

MANOLITO'S CONTINUING ADVENTURES

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Over the winter Manolito continued to thrive and put on weight and condition, and he earned a number of nicknames – Manolito, the Magnificent, Manolito the Wonder Horse, and so on – his acceptance of his new life and his complete willingness to perform any silly task I thought up for him was just awesome. When I introduced him to a flag he watched it suspiciously as it flapped from a holder on the corner of his pen, then marched up to it, took the nearest corner in his mouth and shook it.

In February, I cut his feed back because he was fast becoming overweight. He didn't think much of that little adjustment, but he took it in stride after a bit. On April 25, AIHR held an Open House to celebrate its 25th year in Texas, so Mano was set to be formally introduced as AIHR's new 'spokes horse'. His paddock is right on the main pathway to my largest barn, so he was to be in a good spot for meeting people and for seeing the activities.

The day dawned rainy, but dried up around noon, and the festivities began – these included barbeque and the trimmings, visiting with the various visitors and a performance by the Karma Farms gang – Vickie Ives and Rowdy Yates, Tomlyn Speir and Fernando, and Curtis George and Thunderheart, who gave a Counting Coup demonstration that was a real crowd pleaser.

We provided carrots for the crowd to feed the various Indian Horses who were in attendance, and Mano thought that was just fine. He has gotten to be a true carrot connoisseur since he arrived at Rancho San Francisco. When I first introduced him to them he wasn't much impressed, but with time he decided they were a true treat.

On May 8, we loaded up and took off to our nearest town, Lockhart, to participate in our feed store's Customer Appreciation Day – a pen was set up for Mano and we set up an AIHR information table and coloring-for-the-kids table and spent the day talking to people about the American Indian Horse and it's history. Made some new friends, who had never heard of the American Indian Horse, and visited with some old friends.

In June one of our local area nursing homes held their annual Adventure Camp for the grandchildren and Great-grandchildren of their residents, and for the 2nd year they came out to Rancho San Francisco with a group of 3-6 year olds to pet and feed the critters. Once again, carrots were provided to the kids so they could feed the animals, and when Mano saw all of these 'short people' headed his way with carrots in their little hands he looked like he thought he'd died and gone to Heaven.

Manolito continues to delight and amaze all who meet him – and again I'd like to take an opportunity to thank Dreams N Color and Karma Farms for their part in his creation and upbringing, and for the fates who brought him into my life last August.

The End