

### ***Personal experience comes full circle for Hansen Dam Riding School founders.***

*by Marnye Langer*

For me, it was Al's Stable located on the east side of Stockton, next to the railroad tracks. For Larry, it was Tarrytown Stable located north of New York City, near the McFadden Tarrytown School where he was a boarding student.



“I wore thick glasses which precluded me from most of the after-school team sports,” explains Larry of how he found horses. “My mother signed me up for riding lessons every day after school for \$400 for the year. The first day I walked into that barn and smelled the smells and heard the sounds of horses I fell in love.” He was 8 years old and he never looked back.

For me a perfect day as a 6-year-old was spending all of Saturday at Al's Stable with our horse Banner. My mom would drop me off with a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and a dime so I could call her from the pay phone when I was ready to get picked up. I spent the hours grooming, riding, cleaning tack, playing with the other kids, petting the barn cats, eating the molasses covered crimped corn from grain, and doing barn chores. Only the barn chores were far from arduous. I preferred cleaning a stall to my room. I would much rather rake a barn aisle than leaves from the yard. I am sure there were adults around, but I didn't notice them. There were ancillary to my barn time and I felt free and independent.

## June 2016 - Riding School Reflections

Written by Marnye Langer

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Larry has started and run several riding schools in his lifetime and I watched my mother do the same. Starting Hansen Dam Riding School has been like revisiting our childhoods while giving people the chance to begin their own experiences with horses.

I love walking into the HDRS and seeing the latest artwork hanging on the refrigerator. The other day a little girl was waxing poetic to Larry about posting the trot all the way around the ring. The kids and parents have no idea who we are or what we do in the sport. They are just excited to share their enthusiasm and newfound experiences, and we are just as excited to hear their stories.

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*Author Marnye Langer and her husband Larry Langer operate the Langer Equestrian Group and LEG Insurance Solutions, Inc., and wear many leadership, volunteer and advocacy hats in the hunter/jumper world. Their newest venture is starting the Hansen Dam Riding School at the Hansen Dam Equestrian Center in the Los Angeles area's Sylmar.*