking my final written and practical exams, I was teamed up with Jerry, a Master Trimmer from Washington, who would be my text examiner. For the continuing education portion of our certification, Jerry presented a 4 hour lecture on Equine Dentistry and how teeth can affect our trim balance, or lack thereof.

I was transfixed by every word, my mind began to race as so much of what Jerry was speaking about resembled problems that I had experienced with many of my horses. I was in shock and saddened when I learned that the fate of my beloved horse Pal was due to unnecessary, excessive floating and inappropriate hanging of his head during a routine Vet dental procedure.

When I returned home to Canada I was at a loss as to what to do with my herd health checks. I had already stopped vaccinations on my herd because of what I learned from my experience with Riel. Now I was presented with the question as to what I was going to do in regards to dental work. I could not find any Natural Balanced Dentists in Canada let alone a dentist who is not a Veterinarian. Dentists do not advertise and it was proving to be impossible to find a vet who would only hand float and not hang the head during the dental procedure.

Jerry was not traveling to Canada any longer and he suggested to me to learn how to do dentistry myself. *"It's not rocket science. It is about finding out which teeth are inhibiting lateral and a/p (anterior/posterior) movement of the jaw and fixing any restrictions. That's about it. The biggest challenge is getting the education, experience and instruments."*

He suggested I attend Spencer Lafleur's Equine Dentistry School in New York. I flew out to New York a few months later and was disappointed in the curriculum being offered, or lack thereof. After 2 weeks and over 10,000\$US attending the Lafleur School I came home with no more understanding of Equine Dentistry than what Jerry had presented in the 4 hours CE dental workshop.

I called Jerry and told him of my experience out East and he was sad to hear how the school had deteriorated. Jerry was once one of Spencer's head instructors along with Phil Ratliff (owner of Rite Bite Equine Dentistry) and Mike Fragale (EQ Dentist from Wisconsin State University).

Jerry agreed to take me on as his, one and only private student. *"I thought my teaching days were over..... But I guess not."*

I had the pleasure of traveling with Jerry, three times, on his by-annual dental circuit throughout the Southern states in the US. The first two times on the road with Jerry, hours were spent watching Jerry examine horses, watching them chewing before and after, watching them walk before and after, reviewing and filling out dental charts, feeling in the mouths of hundreds of horses before and after and hours of *theory* in the truck while driving between farm visits. A whole new world of Equine Soundness was unfolding right before my eyes. I began to see a pattern forming and understand how the conventional dental procedures were failing to keep the entire body in balance.

“What happens in the mouth, does not stay in the mouth. Imbalances of molar arcaids which restrict or limit complete movement laterally or a/p of the jaw will be seen throughout the entire neuromuscular, skeletal and metabolic systems of the horse”.
-Jerry-

The third time I traveled with Jerry I arrived with my little golf bag full of dental instruments and as I worked he would watch and critique me as I learned how to navigate my way within the confinements of a deep dark mouth of many horses. The trust the horses gave to Jerry and I really opened my eyes to the Horse/Human Heart connection. *“The minute you walk up to them, sync your heart with theirs, this allows them to know your intention, be mindful and respectful of their feelings and you will get along just fine.”*

After over 680 hours of time spent with Jerry I realize how much more than equine dentistry he has taught me. Jerry’s knowledge of Craniosacral Therapy Techniques, Masterson Method, Master Barefoot Trimmer, Homeopathy, Osteopathy just to name a few, made him the most informative teacher I have ever learned from.

In August of 2021, near Red Deer Alberta, twelve Equine Dentists from across Western Canada came together to complete the Grandfathering of our Dental Practitioners Certifications with the Canadian Equine Dental Practitioners Association. This association has been formed in an effort to get Equine Dentistry legalized throughout Canada. As dentists we were required to pass a written and oral exam and perform two floats on 2 horses. We were also required to take and pass a written and practical exam on becoming Sedation Certified for the use in Equine Dentistry.

I was the only hand floater in the group. All the others floaters used various power tools. I was able to complete my floats in time with the other floaters and with which appeared to be less effort and a fraction of the sedation and without elevating the head.

I choose to continue with my dental education and certifications with various practitioners as I find it always provides me with new knowledge and confirms as to what works best for my Equine clients. I have been questioned many times as to the logic behind hand floating without the use of power equipment as using power tools is much easier on the practitioner. My answer is always *“Well, it is not about me.”*

I have the freedom to work outside, or inside, in an environment that is most comfortable for the horse. Not being limited to buildings with the need of power outlets and stalls for elevating heads is a wonderful thing indeed. My training with Jerry and how he always encouraged me to use the heart connection technique before approaching the horses has served my practice well .

Fast forward to 2022, I have grown my client list to over 1,950 head. Traveling from Toronto Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia on dental tours in the summer months keeps me very busy indeed.

As with any defining event in our lives, great achievements rarely come without sacrifice. I always give thanks to all of my horses but mostly to Pal, Bud and Riel. The obsessive need to have the WHY questions answered, as to what happened to their health, would not have led me on the journey I am now on. It is through their guidance and their heart connection with me that I am able to help and share my knowledge with many other horse owners.

I look forward to speaking with all of you, sharing and answering all of your questions to the best of my knowledge.

With Heart

Christine