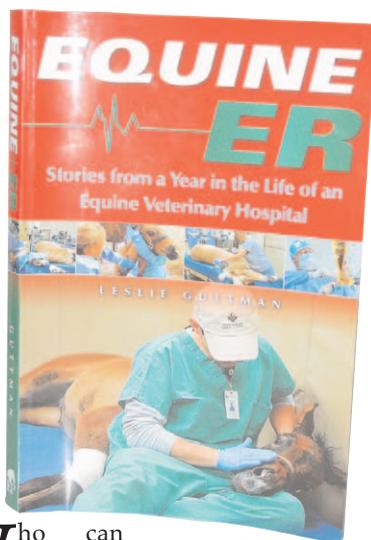


# Repro Cowboys

By Leslie Guttman

Excerpted from Chapter 4, entitled “Repro Cowboys,” from the new book *Equine ER* (Eclipse Press, 2009) by Leslie Guttman.



Who can forget the Thoroughbred weanling dubbed Bones? He had colic too severe for Dr. Chris Newton to treat on the farm, so the doctor sent him into Rood & Riddle. At the clinic, it was found he also had Salmonella, and despite aggressive treatment he was wasting away. But he wanted to live. Dr. Peter Morresey, who treated the colt at the hospital, said: “I have never seen a horse with such will.” After over \$10,000 was spent on Bones, treatment, his owner, James Clay, couldn’t afford to keep him at the hospital anymore, and took him back to the farm of Joseph and Wendy Clay, his brother and sister-in-law, who took on the weanling’s medical care. Wendy Clay massaged Bones every night in his stall, visualizing him well. The horse recovered, but was bow-legged. The farm manager said he was the crookedest

horse he’d ever seen. Dr. Alan Ruggles at Rood & Riddle then did surgery designed to resolve the leg problem as the horse grew.

Some family members urged James Clay to sell Bones, saying he’d never be a racehorse. Clay wasn’t sure what to do; he felt the horse’s spirit was unusual and thought about naming him Ezekiel, who in the Bible brought a valley of bones to life (with God’s help). He told me the following story about the night he made his decision:

“I went out to dinner, I was at P.F. Chang’s, I was hanging out there with a group of people. I went to the rest room and saw a familiar face — It was (Hall of Fame trainer) Nick Zito — I said, “Mr. Zito, I have this horse and almost my whole family wants me to sell him, and I don’t know what to do.

“I explained the story, and after I finished talking, he pointed his finger and lifted it up in the air and then pointed it to my heart. He said, ‘Listen to your heart.’”

“I said, ‘But Mr. Zito,’ and he stopped me and did it again, and said, ‘Listen to your heart. That’s what I do.’ And he walked off.”

Videos from Leslie’s *Equine ER* YouTube series...

#### **It’s a kick**

[youtube.com/watch?v=EEW38IE76O0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEW38IE76O0)

#### **Before and afters**

[youtube.com/watch?v=tVEA3KKNdxM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVEA3KKNdxM)

#### **A tale of two C-sections**

[youtube.com/watch?v=tVEA3KKNdxM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tVEA3KKNdxM)

#### **Prison horse**

[youtube.com/watch?v=ipp3YM3RJkc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipp3YM3RJkc)