

**Douglas O. Thal DVM Dipl. ABVP**

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**PROFESSIONAL PROFILE**

After graduating from UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine, I worked at Littleton Large Animal Clinic for a year as the resident intern. I took the foundation that I learned there and applied those standards at the private practices I worked in, and in the creation of my own equine practice. I have always worked on a mix of performance and pleasure horses. My special interests over the years have been lameness and surgery, but I enjoy all aspects of practice.

I created and have managed my own equine veterinary practice since 1997. Our practice has included up to 4 veterinarians and 18 staff at its peak but at the present time, given the economy and horse market, it is very lean; back to just me and a small staff. I keep up with advances in the field through frequent continuing education, self-study, and strong relationships with colleagues.

I have taken what I have learned through my career and created a specialized equine hospital and ambulatory practice that prides itself on quality veterinary medicine and novel approaches to the delivery of excellent customer service. I am a lifelong horseman, and I use those skills to enrich my practice of equine veterinary medicine and improve the delivery of service. I speak Spanish well enough to converse sufficiently with my Spanish speaking clients.

I strongly believe in educating horse owners about equine health so that they can become partners in the care of their horses. Over the years, I have made a real effort to educate my horse-owning clientele through published writings, seminars and the development of my website, [www.thalequine.com](http://www.thalequine.com).

**PERSONAL PROFILE**

My father and mother are South African and they are fearless innovators. They immigrated to the United States in 1949. My father, Alan Thal M.D. PhD FACS, spent his childhood summers on his uncle's sheep farm in South Africa, where he fell in love with the ranching lifestyle and horses. My father was an accomplished steeplechase rider and polo player.

My father had a distinguished career as an academic surgeon, starting at the University of Minnesota, Wayne State University, Johns Hopkins, and Kansas University. He is board certified in thoracic surgery, and published over 100 scientific papers in the fields of thoracic (especially esophageal) surgery and shock. My father developed several important surgical procedures and invented innovative pieces of surgical equipment, some of which I use today in my equine veterinary practice.

In 1971, our family moved to a ranch near Mora, New Mexico. My father continued in private surgical practice in Las Vegas, New Mexico for 23 years. Locals wondered why people would fly into that little Northern New Mexico town from all over the Country to have my father operate on them. He retired in 1994 because of disabling illness and has lived on the family ranch since. In retirement, he learned to oil paint as a hobby. He has painted almost daily for 16 years and has become quite an accomplished artist.

I was five when we moved to our family ranch. I grew up working there, moving and working cattle, riding and training horses, building fences, corrals, ditches and dams, planting trees, putting up hay, irrigating hay land, watching wildlife and working on the land. That experience formed the basis for my life. To this day, I am passionate about sustainable agriculture and native wildlife and fisheries. The ranch and my family are primary draws that brought me back to New Mexico.

My mother, Felicia Thal, was the daughter of pioneer South African parents who started the first hotel with electricity in South Africa, aptly named "The Electric Hotel." She was trained in history but struck out in many different directions. She managed our Hereford cattle operation, starting in the early 1960's, at our farm in Kansas and continuing at our New Mexico ranch until 2004.

In 1992, my mother was named New Mexico Cattle Grower's "Cattleman of the Year," no small achievement given the politics of the cattle industry in New Mexico. She was recently honored at the New Mexico Cattle Grower's Annual Meeting in 2010, and referred to in the honorary speech as a "Battle Axe" who was vital to the formation of the New Mexico Beef Council in the 1980's.

Among many other achievements over the years, she was also an instrumental force in establishing the New Mexico Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum in Las Cruces. My mother is also a gourmet cook. I always look forward to coming home for the holidays for a great meal. After over 62 years in the United States, she still speaks with a pronounced South African accent.

My older brother John Thal is an attorney with the firm of Atkinson Thal & Baker P.C. in Albuquerque. My brother worked on the family farms for decades, and is just now preparing to move back to the family ranch for his retirement. My sister, Alyson Thal is a doctor of family medicine and owns Corrales Family Practice in Corrales, NM.

I live with my wife, Kristin, and my young son, Russell on our veterinary property in Santa Fe, NM. My son is enamored with beetles, tractors and fishing.

## EDUCATION

- American Board of Veterinary Practitioners** January 2010  
*Board Certified in Equine Practice*  
Currently the only veterinarian practicing in New Mexico with such credentials.
- University of California at Davis School of Veterinary Medicine** May 1993  
*Doctor of Veterinary Medicine*  
Graduated top 10%.
- University of New Mexico** May 1989  
*B.S. Biology*
- Robertson High School- Las Vegas, NM** May 1984

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

- Thal Equine, LLC** Santa Fe, NM  
*Practice Owner & Chief Veterinarian* February 2000 – Current  
In early 2000 I built the first ever full service regional equine practice in Northern New Mexico and provided a full service hospital and an ambulatory practice. In 2006 I moved the center of the practice from Taos to Santa Fe, NM and built another equine clinic. We now have a regional referral center here, and regularly perform colic surgery and other surgery at this location, as well as provide mobile and primary care services.
- Sangre de Cristo Equine Services** Buena Vista, NM  
*Practice Owner & Sole Practitioner* February 1997-January 2000  
In 1997 I outfitted my first veterinary truck, bought equipment and supplies and began my own veterinary practice in New Mexico. At the end of 1999 I moved the base of my practice

from my family ranch in Buena Vista, NM to Taos, NM, where I had a small but growing and more concentrated clientele. At that point, I changed the name of the practice to Thal Equine, LLC.

**Rocky Mountain Equine Clinic**

Monument, CO

*Associate Veterinarian*

April 1995- December 1996

I spent a year and a half working with Dr Jack Galt, a very talented equine practitioner near Colorado Springs. I worked on a mix of performance horses and pleasure horses at this practice.

**Airway Veterinary Hospital**

Colorado Springs, CO

*Associate Veterinarian in Equine Practice*

August 1994- March 1995

I was hired to improve the level of equine practice at a mixed practice that already had a long-standing equine veterinarian employed.

**Littleton Large Animal Clinic**

Littleton, CO

*Resident Intern*

July 1993-July 1994

I lived on the clinic property at this well-known equine hospital, and saw a very large caseload. My scheduled time was divided between hospital practice (assisting with surgery, running anesthesia, radiology, and hospital patient care), and ambulatory practice in which I had primary case responsibility for a wide variety of cases. This internship was vital to my development as an equine veterinarian. The exposure to such a concentrated caseload and the education I received here formed the basis for my intensive approach to veterinary medicine today. I developed a surgical recovery system there that they still use today.

**Thal Ranch**

Buena Vista, NM

*Ranch Work & Management*

December 1972- Present

I was raised on my family ranch in Northern New Mexico. I was always involved in day to day operations. On the ranch, I developed a strong work ethic, self-reliance, and an ability to solve problems. I developed my understanding of horses through starting and training a large number of young horses at the ranch. I developed "feel" in my relationship to horses through trial and error and study. I now use what I have learned about horsemanship to facilitate and enrich my equine veterinary career.

**MEMBERSHIPS**

American Board of Veterinary Practitioners

2010- Present

American Association of Equine Practitioners

1994 – Present

American Veterinary Medical Association

1993 – Present

### **COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

Since 1997, I have regularly conducted annual and semi-annual client education seminars and workshops, given my strong belief in client education. I have done a great deal of pro bono work for horse owners who could not afford the cost of veterinary care, and regularly provide pro bono or discounted services to horse shelters and other rescue-type organizations. I have been invited to and have spoken at various equine organizational meetings and have worked at a variety of equine events as the attending veterinarian.

### **PUBLICATIONS**

I have published numerous articles and other materials on equine healthcare, all available at [www.thalequine.com](http://www.thalequine.com).