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Riding ^{the} American Dream

by Monique Reidy



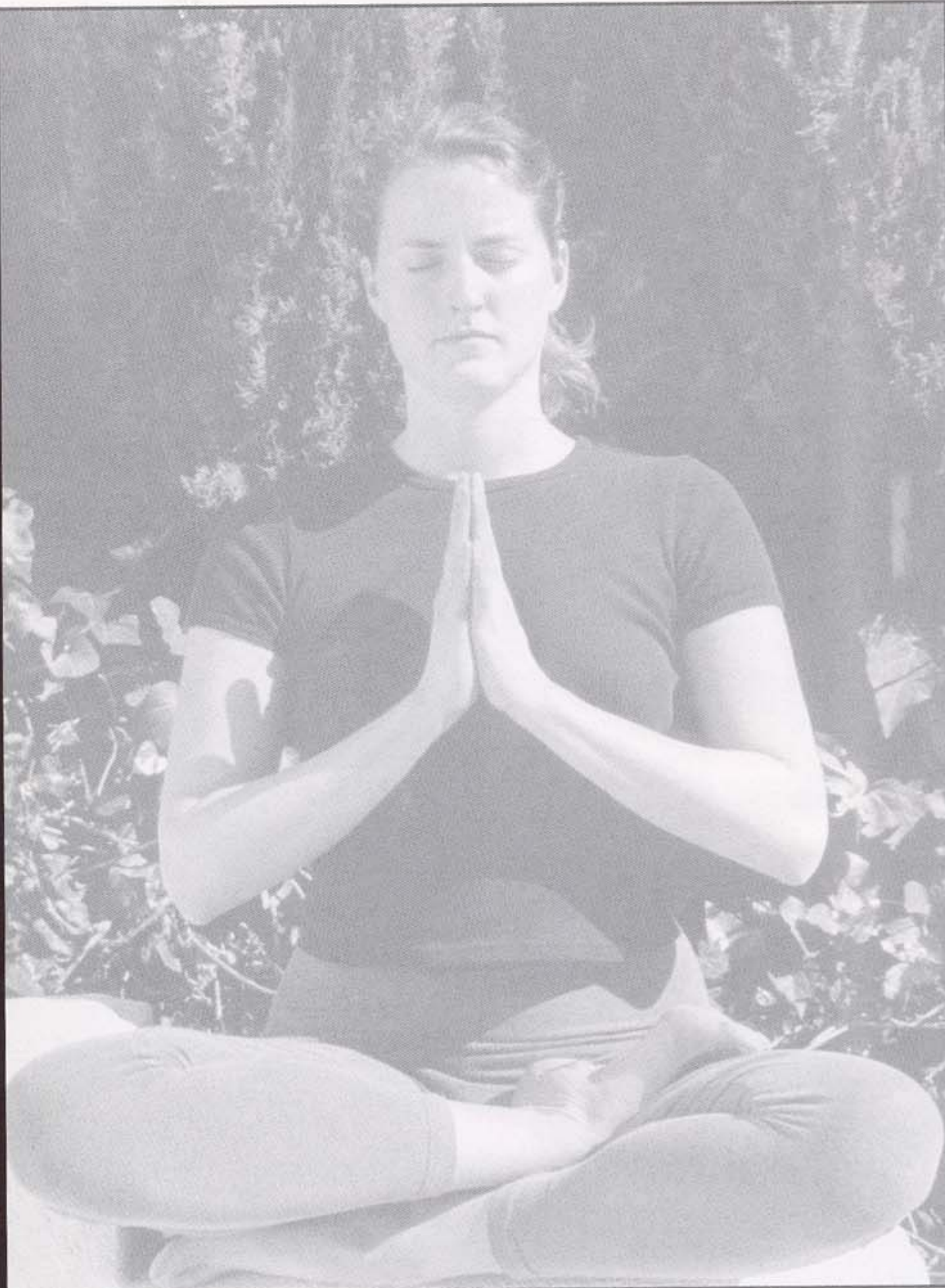
*a*s an independent television and film financier, Sabine Niederberghaus-Lesavoy plays as hard as she works. The sharp, German-born woman is easily branded as a motivated mover and shaker. But the flip side of her go-getter personality reveals a soft, nature-loving woman who was brought up loving horses and the great outdoors.

Raised in a small town in Germany, Sabine developed a love for horses at a young age. Her family lived on a ranch and she had the fortuity of growing up with dogs, horses and other animals.

Sabine left her native country as a young adult to explore Kenya, the east coast of Africa, and to excel in water sports. After seven years of adventure she returned to complete her master's degree in business in the United States, which she

accomplished with an emphasis in international marketing. Her extensive education in European business, coupled with her widespread global experience, enabled her to cultivate a successful career as a financial 'middleman' between American producers and European film financiers.

Sabine's fascination with horses has had a significant impact on her professional life. As a child, she read well-known author, Karl May's illustrious 21-book series, *Winnetou*, which were progressive stories about cowboys, native American tribes and the old wild west. These books encouraged interest and travel to the United States, especially to regions in Texas, Arizona and California. This work was originally printed in German but has since been translated to over 30 languages. Widely read in Europe, these books introduce the European culture to early American history.



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The *Winnetou* works so influenced Sabine's love for horses and westerns that she optioned the film rights and is presently in the process of negotiating a feature western film deal based on May's stories.

Currently, Sabine and her husband, celebrated plastic surgeon, Malcolm Lesavoy, have 4 horses; 3 Missouri Foxtrotters, and one Tennessee Walker. Sabine favors these two particular breeds as they provide a safe ride as well as a challenging one. Upon meeting Dr. Lesavoy, Sabine was thrilled to know that he shared her enthusiasm for horses and that he owned three of the four that they currently have.

Sabine's rides generally last four hours. She and husband, Malcolm, enjoy packing a lunch and escaping to the energizing outdoors to explore uncharted riding trails.

"California is experiencing an increase in restrictions with regard to horseback riding," asserts Sabine. "Often, nature riders generally have to 'trailer' their horses to open, legal areas."

Some of the Lesavoys' favorite tracks are Old Agoura Park clear through to Simi Valley. Hidden

Hills through Chesebro Park, with the Ahmanson Ranch as the connection, is Sabine's dream ride. Chesebro Park, which offers 20-25 miles of trails, is a social gathering point for avid horseback riders.

"Malibu, Westlake, Hidden Hills, and Calabasas riders generally use Sycamore Canyon," advises Sabine. "Starting at Point Mugu, a 20-mile ride leads to Sycamore Canyon. From there, Kanan Dume cuts through Sycamore peak. A ride through Malibu State Park veers to the Paramount Ranch, which is an old, legendary movie set – a very cool destination on horseback."

Sabine, amazed that she's truly living out her childhood dreams of presenting stories of horses to an audience, has a passion to teach children and teens to appreciate the sweeping rewards of horseback riding. She believes that caring for animals helps build character. "Children learn values such as discipline while they enjoy special times with pets. They gain an opportunity to learn responsible behavior." Judging from the contributions horses have made into the development of this fascinating woman's life, who can argue with her conclusion?