

Horse round-up in downtown Woodside

By MARION SOFTKY

It was not your standard Thursday night traffic jam in downtown Woodside.

While cars screeched to a halt and drivers gawked, a herd of horses trotted up the center of Woodside Road, by the Pioneer Saloon and past the Pub, gas station and Gilbert Center.

After a pause to check out Roberts' parking lot, the troop ambled 13 strong, up Woodside Road until they were diverted into the parking lot at Woodside School where firemen, cops, horsemen and children all magically appeared for the roundup.

As the horses milled around the corner in front of Scout Hall, the firemen produced a rope and began to improvise a corral, with the help of some deputy sheriffs and the Woodside Patrol. A supply of halters emerged from various volunteer horsemen as they attempted to catch and quiet the excited animals.

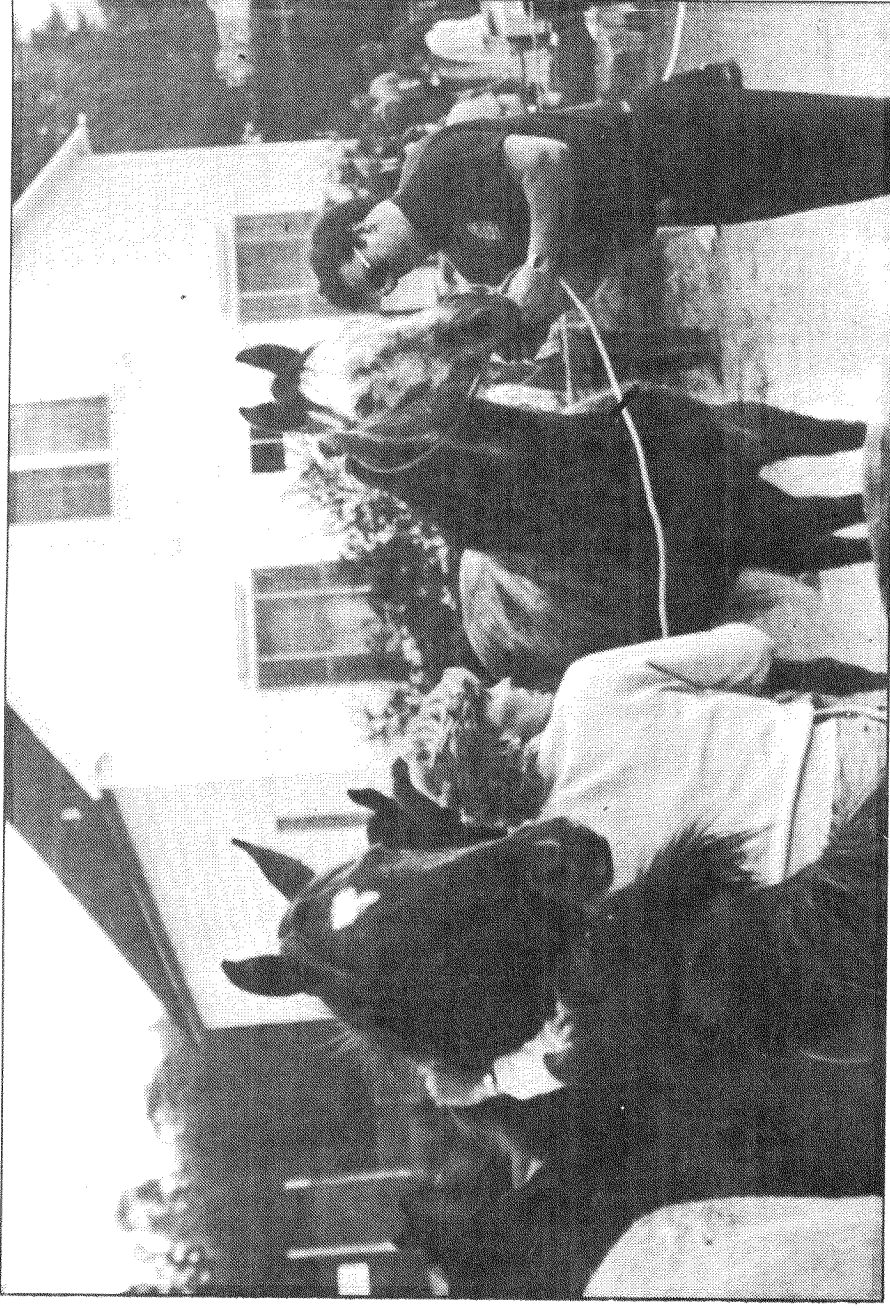
Within half an hour it was over. The horses were enclosed in a neighbor's corral, and the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Graeme Thomas of Willow Tree Farm, arranged transport.

There were 13 horses and ponies, mostly "babies", reports Mr. Thomas. They were led by an old retired horse who shared their pasture on the Lawler property just west of the freeway between Woodside Road and Sand Hill Road.

How did the horses escape the fenced pasture?

Mrs. Thomas speculates, someone might have driven through a fence at the top of Quail Meadows.

The dramatic foray may raise a local governmental issue. Woodside Mayor Lew Reed suspects the question will be raised whether such seasonal pasturing of horses away from a residence is allowed under town zoning regulations.



WHOA THERE. Mrs. Graeme Thomas of Willow Tree Farm quiets one of her horses at last week's "round-up" at Woodside School. To the right, Fireman Greg Nash holds another of the 13 horses who escaped pasture near Route 280 through a broken fence and roamed free through Woodside Town Center during rush hour. There were no

injuries or damage to horses, people or cars. Photo by Marion Softky.