

AMERICAN CONNEMARA

The Official Publication of the American Connemara Pony Society

MARCH/APRIL 2020

EDITION II, VOL. 11 NO. 2

The AWARDS Issue



Tricreek Greystone Riley

ACPS An Tostal Award Winner



Ceili Mosi oa Tunya

*By Irish Park Caraway Finn out of *Coral Misty Ciara*

14.2h HWSD—N/N Inspected and Approved

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Westide Mirah II

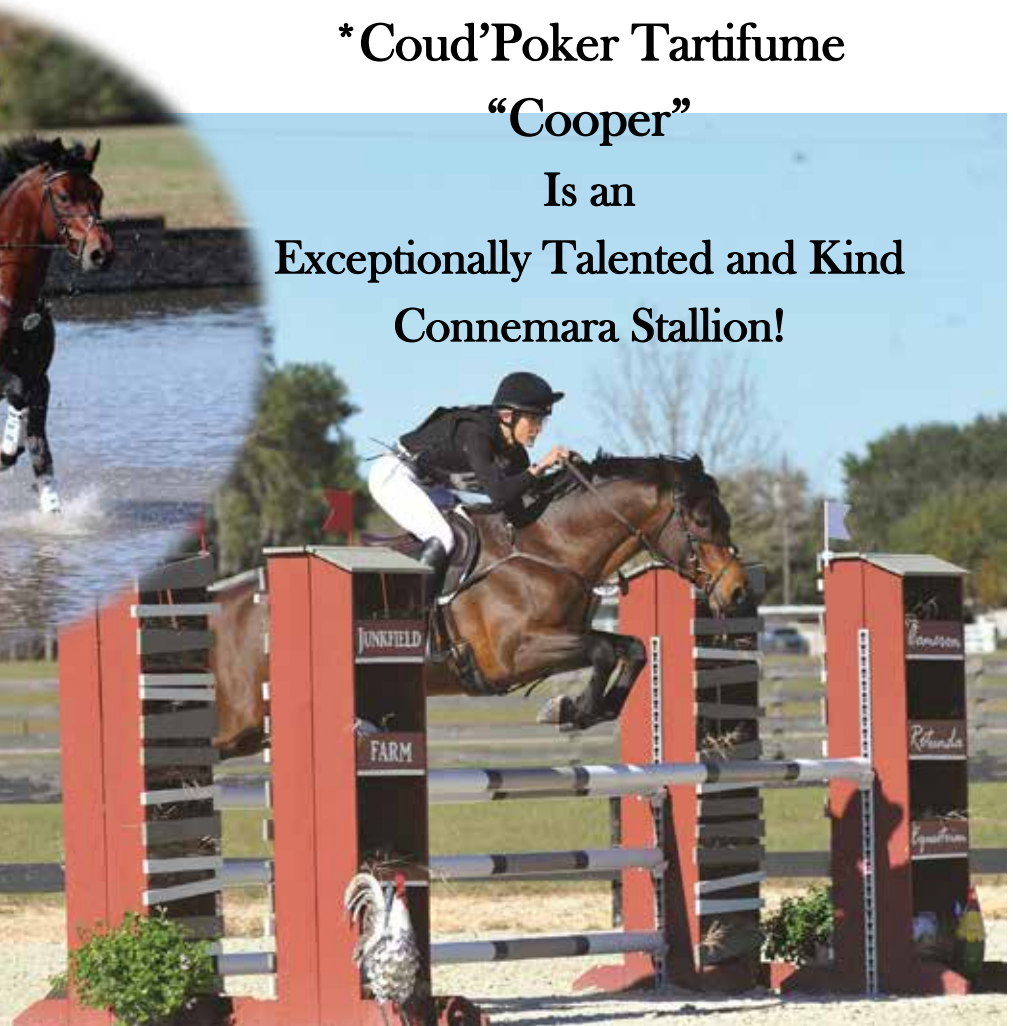
*(Westside Mirah) x Quitas
DeLaLoue (Dexter Leam
Pondi)*

*Granddam is Don Juan V x
Naughty Van Graaf Janshof.
Great Granddams were
Grand Prix Ponies:*

*Neioui Ninon Tartifume and
Violene II.*

N/N

Foaled in 2012



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The Official ACPS Scarf- one of the fundraiser items for the ACPS Foundation which is the fund from which Scholarships and special educational events are provided

If you haven't gotten at least ONE scarf-- send your check to ACPS-F, care of Deb Norman, 1318 Old Charles Town Rd. Berryville, VA 22611.



Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Small But Mighty Are We

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE AWARD WINNERS!

You are our best ambassadors for the Connemara Pony. Your accomplishments with your Connemaras are special; come from hours of hard work; and make everyone around you WANT a Connemara, just like yours!

Thank you for your efforts, please give your Connemara an extra carrot from me and my ponies.

As I write this message, I am watching the Oscars....how apropos, although the gowns and sparkling things do not show up in my barn, trailer or tack room. But, there is something about competing. I find the hours in the saddle, in the barn, and on the road build a cherished and most amazing relationship with my ponies that is beyond the ribbons. There is a real sense of accomplishment when goals are set, the work is put in, stalls are cleaned, and then the reward is realized. The relationship is the reward at the end of the day. Our ponies are all about the relationship.

Small but Mighty are WE. The ACPS is a small group, our pony numbers are not huge compared to other breeds, but it is quite incredible the impact we have on the equestrian world. In all disciplines, our Connemaras are very competitive. Within our affiliate relationship with the USEF, and as a peer among all the breeds and disciplines, the ACPS is recognized as a well-run organization, professional and friendly, with a "Can Do" Attitude. (hmmmm, Connemaras Do It All, so can we). So THANK YOU to all of you for your time and skills so generously shared to make the ACPS successful.

The Board Of Governors met in January and is hard at work to fulfill the objectives of the ACPS. The USEF has made their marketing department available to us so be looking for some new and exciting things to come in regards to promotions and marketing. Much business was accomplished

at the January meeting, as well as the fun times sharing stories of our ponies with each other and catching up with old friends and making new friends. I am very proud of who we are, and I am honored to be a part of this breed and organization. Please come join us, if you have never been to your Region show or tea or whatever is hosted, go. I promise you will not be disappointed.

We have a very busy year coming up, Region Shows, Region Teas, Land Rover KY3day demonstrations, Breyerfest demonstrations, the annual meeting in Lexington, KY. We would love to see you at any or all!

Happy Trails,
Cathy Blackmon



Save the Date!
September 24-27

2020 Annual Meeting

Lexington Downtown Hilton
Lexington, Kentucky



Region V is looking forward to hosting this year's meeting in the middle of Kentucky's horse country. Make plans to come early and stay later!

- ✦ Presentations and Speakers in the next update! ✦
- ✦ Agenda to be announced. ✦

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USEF Annual Meeting and ACPS Board Meeting



Skyeler Icke Voss of The Plains, VA accepted the Halfbred Connemara Dressage Champion's ribbon.



Winners all - (From left) Donna Miller, Megan Harris, Jennifer Garutti, and Skyeler Icke Voss.

The January meeting of the ACPS Board of Governors was a very productive and positive session. In brief, the motions and reports that affect many members of the ACPS are listed here. Much more was accomplished, and the complete minutes are posted on the ACPS Website at www.acps.org. A brief overview includes:

A New Promotion idea and fundraiser for the ACPS Foundation - Megan Harris suggested that a Stallion Auction be organized with the funds going to the Foundation. The suggestion was put into the form of a motion, and was approved unanimously. Stephanie Keen, Megan Harris, Jill McNicol, Donna Miller, and Kate DelaVega will organize the fundraiser. The auction is taking place in February. Marilyn Cheek and Sally Oxnard, co-chairs of the Awards Committee sent the following report: Awards had its usual busy year in 2019. We gave out 57 achievement awards last year (for the previous year) and Karen Laden is laboring over the 2019 compilation that will be presented this spring. An impressive 87 purebred and halfbred Connemaras earned points toward USEF/ACPS Horse of the Year Awards. The USDF/ACPS All Breed Awards honored 31 ponies and their riders. The USEA/ACPS awarded high point status to 3 purebreds and 5 halfbreds (out of 109) Beginner Novice competitors, to 5 purebreds and 4 halfbreds (of 132 competitors) in Novice Level; 4 purebreds and 3 halfbreds (of 67 competitors) at Training Level; 1 purebred and two halfbreds (of 6 competitors) at the new modified level; 2 purebreds and 2 halfbreds (of 19 competitors) at Preliminary level; two halfbreds at Intermediate Level and one halfbred at Advanced Level.

Last October in Richmond, we presented our prestigious Hall of Fame Awards to the winners of the Tooreen Laddie, An Tostal, Tre Awain, and Camlin awards, but had no Broodmare candidate nominated this year. In a break with tradition, we awarded one purebred and two halfbred Connemara of the Year awards to recognize ambassadorial contributions at national and international levels.

A new pilot program was proposed by Tracy Garland, to explore awards for time spend riding, training, or otherwise enjoying a pony in an informal and non-competitive way. The proposal was accepted and will be conducted in Regions 1 and IX.

Sally Oxnard, chair of the Region Chairs committee, sent word that three new Region Chairs had been elected, and they are: Tracy Roettiger in Region I, Katherine Short in Region V, and Susan Dudasik in Region VIII.

USEF Connemara Committee – now chaired by Chris Knox. In the past, the committee met at the USEF annual meeting, but most of the group's work is now done via conference call. Approving rule changes, considering officials, and other items pertinent to the Connemara divisions were topics discussed. The Committee is repopulated annually at the pleasure of the USEF president, Bill Moroney. Jackie Barr, who came to the Board meeting to introduce herself, is the ACPS/USEF contact person for 2020.

The Embryo Transfer Rule for Registration was brought up for discussion by Donna Duckworth. She noted that some breeders had asked why only one Embryo transfer foal (except in the case of twins) was allowed to be registered in one year. Discussion on the topic concluded that the rule was written when the embryo transfer procedure was very new, and very rare. Now, the process is undertaken by many sport horse breeders, and some Connemara breeders. A motion was put forth – Multiple embryos can be flushed from one mare and all resulting foals are eligible for registration pending parentage testing for each. The motion passed unanimously.

WEST COAST CONNEMARA SHOW

Save the date!

West Coast Connemara Show

Region X

June 12, 13, 14 2020

Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds

Watsonville, California

Judge: Mr. Wayne Quarles, KY



FRIDAY — ★★★ Open Dressage Show. Trail Classes, Open to All Breeds

SATURDAY—USEF Recognized Breed and Performance Classes for Connemaras. Fun Classes Open to All Breeds.

SUNDAY—All Classes Open to All Breeds, Jumpers, and Combined Test, (Dressage & Show Jumping). More Fun Classes and Games!

INFORMATION— Darian Hall, Organizer (707) 481-0728



US Equestrian Outlines Key Areas of Success, New Goals at 2020 Annual Meeting

President Murray Kessler and senior staff report on membership growth, program successes, and new member benefits

At US Equestrian's 2020 Annual Meeting in West Palm Beach, Fla., federation President Murray Kessler unveiled statistics that show how a vibrant US Equestrian that is growing membership, boosting sponsorships, and building for the future with new initiatives and operational efficiencies.

Themed "Focus on the Future," the 2020 meeting emphasized how the strategic plan Kessler launched in 2017 is paying off—and set US Equestrian up for a brighter future to achieve both sporting and business goals.

Video from the 2020 Annual Meeting—including General Session presentations by US Equestrian President Kessler, Chief Executive Officer Bill Moroney, and senior staff, as well as interactive panel discussions—are available on demand on [USEF Network](https://usef.org/network/coverage/2020annualmeeting). Tune in at usef.org/network/coverage/2020annualmeeting. The videos also include coverage from the Pegasus Awards dinner and Horse of the Year Gala.

Progress on All Fronts

"We started with a stagnant membership," Kessler reminded attendees at the Jan. 9 General Session. "It was a slightly declining membership of 80,000 that was stuck there for more than a decade, and we were being criticized. It was viewed that USEF was just a place to get a license to be able to compete and served no other purpose and had no other benefits. It was a pretty tough place to be.

"We took on the role saying we were going to change all of that, and we put forth the vision to bring the joy of horse sports to as many people as possible."

Kessler praised US Equestrian's "disciplined approach" to achieving a virtuous circle: improve core processes and capabilities in order to ensure fairness, safety, and enjoyment for members; provide a sufficient pathway for members to win at the highest level and inspire the next generation; then spread the word through marketing, which serves to grow membership, fans, sponsorship, and support.

The results so far are impressive, as Kessler and US Equestrian's senior staff, led by Chief Executive Officer Bill Moroney, pointed out in their General Session presentations:

- Membership has skyrocketed since 2016. US Equestrian membership currently exceeds 187,000 total members and 100,000 fan members. More than 45,387 new members joined the organization just this year, with an increased number of former members renewing their membership at some level.
- Members are competing, many for the first time. In 2019 alone, 81,000 horses competed in more than 2,300 events nationwide, while 14,062 members competed for the first time, showing a significant increase in competition attendance and increased opportunities for members to compete.
- Members are engaging with good content. US

Equestrian's Learning Center is home to over 80 educational videos, which have been viewed by 32,000 unique members and amassed an impressive 320,000 views across US Equestrian's social media platforms. Currently, US Equestrian's social media platforms have over 800,000 followers, generated 20 million video views, and 170 million impressions on the 5,000 posts curated in 2019. Additionally, Connemaras were featured in the award-winning US Equestrian magazine and Equestrian Weekly five times.

- USEF Network has become a valuable asset for both engaging current members and drawing in new ones, with more than 1.3 million total plays this year on streams and content showcasing the diversity and scope of equestrian sport. In 2019, a top post on the USEF Network's Twitter account was a video of Allie Saksen and her superstar half-Connemara Sparrow's Nio as the first combination crossing the finish line on cross-country day at the Land Rover Kentucky Three-Day Event presented by Mars Equestrian!
- Fan memberships have brought short- and long-term value, adding revenue and access to new members with diverse equestrian interests. Fan membership also is rebuilding connections: 14,847 current fan members are former competing members.
- New office will achieve savings. US Equestrian's new headquarters at the Kentucky Horse Park will save more than \$200,000 annually and has provided a collaborative, functional workspace for staff to better serve member needs.
- Outsourced drug testing creates efficiencies as equine welfare remains paramount. This year, US Equestrian outsourced drug testing to the University of Kentucky lab, overseen by Dr. Scott Stanley. Along with the change in laboratory and testing site, US Equestrian also added medroxyprogesterone (MPA) and cannabidiol (CBD) to the list of banned substances in an effort to protect horse welfare.

Safe Sport: More Clarity, Targeted Resources

The past year did not come without challenges and value-driven decisions, including the reaffirmed commitment to Safe Sport and the implementation of the federally mandated Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention (MAAP) policies. As a of the meeting, 61,534 active members over the age of 18 are SafeSport trained and US Equestrian received a SafeSport audit score of 100% in review of its compliance with its policies and procedures.

In an effort to bring more clarity to Safe Sport compliance, US Equestrian has unveiled improved Safe Sport navigation and webpages redesigned for each Safe Sport target audience: trainer, rider, parents, affiliates, licensed officials, and competition organizers. Each page leads with educational videos, need-to-know information, and easy-to-navigate icons. The new website content and a targeted social media campaign

also will address common Safe Sport misconceptions, and US Equestrian also plans town hall meetings to address member questions.

New Member Benefits and Renewing Affiliates

The General Session also revealed valuable new benefits for US Equestrian members, most notably including [health and liability insurance](#) for paid fan and competing members, as well as group discounted medical plans for businesses with two or more employees, including sole proprietors, small businesses, and corporations. This follows the introduction of a free mental health aid for members, which launched in 2019. The insurance program for members will continue to grow in 2020 and offer flexibility and additional coverage needs for all paying members.

On the affiliate membership side, affiliate relationships have continued to grow, and positive conversations are ongoing to find ways to create two-way value for US Equestrian and its affiliate members. Fifteen of 19 affiliates currently have membership agreements in place, while 2019 marked an end of affiliate partnerships with the American Driving Society and the American Endurance Ride Conference.

Building for the Future and Winning to Inspire

When U.S. athletes succeed in elite international competition, they also inspire future generations at every level of equestrian sport. That strengthens programs that are committed to developing

equestrian talent. In 2019, youth teams excelled, sweeping numerous competitions and medaling in top international competitions. Investing in that young talent strengthens the future of U.S. equestrian sport and its programs as we look toward events that will serve as performance indicators in the next decade, including the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games.

In the near term, sponsor relationships and revenue will be a key indicator of success this year. These partnerships bring value to US Equestrian members, and they provide important support for team performance and enhance programs that benefit athletes and competitors. US Equestrian also will work more closely in partnership with the USET Foundation to grow support through education and promotion.

US Equestrian CEO Moroney closed out the session by noting that US Equestrian plans to host a “future of sport” assembly in the spring of 2020 and aims to address a range of critical topics that affect equestrian sport’s future. While the organization looks for new concepts for the future to drive growth, Moroney explained, it will take all of the equestrian community stakeholders working together to maximize growth.

“It takes a whole community for all of us to be successful. You can have success but you might only have success in a small, narrow realm,” Moroney said. “To be truly successful as a sport, it takes coming together and working together to find the commonalities that are going to bring our sport to a new level to create more awareness to make it more popular to bring more people to us.”

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ACPS An Tostal Award for 2019



Tricreek Greystone Riley

By Mary Lou Thall

Tricreek Greystone Riley was born two days before his brother Connor on June 25th 2002. Healthy and strong they were quickly turned out with their dams and from that time on they were best buds and did almost everything together. Riley the smaller of the two was always the bravest with Connor, almost leaping on top of him, to keep up at water crossings.

He and his brother were 2 years old when they went to the Region 1 show in Vermont where they were inspected but not passed because they were too young, but received high marks for their temperaments. I showed each of them in the round pen without a halter and they performed their gaits beautifully for me with verbal commands. I was so proud of them.

We attended several of the Region 1 shows where Riley won the Beryl Eddy Memorial Trophy for excellence in trail competition as well as championships in mini events, hunters, and jumpers classes.

Riley was selected by the ACPS to be an Ambassador at the World Equestrian Games at the Irish Pavilion in 2010. He was to perform a Prix Caprilli and we needed to find music to accompany him. That was when we found his current rider, Sarah Casey, and started his training with her. Although she didn't come to Lexington with us, he has been under her guidance since then and eventually, because of the importance of regular training, moved to her barn.

The following was what Sarah wrote about him when we learned he was to receive the prestigious An Tostal Award from the ACPS....

...When I first met Riley ten years ago, I never dreamt of what unlocked potential he was hiding from us all. We began working to forge a partnership, which was not an easy process at first. But with time, many wrinkles were ironed out, and we had many super successes at the lower levels of dressage

competition. Judges over the years have usually smiled from ear to ear as we approached them on the center line. A couple of them have even asked me if they could keep him! Comments like “elegant pair” and “super pony” are often given by the judges on his score sheets.

One of my long time mentors, Andreas Hausberger Chief Rider of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna, always said, “This will be the first pony I have known to go to Grand Prix!”.

Arthur Kottas, former Chief Rider of the Spanish Riding School and also Andreas’s teacher, has watched us train and said things like, “That was a SUPER flying change!” or even, “Lovely piaffe”.

In 2019, Riley and I were able to take the next step competitively and ride through our first few Intermediare 1 tests with good results. We will eventually reach Grand Prix level competitively in the open division. This I know because this super pony has above all other traits, one of the most important qualities to make it there...a heart of gold. And so we trot on, Riley is learning new skills at his current level, Intermediare 1. and we are all enjoying his courage and sometimes his tantrums, But we can always make him happy with his favorite treat, *Cool Ranch Tortilla Chips*.



Tricreek Riley and Tricreek Connor at a Hunter Pace Event.

ACPS Hall of Fame Winners 2019

An Tostal Award - Tricreek Greystone Riley, Mary Lou Thall

****Tooreen Laddie Award - Tre Awain Ginger Blue, Laura Balding***

Camlin Award - Rockhaven MacBrigh, Mary Carol Harsch and Stephanie Fenton-Hickey

Tre Awain Halfbred Award - Glymary Mary Rose, Kay Clements

Connemara of the Year Purebred - Brambleridge Capability Brown, Georgia Ranson

Halfbred - RR Cool Play, Ryder Richardson

International - Kynynmont Gunsmoke’s Gideon, Pam Liddell

Crestwood Award - Sally Oxnard

USEF/ACPS HORSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Purebred Connemara Mare In Hand

1. Cobblestone Sandpiper, Pat Ashworth
2. Foothills Caroline, Darian Hall
3. *Cashelbay Ellie, Darian Hall

Purebred Connemara Hunter

1. S.R. Irish Envoy, Marilyn Cheek
2. Oakfields Jansen, Hilary Gerhardt
3. Oakfields Lilianne, Jennifer Daly
4. Tie *Castle Monarch, Kathy Lucas and Landsdown Promise of Summer, Marilyn Cheek
5. Cobblestone Sandpiper, Pat Ashworth

Halfbred Connemara Hunter

1. Bright Star, Lynn Harrington
2. Prize, Jennifer Daly
3. S.R. Easter Lily, Petrina Thomas

Purebred Connemara Dressage

1. Roscommon Fagan, Gerlinda Beckers
2. Tullymor's Houdini, Werner Geven
3. Kynynmont's Laney, Harrison Braica
4. Hideaway's Special Delivery, Cathy Blackmon
5. Kynynmont Cooper O'Grady, Pam Liddell
6. Grady, Chiara Heimbeck

Halfbred Connemara Dressage

1. MTT Cooley Caliber, Skyeler Voss
2. Fifinella GCF, Bonnie Canter
3. Dry Brook's Annika's Angel, Sara Carlisle
4. TBF Triton's Rauri, Gretze Witt
5. Denver's Shadow, Kris Kuchenbrod
6. Gallo's Heavenly Breeze, Sabine Maas

Purebred Connemara Eventing

1. Hideaway's Special Delivery, Cathy Blackmon
2. *TBS Declan Pondi, Megan Harris
3. Blue Ridge Breckinridge, Cynthia Holbrook
4. Tullymor's Houdini, Werner Geven
5. Foothills Field Marshall, Donna Duckworth
6. Pip's Thunderbolt, Nancy Winter
7. Northern Victory, Charlotte Zovighian
8. Bantry Bay's Erin, Susan Perry

9. Northern Expectation, Ashleigh Raven
10. Sir Teddington, Sandra Holden

Halfbred Connemara Eventing

1. Labras Leannon, Jennifer Garutti
2. Treetop Flyer, Helen Helton
3. Fate's Patriot, Laura Duhamel
4. Talamah Bound, Tammy Lisi
5. Bantry Bay's Dublin, Eliza Faye Farren
6. Tie, Luck of the Draw, Mary Catlett and Rochambeau, Susan Jellum

Purebred Connemara Jumper (Open)

1. Sky Miles, Hallie Rush
2. Rock My World, Keely Bechtol
3. Hideaway's Special Delivery, Cathy Blackmon

Halfbred Connemara Jumper (Open)

1. Fabrianna DR, Shauna Pingrey
2. Spoot de la Jourlais, Tabitha Okitsu
3. RR Cool Play, Ryder Richardson
4. Luck of the Draw, Mary Catlett

Clifden Trophy – awarded to the Purebred Connemara competing in the Hunter Division

Gold Medal Ribbon owned and ridden by Emily Smith. 943.45 points

2. Jacob's Star Flyboy owned and ridden by Kate Stauffer. 358.9 points

3. Practical Magic owned and ridden by Jordan Rupich. 355.9 points

4. Oakfields Jade, owned by Stephanie Keen, ridden by Lyndsey Keen. 250.6 points

5. Advent Hill Orla, owned and ridden by Eva Kleingartner. 161 points

McKenna Trophy – awarded to the Halfbred Connemara competing Preliminary and above in Eventing

1. HC Celtic Mark, owned and ridden by Donna Miller. 118 points

2. Sparrow's Nio, owned and ridden by Alexandra Sacksen. 109 points

3. Rochambeau, owned and ridden by Susan Jellum. 87 points

Seldom Seen Trophy – awarded to the Halfbred Connemara ridden by a Junior in Dressage

1. Tullymor's Houdini, Werver Gevens, 231 points

2. Dry Brook's Annika's Angel, Sara Carlisle. 190 points

3. Kynynmont Laney, Harrison Braica



Hideaway's Special Delivery

Greystone Dallen McMor x Hideaway's Celebration, 1995

Horse of the Year:

National Champion, Eventing

Third Place, Jumpers

Fourth Place, Dressage

Owned and ridden by Cathy Blackmon

This Pony! Sometimes I am at a loss for words. He is my soul, he is my gift. We competed at five USEA horse trials this year. On my bucket list for Special and me was to go back to his roots. We travelled 11 hours to Genesco, NY to compete at the Historic Hideaway Farm. It was a most wonderful experience for me, as Elliott (our daughter) and Bruiser (Foothills Field Marshall) came too. I walked the grounds where it all began for Special. I met the gracious Beth Harris. Carol Kozlowski organized and ran an awesome weekend. The courses were super fun and the community of equestrians was impressive. Special is coming 25 and still competing with no signs of slowing down. I cherish each day and he continues to wow me. You will see in this issue, Special's legit ad! I am so very excited to have an ad to run in our beloved magazine! Special was chosen by Farnam Equine Products and Equus Magazine as their #SeniorProud Horse! His ad is launching March 2020 in all the national magazines and then Internationally. So watch for him out and about. Have fun with your pony!



Labras Leannon

*Hayselden Perseus x Laurel

Horse of the Year

National Halfbred Connemara Eventing Champion

Owned and Ridden by Jennifer Garutti

I am not sure what more I can say about Anne aka Labras Leannon that I haven't previously said in other year's write ups. She isn't always easy, she has lots of opinions about everything and everyone, but she shows up day after day after day to do her job. I keep thinking at the start of every season that we can't possibly match the success we had the prior year and yet each year she continually rises that that challenge. She's a wonderful pony to manage, she lives on air, travels great, is very easy to have in the barn, I am lucky I have my own farm so I know every little detail of her everyday life. The journey with this pony has been amazing. We've traveled all over the East Coast and Midwest, had great successes in both eventing and dressage, but more importantly are the people who have some into my life as a result of this pony mare. She is my first Connemara halfbred so I am a newbie to the breed, but yet all the people I have met through the ACPS have been the most wonderful genuine people; so warm and welcoming and kind and caring and completely passionate about their ponies and the breed in general. Looking forward to where 2020 will take us and excited to share the journey with so many great people



HC Celtic Mark

By Donna Miller

What a year it was for me and “Salty” (HC Celtic Mark by *ArdCeltic Art). We both were coming back from time off and injuries and did our due diligence to get fit so we could come out in better form than ever. It really clicked for us and spending the 2019 winter in Ocala was amazing.

With each show he came out stronger and more raring to go and most important, more willing to put down a respectable dressage test. That has always been our challenge.

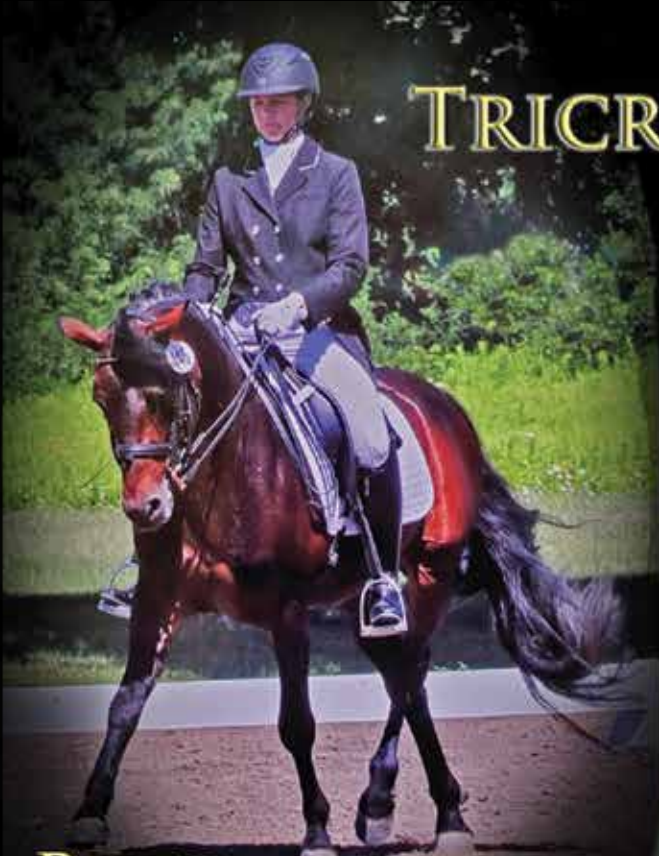
It took years, but I finally figured him out. His patience for the dressage lasts about 10 minutes. So the question was, how to go into an Intermediate dressage test without any warmup? My sister suggested lunging him.

Have you ever seen eventers lunging their horses? I always thought that was for the hunter ring and hot horses. Although not a “hot” horse, Salty does like to play and I found if I lunged him once I got to the show grounds and let him play all he wanted, he was so much happier once I got on. And once I got on, we pretty much went right to the dressage arena and started our test!

The other thing that helped us was being able to use a double bridle at Intermediate. Salty really likes the double and it made it a lot easier for me to keep his steadiness during the test.

Accepting the McKenna was bittersweet as his sire, *ArdCeltic Art won this award in 2010. It means so much to me to win it a second time on one of Art’s offspring. Salty not only won the McKenna Trophy for 2019 but he was highest ranked Intermediate halfbred Connemara for the year. Additionally, he placed me, his rider, 4th nationally for Master Amateur Rider at Intermediate and 9th nationally for Master Amateur Rider at Preliminary. Needless to say I am very proud of this quirky little grey and white paint halfbred!

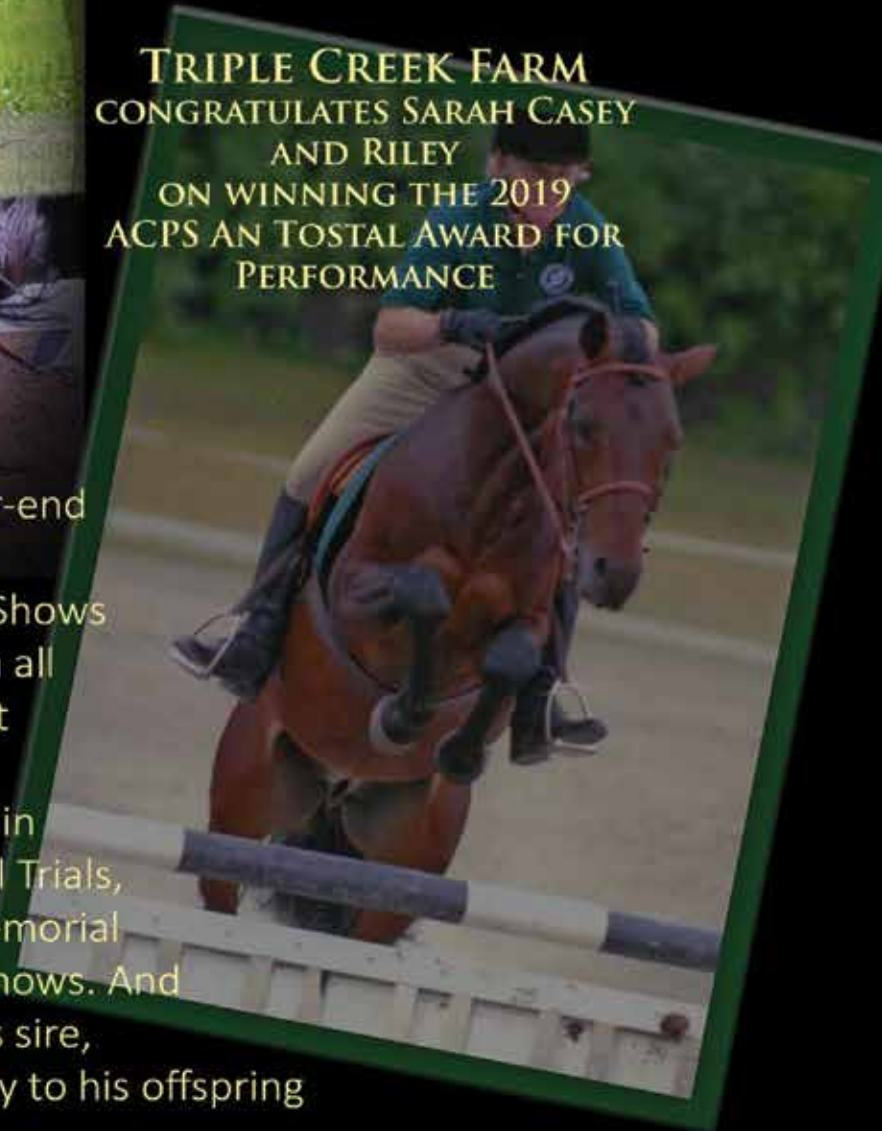




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14HH HWSD N/N

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AND RILEY
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RILEY is consistently year-end champion at the National Dressage Pony Cup Series Shows and finished in 5th place in all breeds of ponies in 2019 at Intermediate 1 level. He has successfully shown in Hunters, Jumpers, and Trail Trials, winning the Beryl Eddy Memorial Trophy twice at Region 1 shows. And Like Greystone McErrill, his sire, he passes his athletic ability to his offspring



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By

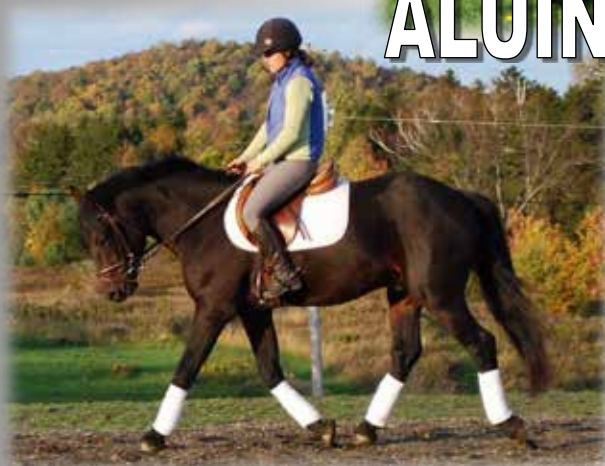
*Aladdin's Denver out of *Patty's Meredith*

14.3, N'/N

9 1/2 " bone

ACPS Approved

ALUINN DURANGO



*Sarah McRae Thrasher
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*Live cover or cooled
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Seldom Seen Award Winner

Tessa Geven and Tullymor's Houdini

After a fantastic year it is a great honor to receive the Seldom Seen Award. It has been an amazing journey for Tessa and Tullymor's Houdini. In June 2015 the Geven family heard from our vet, Dr. Rachel at Valley Vet about a pony looking for a good home. We had been looking for a move up pony for our daughter Tessa. That same day we drove to Big Bear Farm, where Connemara breeder Leigh Ellen Ertle had taken him in. As soon as we saw him in the field we fell in love!

Tullymor's Houdini aka Samson did come with some baggage. He was a 13yr old unbroken Connemara for a reason. He was gelded very late, was covered with scarring over his haunches, and no one had been able to saddle and ride him. The first day it took four people four hours to catch him in the pasture. We spend hours on the ground with him, taking him with us everywhere and exposing him to many things in a positive way. He did not have a mean bone in his body, but was just scared to death. Once we were able to figure him out and understand his fear, we started gaining his trust. Soon we were able to saddle him and then our working student, Lily Barlow, was able to ride him. Getting on him was the hardest part, as he would bolt when you threw your leg over. We took it slow and Lily spend hours desensitizing him under saddle. We would play games and keep it fun while introducing him to new things. His confidence grew every minute. We could tell he was a sensitive horse with a nice movement and a great jump. Lily started doing a few schooling shows at the end of 2015, and in Feb 2016 they competed at their first recognized Horse trials, finishing in first in the BN out of 16 starters. It was the start of his super successful Eventing career

In 2017, Lily left for half a year to Germany and Tessa, then 10, took over the ride and they started their amazing journey. Samson was a lot more confident but still a sensitive pony that got scared at times. We were not sure if this was going to work. We decided to stick to Dressage for a while, so the two could get used to each other. We had some ups and downs but Tessa loved him and never gave up. We started doing Pony Club and some schooling shows. At their first schooling show, the judge rang the bell and Samson bolted. Luckily we were able to stop him and we figured Tessa's flapping



oversized hair bows were spooking him. As soon as we removed them, Tessa entered the ring and had a beautiful test. It was the start of their beautiful relationship.

They soon started showing at recognized dressage shows in 2018 and both pony and rider improved after each show. At the USDF Region 3 Championships they placed 7th at the JR/YR Training Level. They also started showing very successfully at recognized BN Horse Trials. In 2019, Tessa and Samson were the ones to try and beat at both Eventing & Dressage. They had such an amazing bond. Tessa would lead him, when Samson was scared, and Samson would help her, when she would mess up.

They finished 2019, with Tessa only being 11, winning the BN 14U American Eventing Championships out of 38 starters! They also won the 2019 Captain Mark Phillips Pony Award. They then went on to compete at the 2019 USDF Region 3 Championships, placing 8th at 1st Level Freestyle Open, 5th at 2nd Level JR/YR, and 3rd at the Semi Final 13U equitation. It was a pleasure watching these two bond everyday and winning all those blue ribbons were just the icing on the cake.

They have started 2020 strong! In Eventing they started competing at Novice and won their first Horse Trials. She hopes to be able to compete Novice at the AEC Championships. For dressage they are both learning how to do a flying change. They hope to show some 3rd Level and her dream is to earn her USDF Bronze Medal on him. Unfortunately Tessa is now a very tall 12 yr old and starting to outgrow Samson. So not sure how much longer she will be able to ride and compete him. She has started competing her next small horse Big Bear's Cepheus some, but her heart is still with Samson. We will just continue enjoying their journey as long as we can, and treasure every moment they have together in and out of the ring.

Some fun facts

Samson has competed at 20 Horse Trials and won 12, and placed in top 3, 16 times. He has had 1 rail in his whole show career. He is a 24/7 pasture pony and barefoot.





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*Smaragaid Cliff**

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Bright Roxanne) 14.3h, brown

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Bright Star is a Halfbred Connemara by Greystone Ian McVai. He is owned and shown by Lynn Harrington and they were the Halfbred Hunter Champions for USEF.

S. R. IRISH ENVOY

Owners: Les and Marilyn Cheek/Sycamore Ridge Farm
USEF /ACPS HOTY: Champion PB Connemara Hunter
ACPS Gold Medal: Dressage

S.R. Irish Envoy (*Greystone Ian McVai X Glenmary Absinthe*) had a busy and successful 2019, competing mainly in dressage and hunters with his primary rider, Keely Cooley of Rapidan, VA.

They started the year off with some early dressage schooling shows where “Joey” won his classes and then moved on to two USEF/USDF recognized shows: Dressage at the Meadow in May and the Virginia Summer Dressage show in June. They placed first and fourth in their First level classes in the former and also won High Point Connemara. In June, “Joey” won his first class but, perhaps deciding that first level wasn’t challenging enough, threw in two impressive caprioles in the second class. Unfortunately, the judge was not impressed and eliminated them. Nonetheless, they earned a year end third place award in their division from the National Pony Cup competition.

Leaving dressage behind, “Joey” and Keely turned their attention to the hunter ring. In the Connemara Division at the 100th Annual Warrenton Pony Show, they won all three classes for purebreds and took home the Shanagarry Farm Trophy for the second year in a row. They remained the team to beat at a number of local hunter shows through the summer, earning the High Point Hunter Award in the Summerduck Run Farm show series and larking around at some of the local jumper shows.

Of course, no show season would be complete without attending the Region 3 Connemara Show in Lexington, VA. There, “Joe” and Keely won their Beginner Novice eventing class and were the reserve champions of the Purebred Open Division.

The Warrenton Horse Show, the Labor Day tradition in our town, winds up its week with Hunt Night. As they did last year, “Joey” and Keely were among the teams representing the Bull Run Hunt. This year, with less time to practice, they finished lower in the team and pairs competition (4th and 8th), but won the Foxhunter 18-30 Class.

It was a nice (temporary) swan song for Keely, who then went off to college, leaving “Joe” to spend the fall teaching some of the younger riders at his barn. He also enjoyed a little foxhunting before our crazy winter foreclosed some of that activity.

In 2020, he’s hoping Keely will have some time for him when school permits and she isn’t too busy with her own Connemara, An Irish Blessing.



Cobblestone Sandpiper

Piper was special from the start. Her dam, Four Loch’s Perfect Storm, was a maiden mare, and she didn’t really know what to do. Instead of laying down to deliver, she stood up, and I had to catch the baby so she wouldn’t land on her head. That was a first for all of us!

We could see that she was growing into a lovely filly and had wonderful movement. We had chosen *Smaragaid Cliff to be her sire, hoping to add more movement to her lovely dam. We saw her potential, and we decided that she would be a “keeper”. We wanted to make sure that she had the opportunity to develop her ability in dressage. She has really taken to it. She’s smart and enjoys her job. We hope to find her a partner to take her further up the levels.

This year she was ACPS Region 10 West Coast Connemara Show Breed Supreme Champion. She also was USDF Adequan/ All Breed First Level Open Champion. And now she has been awarded USEF All Breed Champion Mare. We are so proud of our little girl! She is very special to us, and it’s been a joy to watch her flourish.

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(*ArdCeltic Art x Balmullo's Irish Moss)

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Valley Creek Carlin LeBeau

Owner/Rider Carla Jimmerson

2019 has been the best year ever for Valley Creek Carlin LeBeau and me. We have been eventing for a few years now and we moved up to Training only to get injured and have to start all over but it was worth it. It was very discouraging at first but I knew it was the right thing to do. Carlin and I have been partners from the beginning because he was born on my farm and I had both of his parents. He has been a dream come true and has been successful in the dressage ring as well. He was awarded his Bronze Medal with USDF this year as well as winning the Beginner Novice Master Amateur division at AEC's in KY. He was also 5th for the year in USEA Beginner novice division, we won 3rd in the Beginner Novice master rider and 4th Beginner novice master. (This was overall for 2019 with USEA). His name means Beautiful Little Champion and he has truly lived up to that name.



Almost Famous

(Aladdin's Denver x Stage Light TB)

Ozzy is still flying high at 18!

Owner/Rider: Ann Grenier

Ozzy (Almost Famous aka Seven Springs River's Touch) had another fun year out eventing around Area 1 and is still going strong. While this wasn't our best year to date, we still had a great time. Bad luck and no luck were the theme this season, but we still had some strong showings. We finished second at the challenging August GMHA after being tied for first the whole time, but losing the cross country tie breaker by a matter of a few seconds! We also finished the season strong with a second place finish at the fall UNH horse trials. Ozzy and I also dipped out toe into straight dressage this season toying with the idea of adding a bronze metal to our collection. We only made it to one show but added a qualifying score at 1st level and 2nd level. This winter we are trying to learn that dressage flying lead changes need to be a little classier than swapping leads in your stadium round! I am so blessed to have such a fun and safe horse to ride- even if he does spook at everything and nothing at all!



Ridgetop Royal Locket

Leader in Modified Halfbred Connemara

My name is Nora Goldfarb and I've been riding Ridgetop Royal Locket for a little over two years. "Maddie" is a 15.3 hand Connemara x Thoroughbred by Aladdin's Denver. I started riding Maddie late in 2017 after my mom had done a wonderful job producing her to Beginner Novice. Maddie is very willing, catty, and athletic so she's come along very quickly. We had a big year in 2019 across a variety of disciplines. Maddie and I moved up to the Modified level midway through the year. We finished 4th out of 20 in the Open Modified division at the Maryland Horse Trials in our move up to that level. Even though we both enjoy eventing, one of the things I love about Maddie is how versatile she is. We also had a 4th place finish in our hunter derby debut in the \$3000 Shannondell Hunter Derby this fall competing

against 30+ horses in the Open division at the Devon Horse Show Grounds. We jumped around Devon in both the low (1m) and the high (1.15m) children's jumpers. And we made our 2nd level Dressage debut this summer scoring a 67%. Notably, Maddie also helped me to achieve my "B" EV in the United States Pony Club later this summer. Maddie is the perfect type that can go into any ring and do well or just hack out in the field on a loose rein like a beginner's pony. She absolutely loves to jump and is so game to take on any course. I'm really looking forward to 2020 with this special horse, and I'm so excited to keep doing what we both love together!

HC Celtic Mark is a Halfbred Connemara Gelding by *ArdCeltic Art who was the Leader in Preliminary for the USEA. He is owned and ridden by Donna Miller. "Salty" was also the winner of the USEF McKenna Award. Read more about him on Page 18 of this issue.



*TBS Declan Pondi

Dexter Leam Pondi x Dandy Sparrow

Owner/Rider: Megan Harris

2019 was an incredible year for Declan. He'd been knocking on the door for a while, and finally earned his first recognized eventing win at Pine Top in February. Then he just kept on winning! He won five out of eight Novice starts, including winning Area III's Senior Novice Championship. These wins led to numerous other accolades including USEA/ACPS High Point Novice Eventer (Purebred), USEF Reserve Champion Purebred Connemara in Eventing and earning his ACPS Award of Excellence in Eventing. He ended up the Number 8 Novice Horse in the country out of more than 11,000 Novice starters.

In true Connemara fashion, Declan performed in more than one arena in 2019. He competed In-Hand, in the jumpers, and he foxhunted. He earned his ACPS Bronze Medal in Jumpers and his Gold Medal in Foxhunting.

If you asked Declan, he'd tell you that foxhunting is his favorite. He absolutely loves hunting in first flight and can be seen quietly walking across the fields surrounded by other horses or enthusiastically bouncing over coops and stone walls. He has become a "regular" at the Blue Ridge Hunt's Thanksgiving meet and guests at the event always come up to say "Hi" and take a photo with him. This was his third year trekking to Virginia for a week in November and it has become one of my most anticipated annual traditions.



*TBS DECLAN PONDI *reflecting on 2019...*



USEA Area III #1 Novice Horse
GDCTA Novice Horse Champion
ACPS/USEA High Point Novice Purebred Connemara
USEF Reserve Champion PB Connemara in Eventing
Five USEA HT wins including Area III Championships

Hunted with four MFHA recognized packs

kicking off 2020...

Pine Top Feb HT - 1st place Sr Novice Rider



All-Breeds Awards

American Connemara Pony Society Inc.

Training Level Open

1. ROSCOMMON FAGAN, Gerlinde Beckers, owner/rider; Ballus Malachi, sire; Lasrachai's Blue Oak Dunlath, dam; Kathleen Fowler, breeder 69.483%
2. KYNYMONT MAXWELL, Patricia Howell, owner; Lorraine Klepacz & Patricia Howell, riders; Rills Lothlorien, sire; Kynymont Camen of Ledgewood, dam; Kathleen Manyo & Pam Liddell, breeders 66.897%

First Level Open

1. COBBLESTONE SANDPIPER, Patricia Ashworth, owner; Leslie Hagberg, rider; Smaragaid Cliff, sire; Four Lochs Perfect Storm, dam; Patricia Ashworth, breeder 68.344%
2. DENVER'S SHADOW, Emma Ciafone & Kristine Kuchenbrod, owners; Emma Ciafone & Kristine Kuchenbrod, riders; Aladdin's Denver, sire; G.G.'s Dove, dam; Top of the Ridge Farm, breeder 65.972%

Second Level Open

1. TULLYMOR'S HOUDINI, Werner Geven, owner; Tessa Geven, rider; Fieldstream's Riley, sire; Kahlua, dam; May Medley, breeder 63.296%
2. MY VALENTINE, Cara Tozour, owner; Alexis Tozour, rider; Moxley Duncan, sire; Hearts and Rainbow, dam; Donna Triboletti, breeder 61.890%

Third Level Open

1. TBF TRITON'S RAURI, Gretje Witt, owner/rider; Skyview's Triton, sire; Bacchea, dam; Jenny Youngblood, breeder 63.500%

Intermediate I Open

1. FIFINELLA GCF, Bonnie Canter, owner/rider; ES Fred Astair, sire; South Ridge Bliss, dam; Sharon Garner, breeder 68.199%
2. KYNYMONT COOPER O'GRADY, Pam Liddell, owner; Emily O'Neill, rider; Gun Smoke, sire; Kynymont Moira, dam; Pam Liddell, breeder 65.000%

Grand Prix Open

1. KYNYMONT GUNSMOKE'S GIDEON, Pam Liddell, owner; Jessica Tate, rider; Gun Smoke, sire; Kynymont Tara, dam; Pam Liddell, breeder 63.294%

Training Level Adult Amateur

1. GERLINDE BECKERS (LA), riding ROSCOMMON FAGAN; Gerlinde Beckers, owner; Ballus Malachi, sire; Lasrachai's Blue Oak Dunlath, dam; Kathleen Fowler, breeder 69.483%
2. PATRICIA HOWELL (VA), riding KYNYMONT MAXWELL; Patricia Howell, owner; Rills Lothlorien, sire; Kynymont Camen of Ledgewood, dam; Kathleen Manyo & Pam Liddell, breeders 65.690%

First Level Adult Amateur

1. KRISTINE KUCHENBROD (CO), riding DENVER'S SHADOW; Emma Ciafone & Kristine Kuchenbrod, owners; Aladdin's Denver, sire; G.G.'s Dove, dam; Top of the Ridge Farm, breeder 65.862%

Third Level Adult Amateur

1. GRETJE WITT (WA), riding TBF TRITON'S RAURI; Gretje Witt, owner; Skyview's Triton, sire; Bacchea, dam; Jenny Youngblood, breeder 63.500%

Intermediate I Adult Amateur

1. BONNIE CANTER (TX), riding FIFINELLA GCF; Bonnie Canter, owner; ES Fred Astair, sire; South Ridge Bliss, dam; Sharon Garner, breeder 68.199%

Second Level Adult Amateur Musical Freestyle

1. GRETJE WITT (WA), riding TBF TRITON'S RAURI; Gretje Witt, owner; Skyview's Triton, sire; Bacchea, dam; Jenny Youngblood, breeder 68.667%

Training Level Junior/Young Rider

1. MADELYN TAFT (MI), riding TRE AWAIN DOLCE SUENO; Madelyn Taft, owner; Tre Awain De Valera, sire; Charlago, dam; Three Creek Farm, breeder 60.862%

First Level Junior/Young Rider

1. TESSA GEVEN (GA), riding TULLYMOR'S HOUDINI; Werner Geven, owner; Fieldstream's Riley, sire; Kahlua, dam; May Medley, breeder 65.278%
2. GEORGIA RANSON (NC), riding BRAMBLERIDGE CAPABILITY BROWN; Georgia Ranson, owner; Bobby Brown, sire; Wildwych Cricket, dam; Nancy Buchanan, breeder 65.196%

Second Level Junior/Young Rider

1. TESSA GEVEN (GA), riding TULLYMOR'S HOUDINI; Werner Geven, owner; Fieldstream's Riley, sire; Kahlua, dam; May Medley, breeder 63.296%

Training Level Vintage Cup - Adult Amateur

1. GERLINDE BECKERS (LA), riding ROSCOMMON FAGAN; Gerlinde Beckers, owner; Ballus Malachi, sire; Lasrachai's Blue Oak Dunlath, dam; Kathleen Fowler, breeder 69.483%
2. PATRICIA HOWELL (VA), riding KYNYMONT MAXWELL; Patricia Howell, owner; Rills Lothlorien, sire; Kynymont Camen of Ledgewood, dam; Kathleen Manyo & Pam Liddell, breeders 65.690%

Intermediate I Vintage Cup - Adult Amateur

1. BONNIE CANTER (TX), riding FIFINELLA GCF; Bonnie Canter, owner; ES Fred Astair, sire; South Ridge Bliss, dam; Sharon Garner, breeder 68.199%

First Level Musical Freestyle

1. TULLYMOR'S HOUDINI, Werner Geven, owner; Tessa Geven, rider; Fieldstream's Riley, sire; Kahlua, dam; May Medley, breeder 69.233%

Second Level Musical Freestyle

1. TBF TRITON'S RAURI, Gretje Witt, owner/rider; Skyview's Triton, sire; Bacchea, dam; Jenny Youngblood, breeder 68.667%
2. MY VALENTINE, Cara Tozour, owner; Alexis Tozour, rider; Moxley Duncan, sire; Hearts and Rainbow, dam; Donna Triboletti, breeder 67.133%

Grand Prix Musical Freestyle

1. KYNYMONT GUNSMOKE'S GIDEON, Pam Liddell, owner; Jessica Tate, rider; Gun Smoke, sire; Kynymont Tara, dam; Pam Liddell, breeder 67.925%

Yearling Fillies

1. SOUTH RIDGE THISTLEBIT, Kimberley Sterl, owner/breeder; Trout Ranch Malarkey, sire; South Ridge Chloe, dam 70.150%

Three-Year-Old Colts/Geldings

1. MLC ROCKY RIVER MORNY, Constance Brown, owner; Morning Glory's Ilyushin, sire; Brambleridge March Mayhem, dam; Janet Rowe, breeder 69.125%



South Ridge Thistlebit and Kimberley Sterl



Kynymont Maxwell

This fabulous photo of Max (courtesy of E. Berkery Photography) was taken at Dressage at the Meadow, Doswell, VA. It was our first show together and my first recognized show in almost 25 years. It captures a lovely moment that perfectly frames his "magical brow band" (Crown Jewels Design) and best of all highlights his beautiful amber eyes. From the very first time I rode him he made me smile. My favorite thing about him is that, with the help of my wonderful instructor Lorraine Klepacz, he will make me a better rider; he is talented and quick in both brain and body, making clear, tactful, and correct aids essential. With this list of accomplishments in his very first year of showing, he is truly a rock star.
Patricia Howell

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(*Grange Finn Sparrow x Molly)

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Cyan Night, RID
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Castle Moya x Abbeyleix Owen
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Imported in 2006

Matchmaker exemplifies what we love about this wonderful breed. He has lovely straight movement and a disposition beyond compare. He is working in dressage, and he loves to go out on trail rides with his big brother to chase deer and turkey. Matchmaker is a joy with that "Here I am, take me!" attitude.

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Brambleridge Capability Brown

By Georgia Ranson

Brambleridge Capability Brown (aka Charlie Brown) was recognized as the 2019 Purebred Connemara of the year for his outstanding achievement across disciplines, both competitive and non competitive. He is by *Bobby Brown out of Wildwych Cricket. Despite the fact that many Connemaras are bred for eventing, Charlie Brown has a natural talent for dressage. This past fall, Charlie earned the title of Reserve Champion at the Bengt Ljungquist Memorial (BLM) Championships at first level and was the NCDCTA horse of the year, also at first level. These achievements not only display his natural ability, but also highlight the rightful place for pony breeds in the dressage world.

Charlie also received two Connemara Awards of Excellence in 2018. One for his performance in the dressage ring, and one for his performance in the therapy ring, demonstrating his versatility among competitive and non competitive disciplines. He was further recognized for his competitive achievements at the USEF Horse of the Year Gala in January. We were fortunate enough to accept the award for Reserve Champion in Connemara Dressage as well as the Seldom Seen Trophy for the highest scoring Connemara ridden by a junior.

In addition to these competitive successes, Charlie Brown was featured in the Coca-Cola Consolidated advertisement for Shining Hope Farms, a PATH certified therapy program, that aired nationally during the World Equestrian Games (September 11-23, 2018). For those fortunate enough to attend the games, the ad ran on the jumbo-tron in the George Morris arena. For those across the country, the ad aired on NBC, NBCSN, and the Olympic Channel. This ad put on display the temperament and work ethic necessary for a therapy pony, a temperament and work ethic that Connemara ponies embody. This ad can be accessed on the Coca-Cola Bottling Co. Consolidated YouTube channel.

Connemara ponies are intelligent with good temperaments. They should be hardy, sure-footed, and have good endurance. The Connemara



2019 ACPS Achievement Award Winners

Competitive Awards

In-Hand Certificate

Cobblestone Sandpiper (*Smaragaid Cliff x Four Loch's Perfect Storm) O: Pat Ashworth
Hillcreek Celtic Bug (*ArdCeltic Art x Tre Awain Cashela Bay) O: Lori Johnson
Piedmont Herman (Balmullo's Beacon x Ruby) O: Gardner Cook
South Ridge Aileen (South Ridge Duncan's Honor x Squishbob) O: Kimberley Sterl

In-Hand Bronze

Folklore Grainne (*Kilfeora Windy Isles x Folklore Honor Larkin) O: Suzanne Antilla
Ivydell Prudence (Balus Turlough x Alki Zenith) O: Paulette Moak
Windy Hollow Tamarack (Aluinn Durango x Caraway Gilly) O: Tracy Roettiger

In-Hand Silver

MacBradaigh's Irish Whistle (Maplehurst Michael McDaire x Elphin Kookaburra) O: Sally Oxnard

In-Hand Award of Excellence

MLC Rocky River Morn' (Morning Glory's Ilyushin x Brambleridge March Mayhem) O: Constance Brown
South Ridge Thistlebit (Trout Ranch Malarkey x South Ridge Chloe) O: Kimberley Sterl
Sparrow's Owen (Grange Finn Sparrow x Savings Carrie) O: Megan Harris

Driving Bronze

MacBradaigh's Irish Whistle (Maplehurst Michael McDaire x Elphin Kookaburra) O: Sally Oxnard

Driving Award of Excellence

Lanie's Lad (*ArdCeltic Art x Tricreek Greystone B'elanna) O: Kimberly Stover

Hunter Certificate

South Ridge Aileen (South Ridge Duncan's Honor x Squishbob) O: Kimberley Sterl

Hunter Silver

Bright Star (Greystone Ian McVai x Sierra) O: Lynn Harrington

Hunter Gold

Ivydell Prudence (Balus Turlough x Alki Zenith) O: Paulette Moak

Hunter Award of Excellence

Landsdown Promise of Summer (Scottsway Bali Hai x Tre Awain Etain) O: Marilyn Cheek

Dressage Certificate

Coastal Tranquility (Hillside Robert McDare x Canaela) O: Stella Marsh
TBF Sweet Malachai (TBF Sweet Independence x Halo's Creek) O: Jenny Youngblood
TBF Sweet Tierney (TBF Sweet Independence x Bacchea) O: Jenny Youngblood
VSH Devine Alexandra (Tullymor's Ned Devine x Missy) O: Susan Dudasik

Dressage Bronze

New Heart's Patriot (Cornerstone's Indelible x New Heart's Morning Glory) O: Carli McKelvey
Tulach Mhor Dew (Field Stream's Riley x Go Baby Slew) O: Kathee Cook

Dressage Silver

Braemar Peace (Gentle Cascade x Atlantic Promise) O: Nicola O'Connell
Don't Think Twice (DaCaprio x Windy Hollow Lilia) O: Katherine Short

Dressage Gold

BSF Finnegan (*Ballywhim An Luan x Bella Fleck) O: Nicola O'Connell
S.R. Irish Envoy (Greystone Ian McVai x Glenmary Absinthe) O: Marilyn Cheek

Dressage Award of Excellence

*Kilfenora Brighana Day (Windy Day x Mac's Bar) O: Karen Shaw
Kynynmont Maxwell (Rill's Lothlorien x Kynynmont Cameo of Ledgewood) O: Patricia Howell
Labra's Leannon (*Hayselden Perseus x Laurel) O: Jennifer Garutti

Dressage (Western) Award of Excellence

Nora Rose (Skyview's Orion x Sara Sue) O: Shelly Feldner-Schuerman

Eventing Certificate

TBF Sweet Malachai (TBF Sweet Independence x Halo's Creek) O: Jenny Youngblood
TBF Sweet Tierney (TBF Sweet Independence x Bacchea) O: Jenny Youngblood

Eventing Bronze

New Song's Freedom (*Smaragaid Cliff x Wildwych Lucy) O: Lee Thomas

Eventing Silver

Coastal Tranquility (Hillside Robert McDare x Canaela) O: Stella Marsh

South Ridge Aileen (South Ridge Duncan's Honor x Squishbob) O: Kimberley Sterl

Eventing Award of Excellence

Labra's Leannon (*Hayselden Perseus x Laurel) O: Jennifer Garutti

*TBS Declan Pondi (Dexter Leam Pondi x Dandy Sparrow) O: Megan Harris

Jumper Certificate

South Ridge Aileen (South Ridge Duncan's Honor x Squishbob) O: Kimberley Sterl

Jumper Bronze

*TBS Declan Pondi (Dexter Leam Pondi x Dandy Sparrow) O: Megan Harris

Jumper Award of Excellence

RR Cool Play (Bentley O'Dea x Corner Oak Penelope) O: Ryder Richardson

Western Gold

Nora Rose (Skyview's Orion x Sara Sue) O: Shelly Feldner-Schuerman



Nora Rose

Skyview's Orion x Sara Sue (QH)

Owner/Rider: Shelly Feldner-Schuerman

Nora Rose achieved her award of excellence in dressage and gold medal in western for 2019. She showed at Level 2 in Western Dressage ending her season second for our local dressage club, horseshow region, and for state B shows in Washington State. While dressage is not her favorite activity, she respectfully did her job, maybe with a little pony mare attitude at times.

We worked the previous winter on honing our trail and ranch riding skills. Over the show season we appeared in many ranch riding, arena trail, and ranch versatility classes. Again, she continued to improve with each show and placed against tough competition. The ranch versatility classes included extreme trail courses, ranch reining, and cattle working classes. Nora loved the cattle classes and put in some great reining runs. In the trail courses she tackled obstacles such as suspension bridges, mucky water, crossing ditches, sidepassing over large logs up and down hills, traversing steep hills, dragging objects, shooting a bow and arrow from her back as well as a water gun, and of course jumping logs

She ended the season 4th in our region and 7th in the B shows in Washington state for ranch riding, and numerous reserve champions at the ranch versatility shows. While it doesn't show in her competitive accomplishments, she shined in teaching our five-year-old son some more about riding. Nora even carried him in his first cattle team sorting practice runs this summer and the grin on his face while chasing cattle made everyone there smile. She educated a lot of people about the versatility of the Connemara breed who had never heard of Connemaras before.

Rain Is A Good Thing

Katherine King

The pair were the United States Pony Club Eastern Dressage Champions. A Halfbred Connemara from Tennessee, the twosome also earned third overall and third in Horse Management at the USPC Championships at the Tryon International Equestrial Center.



Landsdown Promise of Summer

Owners: Rosemary Thomas and Marilyn Cheek

USEF/ACPS Horse of the Year — 4th — PB Connemara Hunter

ACPS Award of Excellence — Hunter

ACPS Bronze Medal — 4H

"Summer", a full-time school pony at Summerduck Run Farm in Culpeper, VA, is a favorite mount of students, making her a very busy pony, but most of her accomplishments are achieved with one little girl, Melia Mindock.

Last year they competed in the hunter ring, went foxhunting, and were partners in 4H, earning their bronze medal in the Achievement Awards program. They placed well together at the Warrenton Pony Show, where they earned their points for the HOTY award. All through the season, there were countless schooling hunter shows and the Region 3 show where "Summer" won the open pleasure under saddle and was champion in the Open Purebred Division, winning two classes and placing second in the third.

She is a relatively green, but reliable foxhunter, and represented the Bull Run Hunt at the Warrenton Horse Show over Labor Day where the hunt team placed 4th. Over the fall and winter, "Summer" has been a valuable member of the inter-school riding team.

Now she is taking on another role—as an artist's model for a life-size sculpture illustrating that magic moment when a young child first falls in love with ponies. As you can see in the photo, she is a very gentle, tolerant pony with small children and is perfect for that role.





Balmullo's Dundee, aka Gaetyr

Therapeutic Riding Silver
(Concord River Roaringwater Bay x Oak Hill's Sweet Ashley)
Owner: Kathy Nebel

Gaetyr is always a gentleman and demonstrates tremendous patience working with clients in Therapeutic Riding of Tryon. At 27 he is still my best trail horse and willing partner. He has his own fan club and is a fabulous representative of the breed.



Sparrow's Owen

*Grange Finn Sparrow x Savings Carrie
Owner/rider: Megan Harris

Owen is enjoying a more leisurely lifestyle these days with light hacking, lots of eating. He is Chief Foal Supervisor and my "go-to" for introducing new horses to the farm. He humored me and attended the Region IV Show last summer to be shown in hand (he has only missed one Region IV Show since 2008). Despite a more "portly" physique, as our vet so tactfully put it, Owen still earned good ribbons in very full classes at our show. He earned just enough points to finish his Award of Excellence in In-Hand. Owen is one of only four ponies to have earned the ACPS Golden Shamrock Award, having earned five Gold Medals in five disciplines. And, as far as I'm aware, he is the only pony to have gone above and beyond, earning an Award of Excellence in all five disciplines as well.



*South Ridge Aileen and Emily F. Belanger
Photo by John Miller - Spectrum Photography*

South Ridge Aileen, a 1999 Connemara/TB halfbred mare by South Ridge Duncan's Honor out of Squishbob xx, bred and owned by Kimberley Sterl, earned her Silver Achievement Award in Eventing, aptly piloted by Emily Frazzoni Belanger, competing in and completing 5 USEA sanctioned events, finishing out their season at the Novice level. To round out Aileen's experiences, Emily also competed her in some Hunter, Jumper and In-Hand classes, earning Achievement Certificates in all. Aileen is also a lead line pony extraordinaire, giving her little friend Corey confidence and affection in the saddle and on the ground, and being recognized as Most Saintly Pony at the ACPS Region 1 show (our most treasured award!).

As Aileen's owner/breeder and Emily's mom, it brings me great joy to see them having such fun at their competitions together!



Folklore Grainne

*Kilfenora Windy Isles x Folklore Honor Larkin
 Owner: Suzanne Antilla

“Gracie” seems to shine where ever she is placed. She earned her Bronze Medal showing In-Hand, doing so while she was in foal with her fourth foal. She is a Premium mare, and one who is also a superb mare to ride.

Ivydell Prudence

Balius Turlough x Alki Zenith (Arab)
 Owner: Paulette Moak

I was pleased to learn that my mare Ivydell Prudence had earned the Gold Medal in hunters and a Bronze for in hand. All the credit goes to Dr. Carlin Jones, DVM and her daughter, Laurel, as they have been leasing my pony for the last 4+ years. It is very rewarding to see Laurel excel, competing in local shows. They have created a real bond together.

While I’m happy about the medals, the most important thing is knowing that my girl is loved, appreciated and given excellent care. As the owner of this intelligent and talented pony I can rest easy knowing she is in very capable hands.



Cady O’Daly Durango

Tre Awain Goldsmith x Katie

Owned and ridden by Roxanne Wells earned a Gold Medal in Foxhunting.



Windy Hollow Tamarack

Aluinn Durango x Caraway Gilly
 Owner: Tracy Roettiger

Windy Hollow Tamarac earned his bronze in-hand award through competing in the Purebred Connemara geldings in hand classes at Region 1. Tamarack has been going to the regional show since he was a yearling. While 2020 will be an exciting competition year for this five year old, his person is convinced that Tamarack’s favorite part is removing his ribbons from his stall front.

MacBradaigh's Irish Whistle

Maplehurst Michael MacDaire x Elphin Kookaburra

Owner: Sally Oxnard

Macbradaigh's Irish Whistle is a 2008, 13.3 hand bright bay Premium mare owned by me, Sally Oxnard of Exeter NH. This year she received a Silver Medal In-Hand and a Bronze Medal in Driving.

I bought this mare who was unhandled when she was five. She spent some time being backed by the talented Elizabeth Latham at Cadbury Woods Farm in NH. Then we bred her to Aluinn Durango and Sarah MacRae hacked her in the hills of VT. After she foaled and was weaned she went to True North Farm in Harwinton MA (Cape Cod) where Kay Slater got her going as a pony club pony and she was leased by a great little rider. They also started her in long lines and noted she appeared to like to drive.

In 2017 the young rider outgrew her and she moved to Triple Creek Farm in West Winfield NY where she was bred to Tricreek Greystone Riley, and polished up her hunter skills. She was Champion Connemara in Hand at Region 1 in 2017, elegantly handled by Christine Kelton who has a real knack for a big trot.

In 2018 she delivered an elegant bay colt and a new driving trainer, Ashley Mount, arrived at Triple Creek Farm. Lucky for me, Mary Lou Thall has both harness and vehicles to match this cute pony package, and a generous heart to let us use it. Whistle was started in long lines again, she was hitched in January of 2019, and she made such great progress that she went to three shows including the New York State Breeders Show at the NY State Fairgrounds in Syracuse



where she was also Champion Mare in Hand. In November she participated in the Connemara Demo at Equine Affaire at the Big E in West Springfield NH, and participated in three clinics with Dana Bright of the ADS. She is a very quick study, she moves beautifully, and she still likes to drive!



FOOTHILLS FARMS/PIEDMONT CONNEMARAS

ATHENS, TENNESSEE



HOME OF TULLYMOR'S MOUNTAIN STEEL by Tullymor's Mountain Shadow out of Tullymor's Kiss of Sun (Breeding Live Cover)

And

BALMULLO'S BEACON by Aladdin out of Tullymor's April Fool (Frozen Semen Only)

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Having Fun with Your Pony? Tell Us About it!

We know that you and many other Connemara Pony owners ride and drive you pony for sheer pleasure. Starting in 2020, ACPS Regions I and IX will run a pilot program designed to recognize the time and effort that members spend riding, driving, conditioning, trail riding, doing groundwork and bonding. Members reporting at least 150 hours per year in any of these activities by December 31, 2020 will be eligible for an Achievement Award Certificate. The report form will ask applicants for stories and photos about how they had fun with their pony in 2020

The purpose of the pilot project in 2020 is to gauge the level of response and to gather recommendations for improvement from applicants. In January 2021, The ACPS Board of Governors will consider the results of the pilot projects and decide whether and how to expand this Achievement Award category to all ACPS Regions.

Marilyn Cheek, ACPS Awards Committee Chair explains: "We want to let members know that the Society appreciates them putting in time – in the saddle or just hanging out!"

Tracy Garland, Region IX Governor, says "We are excited to test this concept! It has broad reach and we hope members respond enthusiastically. We look forward to hearing great stories!"

ACPS Members in Region I and IX are now receiving the information that will need to participate in the FUN WITH PONY 2020 PILOT.



New Heart's Patriot

Cornerstone's Indelible x New Heart's Morning Glory

Owner/rider: Carli McKelvey

Dressage Bronze

Brought Paddy home and started to build a trusting foundation for our partnership this past year. He's attended lessons, pony club mounted clinics, schooling and rated dressage shows. I'm so pleased with his overall disposition, and how he has transitioned to his new life. Since I was a young child, I've always wanted a Connemara, and he is absolutely a dream come true.



Lanie's Lad - barn name Hal - at Elk Creek CDE, Fair Hill Maryland June 2019.

Hal is a 15.1 hand gelding by *ArdCeltic Art out of Tricreek Greystone B'Elanna foaled in 2012. He had a great 2019 with multiple wins at the preliminary level. We began our journey together when he was an unbroken two year old. Since then we have spent our time together driving & riding. Hal enjoys a nice ride out in the county & an occasional round of jumps when not focusing on his driving career. A true Connemara character, he has good looks & charm with a side of sass that never leaves us having a boring day!
Kimberly Stover



***Braemar Peace**

By Gentle Cascade out of Atlantic Promise

Owner and rider: Nicola O’Connell

Silver medal in dressage

This rising 9-year-old mare is just a dream come true, an absolute pleasure. She has really matured over the last year and I’m so proud of her. We are excited for 2020 to continue to squeeze into a busy work/life schedule as many competitions and adventures as we can as this mare has so much potential. The best part of travelling overseas for work is planning my pony life for when I am back at home! This mare is my best friend and is such a great example of the breed, so smart, kind, talented and versatile and reliable. We have so much fun together no matter what we do shows, trail riding and hunter paces. She really enjoys jumping and is brave so I just need to work on my bravery for our 2020 season and hope to do some combined events! We had a very special visit from her breeder Sue Gillingham last year who travelled from the UK to visit us and Peace. Peace is the last foal out of her mare Atlantic Promise who I rode when she was a 5 year old. Peace is a very special pony with lovely old breeding and if I’m brave enough one day I would love to breed her but in the meantime I’m going to enjoy every precious minute riding her!

BSF Finnegan

By Ballywhim An Luan out of Bella Fleck

Owner and Rider: Nicola O’Connell

Gold Medal in dressage

Currently offered for sale

Rising 11 halfbred Gelding, Bred by Maura Jordan. Finn comes from a bloodline of talent, he is half brother to Gannymede the ‘super pony’ and full brother to BSF Padric who are ponies with hugely successful eventing careers. Finn has extravagant gaits and is a super ride so athletic and comfortable. He worked very hard to obtain his ACPS gold medal in dressage last year and now he is now learning to jump with the super talented Allie Saksen who is having great fun with him! Finn is looking forward to some event schooling and competitions in Aiken in February he loves his jumping! So handsome and flashy with an incredible work ethic, he is the smartest most talented pony I have ever known. He has taught me so much. His potential is untapped and with the right partner who has the time to put into him I know he has a very successful future ahead of him.



VSH Devine Alexandra (Tullymor’s Ned Devine x Missy) owned by Susan Dudasik of Misfit Farm in Salmon, Idaho, has added her Dressage Certificate to her list of accomplishments and is looking forward to attending more dressage shows this year. She will also be testing her skills as a dressage and trail pony by attending some Working Equitation events. Lexie, her barn name, has earned her Therapeutic Riding Award of Excellence and was the 2018 ACPS Halfbred Pony of the Year. She recently earned her In-Hand Bronze certificate from the Trail Equine Level of Excellence Program. Lexie also enjoys being “Lexie, the Unicorn” and going to visit the local preschools and various local programs. She is now somewhat of a celebrity in her community.





**Kilfenora Brighanna Day*

Kilfenora Brighanna Day / aka Bri

Sire: Windy Day x Mac's Bar

Owner/Rider: Karen Shaw

Bri and I made our dressage show comeback in 2019 after taking the 2018 season off. My husband and I had moved from a condo to our 33 acre farm in December of 2017. I had to figure out how to fit into my day, a full-time job, five horses, and being married to a pilot who is gone a lot of the time. Once we got a lot of "can't wait" projects done, I put together my mental priority list, found an awesome trainer to work with, and we were back in action. I was very excited to get the e-mail that we had earned our ACPS bronze medal, but also thought that I had read on her previous owner, Brenda Kinyaloc's website, that she had earned her silver years ago. I checked with Karen Laden and she said there was no record of anything for Bri before I got her. The website is no longer up, so I emailed Brenda about it. As it turned out, she is an amazing record keeper and still had all of her paper work from back in 2006! I passed it on to Karen, who copied our correspondence to Marilyn Check and Sally Oxnard. They were able to come up with the Connemara magazine from 2007 which published the results from 2006 showing Bri had, indeed, already received her silver medal! I couldn't wait to share with Brenda that our girl had earned her gold when Karen emailed me that she actually had enough points for her dressage award of excellence! Bri and I want to give a big THANK YOU to these ladies for all their help!



Winslow Photo

RR Cool Play ("Becks")

Bentley O'Day x Corner Oak Penelope

Owner/Rider: Ryder Owen Richardsom

2019 was an amazing year for my pony, RR Cool Play. We went from the .90 meters and moved all the way up to the 1.15 meters and had many successes in the show ring. We qualified and attended US Pony Jumper National Championships and had some great rounds to earn the Team Bronze medal. We had many fun experiences out of the show ring too.

More than anything though, in 2019, my pony and I grew together as a team. Becks taught me about commitment and perseverance. He let me know if he didn't get out enough, if he wasn't enjoying something, or what was scary. He taught me that the relationship between horse and rider is about trust and how it's necessary to listen to each other. Becks taught me that winning is not always about a ribbon. Becks taught me that having a dream, working hard, staying loyal, and staying true to yourself is what brings real success.

Becks is more than just a pony, he is the greatest friend I have ever had. I am so lucky that he is a funny pony and has a heart of gold. His playful antics keep me on my toes. I love that he tries so hard and is a true partner. I love that he puts his head into my arms and it is the only place that feels like home.

I am so proud of our accomplishments in 2019 and the experience that we both gained from our achievements, as well as, our mistakes. It has been a truly special year of so many firsts and I can't wait to enjoy 2020 with my amazing pony.

2019 Non-Competitive Award Winners

Therapeutic Riding/Driving Bronze

Ripleigh's Abra Cadabra (Ripleigh x Lean On The Wind) O:
Carolyn McEvitt

Therapeutic Riding/Driving Silver

Balmullo's Dundee (Concord River Roaringwater Bay x Oak Hill's Sweet Ashley) O: Kathleen Nebel

Therapeutic Riding/Driving Award of Excellence

Crib Glas Mandolin (Bobby Brown x G.G.'s Dove) O: Carolyn McEvitt

Foxhunting Certificate

Mega Luck (Minyfford Megastar x Balmullo's Matilda) O:
Kim Harrison

New Song's Courageous Son (*Smaragaid Cliff x
*Glenormiston Rossleague) O: Nancy Dillon

Foxhunting Bronze

Ceili Coral Isles (*Kilfenora Windy Isles x Coral Misty Ciara)
O: Erin Driscoll

Foxhunting Gold

Cady O'Daly Durango (Tre Awain Goldsmith x Katie) O:
Roxanne Wells

*TBS Declan Pondi (Dexter Leam Pondi x Dandy Sparrow) O:
Megan Harris

4-H Bronze

Landsdown Promise of Summer (Scottsway Bali Hai x Tre Awain Etain) O: Marilyn Cheek

Pony Club Certificate

Ripleigh's Abra Cadabra (Ripleigh x Lean On The Wind) O:
Carolyn McEvitt

RMF Time of O'Reilly (Morning Glory's Ilyushin x RMF Irish Rose) O: Stella Marsh

Pony Club Bronze

Coastal Tranquility (Hillside Robert McDare x Canaela) O:
Stella Marsh

Perseus Popp Sta

Owner/Rider Lyndia McKenzie

I was first introduced to the Connemara breed when I got my second pony, Perseus Popp Star who is currently 19 and still competing. Two years later, I started leasing the coolest Connemara pony (WCR Brianne Sequin) Bree. She is owned by the amazing Martha Slamer. I am also a proud Pony Clubber and am currently at the C-1 level. We are eventing at the Novice level and received reserve champion in the end of year awards for the Novice division at The Heritage Schooling Show in mid Ohio.

As most Connemaras do, Bree LOVES to jump! The first time Bree and I did a recognized event together, we went starter as most do and Bree, being her excited self locked on to a Prelim cross country jump! I gladly was able to steer her to the correct jump, but it was still amazing that my 14.1h pony locked on to a jump that size!

I am 14 and 5'7, which means that my mom's method of tying bricks to my head hasn't been very productive. My height is acceptable for Bree, as long as I am balanced (which I always try to be). I sometimes just wish she could just grow with me. This spring will be our third season together, and possibly our last because of my inability to stop growing. Last season, Bree and I went the entire season double clear! No cross country time penalties, jump penalties, nothing! Bree is such a kind, willing, and talented pony who has taught me so much and continues to amaze me every single day! I'm so thankful for this breed and everything they give to their riders!



Dennis Bomar Photo

New Song's Courageous Son (a.k.a. Courage)

*Smaragaid Cliff x *Glenormiston Rossleague

Owner/Rider: Nancy David Dillon

Courage started foxhunting last August and has made steady progress. We took it easy, staying to the rear of the field with quiet horses along to keep us company. Being a Connemara, he expressed his enthusiasm with some athletic moves but kept his head in the game throughout. We both enjoyed every outing and as he learned what to expect, we moved along faster and closer to the action.

Courage and I hunted with the Thornton Hill Hounds 23 times up to New Year's and we will continue to go out when the weather and footing are favorable through Closing Day in March. One of our goals for the off-season will be to do some jumping so that we can move up to first field when he's ready next season or after. It's such fun to help a horse discover a new job that it loves!



From the Inspection Committee

Premium Connemaras

By Kathy Sparks

We have all seen them or remember them – the pony that takes our breath away. The pony might be a reminder of your favorite childhood mount, the one that you could tell your deepest secrets to, braid flowers into their mane, took swimming in the pond, or the one who stood over you when some how you ended up on the ground. Perhaps you have traveled and visited pony farms here in the US or abroad and fell in love with a foal - or two or three ! Maybe you stood beside the show rail in Clifden and watched the multitudes of Connemaras being paraded before the judges, and waited in anticipation to see if your favorite was pinned in the class. Perhaps while pouring over Pat Lyne's books, researching bloodlines and looking at photos, conjured up a pony you can't get out of your head.

The ACPS Inspection Program allows for owners to present their pony to a team of Inspectors who review the pony, as compared to the Breed Standard. When you look at any animal for which a breed standard exists, whether it be dogs or equines, the breed standard becomes just that the "STANDARD" to which all representatives of the given breed are compared. By definition it is a "set of guidelines used to ensure that all animals produced by a breeder conform to the specifics of the standardization of the breed". (There's that word again.....standard). They help to define the "ideal" animal and provide goals for those looking to improve their stock. Is the animal fit for the function for which it was bred ? Does the breed have an international presence, whereby all animals globally follow similar standards ? In the case of the ACPS, being a member of the ICCPS, all member societies have parallel standards in place. Breed standards contain information covering external characteristics such as appearance, movement, type and temperament and are not designed to contain specific details.

When a pony is presented for Inspection, the Inspectors use a detailed worksheet, one that takes each component of the ACPS Breed Standard and dissects each point, allowing them to be assessed in greater detail. The team discusses each pony and a consensus of remarks and a summary are presented to the owner, with an opportunity for private conversation or a shared discussion with others attending the Inspection.

It became evident during the development of the Inspection Program that every once in awhile, the Inspection Team would have the great honor of witnessing a pony who was not just your typical pony. There are just some ponies that you know represent greatness in our breed and their excellence needed to be acknowledged. It was because of such ponies the ACPS Inspection Program developed the Premium Status Designation for ponies (Premium mare program begun in 2005, stallion program began in 2007). Being a breed society, the continuation of the breed for future generations being paramount, recognition as a Premium Pony, whether or stallion or mare, carries some additional criteria when it comes to their inspection. First and foremost, is their ability to reproduce. Therefore in order for a pony to be considered for a Premium Inspection, a stallion must have sired at least one purebred foal and a mare must have produced at least one purebred foal. That information is verified at the time of the nomination for Premium Inspection. Secondly, the age of the pony is factored in. Mares and stallions must be at least 8 year of age. Generally, a pony goes through the inspection process twice to achieve Premium status - once at a younger age and then the Premium inspection occurring after the pony has been part of a breeding program. On the day of inspection for Premium status, the comments and remarks the pony receives must fall in the very good to excellent range. Of the 800+ ponies inspected since the beginning of the Inspection Program, only 5% have achieved Premium status.

It would be fabulous if ALL our beloved Connemaras were to receive Premium status, but that is not the case. We are lucky that our breed is one where, because of the diligence and the care we have for our breed, many wonderful, recognizable representatives of the standard have been produced. Over the years, the numbers of ponies receiving Premium Status has increased as more ponies have been inspected. But this is the cream of the crop, the best of the best, those ponies that serve to clearly represent the Premium members of our Breed. And we should be proud of those ponies and what they stand for..... a breed that holds a special place in our hearts, one that is governed by a breed standard and an inspection process, represents a global presence in the Connemara world and a pony that will continue to carry its many fabulous attributes into the future.



44 *A Premium Mare, above, and a Premium Stallion, right*

true tales of an adult amateur and her rather cheeky mare

Our Way Forward

Episode 2- Oy! Now You Will Live with the Donkeys!

By Christine Kelton

Assisted by Trout Ranch Polly Claire (*Smaragaid Cliff x New Song's Autumn)

*Love Polly recognizes no barriers.
It jumps hurdles,
leaps fences, penetrates walls
to arrive at its destination full of hope.
- Maya Angelou*

Years ago I saw a TV show called Junkyard Wars that had two teams competing to create a minesweeper. They had one day, and could only use items found in a junkyard - or something like that. What I remember is the commentary describing the resulting machines - one was described as more "British" because it went around the field with great finesse, poking and prodding, while the other was described as "typically American" because it went around with a giant hammer-like thing in the front, banging its way around the field. Effective, to be sure, but completely lacking in subtlety. That's my Polly. Two hammers in the back and a battering ram in front.

I arrived home with my little beige prize at the end of August, 2017. She was two, and I was about half a century older than that. Home for Polly is LaLuna Farm in New Paltz, NY, a hunter-jumper show barn that's only a mile from my house. It's a beautiful place with all safe, split rail fencing, a shed in every paddock and pasture, and a view of the Shawangunk Ridge to die for. It's owned by Julie Stevenson and her husband, Tom Meyer. Tom I've known for years through the Hudson Valley Writing Project at SUNY New Paltz, and Julie I met a few years ago when I knocked on her door looking for a place to keep a pony.

Polly travelled the 5 hours from New Hampshire like a seasoned pro, and stepped off the trailer like she owned the place. "I have arrived!" her body language said, ears up and so calm. And indeed, she had. Two and a half years later, this is how she still arrives everywhere; gets off the trailer, looks around briefly, makes a quick grab for some grass, ties to the trailer, and puts her face in her hay net. Sounds too good to be true, right? There are times when having a dauntless pony does not work in my favor.

We put her in a small grass paddock behind the barn, close enough to keep an eye on her while she acclimated, and the back fence bordered on the big field where the "Fab Five" lived- a herd of retired hunter/jumpers that belonged to the farm. This way, Polly would have company, too. A couple of them came over to see the new arrival, but Polly had her face in the short grass and couldn't be bothered with them. Priorities.



A week or so went by and all was well. Polly spent her days in the small grass paddock and in her stall at night, and I had a full week home with her before I had to go back to work at the elementary school where I teach English language learners. One day while I was cleaning her stall, I heard some squealing going on outside. Polly was trying her darndest to stick her head under the bottom fence rail to bite Tom's legs, and 16.3 ish Tom (a horse, not Julie's husband) was hanging over the fence, trying to bite her back while prancing to keep his legs away from her

nipping teeth. It was all in good fun to them, and I had noticed Tom and Joe hanging over the fence making cow eyes at her for the past few days, but Polly had been indifferent whenever I'd been around. I broke up the ruckus and Tom went back to his herd while Polly started up her grass vacuum. No harm - no foul. All was well.

Inevitably, Labor Day came and went and I had to go back to work. The routine was to feed Polly in the morning and turn her out, and after work clean the stall and bring her back in. So yes, I board, but I think of it as a hybrid situation where I do some of the work myself. And that's how I like it because it eliminates a lot of my anxiety, my eyes are on her twice a day, I don't have maintenance issues, and if I have to go away, they will take care of her. (Since that time, I've gotten a lot smarter. Polly now lives out, but I can bring her in for the night if the weather is really awful. Still, I think we both prefer her living outside, anyway.)



One morning while driving to work, my phone rang. When the barn calls, my stomach always drops. I had just been there not 30 minutes ago and everything was fine. It was Julie (Stevenson), the owner.

“Christine, everything’s fine.” (I love when that’s the first sentence!) “I was looking out the living room window and noticed Polly galloping around the big field with the other horses. I went out there and she was having a great time. She let me catch her and now she’s in her stall. There’s a section of fence down along the back of her paddock. I don’t usually go into the living room in the morning, so it’s a good thing I did.”

You can say that again. All that grass! What if nobody had seen her? What if she’d foundered? This was very upsetting and a real concern! How did that fence come down? By the time I got home that evening, the fence had already been completely fixed. Have I mentioned that I love boarding? - at the right place. And I was informed that the fence rails had been pushed in the direction away from Polly’s paddock and into the back field. A mistake was made, blame was fairly placed.

And then that weekend again. Polly’s Demolition Service was in business. This time I got a call from another boarder who was riding in the ring when she spotted the beige devil back in the big field, at the very bottom, trotting around. She wasn’t even near the herd! Just having another grand time by herself in the big field. That’s Polly. To this day, we go out riding around the farm by ourselves, go on field trips in the trailer ... little Miss Independence needs no equine companionship. Again I say, this does not always work in my favor.

I rushed over to get her. That field is on the side of a fairly steep hill, so those horses get a workout going up and down it. Polly by that time was at the bottom, vacuuming grass. As I approached her, she took off right past me and up the hill, the little bugger, but she stopped part way. Up the hill I trudged, panting, Polly watching and waiting, also breathing noticeably harder. With her head down, she dutifully let me put on her halter, and we trudged and panted the rest of the way together. Yup, the fence was down again, but this time it was a different section. And of course it was smashed outward again. Guilty



little tart. This really couldn’t go on.

“Christine, don’t put that pony back in that paddock. We’ll have to string some electric across the back or figure out something else. When she gets tired of playing with Tom and Joe, she turns around and kicks the fence down.” That was the eyewitness report.

This would become a theme in Polly’s life that I’ll get into in later episodes. When you own a dauntless pony, anything is possible, or impossible. It depends.

Oy! An alternative living arrangement was introduced. Two mini donkeys lived on the farm, Millie and Eeyore. They lived in their own little field, maybe an acre, out by Julie and Tom’s house (Julie’s husband, not the horse, but Tom the horse had been Tom the husband’s horse), with their own shed, and a lovely string of electric tape attached to the middle of the split rail fence. I was told the electric had been installed because years ago, they would wiggle the middle rails until they fell, and would then escape and run down to the barn and cause havoc. It sounded like they were made for each other, like-minded criminals. It was the perfect solution - except there was too much grass.

It was time to introduce the grazing muzzle. Polly was just over 13.3 and at her PPE a few weeks earlier had weighed 775 pounds on the weight tape. Now she was about 800 pounds and I was worried. Same weight tape the vet had used. Twenty five pounds is not much on a pony’s frame, but it’s a slippery slope with these easy keepers, and I wasn’t about to take any unnecessary chances.

On went the grazing muzzle, and I turned Polly out in the same paddock where she had been doing the fence rearranging - but I stayed out there as the playground monitor. To say she was not thrilled is an understatement. There was a lot of head shaking, attempts at eating, more head shaking, and finally she dropped to the ground and rolled like mad. Alas, the dreaded muzzle would not come off! It was difficult to watch as her body language said she was starving to death. Galloping and bucking started. Polly was vexed. I watched for quite a while as she made attempts at eating, walked, tried again, walked, tried again, shook her head, walked... this went on for a while until finally I couldn’t stand it anymore and brought her in, like the mom who can’t leave daycare when her toddler is crying.

The next day, I strapped on her grazing muzzle and walked her out to her new home with the donkeys, mother and daughter team Millie and Eeyore.

A Mexican standoff ensued. Donkeys suffer no fools, and dauntless Polly had not come across a donkey before, as far as I know. She was also wearing her grazing muzzle, so here she was with this nasty contraption on her face and two unknown creatures staring at her. What's a curious and fearless pony to do? Trot up to them, of course. Weren't all creatures put on Earth to play with her and be another "friend" she could boss around?

No. Absolutely not. The donkeys took off to the other end of their little field. Polly pursued. Donkeys being donkeys, they turned around, faced her, and held their ground. Polly stopped short. What is this? A challenge? What foul trick is this? There was some snorting, some ground pawing, and my smart pony decided these were not creatures to be messed with. She turned tail and galloped to the other side of the field, where she was back in her own personal Hades of trying to remove the grazing muzzle. Good luck, sista! I walked away, the mom who is unable to watch.

For the next week or so, they kept to their own halves of the field. And Polly's weight returned to 775, despite all that grass you see in the photo.

Eventually, the two species realized that commingling was not such a bad way to live- at least as far as the donkeys were concerned. The donkeys returned to their dirt pile at the front of the field, one lying down while the other stood guard, and Polly ventured to the other half of their field. Polly got fed something in a bucket twice a day, and Millie and Eeyore considered that highly unfair. To my surprise, one day after feeding Polly her balancer (her feed bucket gets strapped to a tree), cunning, stealthy, calm Millie very slowly made her way closer and closer. I just watched. Step by step, every so quietly, she stood next to Polly, whose ears were pinned, and yet Polly made no move. Millie stretched out her nose. Polly continued munching. Mille inched closer, and eased her head into the bucket. Polly chewed, showing full on mare face. Millie chewed. Unbelievable.

From then on, I had to stand guard, and I'm telling you that a donkey who doesn't want to move will NOT move. Whenever I brought Polly's feed out, Millie the Bold would make her way over ever so slowly, and I started out by just blocking her way. Child's play, she scoffed. She walked a little closer and I pushed against her shoulder - gggrrrrrrr immovable beast! In the end, we compromised - when Polly was done, Millie got to lick the bucket.

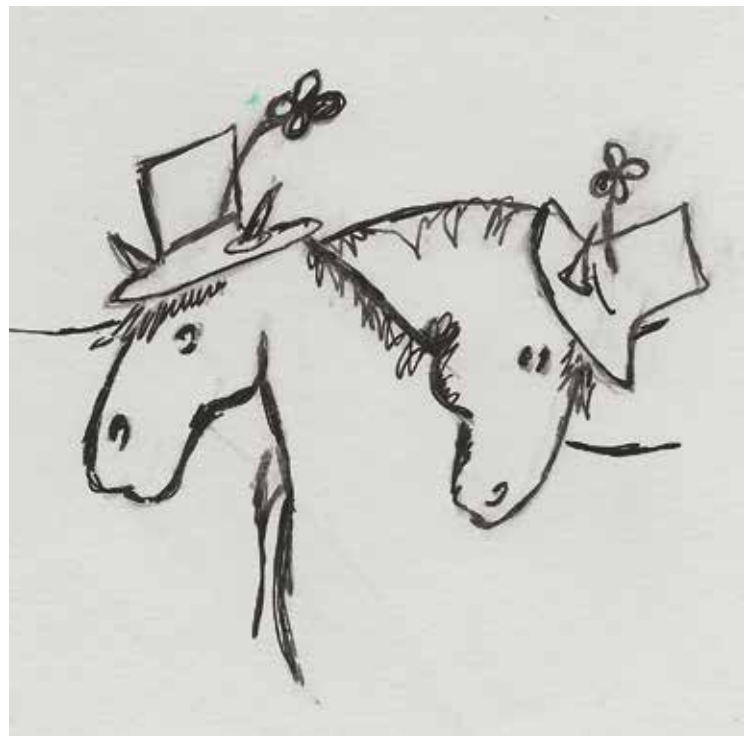
There was one major takeaway from this interaction for me, the human responsible for training the pony. Or I should say the human being trained by, in this case, a donkey. Think about it. The donkey was stealthy and calm and persistent and Polly allowed it to happen. She didn't perk her ears and welcome Millie, but she cooperated even though sharing her food was not her idea or choice. This episode happened in September of 2017, and the

method used by the donkey is still the only strategy I've found to this day that works with my indomitable Polly. I didn't put these pieces together and make the connection until months later, and it hit me like a ton of bricks. More on this when I get to writing about pony training.

Another thought about having a pony with a penchant for removing barriers is the danger. This is one episode I'm telling you about. There have been others, which I'll get into maybe when I talk about horsekeeping. "It's all fun and games until somebody gets hurt!" I can laugh writing about it now, but that's only because nobody has gotten hurt, and I'm doing my best to keep it that way. We all have experienced or know someone who has experienced the horror of having a beloved pony get a career ending, or worse, a life ending injury while goofing off in the pasture. It's no joke. At the end of the day, good electric fences make good neighbors, at least in my case.

No doubt about it, these ponies are smart and curious and they don't always know what's best for them. Try to tell them that, though. It's our job to do our best, discover what works, love them unconditionally, and keep a sense of humor when we find ourselves faced with the personality of an "American minesweeper."

Stay tuned for Episode 3. "Too Young to Ride - Adventures to Share with a Youngster" - or something like that





Sweet, kind Liffey Star left us last week at the age of 27, the last foal from both Genesee Star (TB) and Hideaway's Erin Smithereen (Conn).

She was two years old when we moved into our farm Mothersfield. After getting her started I loaned her to Brant Gamma and Alexx Delorme to ride at the lower levels. When she returned to me, she embarked on a career that saw her winning at Rocking Horse, GMHA, Middleburg, Genesee Valley Hunt, GVRDC and Groton House, I've likely missed some. She competed CCI2* long format before her FEI career was cut short by a fungal sinus infection contracted in Ocala, FL.

After producing three foals, she returned to competition and carried a few more lucky riders around and even made a successful appearance at the American Eventing Championships at the age of 23.

She was a barn favorite, my first "homebred" and she was the queen of the mare herd. I had a feeling I might not see her again when I left for Aiken in January. My thanks to Laura Woodruff, my barn manager, and to Dr Erica Hutten for their care and compassion. Carol Kozlowski

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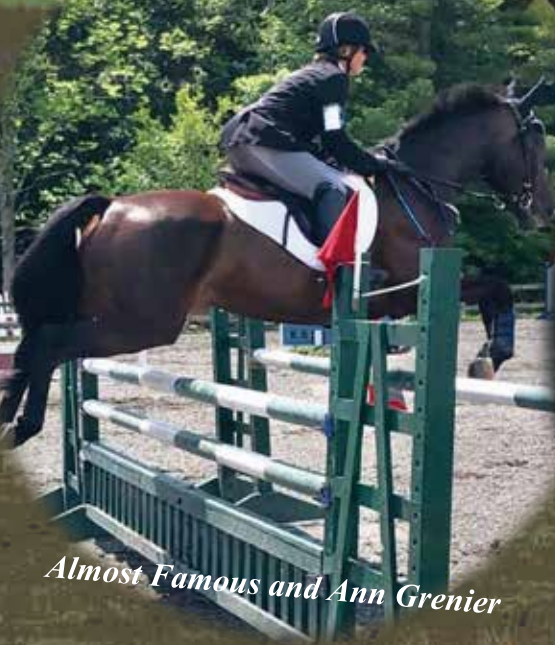
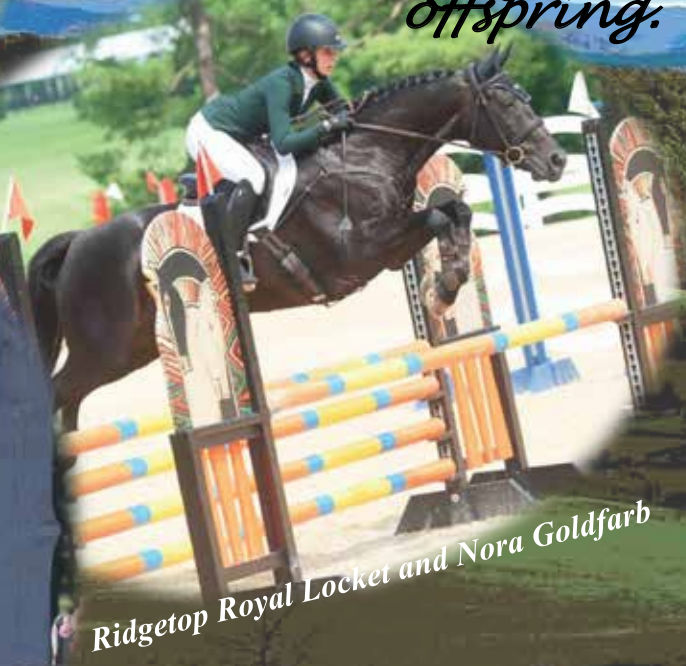
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