



# The HorseCountry Quarterly

A PUBLICATION OF THE TRYON RIDING & HUNT CLUB

## Steeplechase Returns!

TR&HC Bockhouse Steeplechase to run June 5 within CDC guidelines.

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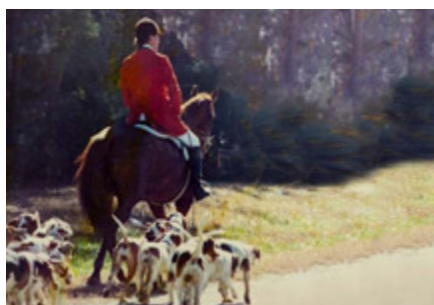
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## In Memory of Drew Brannon

### FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

On March 15, Drew Brannon tragically lost his life in an at-home accident. We, at the TR&HC, are all deeply saddened. Drew, who did not own a horse, nor did he ride, played a key role in the Club for decades serving as member and also as president. He dedicated his time and talent to Club, the community and its people. He epitomized all that we cherish about this caring community—especially its small towns and traditions. He made time to do things when he had no time. He always gave of himself for a greater good.

The following article is based on an interview with Drew last month as he talked about his own personal and significant history with the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club—history which we cherish now more than ever.

## Community, Tradition and Philanthropy Nurturing a Healthy Community

With a family legacy dating back over 100 years, Drew Brannon & his wife Tara are well known within the Foothills community and to members of the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club. While much has changed since Drew volunteered for the Club as a young boy alongside his father (Tim) and grandfather (George), his support for the Club and what it stands for remain unchanged.

As a third-generation TR&HC member, Drew served the Club in many and varied capacities: as president, treasurer and committee chair for the Club's popular Any and All Dog Show - an 87-year-old tradition where any dog and owner duo can participate in categories ranging from the best trick to the waggiest tail with a chance to win ribbons and prizes.

Drew saw tangible benefits to membership in the Club. "Ultimately, for me, TR&HC is about fostering area equestrian traditions while celebrating the natural beauty and unique opportunities and people of this area. The Club also serves as a welcoming society of like-minded friends and neighbors," he said. "I do believe, however, that the club is in a period of change where member benefits will should evolve in response to a new generation of members."

## Not Just for Horse People

You don't have to have a storied history of horse-back riding or even be directly involved in any type of equestrian activity to join TR&HC. "I know many people who moved here and one of their first social outings was a TR&HC event," Drew explained. "The Club's activities offer an easy way for people of all walks of life to engage, and the connections made at these events foster new and often lifelong friendships. While the basis of the Club is equestrian, I believe that it has always been, and should always be a priority of the Club to improve our community as a whole."



## A Light in Our World: Drew, Remembered

October 6, 2019 I was praying and trying to breathe in the Staples parking lot in Hendersonville as I was picking up stuff for the Any and All Dog Show; Drew called and I told him my daughter-in-law was having an emergency Caesarean as we spoke. He helped me feel better, that was the kind of man he was.

- Colleen Torsney

As a relative newcomer, I soon realized who the movers and shakers are in a small community and Drew was one. He was a "gift" to this community.

- Sybil Jones

The finest of young men, a tremendous loss to the Tryon community.

- Jamie Corn

Drew loved TR&HC and worked incredibly hard for it, whether in public during our various social activities (steeplechase, BBQ, etc.) or in private fulfilling the many tasks of being president of this historic organization that no one knows about. He was a dedicated servant of the Club and the community.

- Terry Lynch

Drew was a friend, mentor and a good soul who will be missed by all but especially by me.

- Gary Zumstein

Drew was an individual that every community needed. He had integrity, wisdom, humor, dedication and an unfailing desire to do things the right way. He helped guide the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club through a difficult transitional time while holding down a full-time job and being involved in many community activities. What I liked about Drew the most was his integrity and humor. He was always able to find humor even in the most difficult situations. I will miss him greatly and the community will miss him even more.

- Kent Holden

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## From the Editor's Desk

Recognizing there is no better place to live, work and play than right here in Tryon's horse country, it seems appropriate that we have a means to share our "horsey" knowledge, celebrate everyday victories, commemorate our history as we pump new life into cherished traditions. As a Club, we routinely do this, but we want to bring all the good things we do, closer to you, our members, and to the community. We hope you will enjoy this new *Quarterly*, a horse-focused publication capturing the rich flavor of local people and events. And someday soon, we hope to see you (in person) at our awesome and fun events.

Warmly,  
 Sybil Jones, TR&HC Board member & Editorial director

# Ready, Set, Go – TR&HC Blockhouse Steeplechase

The 73rd Tryon Blockhouse Races, the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club's historic steeplechase, is officially on the calendar for June 5, 2021 at the Green Creek Race Track in Columbus, NC. This will be the first race held after a two-year hiatus. In spring 2019 the track was too wet and last year, the race cancelled due to COVID. This year race organizers at Tryon International Equestrian Center (TIEC) and Tryon Riding & Hunt Club decided to push the annual event to June 5 to ensure safer conditions for the race and its participants.

At this time, only current ticket holders will be allowed to attend provided that federal and state restrictions for public events are lifted. While no additional tickets will be sold at this time, the races will be live-streamed for the public to watch online from the safety and comfort of their homes. Depending on conditions, additional tickets may be sold before the event.



PHOTOS: DON WEST



## THE TRADITION RETURNS: TR&HC Horse and Hound Show Set for April 24

True to one of its core missions, to preserve Tryon's history and traditions, the Tryon Riding & Hunt Club will sponsor its annual Horse & Hound Show on Saturday, April 24, at the Foothills Equestrian and Nature Center (FENCE). Featured classes include two hunter derbies.



PHOTO: MARK JUMP PHOTOGRAPHY

- The TR&HC Derby will feature two classes: 2'6" and 3' with a \$2,500 purse.
- A Mini-Morris 2' Derby will offer a \$1,500 purse – No professionals.
- A \$1,000 bonus will be split among the top three junior/amateur riders in the TR&HC Derby.

**Due to pandemic restrictions, the event will not be open to spectators.** Over 20 fox hunt clubs from the Carolinas and other nearby states have been invited to compete in this unsanctioned event beginning at 8 a.m. Judge for the event will be John Tabachka, a highly regarded hound judge who served at last year's Hound Show. Following the Hound Show, the Club will host a Hunter Derby with competition beginning at 12 noon.

To sign up, go to [tryonridingandhuntclub.org](http://tryonridingandhuntclub.org) or contact the club office, (828) 863-0480 or [office@trhc1925.org](mailto:office@trhc1925.org).



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## LOCAL LEGENDS: GERALD & BETSY PACK

# Horse Sense and a Rare Breed



Jody Gill putting up another ribbon at Harmon Field.



George Morris, Betsy and Gerald.



Betsy getting Leo ready for Florida.

A LITTLE OVER HALFWAY up Fox Mountain, past a coded gate and a few resident gnomes, sits Stoney Knoll (SKF, Inc). Go beyond its cypress-guarded ring and the aged wooden barn emanating warmth on even the coldest winter day, up the fence-lined lane through bucolic pastures – there you'll find the home Betsy and Gerald Pack built in 1972, where they have lived ever since.

For non-horse people, visitors and the many newcomers to the area, Betsy and Gerald Pack are icons of the community. Gerald's keen eye for and uncanny relationships with canines and equines is a local legend, while Betsy's encyclopedic equine knowledge and her ability to motivate amateur riders to their peak is a driving force in their successful business.

**Born to Ride:** Hailing from Virginia horse country, Betsy's aspiration for riding came at the young age of 18 months from her grandmother, an avid fox hunter. After high school, given options for further education, Betsy traveled to Porlock Vale in Somerset, England, a pre-eminent equestrian training center in Britain, to pursue a career in the horse world. "I knew I had to make a living, and there were no teaching facilities in Middleburg," Betsy says. Soon, however, her interest in fox hunting brought her closer to her horse country destination.

Gerald, next to the youngest of five brothers and two sisters, was born and raised on a farm a stone's throw from where Stoney Knoll is today. The family farm bustled with horses, ponies, hogs, beef and dairy cattle. "We raised and grew everything," Gerald says. "We were completely self-sufficient."

Gerald became the only one who had a real interest in horses. By age 10, he was competing at Tryon's Harmon Field.

As an adult, realizing he was not cut out for college business school, Gerald switched back to his original equine interests, while also serving nine years in the National Guard. Over the years, Gerald's talents and trade took him from South America to Europe to train, breed and sell while bringing newly gained knowledge to apply at home.

**Learning from the Best:** Riders, mentors, teachers and horse whisperers all in one are rare. These qualities converged in the likes of Gordon Wright, Arthur Reynolds, and others – all of whom played key, separate roles in mentoring, training and continually challenging the Pack boy from Tryon.

Perhaps above all the others, Wright made his mark. Gerald describes him, "He was an incredible teacher with a wealth of knowledge about every aspect of this business." Betsy and Gerald (and George Morris) were among Wright's star pupils, soaking up both the practical and philosophical. "We learned from the best. He believed to be really good, riders should learn more than one discipline. His system of teaching was based on mastering the basics and today, the really great riders do just that."

**The Hunting Packs:** Once Betsy arrived in Polk County, it was a matter of weeks before she caught the gaze of the popular local fox hunter, Gerald Pack, reputed to be both avid horseman and ladies' man. They were married

two years later in 1970.

The couple was gifted the Greenville County Fox Hunt with a charter from Saluda to Campbell from Gordon Wright. Starting with no hounds, Gerald says, "It took three years to build the pack to 35 hounds. Then in five years, to 60 hounds." The couple successfully ran the hunt for 35 years till Green Creek Hounds and Greenville County merged.

**Stoney Knoll Today - The Family:** There's a new stone mailbox at the front gate of Stoney Knoll, but little else has changed over the years. Gerald and Betsy's son Lewis, immersed



Gerald tacking up Hudson for a carriage ride.



Gerald and Betsy early years.

in the business of horse shows, when not on the circuit, lives with his wife Leslie in the pond-side cabin down by the Buffalo field, home to a half dozen retired horses. Lewis' son, Hunt, a recent graduate of the Citadel, is an officer-in-training at Fort Benning. Son Stephen and wife Katie have their own state-of-the-art new stable, KS Sport Horses, down the road from Stoney Knoll on Fox Mountain Road, where they ride, train and sell show horses.

## A Horse's Life

WALK DOWN THE STALL-LINED AISLE AFTER BREAKFAST, you'll find the horses that aren't being tacked up are likely curled up like napping dogs. No matter where they fall on the horse hierarchy, they all spend most of the time outside in one of a dozen pastures or paddocks.

From the beginning, the Packs kept their "all purpose" facility small so they could do the work themselves. "Our clients have been amazing and long term," Betsy acknowledges, "and our clients are also our friends."

Gerald, with the patience of Job, teaches a dozen riders of all levels, reminding even the highest level rider of the importance of fundamentals. He intersperses each lesson with history, lore and sometimes his favorite recipe. "I think the fundamental difference in training with the Packs is experience," says client Dr. Heather Whisnant. "They draw from a wealth of knowledge, which not only makes us better riders, but also better horsemen."

Betsy is the powerhouse that runs the operation. Riding practically every day, she trains and shows, while making sure the horses are fed, fit, healthy and shod.

The pair have built their business as they have lived their lives—based on skill, knowledge, relentless work ethic, integrity, and most of all—essential for living and working in this part of the world—a *love of horses*.

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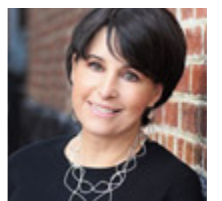
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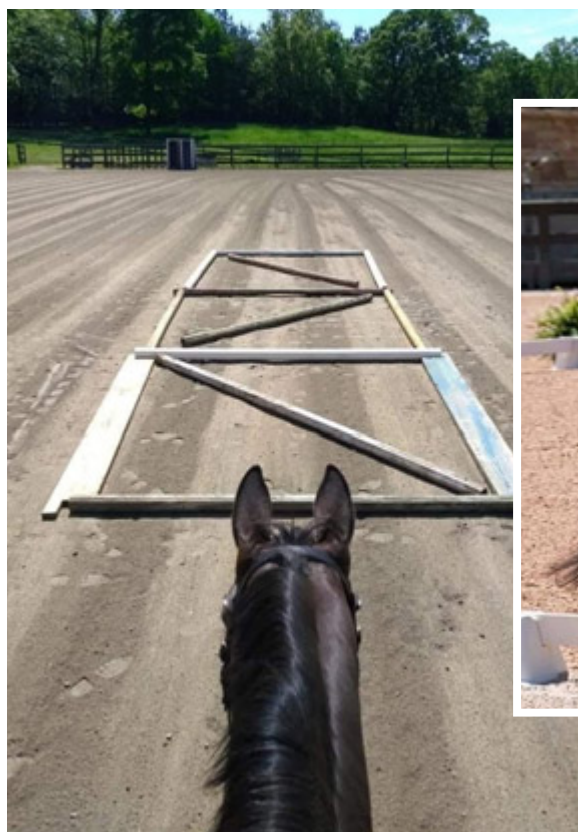
# Equestrian 101: Horses Go as They are Ridden

Among the many passionate and talented equestrian transplants now calling the Carolina Foothills home, Jenny Gardner stands out in more ways than one. Swedish born, she's a former instructor at several Swedish public riding academies, a 2018 USDF Silver Medalist and creator of Equestrian 101, a riding academy that uniquely packages riding principles in palatable doses for both horse and rider.



Bringing Jenny's own teaching methodology stateside, Equestrian 101 is a European style riding academy. The focus is dressage because as Jenny explains, dressage is the foundation for every other form of riding. It's the gymnastics of the horse. It strengthens the horse and creates flexibility. "Horses are stronger, calmer and tend to have a more attentive demeanor," she says. "Back in Sweden, the principles of dressage are incorporated into teaching right

alongside all other disciplines. It's the true foundation for both rider and horse. I believe in the basics which means I focus on the foundation, then building skills."



The foundation of her program is good ergonomics or healthy biomechanics. Teaching the horses how to carry their rider in a healthy fashion, which means arranging rider and horse so they interact most efficiently and safely. "This is truly best for the horse," she says, "especially since horses are not built to carry riders. Our time spent in the saddle will either build them up or break them down—

"Whatever you repeat daily soon becomes habit and second nature. Make sure you practice what you intend to manifest."

—Jenny Gardner



there is no in between." Her methodology reflects dressage principles of teaching the horse to transfer weight on the stronger hind leg, for health, athleticism and longevity.

Headquartered down the lane off Henderson Road, Tryon, Jenny's academy features weekly group lessons for all levels, private coaching and training rides, and cross training clinics. Whether in the ring on horseback or in a traditional classroom, she covers the basics and often intersperses a fair amount of theory into practical lessons. Topics for each level are posted.

As with any top trainer, Jenny understands behavioral psychology of horses. "For instance, the horse can only be considered resisting if he understands what you're asking, and he is physically able to comply. Otherwise, he is simply asking for help," she explains. She stresses the need for riders to have commitment to consistent, progressive education. "That's the ticket. Horses go as they are ridden."

Currently, Jenny is finishing her first 12-week session and gearing up another this Spring due to interest from her mostly local clientele.

*Jenny Gardner earned instructor certifications in both jumping and dressage at Flyinge and Stromsholm, two of Sweden's national equestrian centers focused on developing excellence. She apprenticed with Sweden's top riders including Swedish National champion in Eventing Hans Delling, Olympic Jumper rider Ulrika Hedin and World Cup Dressage rider Malin Hamilton.*

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# Mitigating Pasture Damage After a Wet Winter

by Cassie LeMaster



Equine, Livestock & Forage Agent  
Cassie LeMaster

Does it seem like each year our winter gets wetter and wetter (and muddier and muddier)? Well you're not alone. Many of us are dealing with pasture damage from yet another excessively wet winter. Wet pasture conditions allow plants to be easily crushed and bruised under the impact of our horse's hooves. The tearing action their hoof creates as they travel across the saturated ground also creates areas of bare ground and subsequent mud. As temperatures warm this spring, these bare areas become the perfect environment for weed seed germination. If you have used a dry lot for much of the winter or allocated a sacrifice lot to contain the damage to a smaller area, you should be able to avoid hefty pasture renovation costs. If not, assess the damage in all your fields, scout for weeds and target their control, manage soil nutrients and plan for renovation if needed.

**Assess the Damage:** The first step is to determine how much of the pasture is covered in desirable forages. Estimating this from the gate is deceiving, so it's important to get out and walk through the area. Less than 30% stand loss will likely recover as long as fertility and grazing pressure is managed. Stand losses of 30-60% will need some further

assistance from reseeding, and losses greater than that could need full renovation. Remember, small acreages are going to need more aggressive management to bring the pasture back to full production.

**Scout for Weeds:** Control of most weeds is most effective before they've flowered, which is why scouting is so important. Many weeds crowd and shade desirable grasses and rob the soil of important nutrients, causing further pasture damage if left untreated. Always use a pasture-approved herbicide, and then comply with any grazing restrictions listed for livestock. Read the label!

**Manage Soil Nutrients:** A soil analysis is the only way to accurately determine and supply the nutrients that your pasture needs. Nitrogen (N) and potassium (K) are mobile in wet soils, so even if a soil analysis was done less than a year ago, the nutrient profile could be different from the last analysis. Southeastern soils are naturally acidic, so lime could also be needed depending on the forage species to be planted.

**Renovation:** Even when weeds are controlled appropriately, the grass may need to be re-seeded to fill in bare spots before summer weeds like horse nettle and pigweed begin to germinate. If you have a warm season perennial pasture like Bermuda or Bahia, then re-seeding in the spring is ideal. However, oftentimes spring-planted fescue stands fail as they do not have time to develop an adequate root system before the summer heat arrives. Planting an alternative annual forage such as millet or crabgrass can supply grazing until fall fescue establishment can take place.

**Questions?** You can reach Cassie at (828) 894-8218

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# Local Foxes Can Soon Relax as the Season Winds Down

For the next three issues of HCQ, we will feature one of our fabulous hunts! This time, all eyes on Goodwin Hounds.

PHOTOS: MARK JUMP PHOTOGRAPHY



Goodwin Hounds may just be finishing its third season but Huntsman and MFH Tot Goodwin has roughly 58 seasons under his belt. More than that if you include his childhood Beagle Pack. Hunting the Crossbred Hounds he loves Tot still finds every hunt a new experience. *"I learn something new every time I go out."*



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 Pre adult equitation - Laurel Hanna  
 Pre child equitation - Eliza Hall Hammett  
 Short stirrup equitation - Riley Glenn

Walk trot equitation - Mollie Goodwin  
 Walk trot canter equitation - Levi Graham  
 Adult hunter - Diadeem  
 Amateur hunter - Finesse  
 Children's hunter - Coniah  
 Crossrail hunter - Captain Jack Sparrow  
 Green hunter - Dutch Boy  
 Junior hunter - Over the Moon  
 Long stirrup hunter - Winston  
 Low hunter - Stormscape  
 Performance hunter - Heir Chico

Large pony hunter - Dreamacres Blue Moon Edition  
 Small/medium pony hunter - Highlifes Lamborghini  
 Pre adult hunter - Sterling  
 Pre child hunter - Kalahari  
 Pre green hunter - Stella  
 Short stirrup hunter - Magic Trick  
 Child/adult jumper - Fantastique  
 Hopeful jumper - JC Whitney  
 Low schooling jumper - JC Whitney  
 Progressive jumper - Marrying kind  
 BRHJA Derby series - Finesse

## TR&HC Now Accepting College Scholarship Applications

The Tryon Riding & Hunt Club continues to offer educational scholarships to high school graduating seniors and to individuals currently attending a college or university institution that supports equine enthusiasts in Polk, Henderson, Rutherfordton, Spartanburg and Greenville counties. Interested students should apply by April 30.

The Club will award \$5,000 in scholarships this year. The amount of individual scholarships may vary but will be no lower than \$500.

Recipients must meet certain criteria, which can be found on the

TR&HC website, [tryonridingandhuntclub.org/scholarships/](http://tryonridingandhuntclub.org/scholarships/). In addition to meeting the criteria, priority will be given to high school seniors and financial need.

To apply for a scholarship, please complete the application found at [tryonridingandhuntclub.org](http://tryonridingandhuntclub.org) or contact Martha Woodham at (404) 992-6112. A financial need statement and interview may be requested. Details from the candidate's college financial aid office are requested as part of the application. A photo of the applicant should also be submitted with the application.

## Horse Country Calendar

**April 10, May 1, August 21, & Sept. 18:** Just for Fun Shows, Clear View Farm, Landrum

**April 24:** Horse & Hound Show, FENCE

**April 30:** Scholarship applications due

**May 7-9:** BRHJA Mother's Celebration, Harmon Field

**June 4:** Pre-race Steeplechase Party

**June 5:** 73rd Blockhouse Steeple Chase

**June 8-13:** 93rd Heritage Charity I Horse Show (Spring 6), TIEC

**June 10:** Heritage Horse Show Day at the Charity I Horse Show, TIEC

**June 11:** 4th Carolina Show Hunter HOF Induction

**July 6-11:** Charity II Horse Show (Summer 5), TIEC

**June 17-20:** Harmon Classics Derby Mania, FENCE

**September 3-5:** Harmon Classics Labor Day Spectacular, TIEC

**September 24-25:** XC Schooling, FENCE

**October 29-31:** BRHJA Classic, FENCE

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# Help on the Way

## Polk County Equine Emergency Rescue

Is there any animal that can get into more trouble than a horse? Bites, kicks, bruises, sprains, hooves, bones, bellies – as they innocently flirt with danger. Injuries and situations you can't handle, vets handle – from small stuff to the critical. But what happens when Big Badger accidentally frolicks over the fence and into a septic pit?

In most other densely horse-populated areas, the choice of what to do might be sad. Not here. In Tryon Horse Country, call 828-817-0422. Likely Anita Williamson, director of the Polk County Equine Emergency Rescue (PEER) team will pick up as she simultaneously mobilizes her team of trained volunteer rescuers via speed text. PEER is a medical emergency rescue group. "We immediately find out if their vet is on their way, and if not, who the vet might be and then work under their supervision," explains Williamson. "The equine ambulance is dispersed to the scene as are horse trailers if evacuation is needed." If not for PEER, the next closest equine rescue is located three hours away in Biscoe, NC.

While the need for such an organization as PEER is not every single day, it is a godsend when an emergency does occur. "We can go for months without a call, and then get two or three in a week," says Dianne Joyce, PEER Board president. "Before PEER, people had to rely on police or fire departments (who are often by our side to help), but don't particularly know about large animals nor have the equipment to support a rescue or get an animal to the vet hospital if needed."

PEER is made up of approximately 15 dedicated volunteers and six Board members. As with most local rescue operations, the heart and soul of this nonprofit is its volunteers. Volunteers must be able-bodied, have knowledge of horses and their handling, and have taken a minimum of one full weekend specialized

training provided by PEER who routinely holds training sessions. (Next one is tentatively scheduled for this spring should you be interested in becoming a volunteer.)

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"Our volunteers need to be able to respond in an emergency during all hours and weather conditions," says Williamson. "With that said, we have levels of volunteers."

Clearly, the job is not easy. Joyce recalls, "Our very first rescue was a steer trapped in an icy river. Another dramatic rescue was for a cattle truck turned over on I-26. Eighty cows were involved. It took five hours to get all of the cattle rounded up and the area cleared. LeMaster Livestock in Gaffney helped in bringing three stock trailers to the scene to load those that survived. The truck driver was mortified,

but all were glad no one was hurt."

In every rescue owners are very appreciative of the services, the professionalism and caring. PEER does this at no charge. However, the organization survives and lives on donations from a caring community.

**The PEER Team:** Hats off to Anita Williamson, Ashley Allen, Suzanne Crawford, Holly Dake, Sue Haldeman, Marty Keynton, Brandon Knox, Rick Millweard, Kasey Minnick, Pam Minnick, Bob Neville, Chris Raffield, Mike Rigney, Chuck Rounds, and David Vanetta. Our entire community says "Thank you!"

Help keep this valuable resource alive and well. Visit PEER at [www.peernc.org](http://www.peernc.org)

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**GUEST VET: BIBI FREER**

# Caring for the Young at Heart: *Arthritis in Our Seniors*

If you haven't yet, you will likely at some point in your horse career deal with an aging horse. After age 20, and often earlier, horses physiologically begin to show signs of aging. As in people, effects of aging vary from horse to horse. We know the feeling of sore muscles, sprained ankles, or for some of us—arthritis. As with people, arthritis isn't curable, but there are management strategies that help.

**Here's how to deal with it.**

Arthritis can start at any age, but is more common in older equines. Signs can be quite subtle in the beginning. In an athlete, it can begin as a shortening of stride or difficulty with certain actions like lead changes. As signs progress, you may see changes in the shape of some joints. In general, arthritis tends to be worse at the beginning of exercise and improves as the horse moves.



Some horses may be at higher risk depending on their use, aka job. Also, certain conformation faults may predispose a horse to be more prone to develop arthritis.

In mild cases for at-risk horses who do not have clinical signs yet, I recommend a supplement with avocado and soybean unsaponifiable

(soybean oil) and Omega 3 fatty acids. You can purchase the ingredients and mix them yourself. Personally, when I was showing and competing my older hunter, I used Platinum Performance CJ. If finances allow, I also recommend Adequan, or Legend in these cases. PSGAGs are Polysulfated Glycosaminoglycans, the active ingredient in Adequan which reduces inflammation and improve lubrication. I don't know of any lasting adverse side effects from PSGAGs. Another supplement is resveratrol. However, I am not familiar with this as a joint supplement.

For certain joints, corticosteroid injections are a good treatment. It's important to be aware that many older horses have Cushing's Disease, which increases the risk of laminitis after exposure to corticosteroids. Therefore, they should be used judiciously. I avoid triamcinolone or limit the dose in these horses because triamcinolone has a higher incidence of laminitis following injections than other corticosteroid injections.

As arthritic symptoms progress, I recommend bute the night before riding if they are happy enough on non-riding days without the bute. As symptoms progress to the point that the horse is uncomfortable in the pasture, try one gram of bute every day. This can do wonders for horses who do not have a good quality of life without it. Some horses respond better to firocoxib, the active ingredient in Equioxx.

Unfortunately, NSAIDS have been associated with renal damage and gastric ulcers. I only use the one gram of bute per day in horses when other options no longer help.

A relatively recent product, Noltrex, for joint injections, is a hydrogel. It completely replaces the joint fluid and improves lubrication.

If arthritis occurs in a low motion joint such as the distal (lower) hock joints or pastern joint, fusing the joint is an option. Joints can be fused surgically or chemically. While my experience with this option is limited, I performed the procedure by injecting a proximal interphalangeal joint (pastern) with Everclear. This sounds crazy but there are papers published on the procedure. The results were excellent. That horse is now foxhunting.

Regardless of whether your horse suffers with arthritis or other age-related ailments, we do our older horses the most good by keeping them moving—and, as much as possible, keeping them outside. If a healthy older horse is just standing in a box stall, we're doing him no favors.

**Hunt Country Equine Mobile Veterinary Services, Tryon, NC**

*Dr. Freer, a native of Nash County, has lived and built her practice in Polk County since 1991, having finished vet school at NC State University three years earlier.*

## Glassy Mountain Farm | Lafayette Farm

# Q&A Hoof & Sole



## Farrier Sean Gaul

**Q: As a farrier, how encompassing is your expertise?**

**A:** You have to know anatomy. What's really going on inside the hoof capsule – tendons, ligaments and their functions. The bone structure and how everything is put together. An artistic eye is also important because you better shape the shoe for a proper fit.

**Q: Who do you collaborate with? And what is the importance of their roles?**

**A:** I regularly collaborate with multiple veterinarians, massage therapists, acupuncturists, and chiropractors. These specialists, usually assembled by the trainer or the owner, create a team approach to treatment. Communication is key. I also work with veterinarians and farriers all over the country and internationally to work on their client's horses at TIEC. This is a fantastic experience

for both my associates and myself as we gain insight from working with different opinions and techniques.

**Q: What is it that you do, that most horse-owners don't understand?**

**A:** Realizing that most often we work without the benefit of x-rays, we read the hoof capsule and limb deviation so we can envision what the bone alignment inside the hoof capsule looks like. The hoof capsule distorts around the coffin bone due to uneven weight bearing and/or the elements. Based on this assessment, we try to manage the hoof capsule so as to provide the horse the best base of support.

**Q: What is the most common hoof ailment (and solution) you deal with in our horse country? And the solution?**

**A:** Here, our ground can go from muddy to hard as a brick within 24 hours which can cause one or more of many lameness issues in the hoof, especially for horses who move here from sandy soil areas where they are not used to a hard base. We then make a plan as to what to do to make the horse more comfortable moving forward.

**Q: What supplements, dressings, or other hoof products do you recommend, and why?**

**A:** I am sure there are many that work. The biggest problem I see is horse owners start too late to take care of their horse's feet. For instance, you can't start in the middle of the summer when the horses are fighting the elements and the flies. For horses that stay out all night, moisture from the morning dew makes their hooves even more vulnerable. I recommend starting now to give your chosen supplement. In the fall, their feet tighten up naturally – with or without a supplement. The weak foot grows out and then will trim up nicely. I can't say this was due to the

supplement. What I do tell my clients is to use a gallon of white vinegar, and add two cups of copper sulfate powder, mix well and put into spray bottles. Spray the soles and the nail holes, stay off the coronary band and the bulb. Do this year around to stay ahead of the problem before it happens in the middle of the summer when it's too late.



**Q: Why did you choose this as your profession?**

**A:** I knew I wanted a career that allowed flexibility, and reward for the effort, time and knowledge put forth. As a young man, I always wanted to be around horses, but didn't have the means. I was introduced to the profession by a high school teacher and knew this was for me.

**Sean Gaul: 864-640-7466**

Sean, his wife, Michelle, daughters Caelan, 17 and Emily, 15, and son Sean Thomas, 9, live in Columbus, NC.





## Eyes on Tokyo

### Rider, Teacher, Trainer:

# Beth Perkins

For some, Olympic dreams do come full circle. For Beth Perkins, local rider, teacher, trainer and TR&HC Board member, she's getting ready to buy her ticket to Tokyo as chef d'équipe,\* for Olympic rider Lauren Billys who will be the sole representative from Puerto Rico in this summer at the Tokyo Olympics. "Excited is an understatement," Beth says calmly.

#### Growing Up Nose-to-Nose with Olympians

Beth's passion for the horses must be in her DNA—after all, how could she have anything different after growing up in Vermont with parents who trained and sold event horses and competed? She's been riding as long she's been walking starting with Pony Club accolades, advancing to the highest levels of eventing with a sterling roster of trainers and horses. "I've been lucky," she says, "to have been guided by the best instructors in 'classical' riding."

In 1972 Beth trained with Lars Sederholm in England where she rode Furtive, an Australian horse after he competed in the 1972 Munich Olympics. That same year, she brought him home then competed in Ledyard and trained with Jack LeGoff. Furtive went on to take this young Beth to the upper event levels. "He was

Beth Perkins with her husband Mick and son Sean at Sean's Polk County High School graduation in 2016.



wonderfully honest cross-country," says Beth.

In the 1974 World Games in Burghley, England, Beth, age 18, riding Furtive, placed sixth individually. The next year, the pair graced the Mexico Pan American Games, placing fifth individually and then helping the U.S. take home a gold in the Three-Day.

Clearly on the Olympic path, she was short-listed for the Montreal Olympics. Many years and horses later, she served on the Three Day Selection Committee for the Atlanta Olympics in 1996.



Her star-studded career continued with the seriously well-bred Don't Dali, foaled in 1995, by Valdali (IRE) out of Now You Don't. Don't Dali took Beth to intermediate level where at Bromont CCI\*\*\* in 2005, they placed third in their dressage score. Beth, ready for another challenge, sold Don't Dali who went on to the Advanced level with new owner Will Faudree.

In the meantime, in 2002, Beth and her family moved to Green Creek from northern California. "We fell in love with the beauty of the area and felt we could make a go of it in the horse business," Beth explains.

While settling into her new home, Beth debuted Sal, Don't Dali's half brother, at Rolex Kentucky, the premier CCI\*\*\*\* this side of the Atlantic. They competed in 2012 and 2013 progressively improving.

Nearly 20 years later, Beth says she almost feels like part of the landscape now. She continues to teach and compete while her appreciation for her way of life grows.

She'll soon be packing her bags for California to help train Lauren Billys for her Olympic run. Then Beth will follow Billys as she will likely come East for further training and conditioning. Regardless of where her travels take her, she says, "We feel very lucky to live here and making a go of it. Every day is a gift."

*\*Chef d'équipe; The person who travels with the team to take care of arrangements, leaving the rest of the team freed up to focus on the competition.*



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## YOUNG RIDER PROFILE

# Mike Millon

*Thomas & Densinger Architects  
Charleston, SC*

It all started with my first pony, Jack Frost, the whitest, most bug-eyed eight-hand pony you've ever seen. He was under the Christmas tree. You should have seen it: Christmas at the Millon's house, it was every child's dream. Wasn't but 12 years later I was being yelled at by Olympians and competing in national championships.

**Early Start:** I began riding lessons in Tryon as a five-year-old riding with Windbrook Farm under the watchful eye of Lee Cone. His kids, Arden and Bailey, quickly became lifelong friends and here I learned the ropes while dodging electric fences and painting weathered jumps. We were young, dirty, and care-free; there wasn't a better way to learn the basics. I look back fondly on these times when riding was just for fun. The following years things got significantly more serious.

I remember the day my Mom told me we were moving barns and competing at the "A Circuit" level, and riding with Holli Adams of Meadow Hill Farm, now Still Creek. I didn't know who this Holli was and I wanted nothing to do with her.

Fast forward several years. Holli Adams is like my second mother and every summer I am living with her as a working student training



hard. She taught me just about everything I know about horses, and I'm grateful to her for that to this day.

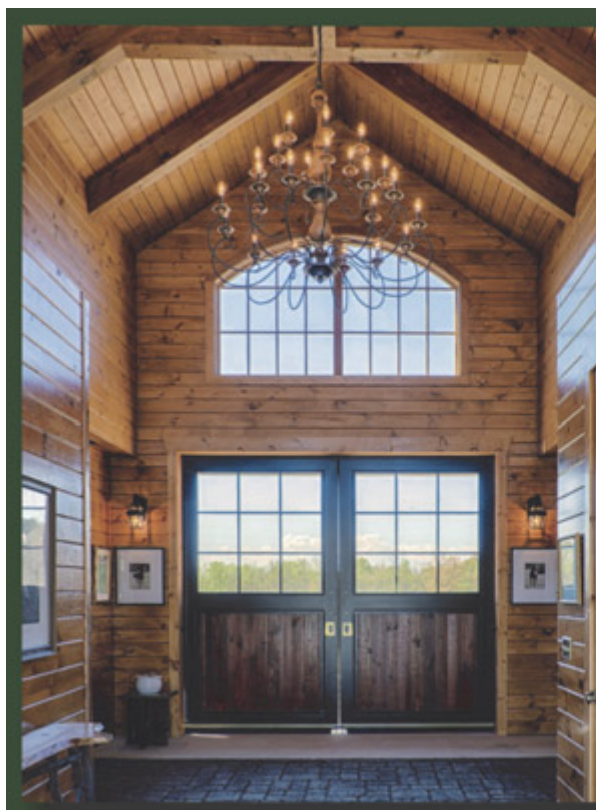
To all of you kids who have fulltime grooms and never lift a finger, good for you. My childhood wasn't like that. I took care of every horse I ever had and am a better man for it. I truly believe you will never have a stronger connection than with an animal you are responsible for. Tryon and the people who live here, like good parents, gave me every opportunity I needed to succeed, not only in the equestrian sport, but far further, in life.

Growing up in Tryon taught me to lose with dignity and win with humility. Growing up competing taught me how to handle pressure. If you can jump a six-year-old, that George Morris himself said was the heaviest animal he has ever met, around a freezing cold national championship course competing against over 200 riders under the watchful eye of the world's top talent... honestly you can do just about anything.

**Lessons Learned:** As an architecture student at Cornell, I found other kids could not handle the pressure of the Ivy League and the judgment of the best architecture professors in the world. For me it was just another day being judged. The perseverance and dedication that riding and the Tryon community taught me was by my side, and four years later I graduated with a masters in Architecture.

Today I rarely compete. However, I can still get on any horse you point me at and jump it around an adult hunter course. I keep the lessons I learned close to my heart and routinely share them with others. As I settle in my career, riding remains an important part of my life. *I will be back in the show ring soon.*

*"Growing up in Tryon  
taught me to  
lose with dignity  
and win with humility."*



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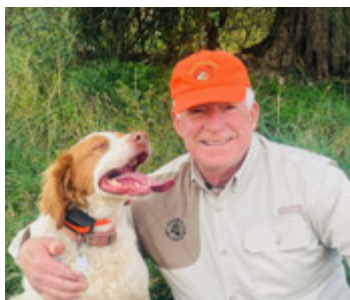




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## TRYON RIDING & HUNT CLUB



### TR&HC BOARD PRESIDENT: Terry Lynch

Welcome to the first edition of the Riding & Hunt Club's new *The Horse Country Quarterly*. We hope you will find it fun, informative and inspiring.

Through *The Quarterly*, we'll capture and share the many rich and multi-disciplined horse-related events in our area.

Concurrent with this inaugural issue, we are pleased to announce that the TR&HC has moved our office back to the Town of Tryon. For the past decade, our office was located on Route 9 in Columbus thanks to the generosity of Roger Smith of Green River Farm who donated a small house in Green Creek for the Club's use.

With the Club's financial stability, in large part due to the Club's successful partnership with TIEC to manage and host the Blockhouse Steeplechase and the Charity Horse Shows, we are excited to be back home in Tryon. Our address is 112 North Trade Street.

Our new offices will give us more visibility; will easily integrate us into downtown activities and economic development; and allow us to easily support local retailers and restaurants.

When you're in town, please swing by, stop in and see what's happening. Maybe you will want to get involved in one or more of the many events for which we always need help – and only lack enough people to make more of them happen.

On behalf our Board, we look forward to seeing you in Tryon!

Sincerely,

Terry Lynch, *President, Tryon Riding & Hunt Club*



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