

# COLLECTIVE REMARKS

THE DIGITAL NEWSPAPER



Anartz Chanca wins the AA Grand Prix at the USDF Nationals in Lexington, KY

## **HDS MEMBERS & POWER DRESSAGE COUPLE MARTA RENILLA AND ANARTZ CHANCA:**

**WIN BIG AT THE US NATIONALS IN LEXINGTON, KY BEGINNING OF November!!!**

Big congrats to the Houstonian couple, professional rider Marta Renilla and amateur rider Anartz Chanca, on their outstanding achievements at the US Nationals'23 in Lexington!

An exuberated Anartz had this to say of his successes:  
 "What an honor for Dazzle and I to be awarded the George W Wagner, Jr Perpetual Trophy as the Grand Prix AA Champion for the

## **Breaking news: Resurrecting "Collective Remarks"**

----- FRAN KEHR

Lesson learned.... Be careful what you "push" for. I've been "pushing" the HDS board for over a year now to reinstate the HDS newsletter, "Collective Remarks." My thinking is that it is important for the Club to have a monthly newsletter (communication wise for it's members) that gives members information on HDS activities *past and present*. Additionally, the newsletter would also include a classified section for sale items (horses, tack, services, etc). We could sell advertising space and put it in a newsletter "nest egg", with the goal of making a printable newsletter that is mailed monthly.

So, my lesson learned was that If you keep pushing for something, you might be put in charge of it!.... and here I am!

I'm hoping to have articles that are not only informative about HDS activities, but

second year in a row! (Presented by International Georgian Grand Horse Registry.)

We also received the Calaveras County Perpetual Trophy for the Grand Prix Freestyle AA Champion presented by Olva Stewart Farrow!

*Such fun US Nationals! I'm over the moon!*

Dazzle is the Grand Prix and Grand Prix freestyle AA Champion!!!  
Dante Rubin (6 year old) is the 3<sup>rd</sup> level AA champion!!!”

Anartz's wife, Marta Renilla, a seasoned competitor and Head Trainer at The Woodlands Equestrian Center in The Spring, Texas, clinched the Reserve Champion title in Inter I and secured 4th place in PSG with Zalando B. Her partnership with long-time dressage companion, WEC's Senor Rubinstein, earned them 8th place in the Grand Prix.



other clubs in our region. We'll have a calendar of events, and continually update each issue as we receive information.

I'm wanting to do a Featured Barn page each month for members to learn about different facilities around Houston. This month, Issue 1, is featuring Paragon Farm, located in northwest Houston off of FM 1488 in Conroe.

- Please take this introductory issue as a model and motivator to submit articles! Deadline will be the 15th of the month before, and you can submit information to be published:
- Pictures
- Articles
- Advertisements
- Classified
- Letters to the editor
- Show Results & pictures
- Barn Gossip
- Info from other clubs
- Dressage Activities include any Clinics, even if only for auditing

[Send to franwkwf@gmail.com](mailto:franwkwf@gmail.com)

**TWENTY-TWO RIDERS FROM TEXAS REPRESENTED US AT THE UNITED STATES NATIONAL FINALS IN LEXINGTON KY, NOVEMBER 9TH THROUGH THE 12TH 2023. HDS WAS REPRESENTED WITH FIVE RIDERS.**



HDS MEMBER, VALERIE JAROSEK, PLACING 5TH IN AA TRAINING LEVEL



ALWAYS FUN TO SEE YOUR NAME IN LIGHTS.  
CONGRATS TO JESSICA QUILIVAN PLACING IN  
THE 3RD LEVEL FREESTYLE!  
JESS ALSO COMPETED IN 4TH LEVEL.

*ARTICLE CONTINUED FROM PG 1....*

## *ANARTZ & MARTA BY ANA RENILLA DELGADO*

Their story provides a glimpse into the rich and rewarding world of dressage, blending skill, passion and understanding of horses. The couple's narrative goes beyond athletic accomplishments, celebrating their family life with three wonderful boys.



Marta's journey from her childhood experiences in a barn in Madrid with her late mom, to becoming an accomplished dressage trainer in the United States is inspiring. She has rich history of achievements including European Championships, Nations Cups, CDI's Young Horses Championships, and numerous Championship titles from training level to GP. Plus, she has developed a dozen horses to Grand Prix levels from their early training stages. Beyond competition, she manages a thriving equestrian facility in the North of Houston: Woodlands Equestrian Club, with over 65 horses covering various services such as boarding, riding school, sales, training and breeding.

Marta's commitment to foundational training and maintaining a perfect balance with each horse reflects a profound understanding and love for the equestrian world.



She has an holistic approach to horsemanship, emphasizing consistency and avoiding overexertion in training, which underscores her thoughtful and compassionate connection with horses. This dedication to horses' well-being, treating them as individuals with trust and pride, pays off with horses trusting her.

Congratulations once again to Marta Renilla, Anartz Chanca, and Woodlands Equestrian Club for their remarkable achievements!





## **FROM HDS BOARD MEETING – DECEMBER 11, 2023**

- **IN ATTENDANCE: JANE HOLMAN, ANGEL GUNN, SARAH DENHAM, DIANE DOUGHTERY, FLO EDELMAN, MADISON SMITH, FRAN KEHR, TRISH HENDERSON, ASHLEY SHAW CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:04 P.M.**
- **FINANCE REPORT: CHAMPIONSHIPS ACCOUNTING ALMOST COMPLETE AND LOOKING GOOD. SCHOOLING SHOW CHAMPIONSHIPS WILL SHOW A PROFIT. HDS WILL END THE YEAR IN THE BLACK.**
- **RECOGNIZED SHOWS: NEXT RECOGNIZED SHOW IS JANUARY 20-21 WITH YEAR END AWARDS TAKING PLACE FOLLOWING THE SATURDAY.**
- **COMPETITION. ANGEL IS PREPARING OUR APPLICATION TO HOST THE 2025 REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS.**
- **SCHOOLING SHOWS: WEBSITE HAS BEEN UPDATED AND SEEMS TO BE FUNCTIONING WELL. EASY TO LOCATE INFORMATION.**
- **SPONSORSHIP: MADISON TAYLOR WILL TAKE OVER AS SOON AS SHE RETURNS FROM HER TRIP IN JANUARY. JANE AND MADISON WILL MEET TO GO OVER THE EXISTING PROGRAMS. FIRST TASK FOR MADISON WILL BE TO FIND A SPONSOR FOR THE CDI AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**
- **SPECIAL EVENTS: JANE AND ASHLEY SHAW WILL TAG-TEAM THE AWARDS BANQUET WITH ASHLEY TAKING OVER STARTING WITH THE SPRING EVENTS. BTW, DO WE HAVE A THEME FOR SPRING/CDI? NEED TO CREATE A LINK TO PURCHASE AWARDS BANQUET TICKETS AFTER FIRST OF THE YEAR.**
- **PUBLICATIONS: FRAN KEHR HAS VOLUNTEERED TO MANAGE THE NEWSLETTER! HER IMMEDIATE GOAL IS TO GET SOMETHING OUT BY THE END OF DECEMBER. SHE IS CONTACTING TRAINERS AND BARNS TO GET INFORMATION AND HIGHLIGHTS. ONCE FORMATTED IT WILL GO TO FLO FOR DISTRIBUTION. NOTE: OUR CONTRACT WITH WIX PROVIDES FOR 5 “BLASTS” PER MONTH. WE NEED TO CONSOLIDATE MESSAGES SO WE DON’T GO OVER THE LIMIT.**
- **EDUCATION: SARAH STILL NEEDS A BUDGET FOR 2024. SHE IS REACHING OUT TO TRAINERS TO FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF EDUCATIONAL EVENTS PEOPLE WANT AND WHAT TYPE OF FORMAT IS PREFERRED – IN PERSON, ZOOM, ETC.**
- **AWARDS: HODGES IS HAVING A SALE WHICH CONCLUDES ON FEBRUARY 15. WE WANT TO TAKE AS MUCH ADVANTAGE OF THIS AS POSSIBLE – HENCE THE URGENCY IN GETTING A CDI SPONSOR SO WE CAN ORDER THOSE SPECIALIZED RIBBONS. BREED AWARDS HAVE BECOME A PAIN IN THE BUTT – BREED ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT RESPONSIVE. CONSIDER DROPPING SOME OR ALL. NEED TO COME UP SOME YEAR END AWARDS THAT ARE NOT FOR PERFORMANCE IN THE RING. SUGGESTIONS INCLUDE GROOM AWARD, SPORTSMANSHIP, VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR, YOUTH RIDER OF THE YEAR AND APPLE AWARDS – SMALLER AWARDS FOR SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR DEEDS DURING THE COURSE OF THE COMPETITION YEAR.**
- **MEMBERSHIP: ROCKING! GOT A BIG BOOST JUST BEFORE SCHOOLING SHOW CHAMPIONSHIP. (DIANE – I APPARENTLY DIDN’T WRITE DOWN THE NUMBERS. PLEASE ADVISE.) JUNIORS AND YOUNG RIDERS ARE NOW COLLECTIVELY “YOUTH” BUT STILL COMPETE IN AGE BASED CLASSES AS BEFORE.**
- **VOLUNTEERS: STILL LOOKING FOR A NEW CHAIR. JANE WILL HANDLE IN THE INTERIM.**
- **UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS: AMY UNISS HAS OFFICIALLY LEFT GSWEC. NEW PERSON – SARAH – IS POSSIBLY ONLY AN INTERIM MANAGER AS THE CENTER IS APPARENTLY STILL INTERVIEWING. HOPING FOR THE BEST .....JANE WILL ARRANGE FOR A POST OFFICE BOX**

## Fertile Ground for Grass Roots

By Nancy Hinz

*Once upon a time, far removed from the intense atmosphere of high-performance dressage, there was a Welsh pony farm in Willis, Texas. Madoc Welsh Ponies and Cobs was a wonderful place for children to grow, and learn the importance of caring for not only ponies but also for other riders who would become life long friends. The riding school at Madoc began simply as a way to get children out to the farm so that ponies were trained, ridden, shown and ultimately sold. Many pony breeders have similar programs, but at Madoc it turned in to so much more!*



*In 1983 Mary Alice imported Kentchurch Chime. He was the first Cob to receive a Legion of Merit award. His 1520 points were almost equally divided between breed and performance classes. He is only the second import so honored. Mary Alice us "during the first visit the Kentchurch Stud in Britain in 1980 I saw a lovely palomino filly was not for sale. A*

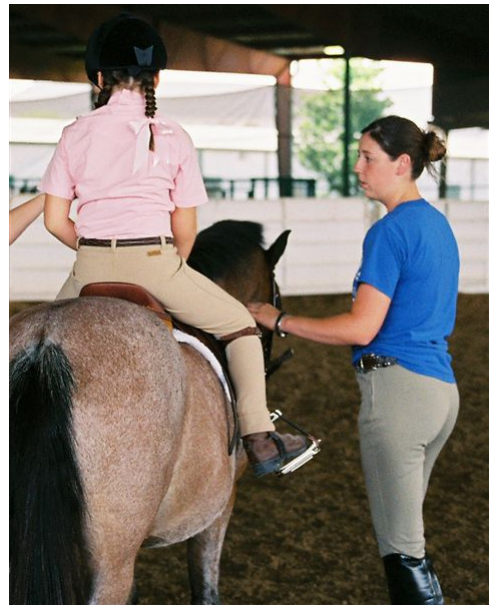
*palomino colt with the same breeding was ordered and Kentchurch Chime arrived in 1983". His kind temperament*



*eagerness to please soon identified him as a performance prospect. His career includes show ring wins in halter, pleasure, hunter, and driving. Outside the Welsh world he has been successful in combined driving pairs, tandem driving, hunting and most importantly in dressage. Nancy Hinz began working with Chime in 1991 and took the dressage world by storm. His unique looks and personality, not to mention the flying feathers, were a tremendous advertisement for the Welsh breed. He and Nancy competed up to Grand Prix. His musical freestyles were always spectacular and brought crowds to watch. When not showing, Chime lived outside with his mares and foals. He died at the age of 28 in 2011. In addition to Chime being the first Welsh Cob in the United States to compete at Grand Prix, there are thirty four Madoc Welsh ponies or cobs listed on USDF scores that were bred by Mary Alice. Seven of*



them competed at the FEI levels, including Madoc Patriot, who was ridden by one of the Madoc riders as part of the Region 9 team at the North American Junior and Young Rider Championships in Bromont Canada in 2003. Four competed through Fourth Level, four competed through Third Level, six at Second Level, seven at First Level and another six at Training Level. One of the Cobs, Madoc Mari, earned the distinction of being the lowest scoring competitor for the USCTA 2019 show season by finishing at a recognized event on a score of 15! There were also numerous Madoc ponies and cobs who competed at hunter/jumper shows, driving competitions and Pony Club events. Madoc Farm produced not only a wonderful line of ponies, but there were many successful students that have continued to be a valuable part of USDF Region 9. There are five former Madoc riders who are currently professionals in the region. They are Nancy Hinz, Erika West-Danque, Cynthia Powell, Benjamin Winger and Allison Cyprus. Another rider who had been at Madoc since the age of seven is Sarah (Christy) Doney. She has spent the last fifteen years as an assistant to Guenter Siedel as well as being an active professional in California. The other Region 9 professionals that have ties to Madoc are Julie Madriguera, Jessica Fan, and Kalie Beckers. They have all spent many successful years competing on their Madoc Cobs. Of these nine riders, seven have already achieved their USDF Gold Medals and the remaining two only lack their two Grand Prix scores. In 1991 I (Nancy Hinz) started working for Madoc Farm. I taught students in the lesson program and started and trained the young ponies. When they were going well under saddle, I would put a progression of riders on them starting with the older more advanced kids then all the way down to the beginners when the ponies were safe enough. Once they passed inspection from Mary Alice they would be advertised for sale as safe, fun kids' ponies. I began working with Mary Alice's stallion Chime who at the time was competing in combined driving and WPCSA shows. We started talking about doing dressage with Chime just for fun and to see how far he would go. He, of course, made it all the way to Grand Prix. Throughout the 30+ years that I worked for Mary Alice she was extremely supportive of all that I wanted to do in the dressage world. She was by far the most influential person in my life and I would not be where I am today without her. Her knowledge as a breeder is evident in all of the fine Welsh Cobs and Ponies that she produced. From start to finish, Mary Alice Williams is a top-quality person!



Julie Madriguera, who owns and competes Madoc All Dun has this to say about Mary Alice and her program: "I first became aware of Mary Alice and her ponies in the late 90's when I received one in training. This son of Madoc's flagship stallion Kentchurch Chime was a charming and talented gelding that the owners could not be convinced to sell to me. Shortly after having this pony in training, I had the great experience of watching Kentchurch Chime compete with his trainer, Nancy Hinz, in both Texas and in Florida. I watched them advance from Fourth Level to Grand Prix together. I was one of their biggest fans. Of course, there is no way to prove this, and my competition for this title would be extreme, but I believe it to be true nonetheless. Nancy and Chime drew crowds and applause and brought joy whenever and wherever they competed. They were excellent representatives for Region 9 when there were not so many people going outside of the

region to compete. Mary Alice fostered and supported this partnership. Mary Alice pairing her passion for ponies with a dedicated dressage trainer helped to develop a true dressage school! Since developing Chime, Nancy has gone on to develop many other horses and represent the region as a US Dressage Finals winner. She is also one of our top coaches in the region and has a string of regional and national student's success stories at every level including everything from schooling shows to international Championships such as NAYC and The Festival of Champions. I cannot overstate the value that Mary Alice has provided to the region and its members. She produced so many sound, talented, sane ponies and small horses for people to ride and learn to compete. She also did this at a price point that almost anyone could afford! Her contribution as a breeder and dressage enthusiast has not been matched in the region and will likely never be duplicated. Those of us who had a Madoc Welsh pony will forever be in her debt. I know that I am. After many years I am honored to have one of her ponies that has advanced to FEI Intermediate 1 and is working on Grand Prix. As a working dressage professional my experience in investing similar sums for myself or students has never yielded the results that my pony, or many others from her breeding, have achieved. Julie Madriguera – LTR Dressage”



My main objective in writing this article was to tell the story of Mary Alice Williams and Madoc Welsh Ponies and Cobs, but in this day of too many safe sport violations, I also wanted to publicize the good places that still exist. I truly believe that regulations and accountability are necessary to keep children safe BUT there are still people and programs out there that teach and care for children in a wholesome productive way. The story of Madoc is the best example that I know to illustrate this point. Mary Alice told me many times that what makes her the most proud is not the ponies but the children who came through her program. Some of those same children who are now grown and have families of their own come back to visit and bring the next generation of riders to meet Mary Alice. Madoc Farm put many wonderful ponies out on the show circuit and in homes across the country but also developed riders who exhibit good horsemanship and a strong love for ponies and the sport of dressage. Many of them started as kids in the program and learned how to have good manners, work hard, help each other and became very respectable adults. Mary Alice set a high standard for her riders and her breeding program and I am proud to have been a part of it!!



*Reprinted with permission from The Dressage Foundation*

## **TDF's Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award Presented to Sarah Denham; TDF's Region 9**

Sarah Denham was recently presented with The Dressage Foundation's 15th annual \$5,000 Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award at the 2023 Great American/USDF Region 9 Dressage Championships.

Sarah Denham (Iola, TX) has a Master of Education from Virginia Tech. She has owned Denali Sporthorses since 2014 and has a wide variety of students. Sarah has a long history of volunteerism and was recently appointed to the United States Dressage Federation Adult Education Committee. The selection committee for the Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award commended Sarah for her strong teaching skills.

*Sarah said, "I am incredibly honored to receive this award. I have always prioritized developing my ability to teach correctly and clearly. To be recognized for that is really rewarding. I have been so lucky to work with several gifted instructors during my dressage career and those experiences and relationships were transformative. I am committed to continuing to provide quality dressage instruction for years to come as this discipline, and the good it does for horses and riders, is truly my passion."*

Students or peers nominate dressage instructors, who then submit an



application that is reviewed by a prominent, independent selection committee. In addition to being a USDF Region 9 member in good standing and a Region 9 resident, the recipient must also demonstrate adherence to sound dressage principles and have a reputation for honesty, integrity, and community service.

For more information about TDF's Region 9 Teaching Excellence Award, please visit [www.dressagefoundation.org](http://www.dressagefoundation.org) or contact Sara Weiss, Director of Grants and Programs, at 402-434-8585 or [sara@dressagefoundation.org](mailto:sara@dressagefoundation.org). To support this Award through donations, please contact Jenny Johnson, Executive Director, at 402-434-8585 or at [jenny@dressagefoundation.org](mailto:jenny@dressagefoundation.org). Donations can also be made online at [www.dressagefoundation.org/support](http://www.dressagefoundation.org/support).



Peaches ridden by Allie Cyprus



Madoc Alis ridden by Brigitte Wexle



Madoc Dylan ridden by Ben Winger

Mary Alice Williams was born in 1936, in Roseburg, Oregon. She spent her childhood living on a sheep farm her father operated in Elkton, Oregon until she went to college and majored in Education.



One of her first memories is when she was young, was of men coming and taking all the horses away from the farm and leaving a tractor. Several years later she received a pony for her birthday because her mother did not think she should grow up on a farm and not have a pony. She was married in 1960 and her husband Dan worked for Phillips Petroleum. They lived in many different places including British Honduras, Abu Dhabi, Libya, Oklahoma, and London. She moved to Texas with her husband and daughter Miriam in August of 1975. While attending a Welsh pony show in Waco, TX she purchased several raffle tickets for a Welsh pony mare who was in foal, because she also did not want her daughter to grow up without a pony!! She won the raffle and the rest is history. She imported several Cob mares and a palomino Cob colt who would become the herd sire. His name was Kentchurch Chime. Over the next 38 years Mary Alice owned and operated Madoc Welsh Ponies and Cobs. She was also very active in her community teaching English as a second language to school children, being a court appointed special advocate for children and many other charity projects. She is now happily retired and living in Ajijic, Mexico where she continues to be an active member of her community.

# The Dressage Foundation

The Dressage Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit, tax-exempt, donor-driven organization that is dedicated to educating, supporting, and advancing the sport of dressage. The organization solicits contributions, appropriately allocates the donations, and awards grants to dressage riders, judges, instructors, breeders, high-performance teams, nonprofit equestrian organizations, and more. For more information, please visit [www.dressagefoundation.org](http://www.dressagefoundation.org).

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## ***THE CENTURY CLUB***

The Century Club recognizes dressage riders and horses whose combined ages total 100 years or more. Horse and rider perform a test of any level at a show (schooling or recognized) or event, and are scored by a dressage judge or professional. Western Dressage riders are also welcome to join the Century Club. An application (found under the "Join the Century Club" heading) should be completed and sent to the Foundation at least two weeks prior to the ride. The Dressage Foundation (TDF) will send a beautiful black and gold ribbon to be presented to the team at the show. Following the ride, TDF sends a Century Club plaque to the new team.



The Century Club was formed at The Dressage Foundation in 1996, at the suggestion of Max Gahwyler (CT), who with his horse Prinz Eugen, became team # 2 in the Century Club (pictured at the above). The first "Centurion Class" ride, held in 1996, featured Lazelle Knocke and her teammate Don Perignon. Lazelle's ride came after her extensive 'three year vacation' away from riding due to surgery and rehab time. As she said, "Hopefully the Centurion class will be in the forefront of a very interesting opportunity for Seniors and Dressage as Recreational and Therapeutic riding. It really is challenging and has long-term goals and benefits.

The Century Club ride has evolved into a serious endeavor that encourages and rewards our older senior riders. The rider need not show everything at their level of ride, but it is important to show that rider and horse work well together. And while we stress the serious nature of riding a test, we want all senior riders for the Century Club to have fun! While this club has no dues, no meetings and no agenda, except to enjoy the occasion, many do keep in contact with the Foundation and with each other by email and phone. This is a wonderful group, not only experienced in horsemanship, but in various and unique life experiences. In order "to do good, we must do well," and we will welcome your financial support to help with expenses of the Century Club News, and the personal plaque and ribbon that we present to each Century Club member.

### **HDS BOASTS FOUR RECENT CENTURY RIDERS!!!**

# Georgette Lee and Omen



*Team #464 Georgette D. Lee & Omen  
Georgette and Omen rode Introductory Level Test A to complete their Century Club ride on October 17, 2020.  
Ages 76 and 24  
Combined age: 100*

**This is a story of sudden transformation and resurrection made possible by Omen, a Dutch Warmblood foaled in 1996 and currently FEI Schoolmaster at Windy Knoll Farm with Fran Dearing Kehr. I met Omen in August 2020 during an infrequent visit to the barn and at that moment in time the thought that I would never ride again because of multiple joint replacements!**

**Omen and I rode for the Century Club on October 17, 2020, at Windy Knoll Farm Fall Schooling Show performing Intro test A with "S" Judge Fran Kehr at "C."**

**I was fascinated by horses from an early age. Even so, my parents dutifully provided ballet, piano, and art lessons throughout my childhood. We moved from my birthplace at Norfolk, Virginia, to Houston, Texas, when I was two years old. My first rides on horses were on mounts from a rent line in Bergen Beach, New York, while spending summers with my cousins. College days had me back in New York at the Fashion Institute of Technology and Teacher's College at Columbia University. I rode rental horses in Prospect Park and Central Park. I returned to Houston after graduation to teach art in secondary schools. Soon after that, I married a wonderful man. He often said he wished he were a horse!**

**My Cloud was my first horse. He was brave, kind, safe, and a seasoned eventer. So that is what we did.**

**In 1980 I changed professions to law enforcement. I worked at Harris County Constable Precinct 2 and Precinct 5 in Houston, Texas, retiring in 2016. I qualified for mounted patrol division in Precinct 5 thanks to the support of Captain Dennis Kuithe, Captain Jim Scarvan, and Sgt. J.R. Hatch. Hanoverian mares Wrapsody and Patroon became mine in 1994. These mares produced some lovely babies. Educating young horses became my job.**

**Windy Knoll Farm, Magnolia, Texas and Fran Dearing Kehr, along with many other mentors and friends including the American Hanoverian Society; Judy and Volker Ehlers of Glenwood Farms in Wilton, California; Katy Equine Clinic in Brookshire, Texas; Woods Quarter Horses and Patty Woods in Brookshire, Texas; and Dan Keen Horsemanship in Spicewood, Texas, provided exceptional advice and services to me for many years.**

**Trey Thompson of Village Fitness in Houston, Texas, deserves credit for years of physical rehabilitation and support. Dr. Chris Nevins, Dr. Robin Goytia, and Dr. Sherman Nagler are always there for me as are Rheumatologists Mona Iversen and Holly Jones.**

***Special thanks to The Dressage Foundation for providing the setting for the happiest day of my life.***

## ***Team #620 Judith Myers and Dancer***



*Team #620: Judith Myers and Dancer  
Team Myers: Judy Myers, Fran Kehr (judge), Owner Kelly McChesney,  
From: Spring, Texas  
Coach Sandra Lindenberg  
Ages: 82 & 18  
Combined Age: 100  
Test: Introductory Level Test B  
Date: February 11, 2023*

**My horse journey began at about the age of six with my younger sister at a carnival. Our parents offered to let us ride a pony around a fenced ring for 25 cents. We rode by ourselves! No person led us. It was magical! We did not want to get off. From that day forward, for our lifetimes, we shared a deep love of this four-legged animal.**

**My sister, Susan Jeffers, became a world-acclaimed children's book illustrator. Her many books include, "My Pony," and "My Chincoteague Pony," which includes a letter to Susan from Marguerite Henry, author of "Misty of Chincoteague. Later in my life, before children, I bought my first horse for \$250. He was a red chestnut off-the-track Thoroughbred. He was a special horse, kind, gentle, and generous. After my three boys were grown and through college, I bought a Quarter Horse who was doing Training Level dressage. He had originally been trail ridden through the streets of Brooklyn, New York, before learning some dressage in Maryland. He**

**was patient and eager to please, a wonderful soul.**

**Recently, I moved to Texas and found a great barn. I was able to lease Dancer, a wonderful 18-year-old grey Quarter Horse mare. This lovely mare had an accident in her younger years and then was turned out for seven years. She is owned now by a sweet woman who put Dancer into gentle training with a USDF gold medalist.**

**The farm was recommended to me as a very fine barn, and I have indeed found my Texas horse family. Everyone there is a true blessing to me. I am immeasurably grateful to all of the wonderful ladies for making my Century Club ride come to be.**

**My family, including my grown boys, flew into Texas from Florida and Alabama and my Texas family hosted the whole event. It is among my life's most cherished memories, and I thank God for it**

## **Team #711 Valerie Smith and Chica**



*Photo by K. McChesney Photography and Fine Art  
Team #711: Valerie Smith and Chica  
From: Willis, Texas  
Ages: 80 & 21  
Combined Age: 101  
Test: First Level Test 1  
Date: September 30, 2023*

**I started riding in England at about the age of ten. There was a riding school opposite our house, and I mucked out stalls for a half-hour lesson. It was hard work, but I was around horses and that was all I wanted.**

**I came to America in my twenties and the horse world was just a distant dream until my sixties. My husband and I bought a small farm, and I started taking lessons again at a local riding barn on their school horses where I was finally introduced to dressage.**

**At the same time, I was volunteering at a horse rescue in our neighborhood and a young Spanish Mustang mare came in from another rescue in New Mexico. Her owners were taking her to a sale barn when they passed the rescue and decided to drop her off there. They said she kept falling down and was unsafe for their daughter to ride.**

**When I saw Chica on the day she arrived in Texas, I knew instantly that I would adopt her. I brought her to our farm where she joined our small herd of somewhat older adopted horses. She was four years old and for two years we did very little with her. I had already been fortunate to find Gina Collier, a mobile dressage trainer, who was working with**

**me and our other horses. Gina saw the potential in Chica and so our journey together began.**

**We have progressed slowly as I am not an ambitious rider, whereas Chica is an alpha mare who believes she knows exactly what to do and how it should be done! However, with Gina's encouragement, expert teaching, and many years of very hard work, I have, in Chica, the most wonderful, talented riding companion.**

**I want to thank my husband, Bill, for supporting me and doing so much barn work; Gina, who has never wavered in her belief of what we could accomplish; dear friends Debora and Elaine who have encouraged and cheered us on regardless; our farrier, Craig McDonald, who has kept everyone sound, and our veterinarian, Dr. Mark Haugland, who has kept everyone healthy. But most of all, I must thank Chica and all our horses. The journey we have traveled together has taught me more than horsemanship but about life and friendship and I am very honored and humbled to be joining the Century Club with Chica. Our ride is dedicated to all the adopted and would-be-adopted horses who are just waiting for their chance to shine!**

## **Team #712 Jane Holman and On A Lark**



*Team #712: Jane Holman and On A Lark  
From: The Woodlands, Texas  
Ages: 73 & 27  
Combined Age: 100  
Test: Introductory Test B  
Date: October 7, 2023*

**It was a dark and stormy night (actually a dark and stormy morning) and the first day of the GAIG/USDF Regional Championships 2023 was off to a rocky start. The Houston Dressage Society (HDS) has hosted the Regionals and a concurrent open show at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center for several years and, as a long-time board member, it seemed like a swell idea to schedule my Century Club ride for this year's event. I am currently serving as President and Sponsorship chair of HDS, I was going to be there anyway..... so why not ride? After a three-hour weather delay, On A Lark and I went down centerline at 7:50 p.m. on October 5.**

**I've been riding for more than 45 years but I haven't shown in at least 10 years and time takes a toll on bodies and clothing. A few weeks before the show, I pulled out my old show clothes and managed to squeeze into my white breeches. Thankfully, I had a spare pair**

**of white cotton gloves because my leather gloves literally dissolved. But I couldn't quite get my jacket buttoned. No worries – this has been the hottest summer on record in Houston. I thought, "I'll be riding at 4 p.m. – jackets will be waived!!!" And then the storms came, and the evening cooled down. My barn mates came to my rescue with braiding bands and if you look closely at the photo, you'll see that my jacket is open ever so slightly.**

**On A Lark is owned by my friend and barn mate, Brenda Anderson. On A Lark is as willing and steady as they come but, like me, hadn't been in the show ring in many years. Nevertheless, when the bell rang, she gave me that "we got this" shake of her head and burned through the test like a champion. We ended up with the high score for the class! Go figure! Maybe Lark and I will go for it again next year – but I think I might buy a new jacket.....**



## FEATURED BARN of the MONTH:



## PARAGON STABLES

Welcome to Paragon Stables; A world-class facility that is home to head trainer and manager, Ben Winger and Owner of Albright Dressage, Ben Albright.

Together with the owners of Paragon, Melany and Thomas Lipar, "The Bens" run a boutique FEI dressage training program and event facility that hosts regular educational events with some of the worlds top professionals. The full training programs are a highly tailored and personalized learning experience for horses and clients that are looking for a competition barn with a horse-centric approach.

In addition to training and campaigning Melany and Tom's exceptional herd of horses, The Bens take on clients and students that are looking for training for their horses or themselves. The environment at Paragon is inspiring and supportive. It's the goal that every rider can feel comfortable enough allow themselves to focus on what matters-the horse! The exceptional staff at Paragon lives on-site for 24-7 care. The head grooms, Cesar and Sergio keep the horses of Paragon in top shape all year, whether they are home in Conroe or they are training and competing in Florida for the winter. The group of top-class horse professionals such as vets; Dr. Bill Stone and Dr. Bill Patterson, Farrier; Virgil Conde, Podiatrist; Dr Ted Kellerman, Chiropractor; Dr. Andrea Sargent and PEMF practitioner; Colleen Williams,

round out the home team working together.

For students of The Bens that are not at Paragon, haul-in lessons, video lessons, or clinics at their own farm work for them as well.

The Bens believe that continuing education is the key to future success and this is obvious when you look at the barn schedule. This year alone, they have hosted events for or worked privately with Steffen Peters, Laura Graves, Tina Konyot, Pam Goodrich, Anne Gribbons and Sabine Shut-Kerry.

Paragon has also twice hosted the annual USDF region 9 young rider clinic with George Williams and plans to continue to support the region's pony, junior and young riders.

Paragon as it is today would not exist if it wasn't for the owner, Melany and the original manager and trainer of Paragon, Anna Burtell.

18 years ago, Anna and Melany, who is a very dedicated rider herself, had a vision to make a top-class facility. What they created is nothing short of an incredible facility for horses and riders that still feels special to this day. Anna retired and handed the

"reins" to Ben Winger in 2017. Winger's partner, Ben Albright joined the team when he moved to Texas in 2019. Over time, Paragon has become home to a strong program of competitive horses and seemingly endless opportunities to improve and learn about dressage. Of course, none of this would be possible without the support of the owners, Melany and Tom, who are generous enough to support these events and share this special place with everyone.

The team at Paragon wants the community to know that they are welcome to take advantage of the educational opportunities at Paragon in any way that suits them!

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# HDS Schooling Show Championships

*Results* click this link [https://www.showsecretary.com/rs.asp?Show\\_ID=1041](https://www.showsecretary.com/rs.asp?Show_ID=1041)  
Photos Compliments of Kristie Scholten <https://www.kristiescholten.com>



Harper Utay



Bonnie Armentrout



Jenny Stewart



Alison, Courtney, Doris MacDonald



Taylor Meyer



Ivy Backes



Roxanne Ellingsworth



Hailey Prinste



WDAA Res Champ



WDAA Res Champ



Magnums Finest Chic  
Becky Nesbitt  
Champion WDAA Open Intro  
Reserve Champion Open Basic

## Upcoming Events and Info Here and Yonder:

- 2024 region 9 omnibus now available online and a few books left
- Alamo Dressage is hosting Kristy Wysocki for a clinic and judge's educational session February 9 – 11, 2024
- Sabine Shut- Kery Clinic at Twinwood Equestrian Center Feb 16 – 17, 2024
- Dallas Dressage is hosting Joan Darnell for a Freestyle Seminar Feb 17, 2024
- Haras Hacienda hosting a MASTERCLASS with Lisa Wilcox April 1 – 2, 2024
- Renee Waters, County Saddlery Rep joins Lisa for saddle fittings April 1 -2, 20 24
- Recognize Shows:
- HDS Winter I & II + Awards Banquet January 21 - 22, 2024
- FEI CDI 2\* + HDS Spring Show April 25 – 28, 2024
- HDS Summer Show 1 & II June a 8 – 9, 2024
- HDS Laborious Show 1 & II August 24 – 25, 2024
- Schooling Shows: Sienna Stables.... January 21, 2024
- Windy Knoll Farm.....Feb 10, 2024
- rain date Feb 24, 2024

### **2024 Election Results**

Secretary - Jessica  
Jemison  
Treasurer - Terri Harlan  
Membership - Diane  
Dougherty  
Recognized Shows -  
Angel Gunn  
Education - Sarah  
Denham  
Publications - Fran Kehr

**Our Volunteer Chair  
position is still open!**

In Upcoming Issues..... classified section.

Free to HDS Members!!! Send me what you have for sale, lease, etc.,,, Tack? Horses? Trailers?

Send classified ads to [franwkf@gmail.com](mailto:franwkf@gmail.com)

Want your barn “featured” next issue?? Send pics and article to

[franwkf@gmail.com](mailto:franwkf@gmail.com)

Letters to the Editor? Article to publish? Bring it on!

We’ll print it!

