

National Versatility Ranch Horse Association



NVRHA RUNDOWN

Celebrating 2015

Year-End Winners

National Championship Event Top Riders

Level of Achievement Awards

Horseman of the Year

Legend Horses

World's Greatest Versatility Ranch Horse

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Affiliate News - Gearing up for the 2016 Event Season





## Welcome to W-H Training Stables

Jay and Gena Henson specialize in all aspects of the versatile horse from training, sales and lessons to judging and clinics. They are very active in the NVRHA, AQHA, NRCHA, NRHA, and NCHA. Both Jay and Gena have been serving as judges and clinicians for ranch horse competitions since before the NVRHA became a formal association. They currently serve on the professional board for the National Versatile Ranch Horse Association and do many clinics throughout the United States.

Willoughby and Henson Training Stables is located in the southwest corner of Kansas outside of Hugoton, KS and sixty miles west of Dodge City, KS. While the Hensons love helping the individuals they enjoy getting to know the people more. "We really enjoy building relationships with the people we've met at the clinics and shows," Gena says. So feel free to stop by or give Jay and Gena a call to talk about horses!







Beth Mitchell Photography  
Quality Photo Art

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[www.bethmitchellphotography.com](http://www.bethmitchellphotography.com)

Thank you to our outstanding photographers  
- both professional and hobbyists -  
who continue to share their talent and artwork with the NVRHA.

It is your capturing of our favorite memories that makes the Rundown  
worth publishing. Without you we are only words...

Beth Mitchell, Brent Eriksen, John Opeka, Ann Mulchay



## Message from the President



Jay Henson

**W**elcome to the 2016 event season and the beginning of the NVRHA's 9<sup>th</sup> year! It doesn't seem so long ago that a small group of us met in Colorado Springs to form the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association. Since then our commitment to the versatility ranch horse, its talents and abilities, has grown to encompass multiple states and all sorts of people.

The association has held a Championship Event every year and that event continues to draw the very best ranch horses and riders from our organization. The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual National Championship Event, held September 2015 in Colorado Springs, was no exception. We had a very successful competition, awards banquet, and auction that topped off another positive season and paved the way to an even better 2016.

Already we have had a new start event in New Mexico with a good showing of enthusiastic new participants, and two more events are planned at the same venue for this summer. All of our affiliates are active and growing, and each has a full slate of events planned for the upcoming months.

The NVRHA was able to fulfill its 501(c)3 obligation by co-hosting a fundraising event last summer benefitting the Wounded Warrior Project. Many of our professional clinicians and members donated their time and efforts to make this a rousing success. The NVRHA presented a check for \$3500.00 to the WWP to support their mission helping wounded veterans.

Another noteworthy success was the change in format for our Open Division. Largely because of the new 'a la carte' options, the Open Division participation was the largest it has ever been. This forward thinking change was led by Dave Currin and further developed by the board of directors. This format allows us to align with other versatility ranch horse organizations and promotes growth. We will hold our first combined event with AQHA this May in Kansas, and hopefully have more to come. Two of our own members took it upon themselves to become certified AQHA show secretaries (thank you Carrie Kliewer and Charlie Stewart), and several of our clinician/judges also hold AQHA cards – those things make this combined event possible.

Remember, the NVRHA is an all-volunteer organization and is always looking for members to help 'lighten the load' of current volunteers. We can utilize any time or talent you might have, so please consider pitching in – just contact any board member.

~~~Jay


2016 Board of Directors

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Jay Henson – KS | President | wbarhtrainingstables@yahoo.com |
| Donna Stewart – CO | VP/Board Chair/Rundown | dmstewartrn@aol.com |
| Deb Martin – MN | Secretary | d.martinparker33@gmail.com |
| Alecia Heinz – IA | Treasurer | smartace007@yahoo.com |
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| Sue Eisenman – MN | Northern Lights Rep | speisenman@aol.com |
| //////////////////// | //////////////////// | //////////////////// |
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80915 | Phone: 719-550-0189
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Email: nvrha.office@gmail.com |
| Website: www.nvrha.org | | |

In Search of: 2017 Board Members

The NVRHA is looking for a few good cowboys/cowgirls who will fill vacant board positions for the 2017-year starting October 2016.

Please consider becoming involved with YOUR association by donating your time and ideas to making the NVRHA better and stronger.

Contact Jay or Donna

The website has a new look!

Visit
www.nvrha.org

The NVRHA Facebook page needs an administrator to keep it current and interesting. The perfect candidate would be a tech-wizard between the ages of 2-9 years! But, we are desperate and would take any old adult – please help!

email Donna

NVRHA Affiliate News



SOUTH CENTRAL VERSATILITY RANCH HORSE AFFILIATE



Apparently they take things kind of literally down there in the South Central NVRHA Affiliate. At least, Matt Heinz does. True to the logo, Matt did 'get caught in the storm' - slicker in hand (or sort of) - and bravely finished out this soggy ranch trail course.

The South Central Affiliate is proud of Matt and his versatility horse, Sun Dee Fox, for winning second in the Novice Division Year-End awards. Matt also placed third overall for the Novice Division at the National Championship Event.

Not to be outdone, his wife (and sometime trainer) Alecia took second overall in the Limited Division year-end awards and first for the Limited Division at the National Championship Event on her palomino horse, Golden H Mister T.

South Central member, Shane Bangerter, placed second at the National Champion Event Limited Division on his mare, Lil Bit O Chic. Shane also won the Amateur Division at Nationals riding his Legend gelding, Langtrees CD (aka Willie), and then rode Willie to a second place finish in the Open Division's World Greatest Ranch Horse Competition.

Taunya Kliewer, a collegiate rider from the South Central Affiliate, riding her horse Bully, placed third in the Limited Division at the National Championship Event.

So, that means South Central DOMINATED the Limited Division at the National Championship Event: Alecia/Shane/Taunya! Way to go, team!

Interested in Joining the South Central Winning Team?

*May 5-8, 2016 * W-H Rendezvous and combined AQHA Versatility Event * Hugoton, KS*

*June 11-12, 2016 * Eastern Prairie Showdown - cosponsored with COVRHA * Lamar, CO*

*July 23-24, 2016 * River Valley Horse Camp Event * Farmington, Iowa*

*Possible Fall Event in Hugoton, KS * watch the website for updates!*

W-H RENDEZVOUS 2016



Presents
the Inaugural NVRHA/AQHA
Combined Event

May 5-8, 2016
W-H Training Stables
Hugoton, KS

CLINICIANS & SATURDAY NVRHA JUDGES:
JAY & GENA HENSON
SUNDAY NVRHA & AQHA JUDGES:
CHRIS JEETER & LORI WALTON

SCHEDULE:

THURSDAY – CLINIC

FRIDAY – CLINIC

SATURDAY –NVRHA SCHOOLING COMPETITION

SUNDAY – NVRHA SCHOOLING COMPETITION & AQHA VRH SHOW

ENTRY FEES:

NVRHA 4-DAY ALL INCLUSIVE (AQHA CLASSES NOT INCLUDED) - \$450

NVRHA PER DAY (AQHA CLASSES NOT INCLUDED) - \$150

AQHA - \$250/ALL 6 VRH CLASSES

AQHA - \$70/COW CLASS

AQHA - \$40/DRY CLASS

NVRHA MEMBERS WISHING TO CROSS ENTER INTO AQHA SUNDAY WILL RECEIVE ENTRY

SEE INCENTIVES.

- Offering NVRHA Amateur, Limited, Novice and Open Ala Carte Divisions
- Offering all AQHA VRH classes in Open, Amateur, Cowboy, Youth and Limited Divisions
- Listed in AQHA Journal as W-H Ranch Horse Rendezvous

For more NVRHA info contact Event Manager:

Channing Hawks 620-428-1109

chanhawks@yahoo.com

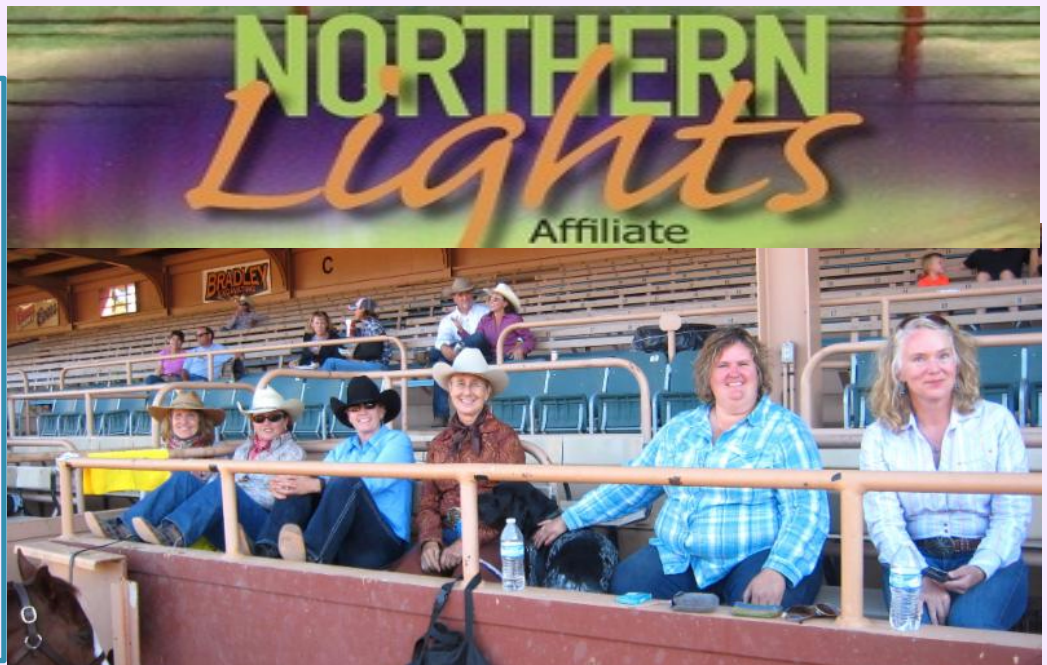


For AQHA VRH Show Info contact:

Jay Henson 620-544-8078



By truck, by plane, with and without horses, and even in neck braces, the ladies of NL came to support their affiliate competitors and friends at the National Championship Event. You won't find a better bunch of cowgirls than this line-up, and NL has a lot to be proud of this year!



Two Legend Horses!

Some 2015 Accomplishments:

Roxanne Burton – Novice Division Year-End Winner, 1st Novice Division at Finals

Connie Gebhart – 3rd Novice Division Year-End, 2nd Novice Division at Finals

Stephany Siitari – 3rd Limited Division Year-End, Ranch Horse Supreme Champion

Vicky Henderson – 2nd Amateur Division Year-End, 3rd Amateur Div. at Finals, 3rd Open Div. at Finals, Superior Ranch Horse Award for Cutting and Conformation, Legend Award

Shelley Johnsen – Superior Ranch Horse Award for Working Ranch, Legend Award

Sue Eisenman – Ranch Horse Champion, Most Improved Rider Award

Carlos Osorio – 4th Open Division at Finals



2016 NLVRHA Show Events

For more information,
Visit our website at:
www.northernlightsversatility.com

Madison, WI ~~~ May 21/22

River Falls, WI ~~~ June 11/12

Windom, MN ~~~ July 9/10

Nevis, MN ~~~ August 19/20/21
(double competition event)

Madison, WI ~~~ September 3/4

- ~ Ranch Trail
- ~ Ranch Riding
- ~ Working Ranch
- ~ Ranch Cutting
- ~ Conformation

*Open Classes
Available*



2016 Event Calendar

- Colorado Kickoff ~ April 23-24, 2016 ~ Latigo Trails, Elbert, CO
- Memorial Day Roundup ~ May 28-29, 2016 ~ Latigo Trails, Elbert, CO
- Eastern Prairie Showdown ~ June 11-12, 2016 ~ Lamar CC, Lamar, CO
- NM Chile Roundup ~ June 17-18-19, 2016 ~ Bosque Farms, NM (double show)
- Mid-Summer Rendezvous ~ July 9-10, 2016 ~ Latigo Trails, Elbert, CO
- Colorado Cowhands ~ August 20-21, 2016 ~ Spicer Arena, Eaton, CO
- Finals Warm up ~ September 11, 2016 ~ Latigo Trails, Elbert CO
- Fall Gathering ~ October 15-16, 2016 ~ Latigo Trails (2017 event)

2016 Buckle Series—
Ride in 4 Events to Qualify
May use 1 NM event.
Best 4 scores win!

www.CoVRHA.com

Come Ride With Us!

COVRHA CELEBRATES 2015 BUCKLE SERIES WINNERS!

COVRHA had 26 horse/rider teams who qualified for the buckle series in 2015 and each rider was presented with a logo jacket!

Our buckle series encourages riders to participate consistently and improve their skills in all versatility disciplines. It has been amazing to watch the evolution and advancement of all riders in the COVRHA. The 2015 Buckle series awards included Mortenson Buckles, Custom headstalls, winter horse blankets, engraved stirrups, and custom halters.

The Novice division winner was Sandy Perry (right) riding Lil Red Jolena, followed closely by Cindy Abshire riding El Rey Conquistador and Jennifer Walker riding RNF Rey Del. Lynn Cool was 4th and Janel Opeka was in 5th place.



The Limited Division winner was Claude Adams riding Cowboy By Starlight. Claude also went on to win the Limited Division Year-End at the National Level. Richard



Cook and Annie Eitel tied for 2nd place. Dawn Back was 4th and Kylie Smith was 5th place.

Two riders rode to a tie for first place in our intermediate division (the COVRHA kept an affiliate-only Intermediate Division for the 2015 event year). Kay Cornelius (left), riding HR Playing Dori and Donna Stewart, riding Riskey Irish Whiskey each won a Mortenson Buckle for their efforts, while Cori Atteberry and Bruce Perry earned 3rd and 4th respectively.

Paulette Marshall won the buckle in the Advanced Division, riding DJ Zans Bright.

Our Open Division was much more popular in 2015. Topping the award list was Donna Stewart, riding Riskey Irish Whiskey, followed by Linda Cellini, Janis Bate, and Jason Perry. Congratulations to all!

SO YOU'VE GOT A NEW HORSE, BUT ARE NOT A NEW COMPETITOR...

What division do you ride??

When a member has competed for a few years in the NVRHA, then decides to start showing a new, inexperienced horse – where do they begin? Sometimes it does not seem reasonable to restart in the Novice Amateur division with the new horse because the rider is not a novice.

Although it is impossible to tailor-make the perfect division for each horse/rider team, the NVRHA and now the COVRHA are working hard to provide divisions where a seasoned competitor can bring a new horse along. Last year the NVRHA started the Open “a la Carte” division that allows any horse/any rider to participate in only one class or all 5 classes - or anything in between. This is a great place to break into Versatility one discipline at a time and hone your skills. It is also a great place to introduce a young horse to competition by competing in only the classes he is ready for. As the year went by, the popularity of the Open Division grew both for new riders and experienced riders who wanted to get a second run in a specific class, or (for a few of us crazy ones) all classes. Case in point is Donna Stewart and Risky Irish Whiskey, who not only rode in the Amateur division, but also signed up and rode again as an open rider all year long. Donna won the NVRHA Open Division and the WORLD'S GREATEST VERSATILITY HORSE CONTEST!

Some folks, though, may think their horse is just too green to go to the open class, but realize the rider is more experienced than a true novice. In 2016 the COVRHA has just the place for you. We will be presenting the GREEN HORSE LIMITED DIVISION. The COVRHA Green Horse Limited Division will include all the elements of the Limited Amateur Division. The guidelines are listed below:

Rules for eligibility:

Designed for the Limited or Amateur rider with a new horse.

A Green Horse Limited horse/rider team is only eligible for 1 season/year, then that team is eligible only for other divisions. (Limited, Amateur and Open only – there will be NO Novice eligibility)

The horse must have a current NVRHA Horse ID Number to compete in any CoVRHA Green Horse Limited event.

☐ For any age horse new to CoVRHA and NVRHA events.

The Horse has never been shown in the NVRHA, NRCHA, NCHA, ASHA or AQHA events or any other similar events of any kind, however this rule does not apply to horses 5 years or younger. The 5 year old and younger horse must not have won a championship in any of the associations listed above.

☐ The horse/rider competing in this division must at least start each class at the show (RR, TR, WR, CT, Conformation) in order to receive National NVRHA Amateur points for that show.

☐ CoVRHA will recognize this division as a separate division, ****but NVRHA does not recognize this as a separate division. Points will be combined with Limited Amateur Division for reporting to NVRHA for Championship points.*

☐ This division will be awarded as a separate division in the CoVRHA Buckle series. To be eligible for the CoVRHA Buckle series Green Horse Limited division, same rules of the CoVRHA Buckle Series participation apply.

☐ The horse in this division can be of any age, but equipment (bits, riding with one vs. two hands) will follow all NVRHA rulebook guidelines already in place for the age of the horse being shown.

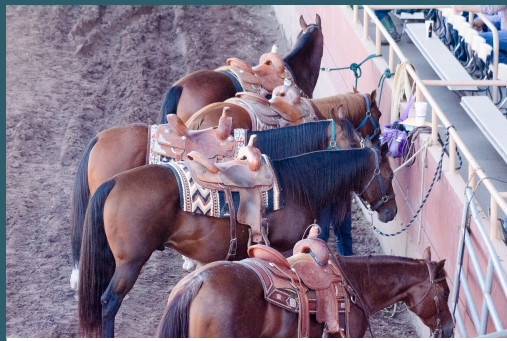
☐ The Horse/rider team is not eligible to move to Novice Amateur during the event year, but may move “up” to Limited Amateur, Amateur or Open at any time. Same rules apply for change in national points.

☐ The Horse/rider team can also show Open A la Carte at any show with any rider as long as that rider is a NVRHA member in good standing, but the rules of that division will apply. (Suggestion: also entering the Open a la carte is a great way to get more experience and schooling runs for these “green” horses)

We know this is a trial for COVRHA only, and we may have some kinks to work out, but we hope the NVRHA will monitor our participation and consider the GREEN HORSE LIMITED division in the future.

~~~ by Paulette Marshall





Best Cow Man Ever...Dustin Hawks!



# 2015 National Championship



Once again, Flat Jay is the high seller at the annual NVRHA Auction. This year he is headed north to Wisconsin...



Event Judge and Professional Advisor, Lavert Avert, looks over Cort Hawks' auction purchase. Yes, here at the NVRHA we welcome our judges to all the social events!



Gorgeous Colorado weather, a topnotch facility, friends, BBQ, music, good cattle, and the exceptional leadership of Bill Hauschildt made this event a success.

Waiting their turn...Connie Gebhart and Carol Ackerman (left);

Cow work...Cindy Cook (right)







### Novice Amateur Division

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Roxanne Burton (IA)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Connie Gebhart (MN)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Matthew Heinz (IA)

### Limited Amateur Division

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Alecia Heinz (IA)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Shane Bangerter (KS)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Taunya Kliewer (KS)



### Amateur Division

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Shane Bangerter (KS)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Donna Stewart (CO)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Vicky Henderson (MN)

### Open Division

#### World's Greatest Versatility Ranch Horse

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Donna Stewart/Riskey Irish Whiskey (CO)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Shane Bangerter/Langtrees CD (KS)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Vicky Henderson/Tatanka (MN)



Partnership Event Winners



# Congratulations 2015 Year-End Champions...



*High Point Novice:*

Roxanne Burton

and

Miss Smart Gun RG

Iowa



*Reserve High Point Novice:*

Matthew Heinz

and

Sun Dee Fox

Iowa

*3<sup>rd</sup> Over-all Novice:*

Connie Gebhart

and

Rum N Coke Cowboy

Minnesota







*High Point Limited:*

Claude Adams  
and  
Cowboy By Starlight

Colorado



*Reserve High Point Limited:*

Alecia Heinz  
and  
Golden H Mister T

Iowa

*3<sup>rd</sup> Overall Limited:*

Stephany Siitari  
and  
Little Lido Ote

Minnesota







*High Point Amateur:*

Paulette Marshall  
and  
DJ Zans Bright

Colorado

*Reserve High Point Amateur:*

Vicky Henderson  
and  
Tatanka

Minnesota



*3<sup>rd</sup> Overall Amateur:*

Donna Stewart  
and  
Riskey Irish Whiskey

Colorado







## 2015 Open Division Champion and World's Greatest Ranch Horse:

### Risky Irish Whiskey

Quality–Talent–Heart, this horse has it all.

Risky has earned all that the NVRHA has to offer: Ranch Horse Champion x2, Supreme Ranch Horse Champion x2, Superior Award in all Five Events, Legend Horse, and now 2015 World's Greatest Ranch Horse.

Looking for more to do, Risky qualified for the 2015 AQHA Versatility World Show and was third over-all year-end for Versatility in the AQHA. He became an NRCHA money earner in 2016. He also earned his AQHA Performance ROM and has qualified his 'old rider' for the AQHA Select World Event in Ranch Riding in August 2016.

“Our whole family has ridden and enjoyed Risky. He'll do most anything with above average ability. Its not that he is great at any one thing, its that he is good at everything, and we think that is the mark of a true versatility horse. We've owned a few good



horses over the years, and have a couple of nice young prospects coming up, but it will be hard to top him. And, it is highly likely that we will never own another horse of this quality”, say the Stewart's. “We've been around long enough to know that horses like Risky don't come along very often.”

That all said, Risky's most important job is still a few years down the road. Little Raegan Jackson, the Stewart's granddaughter, will turn one year old in May...





## Level of Achievement Awards Ranch Horse Champion

*(a minimum of 5 Championship Points in each of the five  
Ranch Horse Classes)*



Sue Eisenman  
DLB Smart Blue Bars  
Minnesota



Donna Stewart  
Riskey Irish Whiskey  
Colorado

Not Pictured: Linda Seeds/Okies Little Chex/California





## Level of Achievement Awards Ranch Horse Supreme Champion

*(a minimum of 10 Championship points in each of the five Ranch Horse Classes)*



Sue Eisenman  
DLB Smart Blue Bars  
Minnesota

Debbie Allen  
Starlight Peppymint  
Arizona



Paulette Marshall  
DJ Zans Bright  
Colorado





## Level of Achievement Awards Superior Ranch Horse

*(a minimum of 40 championship points in any one Ranch Horse Class)*



Shelley Johnsen

Unbranded

Superior Working  
Ranch Horse

Minnesota

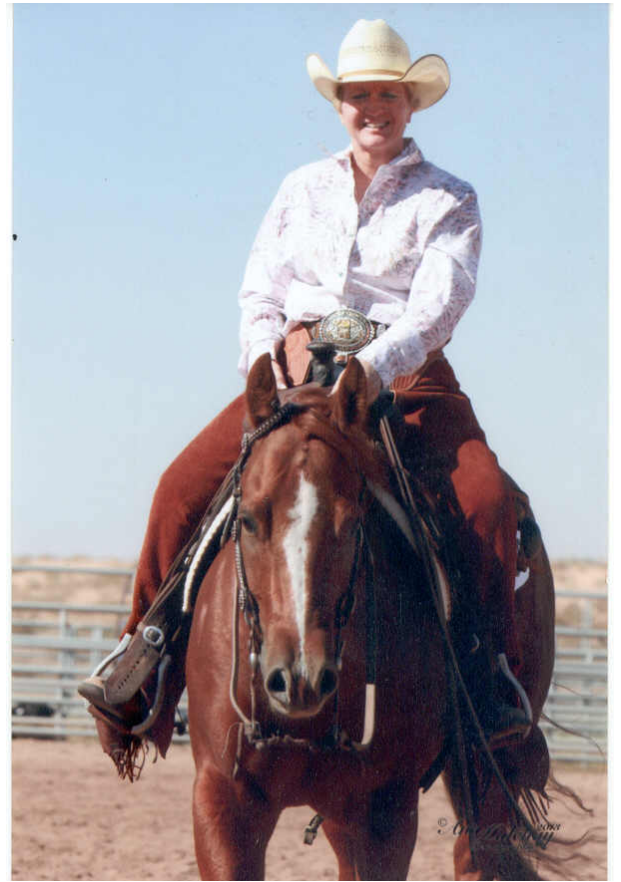


Vicky Henderson

Tatanka

Superior Ranch Cutting  
and  
Superior Ranch Conformation

Minnesota



Arizona

Superior Ranch Riding

Starlight Peppymint

Debbie Allen



Most Improved Rider  
Sue Eisenman

The NVRHA wants to recognize Sue for her dedication and courage. Underneath that silk scarf is a neck brace. Sue, with two horses in her trailer, was involved in a serious automobile accident in route to the NVRHA Finals event from Minnesota. After release from the hospital, Sue boarded a plane and came anyway - to attend the banquet and support her friends. That is Cowgirl material - NVRHA style!

# It is the stuff of Legends...

The NVRHA is very proud to say that we crowned not one but two Legend Horses for 2015. The Legend Award is the highest earned award in the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association. This award is presented to a horse having earned 200 or more Championship points at approved NVRHA events, with a minimum of 40 Championship Points in any four of the five Ranch Horse Classes.

Taking years to achieve, the Legend Award is an outstanding accomplishment in recognition of a truly great equine athlete. The 2015 recipients are: Unbranded owned by Shelley Johnsen; and Tatanka owned by Vicky Henderson. Both horses and their ladies are from Minnesota!

UNBRANDED

NVRHA  
LEGEND HORSE



“Headed to the versatility ranch horse show this weekend, Shelley?”

“Nope, I was at the one in Kansas last week, so I’m going to a dressage show Saturday and a Mounted Shooting Event on Sunday. Oh, then there is a barrel race on Friday night I’d like to get to if the trail ride is over in time.”

“Wow, that sounds like a busy weekend! So you have to get four horses ready?”

“Four horses?” says Shelley, with a puzzled look. “Why would I do that? Just me and Brandon, like usual...”

Shelley Johnsen once told me she doesn’t like the ‘dust to settle beneath her feet’, and now I know what she means. Apparently Shelley’s gelding Unbranded (aka Brandon) doesn’t either. These two don’t just DO versatility, they ARE versatility. The NVRHA would like to congratulate Shelley Johnsen’s 2002 AQHA gelding, Unbranded, for earning the coveted Legend Award!



As it sometimes happens with the best ones, Unbranded found Shelley when she was not looking. Because she usually buys her horses as weanlings, and almost exclusively selects Paints or Dun colored Quarter Horses, Shelley was a bit blind-sided by the big chestnut 2 year old that landed on her place. A friend who bred Quarter Horses convinced her that the young horse was not really suited to the AQHA Western Pleasure show world, but would be really 'happy' in her program. Hmm, this is feeling something like Karma...



So Brandon arrived, the 'ugly duckling' amid the duns and paints. But, just like the fairy tale says...he grew and grew and grew...into a swan, of sorts. Jay Henson calls him 'Big'Un' and that he is. Brandon became a graceful, kind, and willing gelding that quickly found a place in Shelley's barn. She put him into service doing whatever was needed at the time, and well, he did it. When Shelley wasn't riding him, she let young and novice riders use him as a school horse to learn to ride.



Shelley was actively showing another horse in AQHA, but then along came the NVRHA and suddenly it was Brandon's turn to compete. "He is a big horse", says Shelley, "so while trail and ranch riding were pretty comfortable for us, the cattle events posed much more of a challenge. It is one thing to ride a horse as obedient and willing as Brandon, but my cattle skills leave much to

be desired and he IS a big horse! Luckily, the beauty of "versatility" is that you do not have to be the best at everything. And, the educational environment provides an avenue to simply pursue "being the best you can be". And 'Big 'Un' has never lacked for try."

I think Shelley's comment pretty much summed up the whole mission and purpose of the NVRHA. She 'got it' and so, apparently, did Brandon. The two started out in the Northern Lights Affiliate, and once the momentum began they were virtually unstoppable. They showed up everywhere...Minnesota, Iowa, Kansas, Colorado, Arizona...and they won, lots. The team earned every NVRHA achievement award and won several national titles on the Legend journey.

"My thoughts on achieving the Legend Award with Unbranded are simply that it is truly important to set goals and to stick with those goals – success can happen to anyone who believes that", exclaims Shelley. "This award signifies to me the strength of the partnership I strive for with my horse. I am thankful and honored for that. Unbranded has blessed me with his positive work ethic, tolerance, charisma and kind nature – he is a super great partner to have!"

So what's next for Unbranded?

"While I will focus more on bringing a young horse along with the Versatility, Unbranded will continue to be busy with a variety of activities", laughs Shelley.

It seems the most recent addition to Brandon's 'to do' list is dressing up in light horse harness and pulling a cart...no surprises there. If NASA puts out a call for the first horse in space...this Legend Champion will be the first in line...

~~~by Donna Stewart




Tatanka

The little horse that could...and did!

Let me start by saying this is a story I have been watching unfold for the last few years and have hoped to write.

This is the kind of story that gets me excited about being the Rundown editor, about Versatility Ranch Horse, and especially about the National Versatility Ranch Horse Association. This is the kind of story that sets NVRHA apart from other Versatility organizations. This is a feel good story, an underdog story, an 'I told you so' story, a story that would be a movie if Versatility Ranch Horse was a more mainstream equine event. For all the naysayers who proclaim that you must have a high dollar, professionally trained, specifically bred horse to be successful in this sport...read on, you just got shot down...

Enter Tatanka, 2015 NVRHA Legend Horse. This is the ultimate NVRHA Award, at least to any member who understands what it truly means. This title is recognition of a horse with talent and ability, form to function strength, brains and cow sense, health and fitness, perseverance

and heart, and a very dedicated and focused rider or group of riders. This award is about the kind of horse who hangs in there, who can keep going year after year at a high level and who can do it ALL. This is the epitome of Versatility horses, the pinnacle, the peak.

I am a fan of the a la carte format, adopted by NVRHA and most other Versatility organizations, which allows riders to pick and choose in which classes they participate, instead of requiring participation in all versatility



classes. But the Legend Horse doesn't have that option. He does everything and does it well. In the 9 years since NVRHA's inception, we have crowned 11 Legend Horses. Some are still around the NVRHA program, but many have gone on to other venues where they continue to be top performers.

Let's talk about Tatanka. The 14-year-old grulla colored gelding lives in Minnesota with owner Vicky Henderson.

Tatanka is unassuming, so you may not have noticed him. Did I

mention that Tatanka is a grade gelding? That's right, not registered in any breed organization, no papers, no certificates, no nothing. His father was a breeding stock Paint Horse, and his mother was a 1/2 Quarter Horse/ 1/2 Welch Pony mare. Please reread that last line and let it sink in.

Just as another example of who he is, let's look at Tatanka's name. Notice it is a one-word name (think Elvis), given to him by Vicky when she purchased him as a weanling and thought he looked more like a scruffy baby buffalo than any kind of horse. So, what's in a name? A lot, right? At least that is what we are led to believe in the horse showing world. But, in Tatanka's name, where are the words... 'Doc, San, Smart, Peppy, Lena, Cat, Rey, Boon, CD', or any of the others we have come to recognize as a brand of birthright? Well, they are simply not there.

Well then, how could Tatanka have possibly earned a Superior Award in ALL FIVE Versatility Classes including Ranch Conformation? Go listen to the grumblers who will tell you it cannot be done. Then go get the truth from Vicky, who did it.

You see the NVRHA is an organization open to horses of all breeds. The conformation standard is that of a stock horse, not a specific breed. The NVRHA has an excellent set of experienced judges who are good enough to know when one is put together right – which brings us right back to Tatanka.

So Vicky bought him, a smallish extremely cow-hocked baby, with no hope but that of getting her kids interested in a horse. No show aspirations, no expectations, and no trainers. I mean no disrespect to horse trainers, they are a great group of folks and very needed by most of us, but I just want to make the point that this horse did not spend his formative years in a training barn. But he did spend them with Vicky, and her family, and lots of patience. Surely she spent lots of money, right? Let me just say this...one trip to Target, about that much, you figure it out.

Tatanka got put into service early, when Vicky's older horse went lame just before a ride in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The young horse, by then ridden for a whole of 3 weeks, was called upon to fill in and did great. So great, in fact, that next came Craig Cameron's Extreme



Trail Challenges and Extreme Cowboy Races. Then on to a few cattle drives, a stint on the Drill Team, some parades, demos at the horse expo, and all interspersed with trail rides and overnight camping.

Tatanka was 7 years old, in 2009, when Vicky first tried him in a ranch horse competition. It wasn't NVRHA, she thought that organization was too competitive (I about choked on my coffee when she said this), but a smaller local group. It wasn't until she met some people in the Northern Lights NVRHA Affiliate that she tried our organization. They are really nice in the NLVRH, by the way, and fun...lots of fun!

Vicky got hooked quickly, moved up through the Divisions, and once she reached a tougher level of competition decided lessons and trainers might not be such a bad idea. Tatanka became more and more proficient with his new skill set and the two have been unstoppable since. Let me mention again that Tatanka and Vicky have Superior Awards in all five Versatility classes offered by NVRHA (Conformation, Ranch Riding, Ranch Trail, Ranch Cutting, and Working Ranch Horse). Getting forty points in all of those events is not for the faint of heart. Well then, how about that Welch Pony/QH/Paint?

Besides his Legend Award, Tatanka was the 2015 Northern Lights Horse of the Year, as well



as the 2014 two-hand ranch cutting Champion for the North Country Cutters Organization. I loved this part...'against real cutters', says Vicky...smile.

There is really no telling what these two might try next.

'We will continue to show', says Vicky, 'and do lessons and clinics, but no more training.' As we go to print, Vicky tells me that professional horsewoman, Julie Goodnight, will ride Tatanka as her demo horse in the Minnesota horse expo.

So there you have it, a real life NVRHA Cinderella story starring a scruffy grulla colt and his oh-so-amazing human. Keep an eye on Vicky and Tatanka, something tells me this story isn't finished yet.

~~~ by Donna Stewart



# NVRHA 2015 Horseman of the Year Paulette Marshall

*by Donna Stewart*

Once again our Horseman of the Year is not a horseman at all...but a horsewoman, and a very good one at that. The NVRHA congratulates and celebrates Paulette Marshall as the 2015 recipient of one of its most prestigious awards.

Paulette is from Colorado, and is well known to all of the Colorado VRH members as the driving force behind a very successful affiliate. To say she jumped into NVRHA with both feet might be an understatement. I would phrase it more like 'she jumped in with both boots, spurs on, and swinging a rope'!

Paulette was a 4H'er, High School Rodeo Queen, and All Around Cowgirl (yes roping) in the 1970's (surely this should say 1990's)! She raised her sons, Ross and Jared, without a horse of her own, while husband JG was a PRCA calf roper. Then in 2005 Paulette suffered a minor stroke. As part of her rehab from the stroke, Paulette got her own horse – GUNNER – and the rest is NVRHA history!

Since the fall of 2007 when she attended the very first NVRHA event at T Cross

Ranch, Paulette has been an avid participant and supporter of the organization. That weekend she and her gelding, Gunner (CW Playmates Gun) shown above, rode in the 2-day clinic, got placed in the Advanced Division (much to her dismay) and were drawn as the 1<sup>st</sup> cutter to start the show! No complaints, she just decided to 'cowgirl-up', found out that Gunner was an awesome cutting horse, and never worried about drawing a tough cow again. Paulette was hooked!





I think Paulette has attended every Colorado event since that first weekend. And in a true test of talent, she has successfully shown a total of 5 different horses in the NVRHA. Not many NVRHA competitors can say that. During the 2014 season she rode two horses at each show, and was event manager for 4 of the events. She ended that year 2<sup>nd</sup> by one point, in a tight NVRHA year-end race on her Black mare, Dolly (Sontivio Moon), shown above.



This past year Paulette and DJ Zans Bright (shown below) won the 2015 year-end Championship in the Amateur Division! (Talk about tenacity, she and DJ had come in 2<sup>nd</sup> in two previous years). Paulette has travelled to Kansas, New Mexico and Arizona for NVRHA events, winning top honors at back-to-back competition weekends in both Arizona and New Mexico!

But it takes more than successful showing to become the NVRHA Horseman of the Year. As



Paulette demonstrates it takes a commitment to the organization. In the fall of 2011, Paulette became a valuable member of the NVRHA Board of Directors, and soon after that Dave Currin tapped her to take over the reins of the dwindling Colorado affiliate.

Paulette brought enthusiasm, strength and organizational skills to the job of Colorado Affiliate Leader, and has developed the COVRHA

into a strong NVRHA affiliate. To date she has organized four successful seasons of NVRHA events, a COVRHA buckle series, COVRHA year-end events, as well as numerous award banquets and fund raising auctions.



Paulette served as president of the COVRHA from 2012-2014, and is now the acting Treasurer and Event Coordinator. She is quick to attribute the success of COVRHA to the support of the COVRHA Board of Directors, Kay Cornelius, Debbie Raymond, Cori Atteberry, Cindy Abshire, Cindy Rose, Lynn Cool, Annie Eitel and Kathy Clemons.

“These ladies are the core of COVRHA,” says Paulette, “Each of them is ready to step up and take control of whatever task is needed to put on an event, or wrangle a fund raiser.”

One of Paulette’s NVRHA passions is the working ranch horse class including roping the cow. She enlisted the help of her husband, JG Marshall, and together they have made a point of holding successful roping clinics each year as part of Colorado events. JG is a great teacher and usually gets every single rider catching “Kenny” the roping dummy by the end of each clinic session. This extra effort has directly related to several competitors stepping out of their comfort zone, joining the Amateur division, and roping that cow!

Paulette tries to stay attuned to the clinic and competition needs of her members. Since she is such an avid participant, Paulette is aware of the strengths and weaknesses that are inherent in each division. Because of this, COVRHA will trial a Green Horse Division for the 2016 season. This has been developed to allow experienced amateur riders a place to bring along a young horse, or a new un-shown horse, in classes mirroring the Limited Amateur Division. We’ll all be watching Colorado to determine the success of this affiliate program.

When she is not at an NVRHA event, Paulette can likely be found in her arena on another good horse. In the rare event that she is not riding, she could be working in her successful real estate business, or hanging out with one or more very cute grandsons. Wherever she is, things are happening. That’s the trademark of this cowgirl, and the reason we are proud to have Paulette Marshall as the NVRHA Horseman of the Year.



Paulette with grandson ‘Tater’ on her horse Boomer.

*Children are great imitators. So give them someone great to imitate.*

*...Anonymous*



Good News! Coming Soon!

Official NVRHA Logowear from our new vendor: Royal B Threads

We are in the process of developing an ordering website with an access link from the NVRHA website.

We are excited about the very high quality NVRHA items that will be available.

If you or your affiliate need something now...

Contact Bailey Volock at 505-553-6276 or [royalbthreads@gmail.com](mailto:royalbthreads@gmail.com)

For Sale: 2010 Red Roan Mare

This is a nice gentle mare with 2+ years of professional cutting training, started roping the lead steer, very quiet in and out of the arena. Good handle, changes leads, and started turning around.

Great ranch versatility or rope horse prospect - can go in many different directions. Stands about 14.2 and very stout. Asking \$8700, please contact Katie Matusio for more info at 970-371-6328. Located in Colorado.



## The Warrior Vet Ranch Horse Roundup

~~~by Dave Currin

Most Ranch Horse enthusiasts are deeply patriotic, and yet many have not directly contributed to the protection of the freedom that Americans hold so dear. We owe a debt to the Americans who risk their lives to preserve our freedom, and would like to assist, but often don't know how. Many soldiers have returned from the battlefields with severe injuries that restrict their ability to have the quality of life most of us enjoy. Furthermore, their injuries have a major impact on their families.

In 2015, the NVRHA and the Kit Carson Riding Club of Colorado Springs held the 1st Annual Warrior Vet Ranch Horse Roundup. All proceeds were donated to the Wounded Warrior Project. The benefit was a 'trial balloon' as the organizations did not know how much support would be realized. Clinicians and judges from the NVRHA were quick to volunteer and recreational riders from the Colorado Springs area, many of who were Kit Carson Riding Club members, participated in the event. Although we were unable to attract a cattle sponsor, which increased the operating cost for the event, we cleared \$3500 for the WWP! Utilizing the NVRHA 501c3 nonprofit status, all donations made in support of the event were tax exempt.

The event was a rousing success and volunteers have again stepped forward to assist in the 2016 scheduled event. Event organizers, realizing in hindsight that less than half of the Wounded Warrior Project monies provided direct benefits to the disabled warriors, sought other related organizations to support with this year's proceeds. We are happy to announce, that in 2016, all proceeds will be distributed to the U.S. Air Force Academy Warrior Wellness Program, the Pikes Peak Therapeutic Riding Program, and the YMCA Youth Horse Camp. All are local programs that provide direct benefits to disabled warriors and their dependents in our own community.

Although the main focus of the 2015 event was to benefit the WWP, an added bonus was that over 20 new riders got to experience the thrill of the Versatility Ranch Horse adventure for the first time. In 2016, this number is expected to double allowing even larger proceeds to support our Warrior Vets.

The Warrior Vet Ranch Horse Roundup has a bright future. Many disabled vets and their dependents will realize a benefit from people who care, and the culture of the American Ranch Horse will play a key role. We would like to thank the volunteers from both the Kit Carson Riding Club and NVRHA for making this unique benefit happen.

Presented by: Kit Carson Riding Club and
National Versatility Ranch Horse Assoc.

The 2nd Annual

Ranch Horse RoundUp

Helping our Warrior Vets

100% Net Proceeds Benefit Nonprofits Supporting Warrior Vets and Their Families

Saturday, July 30th (7 am to 6 pm)
and Sunday, July 31st, (8 am to 5 pm)

A Family-Friendly Event for all Level of Riders

Low Cost Clinics and Fun Day Schooling Event Top Notch Clinicians and Judges.
Location: Kit Carson Riding Club 6775 Cowpoke Rd., Colorado Springs, CO 80924

Saturday Clinics (7/30): Choose From Four 2-hr. sessions in Ranch Horse Versatility

*Reining (\$30), *Working the Cow (\$30), *Ranch Cutting (\$30), Ranch Riding/Ranch Trail (\$20

-*Denotes Clinic with Cattle.

What is learned on Saturday can be applied in Sunday's Fun Day Schooling Classes

Sunday: 4 Fun-Day Schooling Classes *Working Ranch Horse (\$25)-Applies clinics: Reining/Cow Work

*Ranch Cutting (\$25) , Ranch Riding (\$15), and Ranch Trail (\$15). -*Denotes Class w/ Cattle. Schooling
Class Divisions are based on age and include Youth and Adult.

Plus, a BONUS ROPING CLINIC at NO CHARGE on 8/6 Must pay for minimum of Reining, Working the
Cow, and Cutting on Saturday + Working Ranch Horse & Cutting on Sunday to Qualify.

REGISTER EARLY: SPACE IS LIMITED: Pre-registration and deposit by 6/17.

Final Payment by 7/15. Late Registration considered if spots available.

Visit www.NVRHA.org for more info or call **Robin Mercer 719.550.0189**

Clinicians and Judges

Jeff Barnes
Tammy Romero
Donna Stewart





*Always tighten
your own cinch.*

'Ride the Legend'

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The National Versatility Ranch Horse Association is a nonprofit 501c3 organization.