

This Ain't No Yolk
By Marva Johnsson

Easter, what a beautiful time of the year, with daffodils blooming and so many colorful dress fabrics—the coming out of color after the gloomy winter. Women used to don their finest Easter hat, the Easter Parade was a must-see in *Look Magazine* and a festive Easter dinner with family and friends far and near. Of course, times have changed so we don't see the fine bonnets/hats, no one seems to dress up any longer, no one knows what *Look Magazine* is/was, and the parade is now viewed on television.

My family used to spend Easters at a ranch we leased in La Honda. The ranch was run by a caretaker, but my dad was able to keep his horses there and also raise beef for our freezer. Of course, we didn't have freezers in our homes at that time, but we were able to rent lockers in a cold storage facility. It was during the war years, and it was hard to get meat, milk, and eggs. My dad also rented a little cottage down the road from the ranch where we could stay during the summer and our Easter break from school. We only had one vehicle during those years which my dad needed for work, so we essentially were dropped and left for the summer.

Everyone had a horse but me. I was the littlest, so I guess I didn't count. One day I was given a donkey my dad won in a raffle—I was thrilled. He was gray with long fuzzy ears, and I named him Oscar, Oscar the Mule, although he was really a donkey.

Talk about slow. Oscar wouldn't move. I was always left eating everyone's dust and I was stuck in the middle of the dirt road to the ranch kicking Oscar to go but he just wouldn't move. Someone told me to tie a carrot on a string and then to a stick and dangle it in front of his nose to get him to move. I tried it and I didn't work.

Later I learned Oscar really could move when he wanted to. One Easter we were coloring eggs, and I wanted to color one especially for Oscar. It was the prettiest egg in the carton. The property was fenced and went quite a way behind the cabin. I went out with Oscar's special egg, peeled it for him and he took it from my hand. Suddenly, he started running around the property, head down, back legs kicking up in the air, his head coming back up again and then down with his legs flinging in all directions. I got so scared I ran to the cottage and watched him from the window. My dad told me the yolk of the egg must have stuck to the roof of his mouth. Lesson learned about Easter eggs and donkeys.

That same year I learned that we shouldn't crack hardboiled eggs on our heads like we loved doing. My mother's cousin was a jokester and had helped us kids color the eggs, but we didn't know he had put a couple of uncooked eggs in the carton. We were at a horse show sitting on top of a huge stack of hay and when it was time for lunch, the eggs were

brought out. I was highly upset when my mother wouldn't allow me to crack the egg on my head, but she very daintily cracked it on the sole of her riding boot — luckily it happened to be one that wasn't cooked. We watched Uncle Charlie after that.

Easter was fun at the ranch, times I will never forget. My mom had learned a lesson too. She was 4 foot 11 and had a very hard time mounting her horse. Mom would seek out a rock or something that would give her a little extra "boost" but after she chose a cow patty, she never forgot where to step. They may look old and dry, but they certainly aren't.

Hope all your Easter eggs are cooked. Remember, this is one time you do not need to use your head! But do kids still color eggs or do the parents use the plastic ones with money and/or candy inside?