



# PALM BEACH EQUINE CLINIC

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## Success Story: Amazing Grace

by Lindsay Brock, Jump Media



*Amazing Grace on the day of her rescue*



*Amazing Grace today. Photos courtesy of South Florida SPCA.*

On the morning of December 30, 2015, Laurie Waggoner, director of rescue operations and founder of the South Florida SPCA, got a call that she gets all too often. Agriculture patrol had received reports of three emaciated horses in Miami Gardens, FL, that needed immediate care. Waggoner took action and hooked up her truck and trailer to make the drive to pick up the three horses.

When she arrived, she found an Arabian and a Quarter Horse, both severely underweight, and a pony she estimated to be two years old laying in the mud, too weak and malnourished to even stand. The pony, who was quickly named Amazing Grace or "Grace" had been down for more than 24 hours. Despite Waggoner's best efforts, her team was unable to get Grace on her feet and decided the most humane option was to end Grace's suffering. Calls went out to local veterinarians, but were met with a slow response the day before New Year's Eve.

While they waited for a veterinarian to become available, Waggoner and her team rolled Grace onto a blanket and carried her onto a trailer to make the trip back to the South

Florida SPCA.

"When we pulled her off the trailer, she immediately started grazing," said Waggoner. "The vet was on the way to euthanize her, but I saw that there was fight still left in her. We were able to pick her up and she stood with help. She was not ready to go."

Grace was made comfortable in a stall at the South Florida SPCA and stood with assistance over the next day. But, on the second day, she was no longer willing or able to make an effort to stand.

"I knew we were going to need help, but it was a holiday and locally everything was closed," said Waggoner. "I called Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) and they told me to bring her right in."

Grace arrived at PBEC on New Year's Day and was greeted by a team of veterinarians led by Dr. Scott Swerdlin, president of PBEC. She was treated for extreme starvation and neglect, which included constant blood work to monitor organ function, the administration of fluids, several meals of senior feed and alfalfa each day, and a lot of compassion from PBEC veterinarians.

"She spent eight days at PBEC and returned to the South Florida SPCA ranch with the same will to live," said Waggoner. "Five days later, I came out in the morning and she was standing on her own."

Grace was completely rehabbed in four months and put up for adoption at the end of 2016. On December 31, 2016, one year after she was found on the brink of death, Grace made her way across the U.S.-Canadian border to her new home at Sherwood Farm in St. Catharines, Ontario, with adopter Marilyn Lee.

"I knew she would need special handling to give her the chance to succeed, which we were fully prepared to do," said Lee, who also adopted a Thoroughbred from the South Florida SPCA in 2012. "I saw her current photo on South Florida SPCA's Facebook page and thought, 'Now there is a lovely pony'. Then I saw the photo of her laying in the dirt, and that was that."

One of Lee's young riders, Abby Banis, had also learned of Grace's story on social media and was waiting for the pony in the early morning hours the day she arrived at Sherwood Farm. The two have been inseparable ever since.

Grace's training began immediately under

the direction of Lee's daughter, Robin Hannah-Carlton. Impressed by the pony's love for jumping, Lee made plans to start showing Grace, who won a reserve championship in the pony hunter division at the very first show she competed at with Banis in the irons.

Today, Grace is happy and healthy with the care of Lee and her staff, and the love of a little girl. The South Florida SPCA operates under the motto, "Your next champion just might be a rescue", and for Grace, nothing could be closer to the truth.



## Health Care Reminder

# Equine Dentistry is More Than Just Floating

by *Lindsay Brock, Jump Media*

According to a study conducted by North Carolina State University, approximately 40% of horses have significant dental problems. What's the answer to many of those problems? Dr. Tyler Davis of Palm Beach Equine Clinic states that routine and thorough dental exams may prevent many issues from ever becoming problems.

On a basic level, dentistry in horses is important because the mouth is the first part of the horse that is taking in and processing food. Horses must grind their food into a finely masticated bolus before swallowing. The combination of a horse's upper jaw being larger than the lower and the fact that a horse chews by moving the jaw from side to side results in uneven wear of the teeth. This uneven wear may cause sharp edges, which hinder efficient chewing and may ulcerate or lacerate the cheeks and tongue thus causing incomplete mastication, sometimes leading to problems like colic.

### What is floating?

Floating is the term for rasping or filing a horse's teeth to ensure an even, properly aligned bite plane. While floating is the physical process, the scope of equine dentistry is much broader and examines the horse's overall health as influenced by the mouth.

"You can get a rasp and without even looking in the horse's mouth float the points off, and you may be getting the vast majority of the work done," said Dr. Davis. "But, a really good dental exam with a speculum, a very good light source, and a dental mirror allows you to see possible problems and prevent those problems from becoming painful and affecting your horse's overall health."



### The most common signs of dental discomfort in horses include:

- head-tilting and tossing
- difficulty chewing
- bit-chewing and tongue lolling
- tail-wringing and bucking
- drooling and bad breath
- (sometimes) weight loss and spillage of grain

The above symptoms require the attention of an equine dentist, but prevention is key to avoiding these signs altogether. The general goals of equine dentistry include improving the chewing of food by helping to maintain even tooth wear, relieving pain, treating or curing infection and disease, and promoting general health, productivity, and longevity.

### The most common dental problems in horses are:

- Malocclusions: Periodontal pockets caused by gum disease making a pocket around the tooth. Food gets caught in these pockets and causes even more decay. The disease progresses as the horse is unable to chew properly. It can lead to infection, abscesses in the mouth, and tooth loss.

- Fractured tooth from weakness or caused by a foreign object picked up by while eating. These most commonly cause lacerations to the gums and tongue.
- Tooth root infections that can cause a tooth to die.
- Equine Odontoclastic Tooth Resorption and Hypercementosis in geriatric horses: The buildup of a calcified area around the root of a horse's incisor and canine teeth. When identified, radiographs can be performed to assess damage below the surface of the mouth.

For sport horses, dental care becomes even more important. Much of the connection between horse and rider comes by way of the horse's mouth. If there are problems or discomfort within the mouth, it will be evident in the horse's performance and disposition under tack. According to Dr. Davis, having a horse's mouth perfect allows one to immediately rule out dental issues when trying to troubleshoot a performance problem.

How often should you have a veterinarian perform a routine dental exam on your horse? Dr. Davis recommends every 12 months at the very minimum. In many sport horses, the fact that they are working at such a high level may require bi-yearly exams to prevent any problems that could sideline them from training or competition. Lastly, horses with known dental problems may require exams every three to four months.

Contact your veterinarians at Palm Beach Equine Clinic for more information on equine dentistry, or to schedule a dental exam, at 561-793-1599.

## Meet the Vet Tech

# Meet PBEC Veterinary Technician Morgan Cooley



Originally hailing from Plymouth, MA, Morgan Cooley graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 2013 before beginning to manage a competitive show barn. Then, when an opportunity with Palm Beach Equine Clinic presented itself in early 2016, Cooley made the move to Florida to pursue a career as a veterinary technician. Since then, she's made herself a valuable asset to the PBEC team, working alongside Dr. Jorge Gomez.

### What is your background with horses?

I've been riding horses for as long as I can remember, and there are pictures of me riding from before I can remember! I grew up on my great-grandmother's farm, called Little Forge, in Plymouth, MA. My favorite memories are taking the horses swimming in the pond and racing bareback around the hay fields. I owe my horsemanship skills to my time at Little Forge. I rode and competed in Pony Club during middle school and high school in all of the disciplines with borrowed ponies and my off-the-track Thoroughbred. In college, I rode competitively on the equestrian team at Mount Holyoke College.

### What led you to Palm Beach Equine Clinic (PBEC) and a career as a veterinary technician?

My first job out of college was as a manager



for an A-circuit show stable. We were based out of Massachusetts and wintered in Wellington, FL. Dr. Brusie was our veterinarian, so I got to know him and his technician Sarah very well. After season, I pursued an internship in animal health sales, and when my internship ended I was on the job hunt.

The following winter, just before the start of season, Dr. Brusie happened to ask a friend of mine at the barn how I was, and she mentioned I was looking for employment. Dr. Brusie knew PBEC had a position open. I applied, and three days later, I was driving from Massachusetts to Florida!

Ironically, I wasn't necessarily looking for a vet tech position. Dr. Gomez needed a technician and Dr. Brusie happened to ask about me at the right time. Funny how life happens. With my passion for horses and my organizational skills, they thought I would be a good fit. That was a year and a half ago!

### What is your typical day like at PBEC?

I usually refer to myself as Dr. Gomez's "right hand (wo)man." I organize our daily schedule and am in constant contact with our clients. I keep our truck fully stocked and operational. Dr. Gomez specializes in Sport Horse Medicine and Lameness, so we do many lameness evaluations and pre-purchase exams. I assist by jogging/lunging horses, preparing joints for injections, formalizing the pre-purchase reports, and documenting all the work done throughout the day. Dr. Gomez has three associates that work for him, so I organize and delegate client scheduling and needs between them as well.

### What do you enjoy most about working for PBEC?

I can honestly say I have learned something new and continue to further my veterinary knowledge every day I work with Dr. Gomez. His experience and knowledge of horses never ceases to amaze me. He's not only a fantastic veterinarian, but also a great horseman. It makes learning from him a pleasure. And of course, the horses – I genuinely love working with them each day. It's really rewarding to work on a horse and then watch it compete and be successful in the show ring.

### Have you had any standout or favorite moments since you joined the PBEC team?

Dr. Gomez has a client based in Ocala, FL, who he visits regularly. Last summer, I accompanied Dr. Gomez on one of his trips. The farm sent their private plane to pick us up in West Palm Beach, flew us to Ocala, and then flew us back to Wellington at the end of the day. I will always remember commuting to work on a private plane!

### What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

I tend to be a bit of a health nut. I enjoy staying active, cooking, and baking. I like to be outdoors as much as possible whether that be going for a hike or enjoying the Florida beaches. I enjoy attending concerts and staying up-to-date on all my New England sports teams. I try to find time to ride, though it's not nearly as much as I would like!

# PBEC Pharmacy Product Feature

## EquiShield SA Powder



EquiShield SA Powder supports healthy skin and immune function, and is specifically formulated to address allergies in the horse. The addition of ground stabilized flaxseed helps reduce immune response to common allergens. Other key ingredients, including Quercetin, Sodium

Hyaluronate, MSM, Vitamin E, and Rice Bran help support healthy skin while maintaining skin hydration.

### Benefits:

- Helps maintain normal histamine levels
- Supports healthy immune function
- Maintains hydration and health of skin
- Anti-oxidant
- Anti-inflammatory

Ask your veterinarian about EquiShield SA Powder, or [click here](#) to contact the PBEC pharmacy.

# PBEC In The News



Learn more about the specialty services offered at Palm Beach Equine Clinic, including hoof care, dentistry, chiropractic work, and acupuncture, in the latest episode of 'ShopTalk' hosted by Show Chic Dressage! [Click to Listen!](#)



Episode 30 of the Plaidcast from Plaid Horse Magazine features Dr. Scott Swerdlin discussing how to beat the heat and keep your horse sound, happy, and healthy this summer. [Click to Listen!](#)



Dr. Jordan Lewis answers this Horse.com reader question: How can I keep my senior horse with PPID cool? [Click to Read Her Answer!](#)

# Where in the World are PBEC Vets during August?

**Dr. Wheeler** will be in Lexington, KY, then off to New York State.

**Dr. Brusie** is back at our home base in Wellington, FL.

**Dr. Allendorf** will be in Michigan and then travel to The Hamptons in Long Island, NY.

**Dr. Emerson** will be in Lexington, KY, for the USHJA International Hunter Derby Championship.

**Dr. Lukens** is back in Wellington, FL.

**Dr. Gomez** is traveling between Kentucky, Europe, Wellington, FL, and The Hamptons in Long Island, NY.

# Monthly Giveaway

Don't miss your chance to win in the Palm Beach Equine Clinic Monthly Giveaway! At the beginning of each month, PBEC will announce a special prize that will be given away. Participants will have the whole month to register [HERE](#). At the end of each month, we will draw a random winner and announce the winner on Facebook.

This month's product giveaway is a 3.53 lb. container of Assure Guard made by Arenus. Assure Guard has been a long-standing horse ulcer

supplement for many veterinarians and is recommended for management of a variety of equine digestive challenges. Like the rest of the Assure family, Assure Guard is formulated to prevent colic, diarrhea, weight loss and promote optimal digestive function but, with the addition of calcium carbonate, it also addresses gastric and colonic ulcers.

Whether you're looking for general digestive support or to boost your horse ulcer treatment results and prevent recurrence, Assure Guard is your answer. Sign up to win today!

