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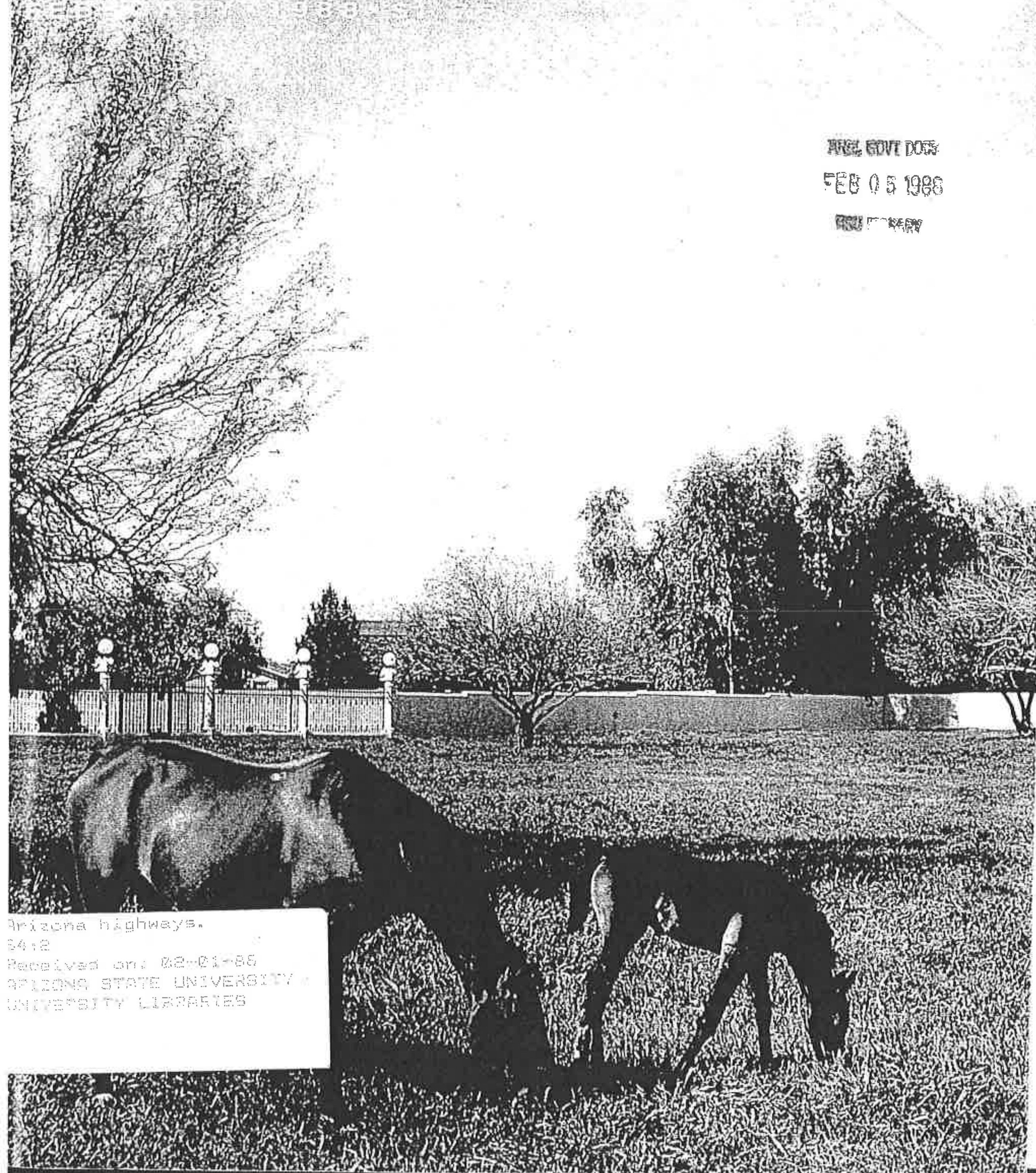

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ARIZONA HIGHWAYS

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(FRONT COVER) *Living a pampered existence, a mare and her newborn colt graze peacefully in a lush pasture at Karbo Arabian Farms in Scottsdale. For more on Arizona's horses,* *turn to page 4.* PETER ENSENBERGER

(OPPOSITE PAGE) *Celestial jewels sparkle in a dark desert sky. A summer view of the Milky Way and foreground silhouettes from Squaw Peak Park and the Superstition Wilderness come together in an evocative scene fashioned by a fertile imagination. A portfolio of the photographer's images, along with a look at how he creates them, begins on page 22.* FRANK ZULLO

They range from the fierce and the proud to the meek and the mild, from wild mustang to high-strung Thoroughbred to gentle hayburner. They're the ...

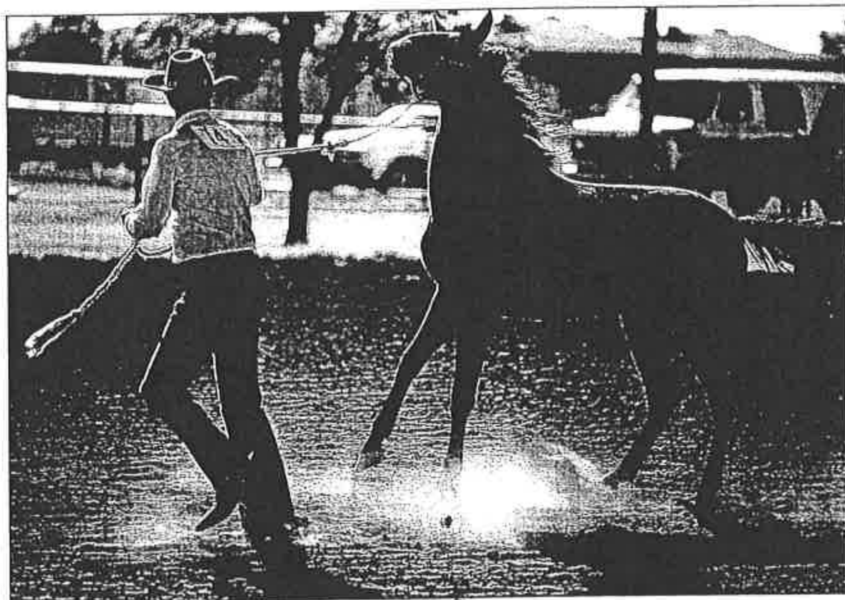
of Arizona

TEXT BY JOAN BAÉZA ■ PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER ENSENBERGER

For a wild horse, the price of freedom from rope and bit is the vigilance of keen senses and a brave heart. He learns to walk as soundlessly as a deer and to shy at the scent of man. He has many enemies — drought, snow, cold, parasites, predators, old age, injuries. Add to these the potential danger of poisonous plants and animals, thorns, quills, and disease. A mare may die foaling, a stallion may be mortally wounded in combat.

I gained respect for feral horses when I lived on an old homestead near Deer Springs on the Mogollon Rim. Often, their courage and character were matched by our own half-wild horses, mountain born and bred.

One still summer night, I lay in bed listening to the rage of stallions under a full moon and the screams of mares running along the fence line two miles away. Next morning, I realized a big black stallion with a white spot on its forehead, the notorious leader of a wild band, had come to steal our filly, Sara. Zair, our gentle blue colt, had run to the corner of the fence to meet the challenge and defend the filly he had grown up with. He was small, even for a desert Arabian, and could have been



(PRECEDING PANEL, PAGES 4 AND 5) *Wild horses still roam remote areas of Arizona in small bands like this one in the Cerbat Mountains. Many are descendants of an original purchase of 150 head by the Hualapai Indians in the 1870s with money Brig. Gen. George Crook paid to his Indian scouts. In time, the horses escaped or were set free, went feral, and prospered through interbreeding with ranch stock in the Kingman area.*
(INSET, PAGE 5) *A Navajo pony grazes on sparse vegetation in Monument Valley.*
(ABOVE) *In the first event of its kind in Arizona, members of the International Society for the Protection of Mustangs and Burros got a chance to show the progress they had made with their adopted animals in the show-ring. At the registration desk, a precocious yearling appears to be entering himself in the competition.*
(TOP) *For some entries, the excitement of appearing before a crowd proves too much, and they balk at entering the ring.*

killed with one head-shattering blow, or have bled to death from wire cuts. But the breeding of centuries gave him the determination to stand his ground.

We found the little Arab grazing in the meadow. He was bruised and bloody, but his palomino filly was beside him. They nickered softly to each other. When we walked up the ridge, we found a half-mile of fence ripped out and the ground pummeled by hooves.

Later that summer, elk snapped the new barbwire fence, and Zair disappeared. We tracked him for three days without success On the fourth morning, he was back in the meadow, grazing contentedly with Sara and a new harem—a young bay mare and a white mare with blue eyes. They were wild as deer.

The black stallion whose tracks we had found along our fence was a legend in the Rim country. Bruce Mortenson, U.S. Forest Service range management officer, had sought him for years. Once he came upon the black grazing with several mares.

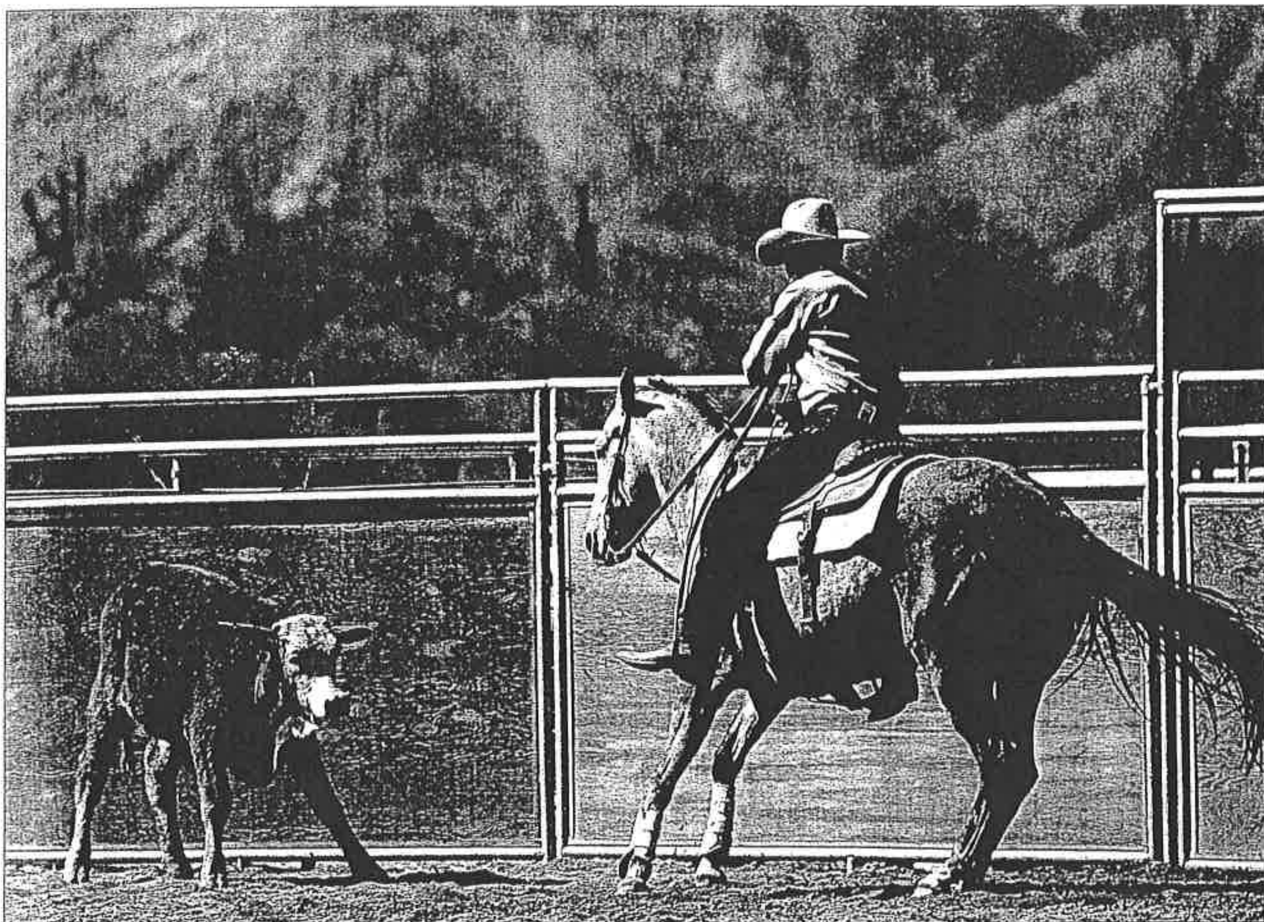
"He raised up his head and stared holes right through me," Mortenson recalled "Then he charged the truck, and he reared up and pawed the air in front of it. If he had hit the windshield, he would have kicked it in."

I always considered it a privilege to catch sight of the black nipping at his mares, pointing them this way and that reminding them who was in charge. But less romantic souls wanted to rid the national forest of wild horses, because they competed with cattle and deer for grass and browse; so every year the Forest Service reluctantly but dutifully tried to catch them.

One year the black and his band were trapped by the lure of salt blocks in a strong pole corral, and then auctioned off. But the man who bought them never loaded the stallion into his stock trailer The black charged him, teeth bared; then said Mortenson, the animal "sailed over the fence like it wasn't even there."

Eventually, the stallion gathered up another bunch of mares—bays and buckskins, mostly—on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation, where hundreds of bands belonging to the tribal cattlemen's associations run free on the open range. The mares weren't "broomtails," but swift well-built horses with hard feet, straight legs, and good heads. A mix of genes, like the black himself.

Every bloodline of the horse world seemed to have merged in the black stallion; try to visualize a kind of quarter horse-Thoroughbred-mustang-Morgan Or maybe a descendant of the mythical "Black Wind Horse" the Apaches said was the Sun Deity's favorite; that horse also wa



V. L. (Doc) Doherty and one of his prized cutting horses confront a defiant calf in a Tucson corral as they prepare for competition.

black as obsidian with a white spot on his forehead. The black symbolized power; the white spot, intelligence.

The next year, the big black and five of his mares were gutshot in cold blood by vandals and left to die in a meadow where once they peacefully grazed. That same summer our wild bay mare foaled. We found her licking a pure black colt with a white spot on his forehead. We named him Sabache, "obsidian."

Thousands of free-roaming horses still run on public and Indian lands in Arizona. Some are inbred, ill-formed, even diseased mustangs; but many, like the big black, are sturdy descendants of sound cow ponies or cavalry mounts, toughened by generations of hardship.

Pioneer cowboys considered the Mogollon Rim the best horse country in the world, and more than a few old-timers have told me their happiest times were spent chasing wild horses at breakneck speed through the pines. A grainfed shod horse could usually get close enough to a wild horse so that a man could use his rope; but what might happen after that was anybody's guess.

Since the 1500s, when Jesuit priests drove remudas of Andalusian horses north from Mexico to the Spanish missions and presidios on the frontier, horses and men have been working partners in Arizona. The introduction of the horse changed the lives of the Athabaskan people forever.

For ages, migratory groups of Indians had packed their belongings on dogs, while they hunted and gathered food where they could. But within a century of the Spaniards' arrival, Apaches and Navajos had become horse people—living, hunting, and raiding on horseback; trading horses to Plains Indians for buffalo meat and hides, to white men for guns and ammunition, to Pueblo Indians for grain, fruit, and vegetables.

They considered horses a gift from the gods. Navajos sang for their strength, beauty, and health, and Apaches received visions from a "guardian horse" who protected them and led them to find more fine horses.

As Mexican and Anglo settlers increasingly peopled the Southwest, they brought livestock with them, and, by the late 19th century, life on the Arizona frontier centered around horses. They helped plow fields, skid logs, haul freight, pull stages, work cattle. They also played a vital role in the courting of young ladies, and in the enforcement of (and, on occasion, escape from) the law. Summer entertainment featured matched races and rodeos where cowboys could show off prized horseflesh.

Long after the horse-and-buggy days passed into history, horses were still highly valued on Arizona's cattle ranches. Even today, nowhere is the partnership between man and horse more important. A working cowboy may not remember the names of his relatives, but he remembers the names, colors, and quirks of all the horses he has ever owned.

But the man who traditionally knew a

horse's temperament best was the horse-breaker, because he was the one who staked life and limb on his knowledge of a particular colt. Day after day he worked patiently, teaching the animal to lead, to wear a saddle, to balance the weight of a rider, to respond to the reins, and finally, to work cattle.

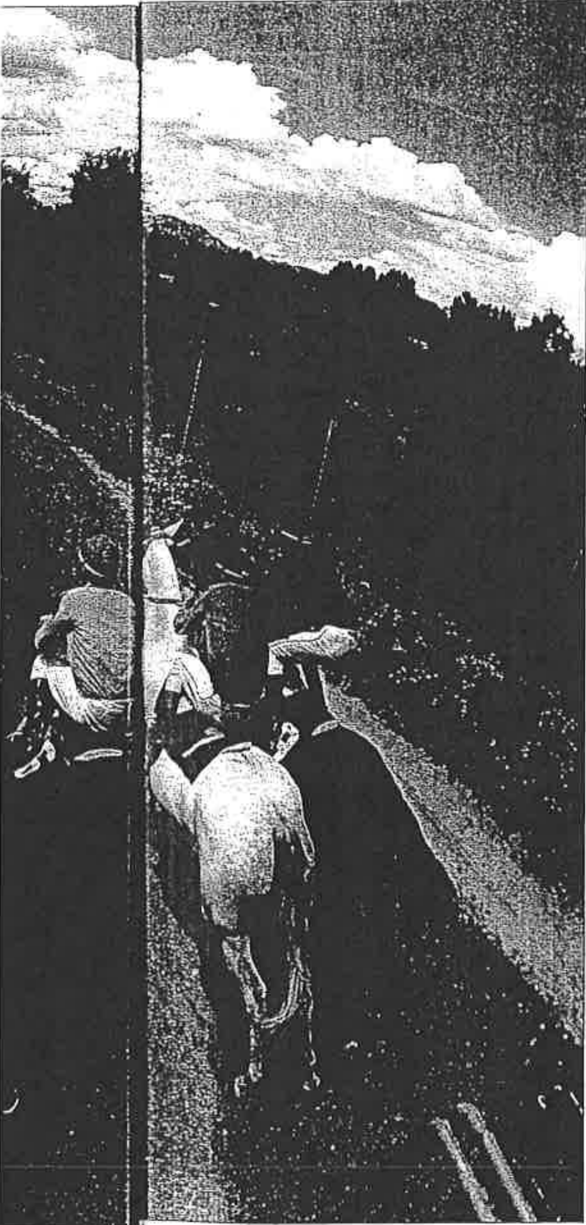
And that brings us to the cow horse, made famous by the folklore of the American cowboy. Almost any horse can be taught to work cattle, but relatively few are born with "cow sense." When a born cow pony sees cattle, his ears perk up, his nostrils flare, and his muscles quiver. A cowboy has only to read his horse to find strays.

Even more rare is the animal with the combination of strength, agility, and intelligence to be a cutting horse, a special animal that must be quick as a cat and know what a cow is thinking before the cow does. Its task requires working into a herd and separating the cattle to be sold, or, at branding time, cutting off unbranded calves from their mothers.

C. P. Honeycutt, a 76-year-old Maricopa wheat and cotton grower, has worked with horses all his life. When he was eight years old, he and his brother drove a band of them ahead of the family's covered wagon through the dusty streets of Dallas. Since 1956 he's been training and riding cutting horses competitively, and he is the first Arizonan to be inducted into the National Cutting Horse Association Hall of Fame.

"I've always liked horses, but I didn't see my first cutting horse show until I watched animals from the King Ranch in Texas performing at Tucson," he said. "That's when I got the bug."

He knew he was in the cutting horse business to stay when he bought Chick Jay, a quarter horse foaled on the King Ranch. In 1959, at the age of five, Chick Jay became a national grand champion cutting horse,



(LEFT) *Charging from the starting gate at Prescott Downs in a crowd of taut muscles and colorful silks, eight Thoroughbreds demonstrate athletic skills refined through centuries of selective breeding.* (ABOVE) *For this lean running machine, a sponge bath and a rubdown are reward for a good morning workout at Phoenix's Turf Paradise.* (RIGHT) *Veteran trainer Zenon Lipowicz develops a bond of trust with his Thoroughbreds before subjecting them to the rigors of racing.*

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scoring more points at San Francisco's Cow Palace than any horse before him. Since then, his record has been tied but never surpassed.

"Chick was mean. He acted real 'studdy.' He tore up more good horse trailers than any horse I ever had—and he'd bite you," said C.P. "If he hadn't been such a good horse, I'd have sold him. He'd fight you on the ground, but once you got on him, he was all heart. He'd die for you."

A colt with good potential, C.P. believes, is "real sensible" with a lot of natural curiosity. "He'll walk right up to you. You can pretty well tell in two or three months if he's going to be a top horse. A cutting horse has got to have everything — cow sense, athletic ability, intelligence, heart."

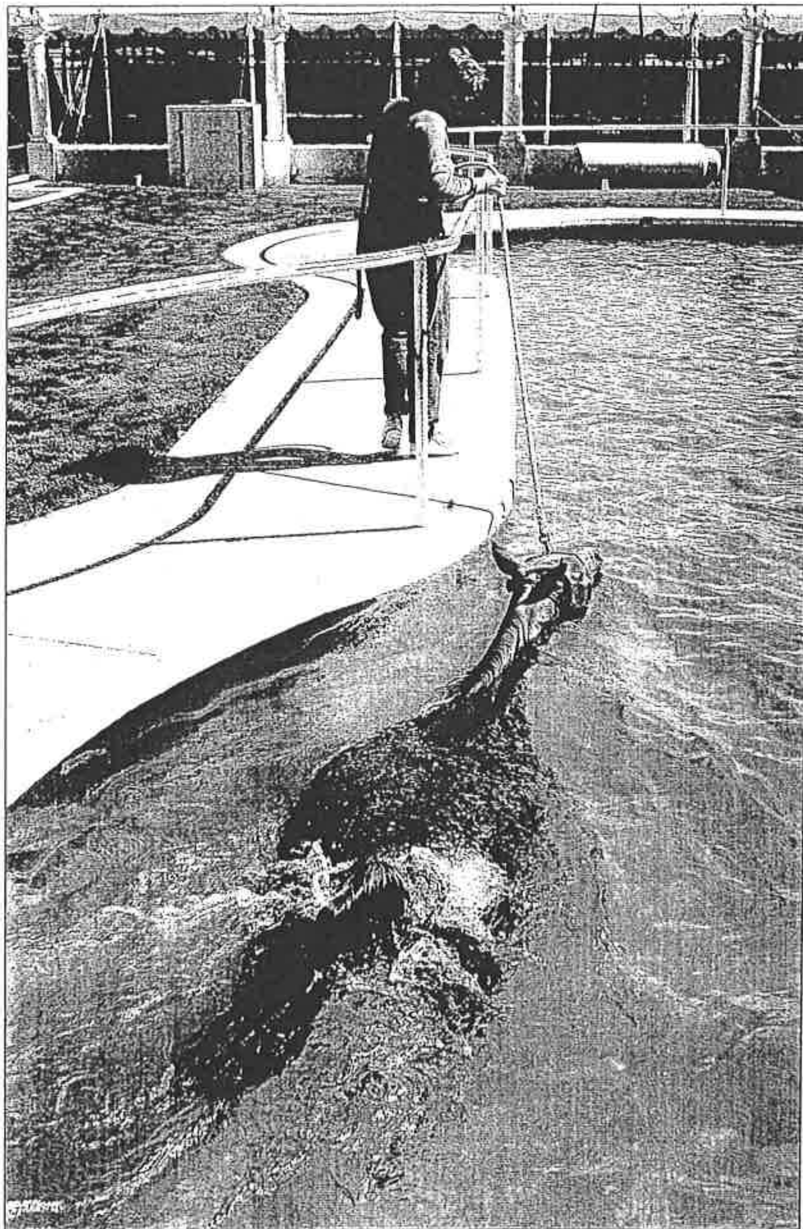
He insists that "patience is the best trainer." Chick Jay required more than his share, but "I never whipped him or jerked him around. I made him like me. He could spot me in a huge crowd at a show and he'd nicker to me."

C.P. at 76 is still riding cutting horses and promoting shows in Arizona. "Cutting horse shows are so fascinating, I just can't get enough of them. I still want to promote the biggest cutting horse show in the world right here in Arizona."

More than breeding, more than conformation, it is the will of a horse that determines what he is. For a racehorse that will is fixed on one purpose — to win. All that kept his wild ancestors alive — strength, instinct, coordination — is concentrated in his moment of glory.

The racehorse, especially the Thoroughbred, has superb athletic skills, a single-minded disregard for pain or danger, and a noble recklessness of spirit.

Among humans, the fever of racing seems to be just about universal, and in the sport of horse racing is found its most



(LEFT) *A few laps around the equine swimming pool at Karbo Arabian Farms in Scottsdale provide both exercise and therapy for injuries.*
(ABOVE) *From the stately stalls to the polished, skylighted ceilings, accommodations at the Karbo barns are everything an aristocratic Arabian could want.*
(RIGHT) *This purebred colt, scion of a long and distinguished bloodline, will soon begin a training program that may lead to a successful career in the show-ring and lucrative stud fees.*

popular and romantic expression.

Few racing enthusiasts are without an opinion about what makes a horse run, of course, but no one knows a racehorse as well as its trainer. And no Arizona trainer is more respected than Polish-born Zenon Lipowicz.

"Understanding horses is something that is born in you. It's in your genes," said Zenon. "You must love horses to understand them."

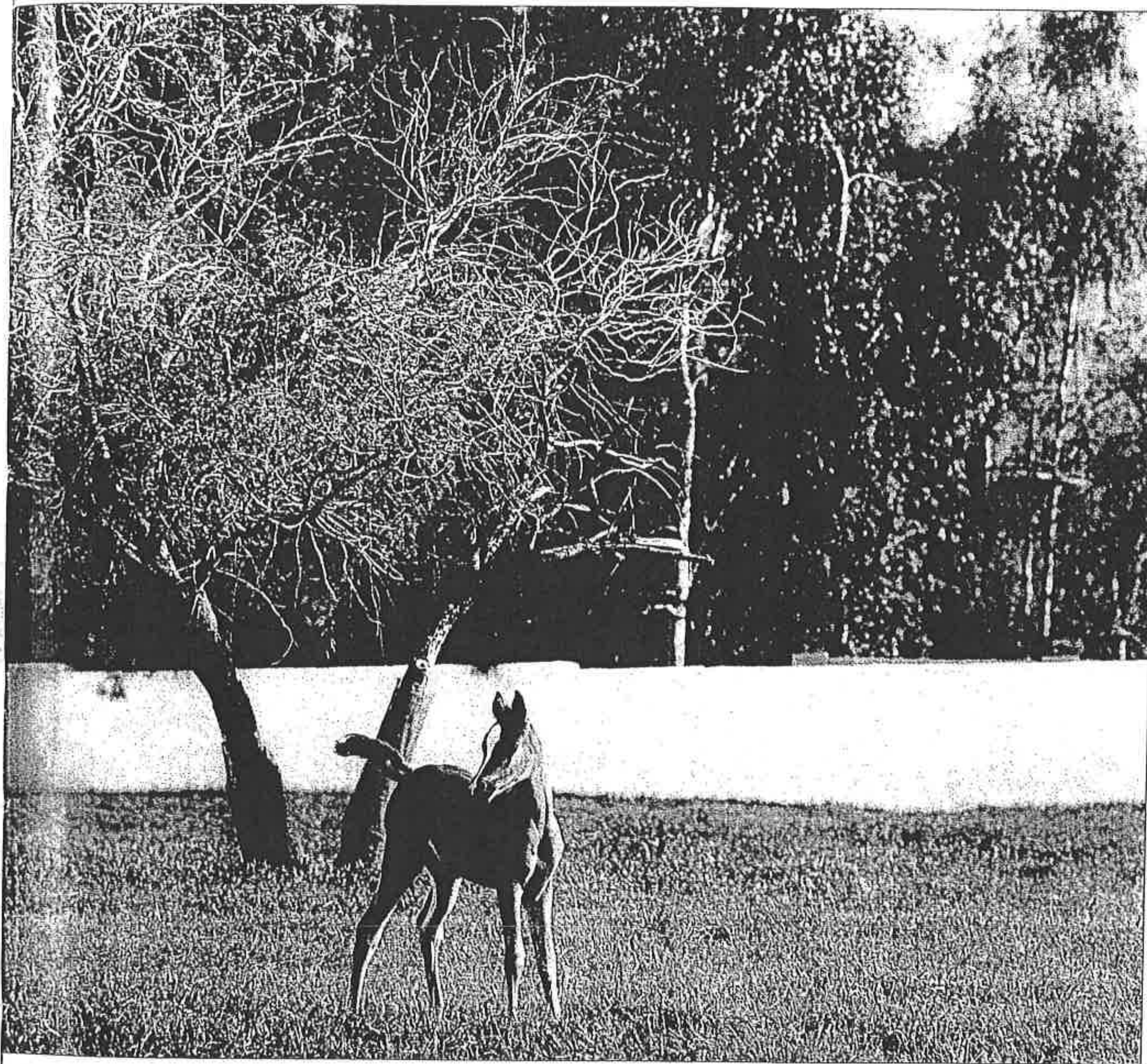
His grandfather had a Thoroughbred farm in Poland, and both Zenon and his father raced in international steeplechase events. Zenon studied animal breeding at the university in Warsaw, and was working at a racetrack when a Canadian rancher commissioned him to buy Polish Arabians. Eventually he emigrated to the United States, and he now runs a breeding program and trains Thoroughbreds as manager of Sir William Farm in Scottsdale.

Lipowicz believes a good horse trainer is an artist. "You can compare him to a sculptor, who has a piece of stone and a vision of what he wants to create. A trainer gets a young green horse, and he knows what he wants to achieve after a period of time.

"His most important tools are his methods of feeding and conditioning. Like the sculptor, he must know the strength and texture of his material. If a trainer pushes a horse too soon, he may destroy him for life. To understand a horse, he must know the pedigree. Genetic factors are very strong with horses. Most receive their speed by heredity. Some are fast apparently by accident.

"First, we build confidence within the horse. The horse must trust the human and know the human will take care of him; later, because of that trust, he can take the stress of training and racing.

"We go very slow under the saddle. We don't want to lose the confidence we have



built up. When he's psychologically ready, we start....

"The race track puts more nervous stress on a horse than any other sport. It's not the same kind of stress in any other situation. It's a matter of precision; you have no margin for error. The most important part of the training concerns the animal's central nervous system and psychology.

"A horse with the will to run and win must have a strong, perfect nervous system. He must put forth a maximum of effort whether he feels like it or not. To work with racehorses requires the same kind of effort in a man. I think to train racehorses, you must give more of yourself."

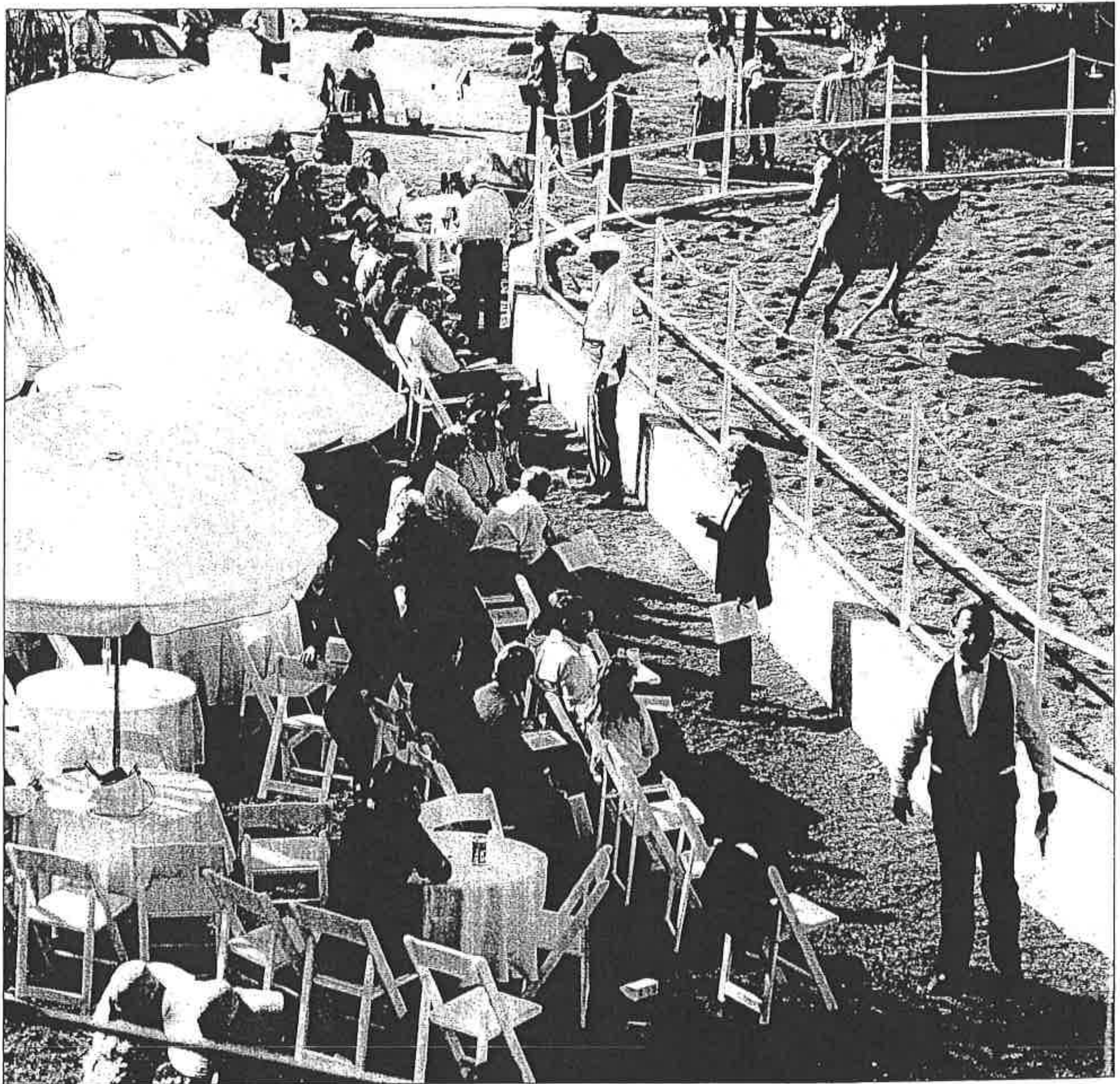
Every morning during racing season at Phoenix's Turf Paradise, Zenon Lipowicz is at the track in the early light. Old injuries have slowed him down, but he is still putting out "a maximum of effort" to train the splendid animals he loves.

They are myth in motion. They seem to breathe fire — to fly. Almost more dream than reality, horses of the oldest pure breed in the world have made themselves at home in Arizona.

Today Scottsdale touts itself as the "Arabian Horse Capital of the World," attracting thousands of buyers and onlookers to the All Arabian Horse Show every February. It combines sales with spectacle, generating an estimated $40 million to $50 million each year. Bids on Arabian show horses start at about $10,000.

The horse that carried Bedouins across vast deserts and conquered much of a continent for Islam 1,300 years ago is today being treated as royalty on Arizona breeding farms.

On Tom Chauncey's Arabian Farm in Scottsdale, horses sleep, blanketed, in spotless stalls. At 7:00 A.M., they are fed individual formulas of oats, alfalfa, and



vitamins. After breakfast, the blankets come off and the animals are groomed with three different sizes of brushes while listening to music. At 9:00 A.M., they are ridden in the desert or exercised in a corral. Afterwards, the horses are splashed with a body bracer and rinsed off. While drying, they walk in circles on the mechanical walker.

The noon meal consists of more oats and hay. After a short nap, it's off to the swimming pool and 10 laps. Then it's shampoo-and-rinse time, and back on the mechanical walker until dry. After supper, the horses are blanketed again and tucked in for the night.

To prevent injuries and infection, all breeding is done by artificial insemination, in a horse "boudoir" with stained glass windows.

The owner lives more modestly. Tom Chauncey, a "Horatio Alger" from a farm in East Texas, came to Phoenix in 1926 at the age of 13 and took a job as bellboy at the old Adams Hotel. From that humble start, he eventually built a radio and television empire.

Horses are in Chauncey's blood. His great-great-grandparents raised dapple grays for the Continental Army on a Virginia farm at the time of the American Revolution. Today he is committed to breeding Arabians, and gets much satisfaction from "touching them, feeding them carrots, talking to them." An injury has left him unable to ride.

"An Arabian horse can do anything," Chauncey said. "It must also be classic in conformation, and beautiful. If you breed that out of them, you fail. You try to bring the best of everything together — hybrid vigor, stamina, appearance. What you get out of it is the satisfaction of improving a breed that's 5,000 years old."

Most, perhaps, but not all Chauncey Arabians are owned by millionaires. Thirteen-

(ABOVE) *The pride and intelligence associated with the Arabian pedigree are apparent in Debbie Feingold's gelding Barshala.*
(LEFT) *An alert young Arabian shows off before an auction gallery of potential investors at Star World's Scottsdale Sale Center, where a million dollars may change hands in an afternoon.*
(RIGHT) *Arizona today boasts more pleasure horses than ever before. Riding into the sunset is a familiar sight on the state's webs of riding trails.*

year-old Debbie Feingold of Scottsdale dreamed of having a horse of her own, but couldn't believe it when her physician father came home one day and said he had bought her an Arabian gelding named Barshala. She boarded Barshala at Chauncey's farm and took riding lessons on Saturday mornings. She learned to groom and care for him as well as ride him in the show ring. Last year, amid the glitter of the world's biggest Arabian show, Debbie won high score in the state for the 13-and-under age class in three different events.

Barshala is more than an outlet for Debbie's competitive spirit. The bond between a horse and a teenage girl is mystical. "He's everything to me," she said. "I can talk to him and tell him my problems when I can't talk to anyone else."

Although working cowboys humorously maintain there's no such thing as a "pleasure horse," most Arizona horsemen would disagree. More often than not, a pleasure horse is part of the family. It may be a purebred Arabian show horse, or a working cow pony gentled by the hands of children. Choosing that family horse is more a matter of instinct than knowledge, according to the John Snyder family of Lakeside.

Chris "Sparky" Snyder rides a Lippizan named Jasmine, "Jazz" for short. Her daughter Maryfaith is training three-year-old Sugar, an American saddlebred - quarter horse cross that she refers to as Silly Filly. Sparky's husband, John, a former game ranger, rides a stout horse named Red. "The first time I saw him, I thought he was dead. He had just been ridden 80 miles, and he was sleeping in a corner of the corral," he said.

When John went to work for the Arizona Game and Fish Department in 1978, rangers had to oversee an entire district. His included hundreds of square miles of the Mogollon Rim, White Mountains, and Blue Primitive Area. The only way to do the job was on horseback.

Now John is manager of the Pinetop-Lakeside Sanitary District. Said Maryfaith, "The only thing Dad talks about is sewers, until we get him out on horseback in the mountains."

John values the freedom and privacy horses make possible. "You can take off with a packhorse and be what you want to be, go where you want to go, without any peer pressure, any need to wear a tie or shave. Spark and I both work in offices. I wear a tie all day at work. When I'm out on horseback, my behavior is normal. It's in an office that it's abnormal, for me."

Sparky added, "Sure, horses are expensive and a lot of trouble. But how many people can climb on a pet and take off to see parts of the country other people don't get to see? It's always an adventure for our family."

To Maryfaith, the family horsebreaker, horses are an investment. "You get too many bruises to give them up," she said. She worked for a riding stable last summer and enjoyed showing other people the mountains. "From the road, all you can see is a field or a ridge. On horseback, you find things you didn't know were there — an old cabin, a sawmill, logging road, wild berries and nuts, bear and elk."

Sarah and Christine, the younger daughters, don't do much riding, but they enjoy the family camping trips. At least twice a year the Snyder family camps in one of Arizona's remote areas. Recently they've ridden in the Superstition Wilderness, the Painted Desert, and along the Lower Blue River. In addition to improving their horsemanship, the family has learned survival skills. "It makes you think, learn to be adaptable," Sparky said. "If you get in a tight spot, you find some way out of it."

Today, there are more horses in Arizona than ever before. Organized mounted groups are found in nearly every community. Their activities range from trail building and maintenance to conservation projects, from search and rescue operations to sponsorship of horse shows, rodeos, and trail rides.

In the electronic age, the horse is a reminder of simpler times when mankind was part of the natural world. For many of us, no machine can ever replace a good horse. ◘

Joan Baéza, a staff writer for White Mountain Publishing, also teaches creative writing at Northland Pioneer College. She has lived and ranched in Navajo County for 36 years and has recounted her experiences in Ranch Wife, *written under the name Jo Jeffers.*

Peter Ensenberger is picture editor of Arizona Highways.