

NVRHA RUNDOWN

National Versatility Ranch Horse Association

Volume 3, Issue 3 ~ Winter 2010



Dave Currin and Docs Second Best

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Training Stables

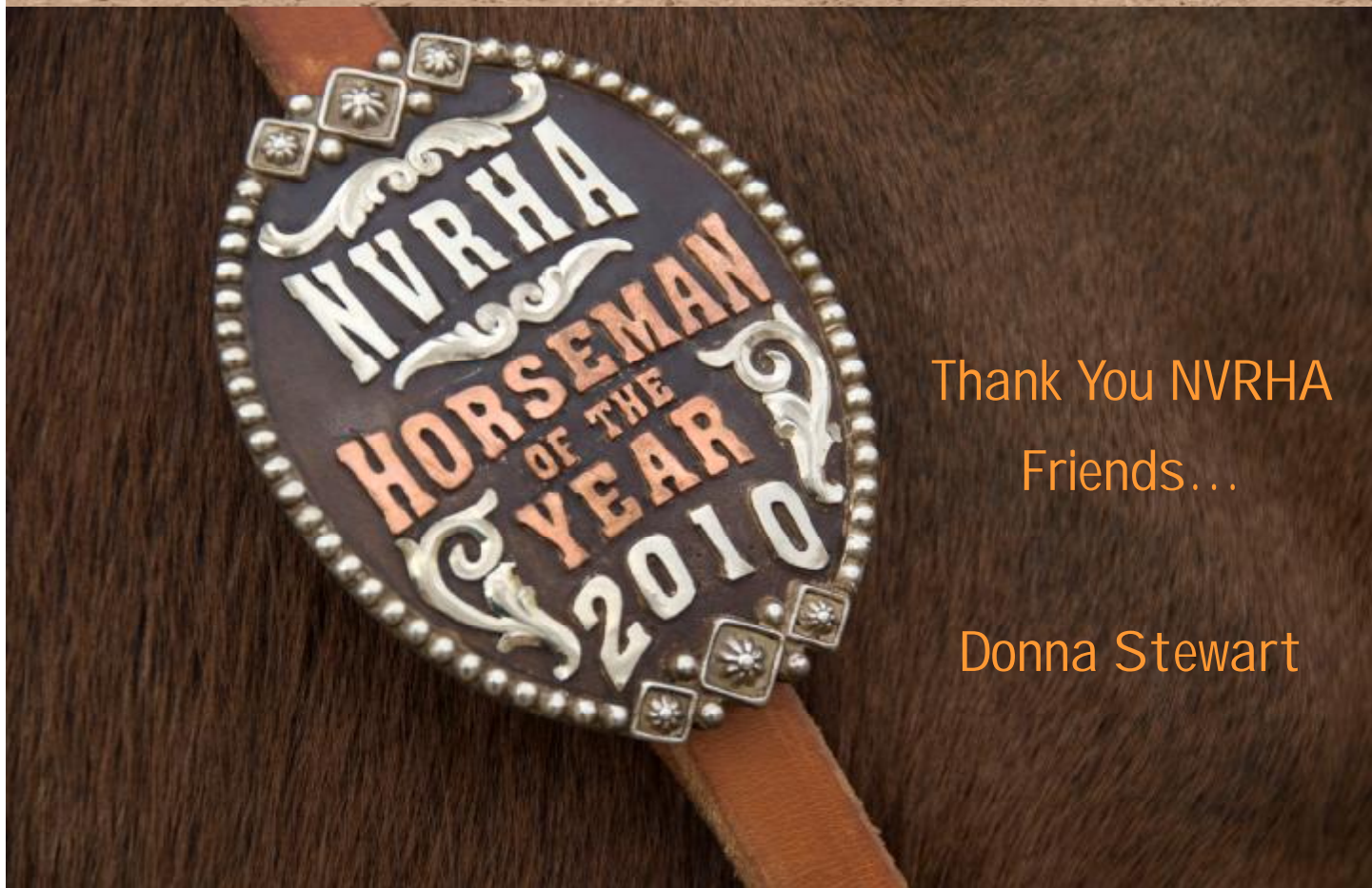


*Would Like To Thank The NVRHA
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For Another Successful Year!!!*

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Torrence County, New Mexico



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Friends...

Donna Stewart

National Versatility Ranch Horse Association 2-Day Clinic & Competitions



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From the President...Dave Currin

Looking Back...Looking Ahead

2010 was the Association's third-year and our growth continues at a healthy rate with quality events held in 11 states. Our expansion was relatively even over six regions of the country stretching from the Canadian to the Mexican border and from the Pacific Ocean to the Mississippi River. Each of the six regions represents about fifteen percent of our membership with Colorado a little higher at 23%. We become a little more "National" each year. Read the articles contained in the *Rundown* and judge for yourself as to the achievement of our primary goals: horsemanship education and fun while riding the greatest horse of all times -- the American Ranch Horse.

Looking Back - some of the high points of 2010 include:

- A 20% increase in membership covering 18 states. This is particularly noteworthy in view of the current economy.
- 32 events held in 11 states. Riding the Versatility Ranch Horse continues to be accessible to more enthusiasts.
- Our third annual National Championship was the best ever, with horses from nine states. Near \$18,000 of awards were presented to members from across the nation at the Annual Awards Banquet. The first General Membership meeting was held and was well attended.
- A Clinician/Judge Certification Program was developed with 22 Clinician/Judges completing all requirements and an additional 30 in the process. This will greatly improve event quality.
- Rules refinement continues by an aggressive Board using input from members with publication of an Official Rule-book. The second and even more complete edition is currently being published for distribution to members in 2011.
- The Association received 501C3 Income Tax status from the IRS. This three year effort will be a basic building block for a solid financial foundation for the future.
- NVRHA ended the year in a positive financial status thanks to all our members and sponsors.

Looking Ahead - What does the future hold?

As the new event year began on 1 October 2010, updated and improved rules are being instituted, carefully developed to ensure Association goals are accomplished. The more significant ones include:

- A Procedure for Formal Rule Change is being implemented* – any member may propose a rule change by submitting the proposed change for the next Event Year in writing by 30 June prior to the upcoming Event Year. The board must approve any rule change with a vote of two thirds in favor.
- *Western Attire will be required in all NVRHA Approved Competitions* – a collared, long sleeve shirt, cowboy hat or helmet and western style boots will be required.
- *Ranch Confirmation Judging may be held as the last class of the day* – this gives more time to warm up, aids in score tabulation efficiency and event flow, and complements the overall Ranch Horse experience.
- *Use of Certified Judges and Clinicians will be required at all approved NVRHA Events* – these judges and clinicians must understudy with a highly qualified professional and pass a rigorous test on the Association's rules and procedures in order to be certified. This will greatly improve both quality and consistency in clinic instruction and judging.
- *Criteria for participation in the Novice Division has been relaxed* – new riders must have their first two competition score average no more than a combined average score of 230. (This is an increase of 30 points over 2010 levels). This combined score average is for the four performance classes only (riding, trail, working and cutting) -- conformation is excluded. This will result in a larger percent of riders participating in the Novice Division.
- *Permanent Division Assignment for the new Event Year will be based on the preceding year's Average Composite Score* – On 30 September, the average of all the composite scores received in the previous year's events establishes the permanent division assignment for the new year beginning on October 1 based on the following criteria:

Advanced Amateur--- 330 or more
Intermediate Amateur--- Less than 330 but greater than 260
Novice Amateur--- less than 260

- *Members may voluntarily move to a Higher Division* by advising the Association in writing within 30 days of Official Notification of their Permanent Division Assignment.

- *Year End Awards will be based on Total Placement Points received by the Horse/Rider Team's Top Five Competitions received during the Event Year.* In 2010, the total of all accumulated Placement Points from all events attended during the Event Year determined the Year End Award Winner.
- *Scores received at the National Championship will be excluded from Year End Awards.* No Placement Points will be awarded at the National Championship (only Championship Points for Ranch Horse Champion, Ranch Horse Supreme Champion, Ranch Horse Superior, etc.). The Championship Show is a stand alone event and is omitted from any Year end award calculations.
- *Notification of eligibility for National Championship participation* will be made in the first two weeks of August prior to the September National Championship event. Those riders gaining eligibility during August will be notified upon eligibility qualification.
- *Horse Identification Number will be required for 2011 event participation*—application for Horse ID Number may be made as part of membership application/renewal. This number will be a permanent assigned number used to ease score tabulation and assure horse and rider qualification for participation.

The large majority of these rule changes were a result of member's suggestions. A very involved board is meeting 5 to 6 times a year, carefully guiding the organization's growth. We owe each and every Board member huge thanks for all they do. It is a tough and often unpopular job as it is impossible to satisfy everyone. I can honestly say that each and every decision is labored over extensively with the best interest of the Association and achievement of its principal goals (education and fun) always "front and center". No Board meeting held to date has been less than four hours with the average about six hours—they are giving it their all!

As we grow in both quality and numbers, our volunteer approach is weighing heavily on our many volunteers. Of equal importance is the need for "new blood" on our Board. Realizing this, the Board is considering a policy of changing out five Board members each year as we go into the future with the average tenure on the board about three years. Obviously, there are many Board members who may wish to continue beyond three years and may do so on a selective basis. The Association is looking for help in the following areas: Board Members, Event management, Event score tabulation, Event cattle management, Access database development, Points management, Website development and maintenance, Administrative support, Writing magazine articles, Advertisement and flyer layout, Legal assistance, Money management and general non-defined help. If any of these areas strike your fancy, please let any board member know...in our February 19 board meeting we hope to finalize our plans for the 2011 event year. Call me if you have any questions—719-481-9311 (preferably between 7:30–9:00am).

One of our major objectives for 2011 is to refine our points management in the attempt to provide accurate and timely service to our members regarding points earned at schooling competitions. We plan to consolidate membership, horse identification, points earned, award status, etc. into an Access database and frequently update it, with results being accessible on the website. We urgently need two to three volunteers with advanced computer skills to help us with this initiative.

I would like to end with a very important message to "all of us."! The Association was organized to provide riders of "all levels" with an opportunity to enjoy riding the legendary American Ranch Horse. To experience the maximum level of enjoyment, the education component became paramount to NVRHA. To encourage our riders to improve their horsemanship skills, our awards program was initiated. I have observed that many riders have become obsessed with winning awards rather than becoming a better rider and enjoying the adventure of 'riding the legend'. From personal experience of over 40 years of active horse activity, I have tried it both ways (riding for awards or riding to become a better horseman). The lesson learned was this: the most enjoyment began when my focus on winning was put on the backburner to improving my horsemanship. It was not the destination, it was the journey!

Have a wonderful holiday and I hope to see you all at an NVRHA event in 2011--- Dave

Attention NVRHA Members

Volunteers are needed for the following positions:

- ~Board Membership
- ~Webmaster (management and maintenance of NVRHA website)
- ~Advertising Manager (procurement of paid ads for the *Rundown* and website)
- ~Event Critique Manager

These positions may require specific skills and significant time commitment.
If interested please contact Dave Currin at 719-481-9311.

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The NVRHA is a
501 C3 Organization

2011 NVRHA Proposed Expansion Event Schedule

The 2011 Event Schedule planning is underway with the affiliates and event managers. The most current information will be posted on the website. Please log on to www.nvrha.org regularly to stay informed of all the latest additions to the schedule.

The following is a listing of proposed expansion events for the 2011 event schedule. These new startup events in a variety of locations can be added to your list of 'old favorites'.

Summer
Auburn, California
Event Manager: Mick Flood

Summer
Billings, Montana
Event Manager: Justin Mills
Phone: 406-256-2495

Summer
Durango, Colorado
Event Manager: TBD

Summer
Elkhorn, Nebraska
Event Manager: Burton Smith
Phone: 402-289-2118

Spring/Fall
Las Vegas, Nevada
Event Manager: Marvin Call
Phone: 702-212-3280

Winter/Fall
Ocala, Florida
Event Manager: TBD

Summer
Pembroke, Massachusetts
Event Manager: Marge Mullen
Phone: 401-247-7789

Summer
Redmond, Oregon
Event Manager: Joline Hoover
Phone: 514-519-4995

Spring
Springfield, Missouri
Event Manager:
Phone:

Summer
Stevens City, Virginia
Event Manager: Hank Helsley
Phone: 540-550-4842

Late Summer
Vernal, Utah
Event Manager: Scott Duke
Phone: 435-789-6426

Spring
Waco, Texas
Event Manager: Channing Hawks
Phone: 620-428-1009

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP...

NVRHA

NATIONAL VERSATILITY RANCH HORSE ASSOCIATION

Membership Application

PLEASE CHECK ONE MEMBERSHIP AND COMPLETE INFORMATION BELOW

You can either enroll on-line or print off and mail to the address below.

<u>ANNUAL</u>		<u>*CREDIT</u>	<u>LIFE TIME</u>		<u>*CREDIT</u>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Youth/Student	\$25.00	\$25.75	<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	\$300.00	\$309.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Individual	\$50.00	\$51.50	<input type="checkbox"/>	Couples (2)	\$500.00	\$515.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Couples (2)	\$80.00	\$82.40	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family (3+)	\$1,000.00	\$1,030.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Family (3+)	\$125.00	\$128.75				
<input type="checkbox"/>	College	\$100.00	\$103.00				

* CREDIT CARD = 3% fee for credit or paypal payments.

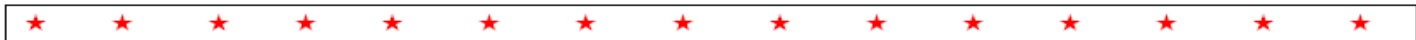
TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Mailing Address: _____ DOB: _____
City/State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

If Couple or Family membership, please list all individuals names and birth dates:

Name: _____ DOB: _____
Name: _____ DOB: _____
Name: _____ DOB: _____

*Note: You are invited to attend **one** NVRHA clinic and/or competition without becoming a member



Please send your check, money order or credit card information to: NVRHA, 590 Hwy 105, Box 150, Monument, Co 80132. To pay by credit card (M/C & Visa ONLY) complete below:

Name on Credit Card: _____ Type: _____

Acct #: _____ Expiration date: _____

A 3% fee will be added to all credit card payments.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*** All Annual Memberships expire December 31st ***

SPONSORED BY: _____

NVRHA, 590 Hwy 105, Box 150, Monument, CO 80132

Toll Free Phone 1-866-430-8114 ~ Fax: (719) 487-9014

www.NVRHA.ORG

2010 National Championship Top 5 Results

Open Division Class Placing for Top 5								
First Name	Last Name	Horse	Conformation	Ranch Riding	Working Ranch	Ranch Cutting	Ranch Trail	Overall
Bob	Grant	Primos Peppydoit	2	4	1	1	7	1
Kim	McElroy	Chex N Playboy	3	2	5	2	5	2
Dolly	Wallace	Tequila Poco Doll	1	6	8	5	2	3
Patrick	Wilson	Lena's Smart Little Bear	6	1	4	6	3	4
Chris	Wilczek	Saratrona	4	5	2	4	4	5

Advanced Division Class Placing for Top 5								
First Name	Last Name	Horse	Conformation	Ranch Riding	Working Ranch	Ranch Cutting	Ranch Trail	Overall
Dave	Currin	Docs Second Best	2	2	1	2	2	1
Susan	Heyvaert	Starlight Dillon	1	3	4	1	1	2
Rebecca	Grant	Chics Monkey	3	1	2	3	5	3
Tim	Rose	Mega Powder N Moore	4	5	3	5	4	4
Cindy	Abshire	Fancy San Scooter	5	4	5	4	3	5

Intermediate Division Class Placing for Top 5								
First Name	Last Name	Horse	Conformation	Ranch Riding	Working Ranch	Ranch Cutting	Ranch Trail	Overall
Sara	Gugelmeyer	Colonels Miss Chic	5	1	7	4	1	1
Jennifer	Sadler	Little Bell Pepper	4	2	11	7	3	2
Charlie	Stewart	Risky Irish Whiskey	1	7	8	2	12	3
Shane	Bangerter	Langtree's CD	7	11		1	2	4
Edgell	Pyles	A Time to Spark	2		4	3		5

Novice Division Class Placing for Top 5								
First Name	Last Name	Horse	Conformation	Ranch Riding	Working Ranch	Ranch Cutting	Ranch Trail	Overall
Debbie	Raymond	Mr. Smart T Smoke	1	1	2	4	1	1
June	Coghlan	Smoker Doc	3	2	1	2	4	2
Patty	Hamel	Gin Away Jack	2	3	3	1	7	3
Kathy	Wyatt	Kakki Bueno	4	7	6	3	2	4
Melissa	Gard	Little Lida Lucas	5	4	4	7	6	5



The Sun Sets Over the Arena as another NVRHA Championship Event Goes in the Books...

Story by Donna Stewart

Can you imagine a better setting than this for the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association's 2010 Championship Event? 'Riding the Legend' was alive and well in Colorado Springs for a beautiful three days filled with everybody's favorite things - horses, friends, and fun. Ranch Horse folks came from all places west of the Mississippi to compete in the biggest event of the year and they weren't disappointed. An expertly organized event, managed by Bill Hauschildt for the third year in a row, this year's finals offered a beautiful venue at the foot of Pikes Peak. The Norris-Penrose Event Center and Mr. Bob Norris (the original Marlboro Man!) lend an true western feel to this biggest of all NVRHA events. *(See story about T Cross Ranch on page 34)*

Friday started off with the general membership meeting which was well attended and very positive. It was no surprise that the group of enthusiastic members came up with many good suggestions for improving the overall quality of the NVRHA. Since that time the board members have met and discussed some of the most pressing issues. *(See President's Message on page 5)*

Saturday began the first of two days of competition. Amateur Divisions were Novice, Intermediate, and

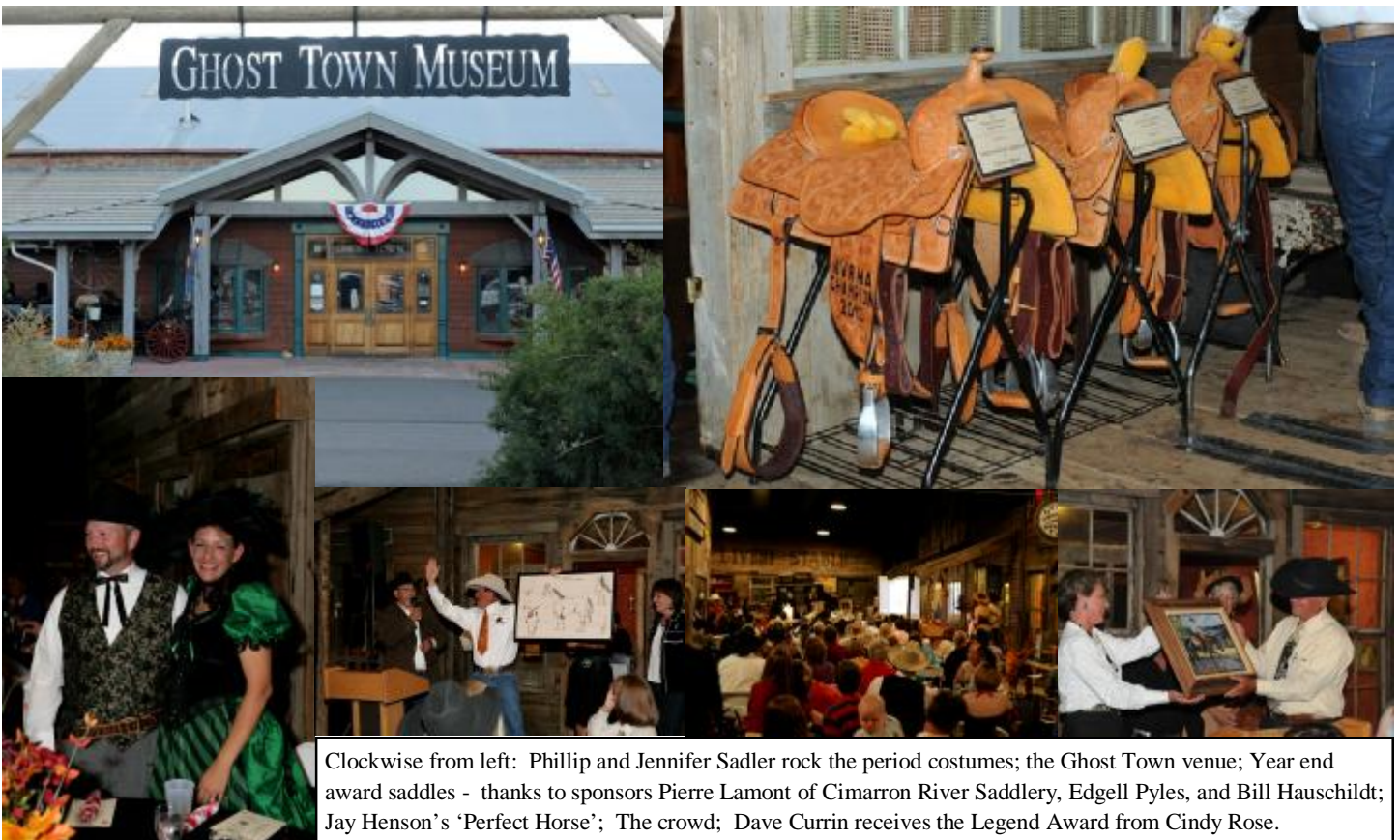
(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

Advanced, with an Open Division for the big guys. There was also an Amateur and Open Cash Jackpot for the gamblers! The conformation and cattle classes were judged by California NVRHA member and certified Judge, Jimmy Flores. Lori Walton, also an NVRHA member and judge from New Mexico, handled all the dry work classes. There were around 70 entries total, with representation from 11 states!

We did have an unfortunate mishap Saturday morning when Richard Cook's (NM) horse fell during the cutting class and Richard sustained a leg injury requiring transport to a local hospital for medical care. Let me just take a moment to say thank-you on behalf of all of us to Phillip and Jennifer Sadler, NVRHA members from Missouri and both Emergency Care Physicians. These two can jump off horses and over fences faster than any superhero when an accident happens, and I have personally witnessed this at two events this year! It is never too far from anyone's mind just how dangerous this thing we love really is and when you watch a friend disappear under a horse that danger becomes real very quickly. That said, having Phillip and Jennifer around is a great comfort and benefit to the rest of us. Okay, so back to Richard. Well, no surprise that he 'cowboy'd up' and was back in the arena, albeit on crutches, by Sunday morning and ready to cheer on the rest of us as we finished up the remaining classes.

Party at Ghost Town! And that's just what we did Saturday night at the annual awards banquet hosted by the one and only NVRHA saloon girl - Lynn Cool. If you weren't there then you really missed something because it was one great shindig! The venue was main street of a real 'old west ghost town', complete with a livery, general store, bank, jailhouse, and of course a saloon! Seeing Cutter Hawks, age 7, bellied up to the bar was quite a sight. The original western costume contest added a lot of character to the night and showed off the creative nature of some of our friends. Great camaraderie, good food, the annual slideshow, a couple of good pranks (might want to ask Jay Henson about his 'perfect horse') and an amazingly successful auction called by that famous auctioneer Tim Rose, made it a spectacular night. And that was all before any awards were given! Yep, we made poor Bill wait most of the night to get his saddle. Bill and Beverly Cantrell did an excellent job procuring and displaying all the high quality year-end and earned awards given out that evening. So instead of listing them all, the following pages are filled with all those award winners - bet you'll see someone you know. Enjoy, and thank you everyone who had a hand in this year's incredible event.



Clockwise from left: Phillip and Jennifer Sadler rock the period costumes; the Ghost Town venue; Year end award saddles - thanks to sponsors Pierre Lamont of Cimarron River Saddlery, Edgell Pyles, and Bill Hauschildt; Jay Henson's 'Perfect Horse'; The crowd; Dave Currin receives the Legend Award from Cindy Rose.

2010
Affiliate
Champs!

*Susan
Heyvaert*

~

Kathy Wyatt

~

*Kim
Deters*

YOU
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GIRLS!



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2010 Most Improved Riders
Jennifer Walker and Linnea Zueck



Congratulations 2010 National Championship Event Winners



Novice Division

Champion
Debbie Raymond
Mr Smart T Smoke

Reserve (no picture available)

June Coghlan
Smoker Doc

3rd Over-all
Patty Hamel
Gin Away Jack



Novice Group

From left: Melissa Gard, Patty Hamel, Mike Ackerman,
Debbie Raymond, Brian Thomas, June Coghlan, Kathy Wyatt





Intermediate Division
 Champion
 Sara Gugelmeyer and Colonels Miss Chic
 Reserve
 Jennifer Sadler and Little Bell Pepper
 3rd Over-all
 Charlie Stewart and Riskey Irish Whiskey



Intermediate Group
 Per the judges' this was the 'toughest group of riders'





Advanced Division

Champion: Dave Currin and Docs Second Best Reserve: Susan Heyvaert and Starlight Dillon

3rd Over-all: Becky Grant and Chics Monkey

Group photo: Tim Rose, Susan Heyvaert, Dave Currin, Becky Grant, Cindy Abshire



NVRHA Collegiate Group

This amazing group of young people from Oklahoma Panhandle State University added a new and welcome dimension to this year's Championship Event.

The OPSU Collegiate Horse Team, coached by instructor Channing Hawks (third from left), travels throughout the western United States competing with other college teams. Their talent and enthusiasm in the VRH event is showcased by participation in the NVRHA.

Open Division

Champion:

Bob Grant

Primos Peppydoit

Reserve:

Kim McElroy

Chex N Playboy

3rd Over-all

Dolly Wallace

Tequila Poco Doll



Open Division Group

Dolly Wallace, Gerri Barnes,
Jeff Barnes, Kim McElroy, Bob Grant,
Patrick Wilson, and Chris Wilczek

And the 2010 Year-End All-Around Winners are...

Novice Division



High Point Novice:
Kathy Wyatt and Kakki Bueno

Northern Lights

Reserve High Point:

Debbie Raymond and Mr. Smart T Smoke

Colorado

3rd Overall:

Patty Hamel and Gin Away Jack

Arizona

Intermediate Division



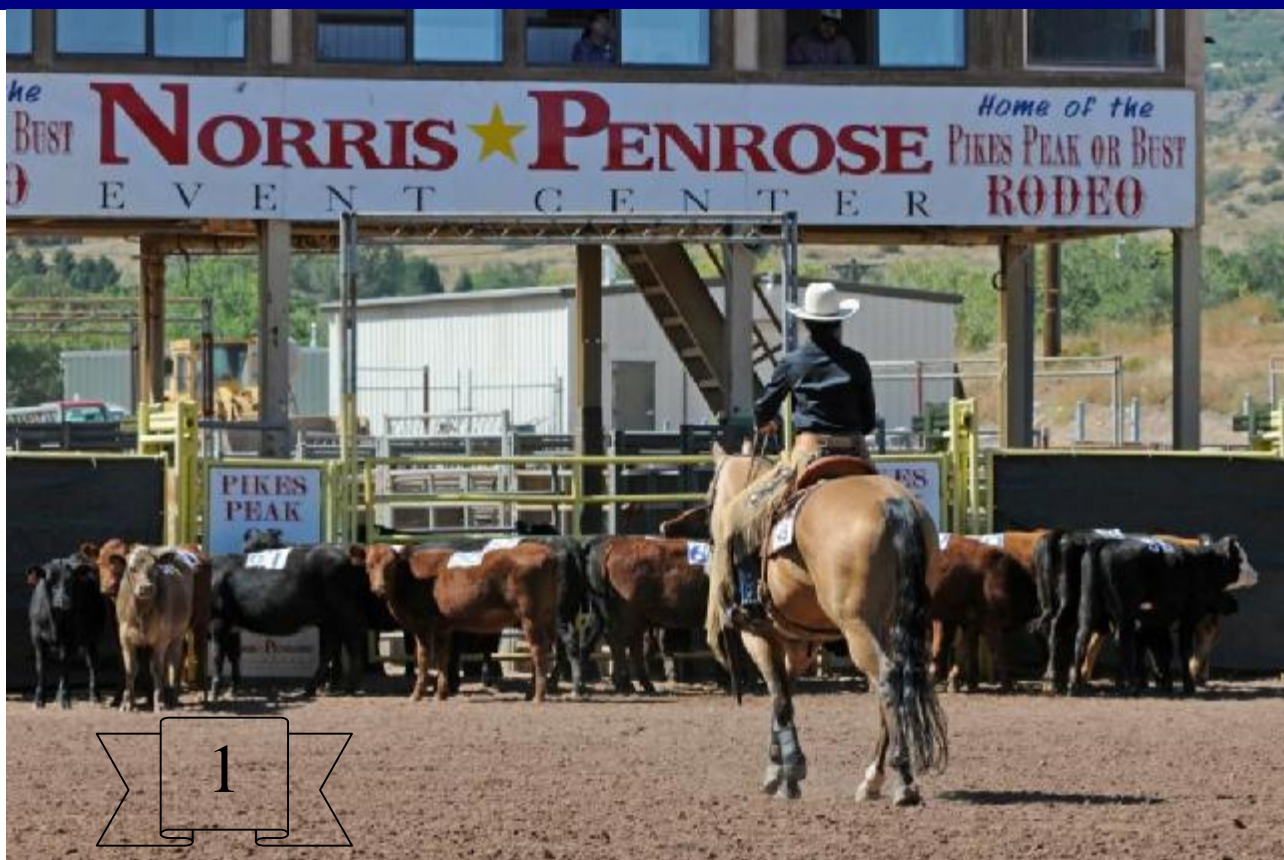
High Point Intermediate:
Bill Cantrell and
Whiskeys Chick Stick
New Mexico

Reserve High Point:
Scott Duke and Little Rey Lena
Utah

3rd Overall:
Shane Bangerter and Langtrees CD
Kansas



Advanced Division



High Point Advanced: Susan Heyvaert and Starlight Dillon (Northern Lights)
Reserve High Point: Donna Jensen and Mister Cowboy Chant (Arizona)
3rd Overall: Tim Rose and Mega Powder N More (Colorado)



Level of Achievement Awards
Ranch Horse Champion



Shane Bangerter
Langtrees CD



Diane Clare
One Chexy Chic





more...Ranch Horse
Champions

(From top left)

Charlie Stewart

Riskey Irish Whiskey

Charles Padilla

Tequila Poco Doll

Mick Flood

Mr Chex Nic



and more...Ranch Horse
Champions

(From top left)

Susan Heyvaert

Starlight Dillon

Donna Jensen

Mister Cowboy Chant

Donna Stewart

A Classic Page

Not Pictured:

Mick Barth

Bar Starette Hickory



Performance
Horse
Champions

Paulette Marshall
and
CW Playmates Gun



Cindy Abshire
and
Fancy San Scooter



Scott Duke
and
Little Rey Lena





S

upreme Ranch Horse Champions



(Clockwise from top)

Heath White
and
Rise to the Challenge

Donna Stewart
and
A Classic Page

Susan Heyvaert
and
Starlight Dillon

Superior Ranch Horse Award



Bill Cantrell
and

Whiskeys Chick Stick

Superior Ranch Trail, Ranch Riding,
Working Ranch Horse
RHC, SRHC

2008 Year End Intermediate All Around

2008 Horseman of the Year

2010 Year End Intermediate All Around

Dave Currin
and

Docs Second Best

RHC, SRHC

Superior Ranch Trail,
Ranch Conformation

2010 National Champion

2010 Legend Horse Award





Cindy Rose
and
Double Tuckered Out

RHC, SRHC
Superior Ranch Riding, Ranch
Trail, Ranch Conformation,
Working Ranch Horse
2009 Legend Horse Award

Cindy Abshire
and
Fancy San Scooter

RHC, PHC
Superior Ranch Riding,
Ranch Trail





Tim Rose
and
Stylish Gus



RHC, SRHC
Superior Ranch Cutting
2008 Advanced Year End
All Around
2009 Horseman of the
Year

Edgell Pyles
and
A Time To Spark

RHC, SRHC
Superior Ranch
Conformation



Heath White
and
Rise to the Challenge

RCH, SRHC
Superior Ranch Riding, Ranch Trail,
Ranch Conformation
2009 Advanced Year End All Around

Lisa Hauschildt
and
Too Darn Smart

RHC
Superior Ranch Riding

NVRHA Award Criteria

Ranch Horse Champion (RHC):

Minimum of 5 championship points in each of the 5 Ranch Horse Classes

Supreme Ranch Horse Champion (SRHC):

Minimum of 10 championship points in each of the 5 Ranch Horse Classes

Performance Horse Champion (PHC):

Minimum of 10 championship points in all 4 working Classes with the exclusion of Conformation

Superior Ranch Horse Award (SRHA):

Minimum of 40 championship points in one Ranch Horse Class, may win a Superior in all Classes individually.

Legend Horse Award:

Presented to horses earning 200 or more championship points. Points are lifetime accumulation on the horse only.

Horseman of the Year:

Presented to the horseman making extraordinary contributions to the NVRHA in the areas of participation, levels of achievement, sportsmanship, and volunteerism.



NVRHA 2010 Horseman of the Year

Story by Sara Gugelmeyer

Dedicated

Who would have thought that the 2010 NVRHA Horseman of the Year would be a girl? Yes, it did happen. Donna Stewart's commitment to NVRHA and everything she does earned her the Horseman of the Year title. It's an award meant to honor the recipient's horse skills, but also his (or in this case, her) dedication to the association.

Donna admits that she does not think of herself as a traditional horsewoman. In her life, riding horses has oftentimes taken a back seat to being a good mother, wife, and nurse practitioner. But every role she plays, she does with dedication. Perhaps this is why the people of the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association honored Donna at the National Championship Awards Banquet September 24, 2010, as the association's Horseman of the Year.



'I have done the dry work classes for years, but the cattle classes have been such a huge learning curve for me and my mare. Roping is still one of my biggest challenges, but I am finally starting to like it (thanks to great coaching from Bill, Jeff, and JG)!

Horse Crazy

Donna was born in Alabama, one of four children of a military man. It wasn't until her father retired and the family settled in Colorado that Donna was allowed to fulfill her love of horses by owning one.

"We didn't have a barn or even a pen," Donna says, reminiscing, "we bought my first horse and tied her to a tree in the yard. My parents weren't quite sure what to do with a horse crazy kid, but they were sure good to me."

Although she was the only one in her family with the "horse disease" as she calls it, her parents hauled her to local 4-H and open horse competitions and eventually to some Quarter Horse shows. While in high school, Donna met Charlie Stewart. His family was in the horse business and the two found a common interest. Since the couple couldn't yet drive, they dated horseback. Charlie would ride the five miles from his house to hers, they would spend the day together, and he would ride home at night.

"When my father took mercy on him, which wasn't very often, he would trailer Charlie and his horse home," Donna laughs, "otherwise he rode in all kinds of weather."

She was 16, when they started dating and the two married when she was 21. By that time, Charlie had enlisted in the Navy and when Donna completed her Bachelor's of Nursing degree at University of Colorado, they moved to San Diego where Charlie was stationed. That didn't last long, however; as soon as Charlie's commitment was up, they returned to the Colorado Springs area to raise a family. Caitlyn, now 24, was the first-born, and Evan followed about four years later. Donna found her new calling as a horse show mom. She hauled Caitlyn (and Evan until baseball won him over) to horse shows around the region, while juggling her other responsibilities at home and a full-time job as a nurse. During these years, Donna also returned to college to earn her master's degree and nurse practitioner's certification.

Back in the Saddle

Donna's own horse interest took second place to all her other commitments, but when Caitlyn headed off to college, she was ready to get back in the saddle.

"Trail riding was rather boring and I was pretty burnt out on the Paint Horse show world by that time, after years of hauling Caitlyn," Donna explains, "I met Dave Currin who convinced me to try versatility ranch horse through RMQHA. Then when the idea of NVRHA came along, things started to get really exciting. I didn't know anything about cattle but the NVRHA seemed like a forum where a beginner could learn and feel welcome. I rode a paint horse, still do, and NVRHA truly welcomed all breeds. There wasn't a lot of pressure, it was just a fun, friendly activity where you could come and participate. And NVRHA people are the best."

Donna and Charlie went to the first meeting of the NVRHA in December 2007. It was really exciting to be in on the ground floor of a new association and that's also when she got involved as a volunteer for the organization.

"I just kept raising my hand, and here I am," she says smiling. "Charlie was involved from the beginning too. Dave hooked him in with the points thing and he came to everything I came to. He would show up with the camera and stand at the fence taking pictures, then do the points for the shows. But he didn't start riding until we bought his horse, Risky, in 2009."

Donna says she feels privileged that the NVRHA is something she and Charlie can do together.

"There are not too many couples that do this together. Many times it is one or the other," she says, "but its wonderful having something we both enjoy. That's how we met was because of horses so we've kind of flashed back, except we are older, fatter and get tired quicker!"

(Continued on page 43)



'Horses started out as a family thing, and they always will be. That's what is so great about the NVRHA.'

Above: Donna and Charlie at an NVRHA clinic; Evan on Risky; Early horse show years with the kids.

NVRHA Legend Award

Story by Donna Stewart



Left - Dave exhibits Miss Sweet Step, circa 1979

Above - Dave and Docs Second Best 2010 National Event Halter Class

My, how time changes things. From a kid driving milk cows on his pony Pee Wee (bareback of course, because Dad wouldn't buy a saddle), Dave Currin has had a lifetime of horses. Lots of horses – bred, raised, trained, and shown by Dave and his wife Micki. So, it comes as no surprise that Dave and his current ranch horse, Docs Second Best, are the latest recipients of the NVRHA Legend Award.

NVRHA's founder and favorite southern gentleman hails from his family's Oxford, North Carolina tobacco farm. The youngest of four kids, with a strong 'horse and buggy' background, Dave was born a cowboy at heart. Raised in a state filled with gaited horses, as a teen he witnessed a Texas cutting horse demo at a local cattle sale, and he fell in love with the West.

"I never saw anything like that before," Dave said. "From then on my heroes were Roy Rogers and John Wayne. I fell in love with the West and its ranching culture."

Life has taken Dave on an incredible journey. He left the farm and graduated from North Carolina State University with a degree in Civil Engineering. Upon college graduation in 1962, he met and married Micki, a fellow horse enthusiast who grew up in Pittsburgh. Dave entered the Air Force as a commissioned officer, and then headed to Graduate school in the middle of cowboy country at Oklahoma State University.

"I bought my first backyard horse then, and exhibited her in a local show in the confirmation class. I didn't have boots, so I wore penny loafers and no hat! Did pretty well too as I remember..." Dave laughs.

After serving in Vietnam, Dave was stationed in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1968. The closest to real western culture he had come, Dave remembers this as the beginning of his horse enterprise.

"Micki and I wanted to build something together that we would both enjoy," Dave says. "We had a shared love for horses. Oh, but we were so naïve, so green! We started buying and showing young ones because they were all that we could afford. But they were real clunks and all I did was get beat. I got real tired of that. No second place, I wanted to win!"

Now that's quite a change coming from the man who insists that NVRHA is all about having fun!

That drive to win pushed Dave to develop an eye for good horses. In 1969, he took a chance on a 2 year-old Elmer Hepler mare called Spice O' Lee. She had just come off the track and was in a dude string when Dave spotted her. Next came trainers and lots of lessons for this couple who had never ridden or shown much. One year later Spice O' Lee was the Grand Champion Halter Mare at the New Mexico State Fair and won the Western Pleasure Class out of 103 entries! Micki showed the mare to win the NMQHA Reserve All Around in 1970 and 1971 in her first year of showing! So, not only could Dave pick horses, apparently he also picked a wife who could ride those horses.

The military brought Dave to Colorado Springs in 1971 to teach Civil Engineering at the Air Force Academy. By this time he and Micki had two children, daughter Kelly and son Cameron. The family horse business moved too, and Dave made a second good purchase, the mare Miss Curly Top.

"She was the only mare to ever beat Spice O' Lee in the conformation class, so I had to buy her," Dave explains. "We made Spice O' Lee a broodmare after that, and Micki began showing Miss Curly Top. She qualified for the first ever AQHA World Show in Lexington, Kentucky, but we couldn't afford to go! They didn't pay Air Force officers that much and we had two kids to raise."

How does a guy in the military move between duty stations all around the world, fight wars, raise a family, and be in the horse business? Well, it ain't easy my friend. While out of the country or in places that he couldn't keep horses, Dave leased out his broodmares and put his young horses with trainers to be shown. Because Dave and Micki wanted to exhibit horses that they had raised, they began breeding their good mares with great success. The breeding program produced around 80 foals with a long list of accomplishments in the halter and riding arena, including winning the AQHA Congress Pleasure Futurity for several years in a row. A visit to the Currin's 'trophy room' will give you an idea as to the success they achieved, but plan on spending the afternoon because you are going to need that long. Some highlights include:

Oh Susannah - mid 70's – Superior Halter, Western & English Pleasure, Western Riding Open & youth .

Jazz Step – Runner Up High Point Horse for the AQHA registry in 1982

Miss Sweet Step – Superior Halter Mare who became the basis of the Currin breeding program.

Illusive Clue – By Obvious Conclusion was the only stallion they kept. He was the Superior Conformation horse in the RMQHA for several consecutive years in addition to having ROM's in both English and Western Pleasure.

(Continued on page 45)



Dave riding Docs Second Best competed in the Ranch Trail and Working Ranch Classes at the 2010 National Championship Show. The team won the Over-All for the Advanced Division.

The T Cross Advantage



Story by Dave Currin



Focus on preserving the culture of the American Ranch Horse is a major goal of the NVRHA. The true ranches which duplicate the “adventure of the West” having breeding programs producing superior American Ranch Horses are dwindling. The T Cross (T+) Ranch near Colorado Springs, Colorado began a tradition in the 1950s which continues today, producing quality Ranch Horses. The ranch runs 1500 pairs of cattle on over 55,000 acres and maintains one of the best ranch horse breeding programs in the nation.

The Early Years -- The founder and head Cowboy at T Cross is Bob Norris, a true American Cowboy icon. Bob, the original “Marlboro Man” ran with the best of them, including John Wayne, with whom Bob was a close friend. For over 12 years, John Wayne attended the T Cross Production Sales, purchasing most of the ranches geldings. Bob Norris, a native of Illinois, attended military school and later graduated from the University of Kentucky. His entrepreneurial spirit led him to the West. Having been introduced to the American Quarter Horse at the University of Kentucky, he was soon roping cattle on the Waggoner Ranch in West Texas. His destiny was ranching and he rapidly went to the top. His early spreads stretched from Colorado to Montana but soon were consolidated into central Colorado as the T Cross Ranches. Along the way, he also had considerable success in the oil industry.



Opposite Page:
Gathering Cattle on
the T Cross Ranch

Mr Bob Norris
riding Bob A Lena

At Left:
Lavert Avent ,
T Cross trainer and
NVRHA member,
showing Charming
Melody. The mare is
leading the nation in
AQHA Versatility
Ranch Horse

The T Cross Breeding Program -- Early in 1958, Bob purchased Bob Sunup, at the B. F. Phillips Ranch sale. Realizing the value of an all-around horse, Bob campaigned the horse to his AQHA Championship and the line of proven performance horses with unbeatable conformation and good dispositions began. In the early years, many great horses were in the T Cross stallion string to include Poco Pico (a top cutting son of Poco Bueno), Tee Cross (an AQHA Champion, son of AQHA Champion OTOE), and Smoking José (son of José Uno) to name a few. Today, the tradition of fine stallions continues with Mr Gallo Del Cielo (a son of Gallo Del Cielo), Tari Pines For You (a son Of Doc Tari), and Charmin Jose (a son of Smokin Jose).

These fine stallions are crossed on a band of 30 carefully selected broodmares. About every three years, the T Cross Ranch holds a Production Sale, featuring horses started in all the skills necessary for the versatility ranch horse. The Stud Manager, Katie Roles, carefully manages a program well known for “proven performance”.

Promotion --The T Cross Ranch horses continue to distinguish themselves in the cutting pen, at ranch horse competitions, and on ranches across the country. Lavert Avent, the current trainer at T Cross, recently campaigned Charmin Melody (Charmin Jose x Jays Melody by Docs Jay Jay) to the 2009 High Point Open Horse in AQHA Versatility Ranch Horse and is currently leading for the 2010 award. Lavert is a certified NVRHA clinician/judge and frequents many NVRHA events. In mid-September of each year, T Cross sponsors one of NVRHA's most prestigious events at the T Cross Ranch. Bob Norris is present at these events, usually horseback on Bob A Lena, one of his favorite mounts. Our annual National Championship is held at the Norris Penrose Event Center in Colorado Springs. The Center is named after Bob for the many contributions he has made to the horse world and the community of Colorado Springs.

The Future—Ranches such as T Cross help preserve the culture of the American West and the Legendary American Ranch Horse. NVRHA is extremely proud to have Bob Norris as a friend. Thank you Bob!

Affiliate News

Great people do great things...and NVRHA affiliate and regional leaders are proof of that. Putting on quality events all around the western United States, these folks dedicate hours of time and effort into keeping the NVRHA going and growing. Enjoy the following event recaps from the very successful 2010 event season that happened all across the West. And please share news and photographs of your affiliate events to be published in future issues of the *Rundown*.

Colorado Cowhands Event

Story by Sadie Ackerman

Life will always pitch you the curve ball. No matter what, there will be thorny obstacles staring you in the face. Take weather for example. Weather can be the biggest obstacle of any given day. You can have perfect conditions, mild sunshine, with the highs reaching around 70 degrees; or you can be brutally beaten up with tornado and hail storms. Although we didn't have to face weather of that multitude, the participants of the Colorado Cowhands NVRHA show at the Last Resort Equestrian Center definitely proved they can cowboy up! Participating in a clinic and a competition in constant rain is not the easiest task to pull off. However, I have to personally thank all the people who worked through it and finished with smiling faces. Being the daughter of one of the coordinators for this show, I saw firsthand how much work is required to be successful, and how much of a disappointment it would have been if we had to cancel the entire weekend out of loss of participants. Despite the unavailability of outside waiting areas, we worked together in order to cram ourselves into the little show arena that was luckily indoors. This was without a doubt a struggle; nevertheless, every single person was very accommodating. In addition, everyone showed major improvement with the assistance of our wonderful clinicians Jay and Gena Henson. We greatly appreciate your time and knowledge!

In spite of the dreary conditions, and an underwater trail course, the show did go on. Lee Ann Wilson, a first-time NVRHA contestant, on Eternal Redemption stole first place in the Novice division with Brian Thomas on Zans Charity bringing up second. The intermediate division with seven riders was excellently represented by Bill Cantrell on Whiskeys Chick Stick unquestionably deserving first and Charlie Stewart on Risky Irish Whiskey coming in second. Rita Lauby ever so graciously accepted first in the advanced division on Lil Bit o Badge with Mick Flood on Double Tuckered Out putting up a good fight! We didn't forget about you Mick Barth, you put up tough competition too!! Speaking from the two coordinators, Carol Ackerman and Rita Lauby, I would like to congratulate all the winners, thank every single volunteer (particularly my grandparents, Tom and Liz Ackerman for serving coffee and doughnuts all morning, and Cari Niess for her magnificent ribs and chocolate cake) and every person that chose to put up with Colorado's outrageous weather! Also a special thanks to Jim Helzer of Wrangler for being a huge sponsor and providing us with many of the prizes we awarded. Overall, the weekend ended with triumph, victory, and a heck of a good time! Who knew two days in constant rain could be so pleasant?

P.S. I even won Ranch Riding in the intermediate division, nice try Donna!
(And she deserved it! ~ DS)



Mike and Carol Ackerman (pictured) are avid NVRHA supporters from Northern Colorado. Their daughter Sadie is one of only a few youth who actively participates in the NVRHA. Sadie, beautiful, fun, and very busy with her many sport and school commitments, graciously offered to write the article on the first Colorado Cowhands event that was co-sponsored by her mother Carol and friend Rita Lauby.



Colorado Strawberry Creek Event

Story by Cindy Abshire

I'd always heard that the Granby event was loads of fun, and after not doing much participating in NVRHA events last year, I was eager to go this year. The first obstacle was Berthoud Pass. I was a little intimidated by this bit of travel, even though I have hauled over many of the passes in Colorado and a couple in New Mexico. Some of those edges just looked like an abyss, lined by an itty bitty guard rail that wouldn't hold back a bird! God made me short because He knows I'm afraid of heights! However, the pull over the pass was blissfully uneventful. When I pulled into the Strawberry Creek Ranch on Thursday evening, it was lightly raining and very much chillier than home. The beauty of the area was refreshing and appreciated!

Friday dawned with splendor and it was so nice to breathe fresh, crisp mountain air. My group spent the morning with Jack McComber, practicing cutting. I was glad to meet Jack and spend time under his tutelage; though I'm sure he wondered what the heck *I* was doing there! I couldn't do anything right and got confused. The afternoon was spent with resident and ranch manager, Jeff Derby practicing roping and trail obstacles. I learned a new way to swing my loop and am very eager to start practicing it on live cattle! What a wonderful clinician Jeff is, and we appreciated his insights on horsemanship, philosophy, roping and training tips.

Friday evening was the social at Brenda and Hal Simmons' place just down the road. A great BBQ in gorgeous surroundings and under a nearly full moon and clear skies! The weather was perfect with no wind and no bugs! During some conversation about the area of Granby and my trepidation of traveling over Berthoud Pass, some of the resident folks knowingly and good-naturedly laughed at this flatlander. They haul over it in all kinds of weather – brave souls. Hal started a fire in the fire pit and then Jeff Smyth showed up with his guitar. He played tunes and sang, inviting us to join in. The sassy and vibrant Lynn Cool didn't need a second invitation and was the co-star of the night doing her best rendition of Janice Joplin. We all sang off key, urged on by Lynn and her antics. I only had tea to drink, honestly! Our musician played song after song and we thoroughly enjoyed ourselves laughing and singing.

Saturday morning was another stunning dawn that later saw my group in the arena with Blue Allen, working on – you guessed it – working cow horse. It was also great to ride with Blue again! After lunch, which Lisa and her 4-H'rs sold during the entire event as a fundraiser, we were free to choose to work on whatever we wanted. Conformation class was held that afternoon and then a BBQ dinner on the ranch, also provided by Brenda and her very hard-working friends and volunteers. The food and company was terrific as usual! Marty Pickett and I explored a very interesting old barn on the property that housed Jeff's stallion, some chickens and kittens and some hay in the loft.

Competition day - Sunday. Another stunning morning, warmer than the last two, but just beautiful! After some minor glitches and some scrambling to get the last minute things done (haven't we all been there), the cutting and ranch riding got under way for 22 competitors. Everyone ate when they could and then the working cow horse and trail got going. The trail course was outdoors and over some distance and at first Jeff Derby was walking around in order to see it all. We soon realized there would be nothing left of him at the end of the day, so Lynn Cool and Jeff's daughter Kenley saddled his horse and brought it to him. It was good to see Dave Currin riding again after a long, dry spell, and Cindy Rose riding Gus! The competition ran so smoothly and the scorekeepers kept up so efficiently, that all the competitors were done around 1:30 and the awards issued around 2:30!

Brenda and the wonderful folks in Granby worked their tails off to make this event happen. They are gracious, friendly and fun-loving folks whom I was so glad and grateful to meet! If you ever get the chance, this is one of those events that shouldn't be missed. Don't let Berthoud Pass scare you away - the drive back over wasn't bad at all! I feel so fortunate to meet and befriend all the different folks involved with the NVRHA. You are all the "icing on the cake" of doing what I love -- riding my horse in these events!

Colorado Barnes Down-Home Event

By Gerrie Barnes

Not only was the Down-Home NVRHA Clinic & Competition - held on July 31/August 1 - a relaxed and friendly event, the turnout of 21 riders was one of the most successful in 2010. The newest VRH rider, Stella Ziegelmeier, said, "I had a great time...what an awesome group of people...I have been blessed with getting to know these wonderful people." The event was sponsored and held at Barnes Ranch in scenic Larkspur, CO. Jeff and Gerrie Barnes were both the clinicians and judges.

The clinic had a unique format providing continuous involvement for riders in a real-ranch setting. There were three 4-hour sessions for the intermediate and advanced riders. Only 6 riders were registered per session - making it a very small group - thus, lots of personal attention and interaction. Each session began with a review of the Foundation Maneuvers - a list of 8 sequential maneuvers that stretches the muscles of our equine athletes, focuses their attention on their riders,

and indicates to the riders which parts of the horse needs further attention to be successful in working cattle. Two pocket cards were provided to all clinic attendees: Performance Riding & Foundation Maneuvers.



An explanation of a "rodear" followed with the clinic riders practicing in the indoor arena what they would be required to do outside - where a lack of attention or not plugging up the hole would result in cattle being lost and re-gathered.



A rodear is a "cowboy fence". When there was a need to gather a herd to doctor or brand - and they were out several miles from the nearest catch pen, the cowboys would surround the herd and act as a fence with one cowboy going into the herd and pulling out the cow that needed the attention.

Dinner on Saturday night was a modern day version of down-home cooking with fried chicken, mashed potatoes, and gravy. . . from KFC :) Reminiscent of the grandmas bringing their favorite cakes, several choices were available. . . again the modern day version . . . from Safeway. Annie Anderson & Connie Miller staffed the dinner in addition to the breakfasts and lunches for both days.

Competition day brought a wonderful group of volunteers together: Petra Hladkyj (scribe for Gerrie), Sue Nichols (scribe for Jeff), Lynne Dixon (announcer), Autumn Rumph (timer), Lisa Hauschildt (gate keeper), Jim Armstrong and Josh Raddatz (cattle & set up guys), Annie Anderson (registration, food, and assistant), Connie Miller (food and set up), Bill Hauschildt and Linda Raddatz (scoring), and Cindy Abshire (awards).

Congratulations to the following all-around competitors:

Advanced

- 1 - Cindy Abshire
- 2 - Tim Rose
- 3 - Mick Barth
- 4 - Mick Flood

Intermediate

- 1 - Bill Cantrell
- 2 - Paulette Marshall
- 3 - Cindy Rose
- 4 - Diane Clare

Novice

- 1 - Stella Ziegelmeier
- 2 - Charri McArthur
- 3 - Cathey Skow
- 4 - Jennifer Walker

New Mexico

The New Mexico Affiliate boasts an involved and active group of NVRHA members. They held three top-notch events in 2010. The La Mesa, Moriarty, and San Cristobal Ranch events were all successful and well-attended and supported by great coaching by experienced clinicians like Josh Armstrong, Andy Adams, and Blue Allen. The 'Ride for the Ring' program was a huge success and a custom designed diamond ring was presented to the high point winner in each division. The lucky 'ring bearers':

Novice - Brian Young

Intermediate - Bill Cantrell

Advanced - Bill White

There are so many good hands from New Mexico and we saw some of them

at the Championships this year - Diane Clare, Dolly Wallace, Charles Padilla, Bill Cantrell, and Richard Cook to name only a few. Next season consider a drive to New Mexico for some great scenery, delicious food, friendly people, and real ranch horse activity!



Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, Nebraska and Kansas

You bet we've gotten there! NVRHA is going strong in this region. Not yet a sanctioned affiliate, there are several dedicated leaders and a few long-standing events that continue to grow the NVRHA.

Every May at the W-H Training Stables, Jay and Gena Henson host the Rendezvous. If you haven't been then you are missing out. It is a 'must-attend' event for so many ranch horse goers not only for the outstanding clinic/competition, but for the tradin' and dancin' that happens every night. Music, food, friends, storytelling' - and a little bit of wind - come try it out in 2011.

The Collegiate group, headed by Channing Hawks, has held several NVRHA events in 2010. Oklahoma Panhandle State University and Dodge City College both have Ranch Horse Teams that have hosted clinic/competitions at their respective schools. The college facilities are great and the kids are even better! There is never a dull moment, lots of laughs, and um...partying...western style, of course. So, if you think you can compete with these young folks - come on out!

California

Somewhere to the West lies the golden state and lots of vaqueros who can do this ranch horse stuff! This group of NVRHA members hosted a "Shoot-Out Saddle Series" for the 2010 season that was won by Dawn Meinhold. Congratulations! I understand that there are big plans brewing for California in 2011 - let's hear from you guys!

Arizona

Bob and Becky Grant and their awesome team of NVRHA folks have really rocked the Ranch Horse world in Arizona. As the only tier two NVRHA affiliate, Arizona VRH has hosted some of the largest and most successful events in the West. If you have ever had the opportunity to watch Bob Grant ride a horse then you have seen the quality of work coming out of Arizona. Bob and Becky can do it AND teach it - and to top it off they are great people. I am told that winters are pretty nice in the desert, so it might be a good place for us Northerners to go for some wintertime ranch horse action!

(Note to all: articles/info on Affiliates, Events, and People are always welcomed and needed for this section of each Rundown issue. Please submit material to dmstewartn@aol.com for consideration. I need your help! -- DS)



The Northern Lights Phenomenon

Story by Susan Heyvaert

Northern lights is a light phenomenon where veils of rainbows touch the skies across the pines and prairies of the Northern States. It is a spectacular sight to see! This year, Northern Lights Affiliate shone its light on the NVRHA. 2010 was a great beginning to what we hope to be a long relationship with NVRHA.

Our year started out with a surprise invitation from the Minnesota Expo to have NVRHA represent our events at the popular April venue held each year for the horse community at the State Fair Coliseum in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dave Currin and Jay Henson flew up and some key players stepped forward to be demo riders for the mock clinics presented to the crowd. We had a booth staffed by our dedicated members, a drawing for free lessons with Jay and Gena, as well as a drawing for two - \$100 off certificates for an event in 2010. We picked up about 50 names for our mailing list and the feedback on the presentations was exciting.

In May, we held an event at Swede Lake Ranch, in Wisconsin, with Jay and Gena Henson, clinicians/judges. It was Rick and Lyla Demulling's first time putting on a NVRHA event and because it was right at their home, it was a warm comfortable setting with a lot of

TLC from them, starting with Rick pulling out every "boy toy" imaginable to help Kim Deters' rig get unstuck from the mud. We had 21 compete on Sunday, 15 were Novice! David Slipka, Tom Bjorklund, and Werner Thiedemann apprenticed under Jay & Gena for the weekend in pursuit of their NVRHA certification.

Next on the docket was our event in Valley City, North Dakota, put on by Wyatt Zuan. He found out how crazy it can be competing and running the event at the same time, but boy did he pull it off! Wyatt added a nice touch to the awards by giving out halters with his personally braided lead ropes. We had 23 attendees with 14 being novices! The weather was picture perfect and JJ Rydberg, Mitch Smith (popular roping clinician), Dave Currin, and Neil Henning (apprenticing for his certification) shared their vast knowledge with us for the weekend.

In July, our event was in Wessington Springs, South Dakota, hosted by Kamber, Elise, and Don Ulmer, Steve Grove, and Bill Krech, at Steve's inviting Gun Barrel Ranch. Steve Grove and his friends, Harold and Steve, magnificent cooks and photographer, outdid themselves with their warm hospitality and fabulous cooking. This was Don's third year working as a clinician/judge with the NVRHA group.

August's "Pine to Prairie" event brought Jay and Gena Henson back up to Minnesota, joined by David Slipka (roping), and Tom Bjorklund (cow work). Lance Scheffel joined us to apprentice with Jay and Gena toward his judge's certification. With four clinicians Saturday, it was packed with new tips and advice! Vicky Kettlewell and Greg Booth put this one on, a first for them, and the reviews were glowing. Strait Rail Ranch in Nevis, Minnesota, was a perfect setting for our clinic/competition so we hope to make this location a permanent venue in future years. Thanks to the organizing efforts of Jan Rooney, Jay and Gena followed up the weekend with a free YOUTH CLINIC which was attended by 16 girls (yep, no boys...). There were grins from ear to ear as they worked the cows and practiced the trail obstacles.

Windom, Minnesota, wrapped up the event year in September at the City of Windom Arena. The folks there were so accommodating, getting every detail just right for a new venue they had not experienced before. Although the number of participants didn't reflect it, the feedback on this one topped them all thanks to Lance Scheffel, cow and reining clinician and judge, and Bonnie Minor, trail and ranch riding clinician/judge, as well as Susan Heyvaert, event manager.

The lights that shone the strongest this year were from our volunteers. Starting from scratch just a year and a half ago, our volunteers have made "the phenomenon" happen. Getting a website up and running, exhibiting at the Horse Expo, putting on five events and a free youth clinic, and planning a year end banquet takes a lot of dedication... and this group has DEDICATION! We look forward to the certifications of our LOCAL clinicians/judges; Neil Henning, Tom Bjorklund, David Slipka, Bonnie Minor, Werner Thiedemann, and Lance Scheffel. Our first annual Year End Banquet in November, will award the year end winners with **Northern Lights buckles** and many other top notch awards. We hope you will join us at our NVRHA events in 2011!

Year-End Winners for the Northern Lights Affiliate:

Novice:

Championship Buckle: Kathy Wyatt on Bueno
Reserve Champion buckle: Lyla Demulling on CMS Bobbi Jo
Third, coat/hat rack award: Lisa Rixe on Hazel Rey Lena
Fourth, pendant: Stephany Siitari on SLJ Ruby Slippers

Intermediate:

Champion buckle: Vicky Henderson on Tatawka
Reserve Champion buckle: Kim Deters on Miss Steel Pep
Third, coat/hat rack award: Bernice Galusha on Honey Gin
Fourth, money clip: Bill Thomas on Lenas Sailin Cowgirl

Advanced:

Champion buckle: Susan Heyvaert on Starlight Dillon
Reserve Champion buckle: Shelley Johnsen on Unbranded
Third, coat/hat rack award: Rick Demulling on Bandito Mega
Fourth, money clip: Wyatt Zaun on Melinkali Surprise



The NL group - Pine to Prairie Rendezvous, Nevis MN

Membership Drive Challenge

During the 2011 Event year, we are challenging ALL members to a membership drive. There will be a \$500 cash prize, generously funded by Tim & Cindy Rose and Edgell Pyles & Marty Pickett.

This will be awarded to the ONE member or "Affiliate Team" who obtains **10 or more NEW** members during the event year.

The 'recruiting member or *team*' must make sure the new membership forms are **clearly signed by ONE designated person to indicate who recruited the new member.**

(Member or team must be current members at the deadline time)

If the form is NOT signed upon receipt in the office, it does not count. Signatures will be tracked through the NVRHA office.

The deadline: Sunday September 11, 2011.
In case of a tie, the funds will be split evenly.

Good Luck!

Colorado NVRHA

(don't worry, this stuff melts...)

Tentative 2011 Event Schedule

*CO Kickoff Clinic/Competition April 16-17

Barnes Intro to VRH Clinic/Mock Competition April 29-May 1

*Cactus Creek Clinic/Competition May 21-22

*CO Cowhands Clinic/Competition June 11-12

Ride in Rifle Combined Event Clinic/Competition (TBD - mid July?)

*Strawberry Creek Clinic/Competition July 22-24

*Barnes Down Home Clinic/Competition July 30-31

Fish and Cross Ranch Cattle Gathering Event Early to Mid August

*T-Cross Clinic/Competition September 9-11

*Qualifying Events for Colorado Buckle Series

(Members must attend a minimum of 4 qualifying events. Buckles awarded for Novice, Intermediate, Advanced Divisions. Winners determined by highest combined total scores.)

(Continued from page 31)

All-around gal

Donna is a busy woman: riding horses, writing articles and helping babies. But, being named Horseman of the Year was a surprise she says.

“What an honor. It’s a privilege because so many people are deserving of this award. I never think of myself as a ‘horseman’. I think of myself as a wife, mom, and nurse practitioner. I was the nurse of the year in 1997 but that was nothing compared to this,” she grins.

Donna has had much success in the show ring, piloting her home-raised mare, A Classic Page (Jinx), to ranch horse champion, supreme ranch horse champion, and 2008 National Champion titles.

“Jinx is not a cowhorse, just an ordinary backyard horse with a little bit of try. I bought her as a project at the Paint Horse sale in Denver in 2001 as a weanling. She doesn’t have any special breeding or claim to fame that so many other horses have who are successful in this thing, so I am just really thrilled that she made it to that supreme title,” Donna says. “Gena and Jay Henson are longtime friends of ours, pre-versatility ranch horse days, and they have done a lot of work on Jinx. Gena told me early on that Jinx wasn’t going to be great at any one thing, but that she would do all the events pretty well and wouldn’t embarrass me. That was a spot on evaluation of my mare.”

The NVRHA magazine is Donna’s pet project. She has committed her time to it from the beginning.

“Originally Dave Currin told me it was going to be just a couple page newsletter so it didn’t seem daunting to me,” Donna says. “It’s evolved into a lot larger project and I have had to self-teach the publishing part, but I really do like it. Writing has always been a hobby I enjoy and this has given me a forum to do that.”

And, she has goals for *The Rundown* magazine.

“My goal is really to make *The Rundown* a bigger, better, more professional and recognized publication. By growing it, making it meaningful and useful, I hope it will be something that the membership looks forward to. That magazine is really near and dear to me,” Donna admits.

When Donna is not in the show pen or working on *The Rundown*, she is often at the hospital working as a neonatal nurse practitioner. She works 24-hour shifts in the neonatal intensive care unit providing medical care for critically ill babies.

“Nurse practitioners are independently licensed advance practice healthcare professionals who provide medical care to patients much as a physician would,” she explains. “My role involves working collaboratively to provide medical care for infants in the neonatal ICU. I also attend high risk infant deliveries to provide specialized care and resuscitation. There is a lot of teaching involved in what I do; both for the parents of special needs infants and the nursing staff at the bedside. I am also a member of the specialty medical flight team. We travel by helicopter, fixed wing plane, and ground ambulance to transport ill and premature infants born in outlying hospitals and bring them to Colorado Springs for care. It’s great work taking care of the smallest and most fragile patients.”

Charlie and Donna’s own babies are now grown. Caitlyn married Dwyatt Jackson and she works as a chemical engineer in Oklahoma City. Evan is a junior at the Colorado School of Mines, and is studying petroleum engineering.

Although Donna and Charlie’s accomplishments are many, they don’t plan on slowing down any. Donna says their goal for the 2011 event season is to attend at least one event in each affiliate which will require some travel time, another part of showing Donna loves. Also, she is looking for another horse.

“I am looking forward to getting a new horse and stepping it up a notch and being able to show at the next level,” Donna says. “I have learned so much, but still have so much yet to learn. That will never change.”

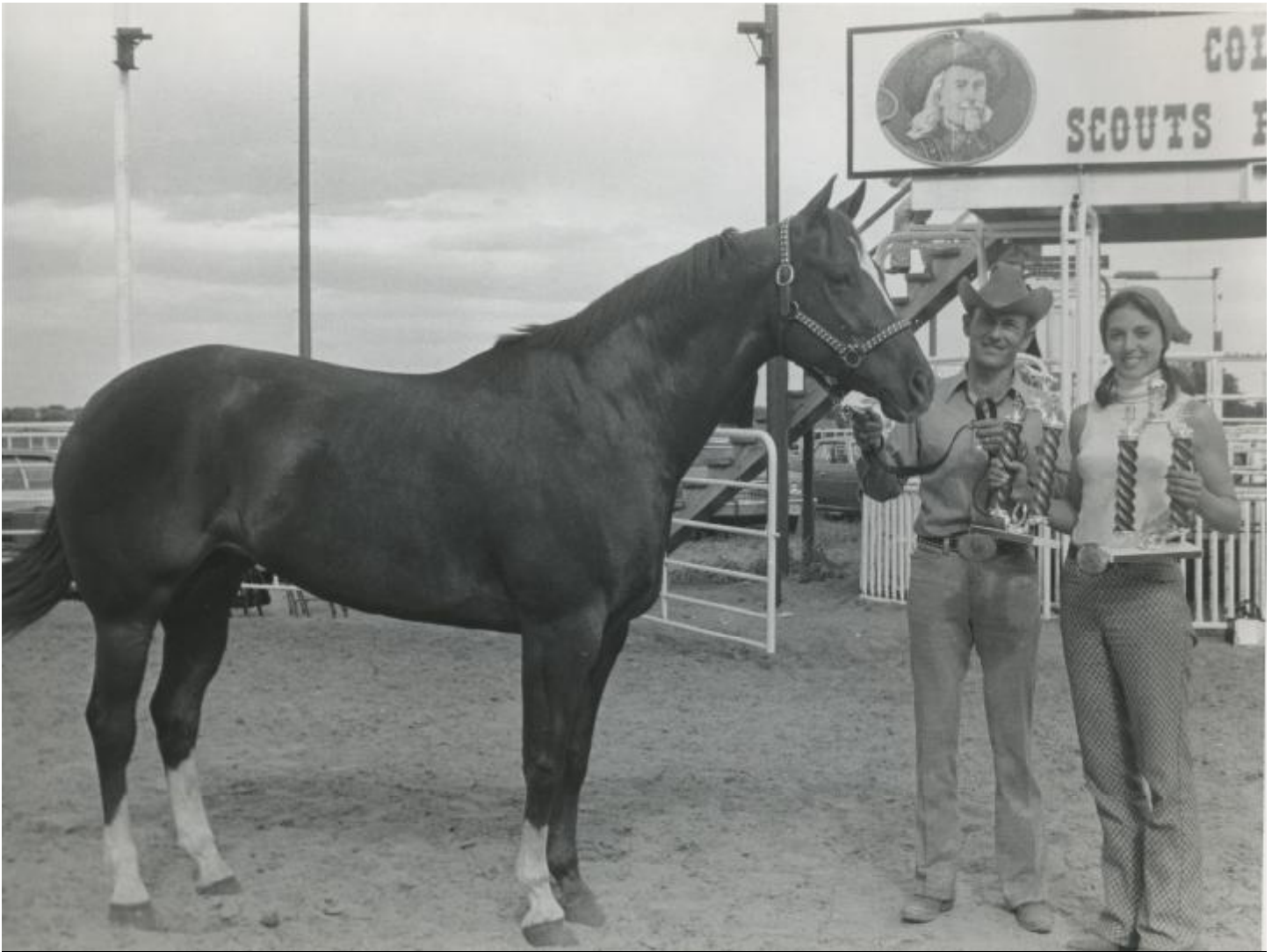
Donna and Charlie continue to seek Jay and Gena Henson’s guidance, having met them during Caitlyn’s show career. Jay and Gena agree that Donna is very deserving of the award, both for her improved riding skills and her endless dedication to the NVRHA. Gena also respects Donna’s job as a nurse practitioner.

“Anybody who can fly in a helicopter and work on a sick baby must be special,” Gena says.

Jay is most impressed with Donna’s improvement this year in aggressiveness.

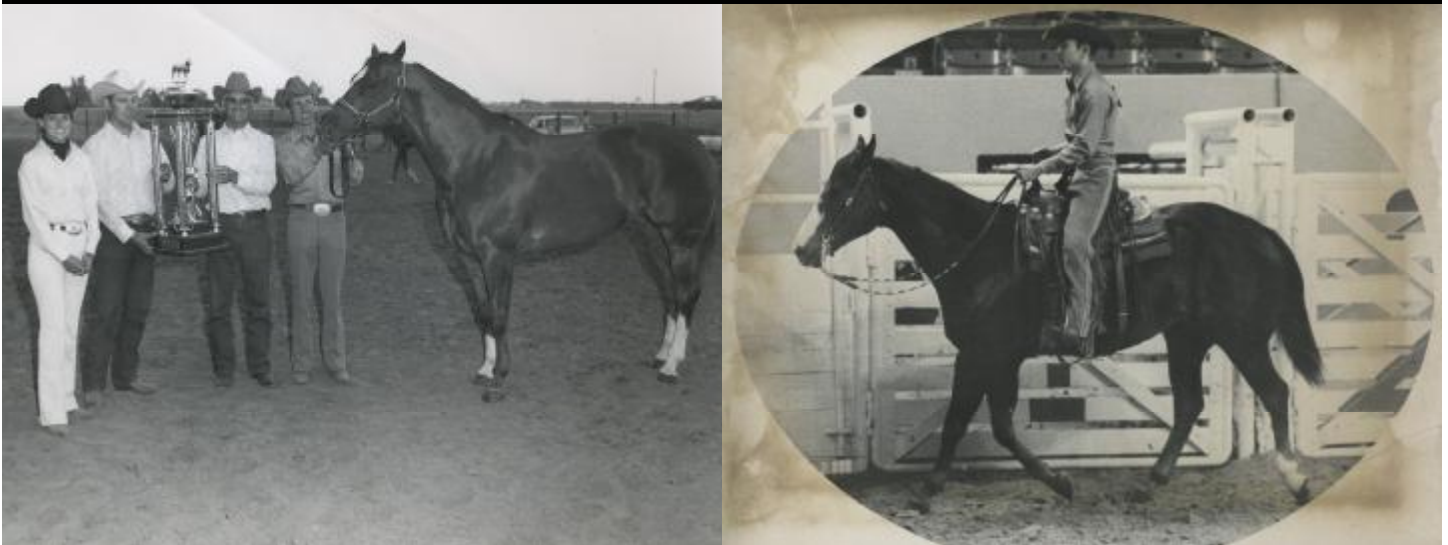
“She went from saying, ‘I’m not going down the fence’, to kickin’ on ‘Paint’,” Jay says. “She has always been a good rider but wasn’t aggressive enough to go down the fence or go rope,” Jay says. “She is now.”

And Donna’s proved it. Her improvement and success in the show pen and continued volunteer work for the NVRHA is proof enough; she is as dedicated as they come.



Above and below left :
Dave and Micki Currin show Miss Curly Top. The mare was the All-around horse at a three show circuit at the Bill Cody arena in North Platte, Nebraska on 4th of July, 1973.

Below right: Dave shows Spice O' Lee at the 1971 Denver Stock Show.



(Continued from page 33)

“Our horse showing ended in 1996. We had been going so hard for so long that we kind of got burned out. Then we lost one of our best 3 year olds, Fascinating Rhythms, to colic and at the same time we also lost our enthusiasm. It was an abrupt end. We entered a period of dormancy that lasted until 2002,” Dave recalls.

Raising and showing horses would have been enough for most people, but not for Dave. He also served as a Director of the Rocky Mountain Quarter Horse Association for 15 years, and as President for 2 years. In January of 2002, contemplating retirement and looking for something new to do with horses, RMQHA asked Dave to put together a recreational horse program with the purpose of creating a forum for non-showing members to become involved in something other than traditional horse showing. By this time, Dave was disillusioned with the modern day halter horses that could not perform. His interest was turning to a more athletic all-around horse.

“I saw my first Versatility Ranch Horse event at the National Western Stock Show. It was an open event competition between some of the big ranches. I remember thinking ‘my God that’s it!’ I set to work on developing an entry level amateur VRH program to get people involved,” Dave explains. “It progressed from there and we had so many good people involved. I was having fun with horses again.”

Naturally, Dave wanted to do more than organize the VRH program, he wanted to ride in it. This was his chance to participate in a very western event. He started out riding Carolina Tar Baby. She was not a cowhorse, so both Dave and the mare had a lot of learning to do.

“I rode Carolina Tar Baby knowing she wasn’t ‘the horse’ I really wanted to do this on, but she did pretty well. We learned a lot together. I didn’t think it would be good for the organization if I won much,” Dave remarks, “so I was in no hurry to find my dream ranch horse.”

Finding Docs Second Best, aka ‘Diva’, was a 2 year process. With the help of Jay Henson, Dave acquired the Doc N Jose mare in 2004. She was started by Al Dunning and used for team penning, roping, and match racing.

“I bought that mare sight unseen. I trusted Jay to know what I wanted, and I was not disappointed. When Jay brought her up to Colorado for me to see,” Dave remembers with a smile, “we were at Tim Rose’s place and I looked for her in the barn but she wasn’t there. They had hidden her in a round pen back in the woods. Jay waited until I just couldn’t stand it anymore and then took me out to see her. When he pulled the blanket off that beautiful black mare one of the most enjoyable phases of my life began. I had my first real ranch horse and I was in love!”

With Jay’s help, Dave and Diva came along. Dave admits that when he learned to listen to Micki his horsemanship improved greatly! In 2006, their first event year together, Dave and Diva earned the Supreme Ranch Horse Champion award. Despite some injuries and set-backs to both horse and human, the pair continued to progress successfully.

In 2007, Dave and a small core group of VRH enthusiasts chartered the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association. The new group changed its focus and way of doing things from a ‘show mentality’ to an ‘education and fun’ mission concentrating on the amateur rider. In three short years the NVRHA has expanded into over a dozen states, but the basis of the program remains unchanged – a unique clinic and schooling competition format where amateur riders continually learn and improve their skills with coaching from professional horsemen and horsewomen.

The Legend Award is presented to those horses accumulating a total of 200 lifetime points in the NVRHA. The second horse to achieve this level of success is Dave Currin’s mare, Docs Second Best.

“I never set out to do this,” Dave admits. “My driving force was to have fun and improve my horsemanship skills. And that was a huge shift in life philosophy for me. This award is a culmination of my personal journey. And, you know, I am looking forward to the future now that I know I really might be able to do this! My skills and teamwork with my black mare continue to evolve, and someday I hope to come up to her level – and I really hope that happens before one of us comes to room temperature!”

Everyone at the NVRHA Championships this year witnessed that evolution as Dave and Diva won the Advanced Division High Point. But despite all the horses and all the wins, it’s the unbridled optimism and enthusiasm that make Dave most memorable. Through his passion and vision, Dave has given us a forum in which to enjoy the sport of versatility ranch horse. It’s really a gift from Dave to all of us. So, as simple as it may sound, ‘Thank you my friend’.





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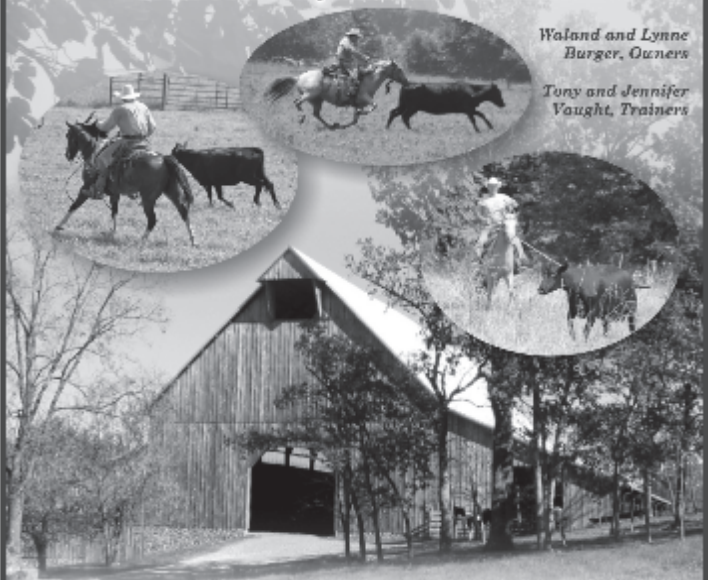


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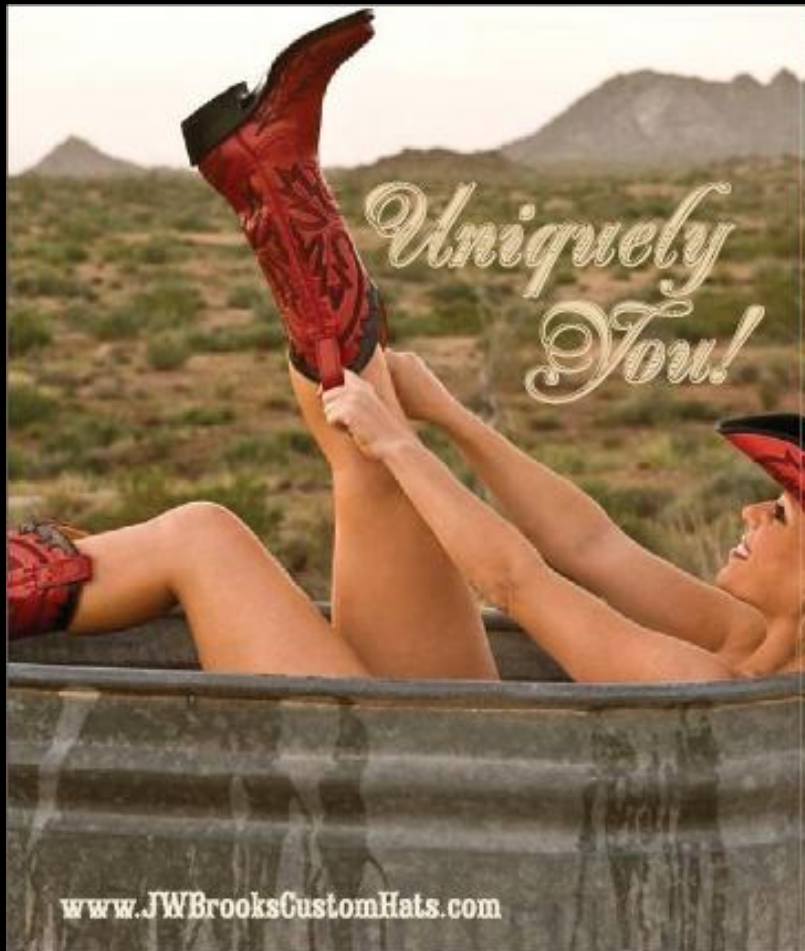
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