

Whinny

MAGAZINE

A publication for St. Louis area equestrians and pet lovers.

DECEMBER
2005



RAYROCKWELLPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Peyton Yake rides Anita in a walk/trot class Nov. 5 at the Irish Fox Schooling Show at the National Equestrian Center.

Hamilton Stables LLC near New Melle is this month's "Barn Beautiful" photo essay. **Pages 24, 25.**



Blair Feed and Grain Inc.



Greene's Country Store and Feed



Tack Room Saddlery



The Tack Trunk

Local stores share their history and current strategy in a changing world.

Pages 16-21.

Australian veterinarian Chris Pollitt talks about how



St. Louis has made huge contributions to laminitis research through the Animal Health Foundation.

Pages 5-9.

Rising stars in the horse world

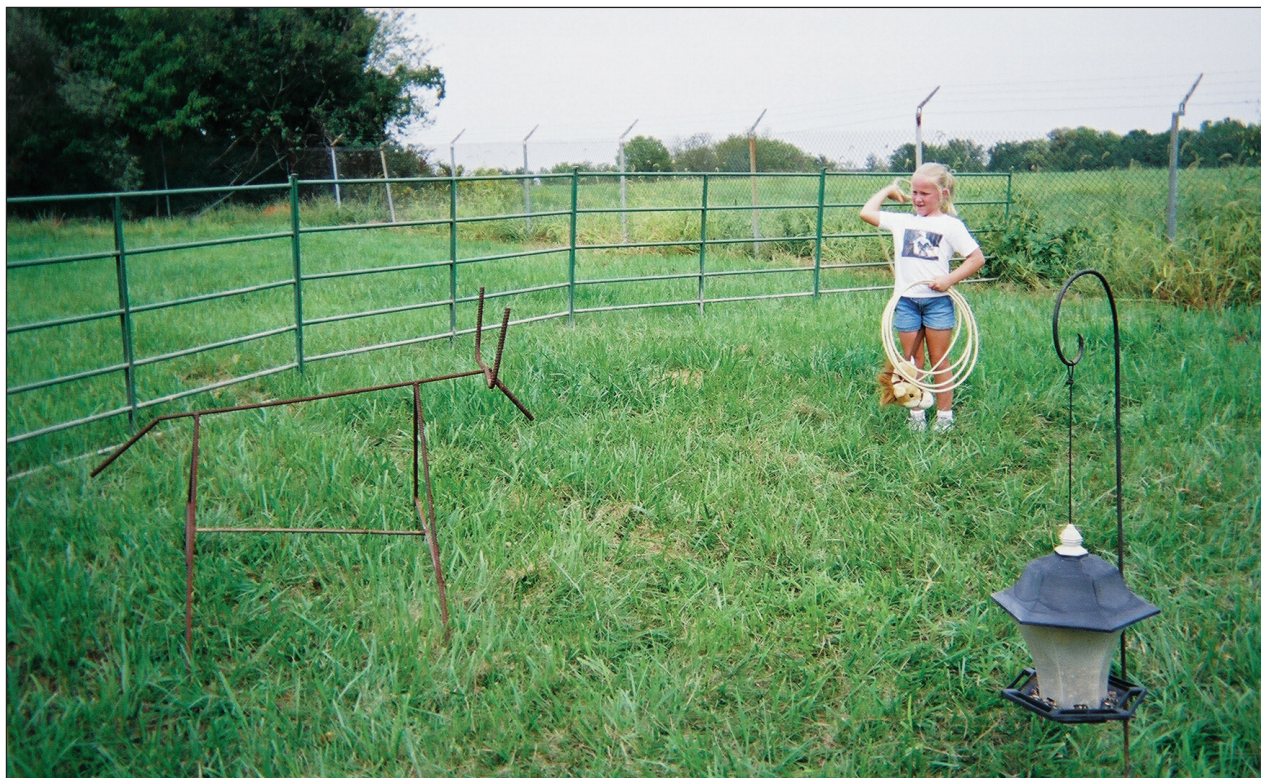


PHOTO COURTESY CHERYL LEWIS

A young equestrian tries to keep her mount under control as she competes in the Wee Little Rodeo at a benefit fun show, A Day to Cure Diabetes, held Sept. 24 at the Warren County Fairgrounds.



Rachel Adkins (left), 6, and Katie Hagerty, 9, hang out at the Irish Fox Schooling Show, held Nov. 5-6 at the National Equestrian Center. Adkins was riding Penelope at the show and Hagerty was riding Third Note.



Rachel Burkins of Edwardsville, Ill., unbraids Picasso, or Joe, after his first dressage show at the SLADS Fall Classic, held Oct 8-9 at the National Equestrian Center. Rachel said the 6-year-old pinto gelding was excellent at his debut.

Additional photo gallery pages: 10, 11

Also inside

HAIR-LOOMS:



A local woman turns dog hair into keepsakes for pet lovers. Her business is called Rover's Comb, and she gets to put smiles on people's faces for a living.

PAGE 27

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR *Letters to the editor must be no more than 125 words, mailed on paper, signed and include a phone number for verification. Your name will be withheld upon request and your phone number is strictly confidential. Since this magazine's focus is positive, helpful information, we ask that you be constructive in your comments. We reserve the right not to run anything we deem inappropriate. Letters may be mailed to the address below.*

Whinny

P.O. Box 337
New Melle, MO 63365
636-398-5067
whinnymagazine@aol.com



Dedicated to a dog
named Whinny |
1997-2005

From the editor

Welcome to the second edition of *Whinny*, with many more to come, thanks to all the encouragement and support of the horse community.

While many magazines use this space to run a wise and witty column, some editors know their limitations. Instead, I thought I'd spend a few minutes explaining some basic rules of journalism and the challenges so far with this publication.

A magazine's news department is supposed to gather the top news of the day, and, in turn, create a loyal readership of people who trust its judgment. In a parallel world, the magazine's ad department gives businesses the opportunity to tell this loyal readership about their product, and the ads pay for the publication. The two departments are supposed to be completely separate. News organizations do not cover a particular subject or business because it took an ad. Similarly, they do not cover a particular subject and then ask for an ad from the subject. Oddly, I've been tempted to turn down several ads in this issue, because it would look like that was happening.

I'm running into some interesting dilemmas wearing the hats of both departments at the moment. I've had advertisers ask if they could put together an ad using photos that ran with a story in the previous issue. Hmm. I'm not going to be able to improve on the photos if I take them again. But, will people recognize the photos as something other than a story this time? In the end, I said yes to the photo use, and we're thrilled to have the wonderful advertisers. Half the purpose of the magazine is for advertisers to reach their potential customers.

The magazine does not play favorites, but some names are going to show up often because they are busy in the horse world. I have at least one additional writer coming on board in future issues and hope to have more diversity in the topics. I'd like to create a page written for or by youths, but I'm a long way from childhood, and kids today are very sophisticated. I'm going to need guidance on what today's youth would find interesting.

Call me biased, but I think this is a great issue, full of information about our community that you can't get anywhere else.

Enjoy.

Joanie McKenna, editor

Calendar

Dec. 7-11: Equine Productions
Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center
Maryann Meiners 636-398-4623
Tommy McIntyre 630-842-7650

Dec. 10-11: Dressage clinic with internationally known rider Paul Belasik at Hamilton Stables LLC. Belasik is author of "Riding Toward the Light" and two other books. He gives clinics across the globe and trains a wide cross section of clients at his Pennsylvania Riding Academy at Lost Hollow Farm. For riding or auditing, contact Hamiltonstables@aol.com. For information on Belasik, go to www.paulbelasik.com.

Dec. 14-18: Equine Productions
Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center

Dec. 19-21: Last Chance
ApPointMent
Kim Rumpsa 636-452-5521

Jan. 4-8: Equine Productions
Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center

Jan. 11-15: Equine Productions
Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center

Jan. 28-29: Irish Fox Stables
Hunter/Jumper Show (Arena A)
National Equestrian Center
John and Beth Korenak
636-398-6868, 636-398-5538
www.irishfoxstables.com

Jan. 28: NEC Fun Show (Arena B)
National Equestrian Center
636-561-8080

Jan. 29: NEC Barrel Race
National Equestrian Center
636-561-8080

Feb. 4-5: Meet Me in St. Louis
Dressage Schooling Show (Arena A)
National Equestrian Center
636-561-8080

Feb. 4-5: Excellence in Motion
Dog Agility (Arena B)
National Equestrian Center
Karen Winter 314-440-3623

Feb. 8-12: Equine Productions

Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center

Feb. 15-19: Equine Productions
Holiday Hunter/Jumper Series
National Equestrian Center

Feb. 25-26: Irish Fox Stables
Hunter/Jumper Show (Arena A)
National Equestrian Center

Feb. 25-26: Missouri Reining Horse
Association Fun Show
National Equestrian Center
Gwen Haskins 314-795-5543

Feb. 25-26: Missouri Equine Council
Equine Education Celebration
Boone County Fairgrounds, Columbia,
Mo., Centered Riding Clinic with Susan
Harris.

June 2, 2006: SLADS
Summer Festival I
National Equestrian Center

June 3-4: SLADS Summer Festival II
National Equestrian Center

Oct. 7-8: SLADS Fall Classic
National Equestrian Center

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present to win. One entry per
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many times as you'd like.

Other giveaways:

1,500 pounds dog and cat food
250 pounds bird feed

Holiday sale: Prices through
Dec. 31 or while supplies last.

In depth

Waging war on laminitis

St. Louis donations totaling \$650,000 have altered the battle, researcher says

By Joanie McKenna
Whinny Magazine Editor

Laminitis is considered the second leading cause of death in horses, behind colic.

And yet, owners who haven't dealt with the disease know little about it.

Laminitis is a catastrophic failure that happens in the equine foot, caused by some trigger factor. The crippling disease strikes indiscriminately, taking down such thoroughbred legends as Secretariat and Affirmed, and more recently, Sunday Silence.

Those who have been through the suffering watch for every new medical development, often pinning their hopes on the world's leading researcher in the field, Dr. Chris Pollitt of Australia.

Once an all-around practitioner, Pollitt has spent the last decade building a team of dedicated scientists at the University of Queensland. The group has been making significant progress in determining what causes laminitis, and St. Louis has played no small part in making that happen.

Ongoing funding

Since 1995, Pollitt has been receiving grants twice a year from the Animal Health Foundation, a group started by St. Louis veterinarian Don Walsh and friends in 1984 to raise funds for animal research. Laminitis was supposed to be the first of many diseases to be cured, but it remains a thorn in the side of all.



PHOTO COURTESY DR. DON WALSH

Veterinarians Chris Pollitt and Don Walsh talk about laminitis at Walsh's home in Pacific.

Pollitt calls himself lucky to receive the AHF funding and says that, without it, he'd be working at half the speed and producing half the volume.

Pollitt was in the United States this fall to speak at three big events:

- The Purina Mills Veterinary Equine Conference, attended by 400 veterinarians Oct 29-30 at the Purina Mills Conference Center in Gray Summit;

- The Third International Equine Conference on Laminitis and Diseases of the Foot, held Nov. 4-6 in West Palm Beach, Fla.;

- And an Animal Health Foundation fundraising dinner Nov. 19, again at the Purina Mills center.

Those who have attended the AHF fundraisers know Pollitt

Continued on next page

Factors that may lead to laminitis

- 1) Excess grain.
- 2) Gastrointestinal disease.
- 3) Obesity.
- 4) Equine metabolic syndrome.
- 5) Cushing's Disease (Pituitary Pars Intermedia dysfunction).
- 6) Grass.
- 7) Corticosteroid drugs.
- 8) Retained placenta in mares.
- 9) Exertional myositis, or muscle breakdown following extreme exertion.
- 10) Pregnancy-related laminitis.
- 11) Hyperthermia.
- 12) Black Walnut toxicity.
- 13) Stress.

Source: Dr. Don Walsh

In depth

Continued from previous page

to be a tall, swashbuckling horse-man who can tell a great story and can crack a mean stockwhip.

In private, he's a soft-spoken veterinarian who reviews his work with the passion of a scientist and the wisdom of someone who has seen a lot of suffering.

"I hate the disease. I hate it so much," he says, describing the helplessness of trying to treat a horse once it has fallen victim to laminitis.

During his visit to the area, Pollitt stayed at Walsh's log home in Pacific, and the two often stayed up all night reviewing cases and theories. Interviewed there, both veterinarians say it's a long way from their first meeting in 1991, when they attended the same seminar, but neither remembers talking to the other.

Walsh was slowly building his research foundation but still looking for the right person to fund.

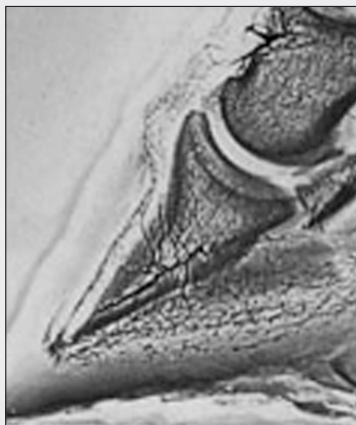
In 1995, the two again were at the same seminar held in Kentucky. Walsh listened to Pollitt speak about his work and thought he was the real deal. After a somewhat awkward introduction, they arranged a meeting the next morning, and over breakfast, Walsh asked Pollitt if he would be interested in a grant.

"I was embarrassed I could only offer him \$14,000," Walsh says.

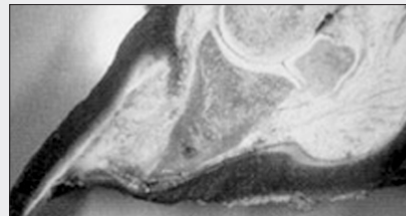
Pollitt laughs at the thought and says, to him, that was a windfall.

Walsh says he chose Pollitt because he thought his work was the most likely to succeed and Pollitt would continue to work on laminitis rather than move on to something else. The small Univer-

Laminitis Laminitis is the breakdown of the internal supporting structures (laminae) of the foot. The laminae deteriorate when excess activation of enzymes causes the attachment of the those cells to break loose from their basement membrane.



A hoof with the coffin bone at the correct angle.



PHOTOS COURTESY DR. CHRIS POLLITT

A hoof with the coffin bone rotated downward, pressing on the sole.

Founder Founder is the crippling result of laminitis, in which the coffin bone within the foot rotates downward, putting pressure on the sole of the foot, sometimes even puncturing it.

sity of Queensland research team started out as Pollitt and one post graduate student. Now, Pollitt has three post doctorates and seven post graduates at the Australian Equine Laminitis Research Unit, which has attracted more than \$2 million in funding.

"We have a critical mass and we get things done," Pollitt says.

\$650,000 in donations

St. Louisans to date have given the Animal Health Foundation more than \$650,000. A large percentage of the money goes to Pollitt. Both Walsh and Pollitt expected the disease to be cured by now.

Pollitt never intended to be a university academic in the first place. He comes from a family of tradesmen and was happy as a full-time veterinarian. Then he treated Twinkle, a 10-year-old Connemara who was overweight and had suffered a case of laminitis. He was sent to Pollitt by another vet who basically had given up.

"We had just heard about the heartbar shoe." Pollitt says. "We also did a hoof wall resection." With those new developments of the day, Pollitt brought the horse back to soundness.

Twinkle was feeling better, but the inquisitive scientist in Pollitt was becoming frustrated by the need to solve the mystery behind the disease.

"I wanted to try to understand it. Nothing I had read made sense," he says.

At the time, laminitis was thought to be caused by an interruption of blood flow to the foot.

What Pollitt has discovered is that it is a normal enzyme process out of control. The horse has the ability to separate the hoof from the tissue so the hoof wall can grow, similar to a fingernail growing. It's doing that under harmony in a controlled way. It's only by accident that a trigger factor comes along to activate the enzyme system in a way that causes the damaging separation between

Continued on next page

In depth

Continued from previous page

the inner hoof wall and the bone it's supporting inside the hoof.

He says he hasn't done his research to prove or disprove any theory. He's tried to develop an evidence-based philosophy to gain new knowledge.

He admits he's had to change direction a few times over the years as he's been driven by new facts.

When asked if laminitis is on the rise, he says there are no hard numbers. But what he is sure of is that the world's horses are getting fatter.

"Obesity in horses is following obesity in people," he says. He credits that to the sedentary lifestyle of horses today coupled with lots of good nutritious food.

The disease is finally on the world radar, Pollitt says, citing a poll last year in which members of the American Association of Equine Practitioners said laminitis was the disease they would most like to see solved. Until then, laminitis hadn't rated that highly.

"It's the most frustrating disease to work with," Pollitt says. "Nothing we do helps."

When asked to compare the complexity of an equine foot to something on the human body, Pollitt says the horse foot and human hand are built on the same template. He described the horse's longest and now only finger as the pastern, with the horse standing on its fingernail in the form of a hoof wall.

"It's the same evolutionary plan," he says.

Pollitt puts all of his information on an amazing Web site



Dr. Chris Pollitt entertains the audience by reciting "The Man from Snowy River" at an Animal Health Foundation fundraiser Nov. 19 at the Purina Mills Conference Center in Gray Summit.

(www.laminitisresearch.org) accessible to all. Not only does he describe exactly how the equine foot works and then fails during the process of laminitis, but he illustrates it with his own photography as well as illustrations by some of the best artists in the medical illustration field.

"It's knowledge, not a forum," Pollitt says.

Pollitt also, on invitation, has written chapters on laminitis in modern textbooks. His own textbook, "Colour Atlas of the Horse's Foot," has been reprinted four times and been published in German, Japanese and Spanish.

Researching laminitis has been nothing short of a roller coaster for the 63-year-old. While he was scheduled for mandatory retirement from the University of Queensland, he's appealing to the school to stay on. He has

Continued on next page

Laminitis victims

Secretariat: In October 1989, Secretariat was put down after he developed complications from laminitis. He was 19. The beautiful chestnut colt ran the first sub-2 minute Kentucky Derby on his way to sweeping the Triple Crown in 1973. His career earnings totaled more than \$1.3 million.

Affirmed: In January 2001, Affirmed was euthanized due to laminitis. He was 26. He had injured his left front pastern the previous October, causing him to stand too much on his right front foot, resulting in laminitis. Affirmed remains the last winner of the Triple Crown, in 1978, and his legendary rivalry with Alydar made it an exciting year. He was ridden by young jockey Steve Cauthen. Affirmed's earned \$2,393,818 in his career.

Sunday Silence: In August 2002, Sunday Silence lost his battle with laminitis after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 16. He had been ill since May with an infection in his right leg that brought on laminitis in his left foot. His owners had been discussing whether to euthanize him when he got down in his stall, could not get back up and eventually died of heart failure. The nearly black stallion won the Kentucky Derby, Preakness, and Breeders' Cup Classic over arch rival Easy Goer, and his career earnings totaled \$4,968,554.

In depth

Continued from previous page

no intention of giving up the battle against laminitis.

Research is not a 9 to 5 job. Matter of fact, Pollitt and his researchers often work through the night.

"If you don't, you don't succeed," he says.

One of those successes is having proven over and over that icing a horse's feet at the earliest stages of laminitis stops the separation process from happening.

Some of the other highlights have included:

- Staining sections of a horse foot — to highlight the laminar interface of the foot — so well that Pollitt suddenly could visualize the mechanism of laminitis pathology.

- Using an electron microscope to show, at much greater magnification, the finest elements of the laminar interface. Seeing the basement membrane magnified at 60,000 times is witnessing "God's work," he says.

- Discovering that grass produces a unique sugar, fructan, not digestible in the small intestine, and that the fermentation of fructan starts the whole reaction that

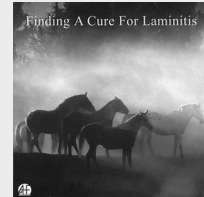
Animal Health Foundation

To learn more about the Animal Health Foundation, go to www.ahf-laminitis.org or call 636-451-5249. The group sends out an annual newsletter with the latest research advances and holds a fundraiser every other year. AHF continues to need donations. All contributions go directly to researchers.

DVD available

The AHF has made a DVD, blending video segments of chronic laminitic horses with animated graphics provided by Dr. Chris Pollitt and narration by Dr. Don Walsh. The DVDs were designed to educate the public about laminitis and raise awareness of the foundation. If you're interested in getting a DVD, send \$5 for shipping and handling to:

Animal Health Foundation, 3615 Bassett Road, Pacific, MO 63069.
Write "DVD Request" on the envelope.



The DVD runs 13 minutes long.

leads to laminitis.

The research job has required a tremendous amount of travel, and Pollitt has been to every continent, giving lectures from Japan to Norway to Latvia and Canada. He says he's proud to have taken the names of the University of Queensland and the Animal Health Foundation all over the world; he makes a point of acknowledging the foundation before each lecture.

But he's also tried to maintain a good family life and luckily is married to another understanding scientist. His wife, Sandra, is a

biochemist.

Pollitt owns Australian stock horses, which he describes as a very smart working horse. He no longer competes in endurance but does still make time to ride. His daughter, Jane, is a dressage and combined training rider and just got back from a six-month training stint in Germany. Son Ben is working on the Banff ski slopes in Alberta, Canada.

Pollitt's goals remain the same as when he started this quest.

"I want to relieve enormous suffering by reducing its incidence," he says. Once laminitis has happened, it's very difficult to treat, and the best hope is prevention and early therapy before chronic damage sets in, he says.

Pollitt and Walsh were asked at separate times whether Secretariat and Affirmed could have been saved today if they had suffered from laminitis in 2005. Both gave the same head-shaking, battle-weary reply.

"No."



PHOTO COURTESY DR. DON WALSH

Dr. Chris Pollitt stands by signed photos he took of Australian stock horses — items he donated to the silent auction — at the Animal Health Foundation fundraiser at Purina Mills. The event raised \$40,000 for laminitis research.

As St. Louis gears up for the start
of the 2006 show season

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**The competitors for their
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**And the parents for so many hours
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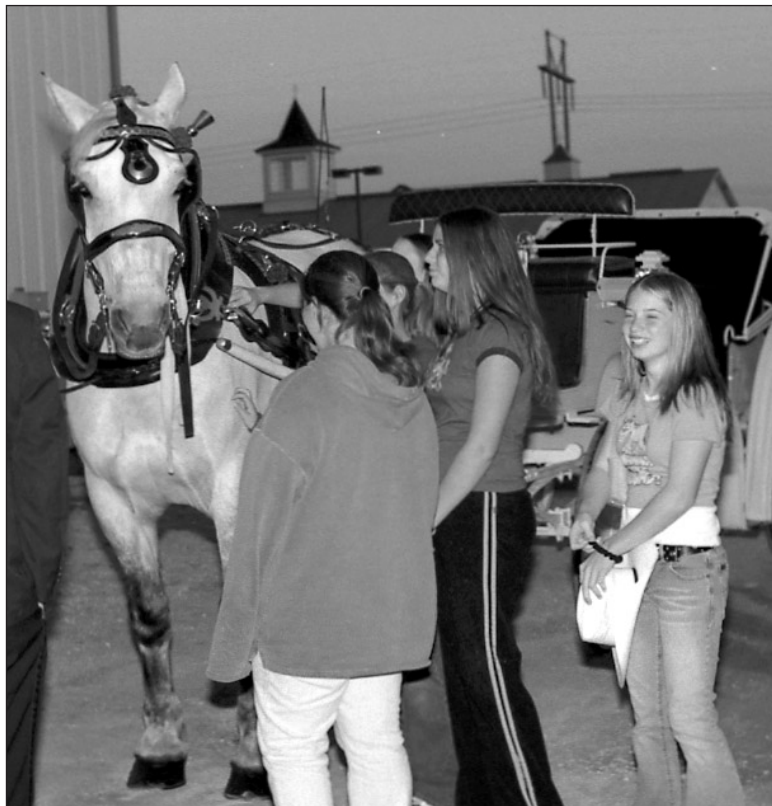


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St. Louis National Charity Horse Show



Toby, a percheron from Paragon Carriage Co. in Warrenton, Mo., entertains guests before escorting VIPS into the main ring Sept. 17 at the St. Louis National Charity Horse Show at the National Equestrian Center. Toby is 18-1 hands and grew 2 inches after age 5.



Roger Hoff, a portrait artist of horses and other animals, is surrounded by potential clients as he attends the exhibitors' party Sept. 17 at the St. Louis National. Hunter/jumper rider Susan Aselage walks by in the background to the right. The exhibitors' party for the evening was held by Katana O'Brien's barn.



Maryann Meiners and Marian Sandbothe manage the show office at the St. Louis National. The two kept things humming throughout the hunter/jumper and Saddlebred weeks.



Ruth Pfeffer and Bill Mumford get together for dinner Oct. 1 at the St. Louis National. Ruth is not shy about saying that she's 93 and going strong.



Business is brisk Oct. 1 at the booth of Longmeadow Rescue Ranch at the St. Louis National. This year's show benefited Longmeadow, an animal rehabilitation center.

Out and about

More horse fun



PHOTO COURTESY CHERYL LEWIS

Two riders compete in a ribbon race at A Day to Cure Diabetes, a fun show Sept. 24 at the Warren County Fairgrounds. In this event, riders hold a ribbon between them and gallop around the arena, trying not to break it. It is a timed event.

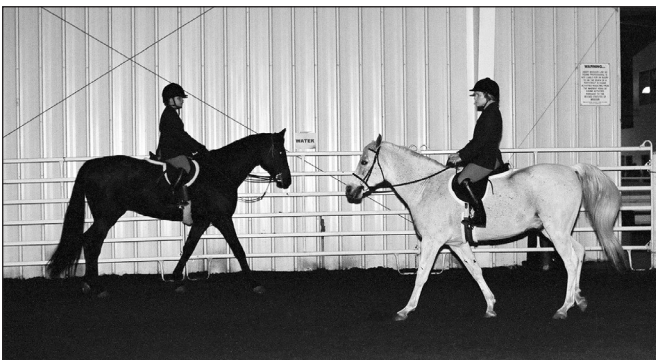


PHOTO COURTESY CHERYL LEWIS

Rocky the horse talks to spectators in the stands at A Day to Cure Diabetes. On the bleachers: Fletch Lewis, Briana Thieman and Eric Pflughupt.



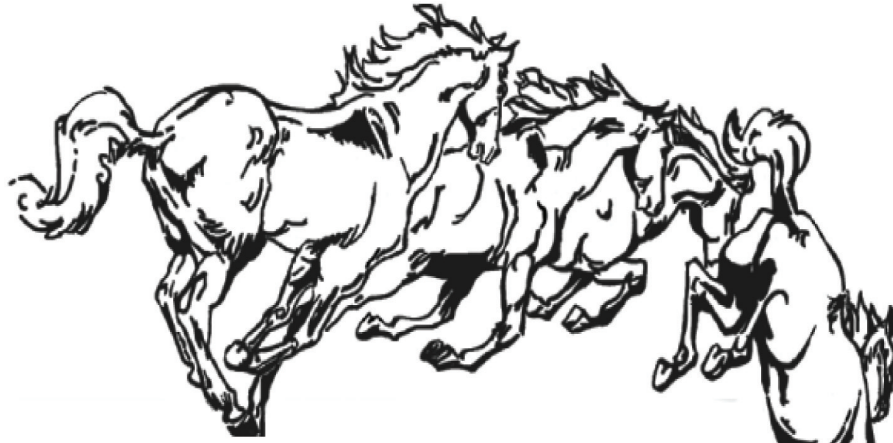
Lisa Keys of Edwardsville, Ill., gets a lift from her score of 71 aboard Whoopie Girl at the SLADS Fall Classic on Oct. 9 at the NEC.



Kerry Bailey (right) warms up for a beginner hunter class at the Irish Fox Schooling Show on Nov. 5 at the NEC.



Hans, a Norwegian Fjord, waits his turn with rider Addy Donnelly at the Irish Fox show.



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Equine Education Celebration is planned for February

The Missouri Equine Council is holding its 16th annual Equine Education Celebration Feb. 25-26 at the Boone County Fairgrounds, north of Columbia, Mo.

The weekend brings together professionals, vendors and horse lovers of all ages. It includes breed presentations in the main arena, seminars and a horse activity area. The celebration kicks off with a clinic Feb. 24 by Susan E. Harris, a Centered Riding clinician who apprenticed under Sally Swift.

Breed organizations are invited to bring three to seven horses epitomizing their bloodlines and to do a 15-minute presentation.

Also scheduled:

- Cowboy Mounted Shooting with Missouri Big Irons;
- Training the Western Pleasure Horse with Jim Dudley;
- Everyone Can Drive with Kara Whittaker;
- And a dressage demonstration by Arabian Sport Horses.

The Missouri Equine Council is looking for volunteers workers.

For more information on the weekend, contact:

Missouri Equine Council
P.O. Box 608,
Fulton, MO 65251
800-313-3327
info@mo-equine.org
www.mo-equine.org

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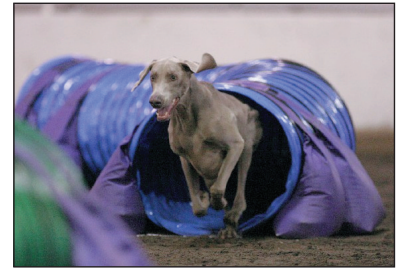
Show ceremonies | St. Louis National Charity Horse Show (Saddlebred), Sept. 28-Oct. 1



Lindsay Haupt
St. Louis National Charity Horse Show (Saddlebred), Sept. 28-Oct. 1



Sandra Lee Lewis
SLADS Fall Classic, Oct. 7-9



GreatDanePhotos

"Deacon" Schafnit
North American Dog Agility Championships, Oct. 13-16



Kelsey Baker
St. Louis National Charity Horse Show (hunter/jumper), Sept. 14-18



rayrockwellphotography.com

Emily Korenak
Irish Fox Stables
Hunter/Jumper Show, Nov. 5-6



rayrockwellphotography.com

Llama Futurity, Parade of Llamas before auction, Sept. 23-24



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Jim Blair Sr.

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Located at the corner of Highways D and Z, Blair's has been serving a broad spectrum of animals with the motto: "If it eats, we have a feed for it."

Blair's also has been the place to go if you want to know what's going on, and the stools at the counter often are full of people ready to bring you up to speed.

In February, Jim Blair Sr. will celebrate his 50th anniversary of owning the store and living in New Melle. The 79-year-old officially retired in 1992 but is still busy serving customers and loading up their heavy bags himself. The store is managed by his son, Jim Blair Jr., another local celebrity.

Together, they have watched the landscape change over the last half-century from a thriving farming community to a more traffic-heavy suburb.

"You could drive from here to Wentzville and never see a car," Blair Sr. said of his early days in



Blair Feed and Grain Inc.

Blair Feed and Grain Inc.

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New Melle, MO 63365
636-828-5314

(The back of the lot is at the corner of Highways D and Z.)

Pets are welcome.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to noon Saturday.

town, when Highway D was still a gravel road and gas was 20 cents a gallon. The other local landmarks at the time were a mercantile, or general store, which also housed the post office, and a funeral home, he says.

The original mill was constructed in 1858 and powered by oxen, according to a book published by the local friendship society. The mill changed hands several times over the years and was converted

to steam and then electric. It was called Holt Milling Company when Blair Sr. bought it in 1956 and renamed it Blair Feed and Grain Inc.

Blair Sr. was born and raised near Troy, Mo. He was drafted in the Army in 1945; World War II was over, but he spent a year in Japan, a time he describes as interesting.

Once back in Troy, he served in a variety of roles in the farming community. He owned his own truck and hauled livestock and crops for farmers, while also doing a little farming of his own.

The agricultural community was thriving in New Melle, and he moved there to be at the center of it. He rented a home within sight of the store's front door. He still had his hauling business, but now he stayed at the store and let others do the driving. Farmers used to bring their animals — chicken, hogs and cattle — to the store to be hauled to St. Louis.

Continued on next page

Shop talk

Continued from previous page

Blair also raised chickens in the 1960s, chickens that he didn't own but helped nurture for a few months. The pullets, or baby hens, would be dropped off — 32,000 at a time — every 13 weeks. Blair would raise them for 10 weeks and then move them on to their next home, where they would grow some more before moving to laying houses.

Blair kept that business going for eight years and it paid for the building that now serves as his warehouse.

"It kept us busy," he said. It also doubled his feed business, an increase that did not go unnoticed by his former supplier, Wayne Feeds. The company gave out free trips out as rewards for so much tonnage sold, and Blair Sr. has a wall full of plaques chronicling those trips to such places as Greece.

Blair also had a few other chores to keep him busy. He served on the New Melle volunteer fire department for 47 years — including as treasurer at a time when people paid \$5 per year for a fire tag so they could have fire service — and on the water district board for 39 years.

When Blair purchased the mill, it was one old building on the south end of the property. Since then, he's added the elevator, bins, and, in 1992, the building that now serves as the store. The entire facility holds 76,000 bushels of grain (a bushel of corn is 56 pounds).

Blair's wife, Alberta, did the books early on. As one might



The original building at 3600 Mill St.

expect, Jim Jr. started sweeping the floors as a youth. Once out of school in 1967, he started working there full time. His own children don't work at the store, having chosen "better jobs," he says with a laugh.

New Melle no longer is a farming mecca. Some of the old farms are still around, "but there are no farm animals on the farms," says Blair Jr. "There's hardly any livestock left."

The focus of the store now is horse, pet and specialty feeds, mainly Purina feed lines. The shelves are stocked with bird and deer feed, along with more traditional pet items.

"We sell more deer feed than hog feed," Blair Sr. says.

Hunting actually is the one expanding area of the business. Hunters in Missouri are allowed to feed deer except for the weeks before and during

hunting season.

"Everyone wants to hunt," Blair Sr. says. In addition, there are those who feed the deer just to have them hang around.

Another change for the store is a reduction in its custom blending of feeds, which has gotten more complicated because of rising insurance costs, Blair Jr. says.

The Blairs continue to offer some longtime services to customers: Delivering mulch and feed to people's doors; ordering lumber and posts; selling tires for cars, trucks, tractors and wagons; repairing tires; and brush-hogging.

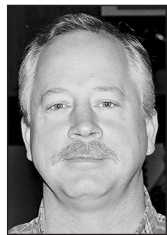
As farmers have abandoned the area, selling their farms to developers and moving farther out, one animal has remained faithful to Blair's.

"Horses are our biggest customer now," Blair Jr. says.

Greene's Country Store and Feed | Randy Greene

Greene's Country Store and Feed — nicknamed “the Purina store” for six years — is a business in new hands, but with an old friend to guide it.

Randy Greene, a 25-year veteran of retail, opened the Hawk's



Randy Greene

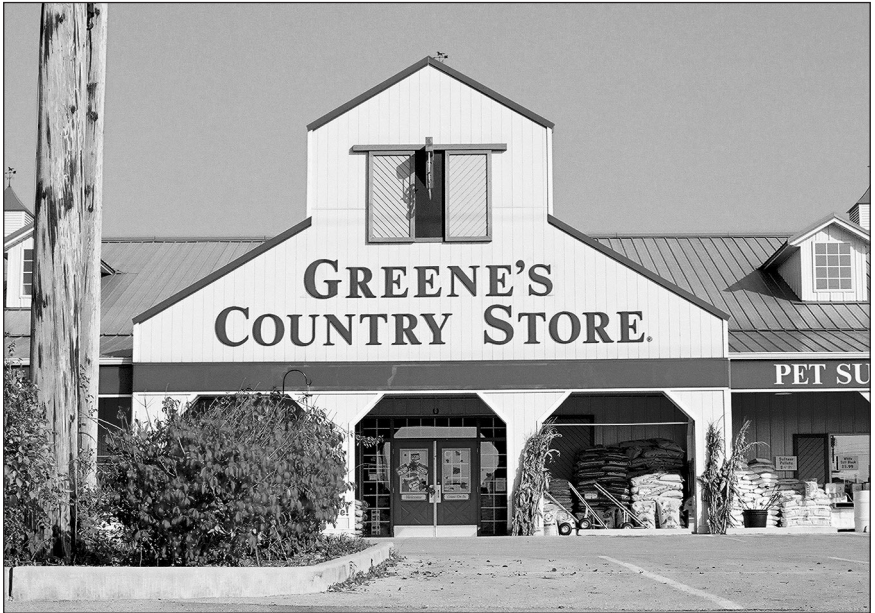
Ridge Feed and Pet Supply store on Highway N in 1999 for Purina Mills as a corporate concept store. Now, he owns it, after purchasing it in July.

Greene's background actually is in people food. The Colorado native moved to St. Louis in 1994 to build and run the Wild Oats natural food store at Interstate 170 and Ladue Road. He previously worked for the Safeway grocery chain.

A family member told him about a new program Purina Mills was starting called America's Country Store. The company needed someone to open a model store to test and build a retail plan for future independent stores.

The idea stemmed from Purina Mills' realization that feed dealers couldn't survive off feed alone anymore. With the continual decline in farm land — Greene cited a USA Today report that said 6,000 dairies were closing each year — the rural feed store was being swallowed up by suburbia and having to change to keep going, Greene said.

When Greene heard about the program, he wrote Purina Mills a



Greene's Country Store and Feed.

Greene's Country Store and Feed

8621 Highway N
Lake St. Louis, MO 63367
636-561-6637

Pets are welcome. Occasionally, free cats are up for adoption at the store.

Hours: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Monday through Saturday,
10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

letter expressing interest. He was hired to create the first company owned store and help build the program nationally. Purina Mills eventually opened two stores, in Lake St. Louis and Conroe, Texas. Problems were overcome and the concept was proven to work. All the stores are now independently owned and the

program opens more than a store a week.

When a potential store owner signs up, Purina Mills evaluates the market for demographics and potential; tells the owner what size the new store should be; lines up products, dealers, prices; and maps out how much space each product will need.

Greene still gives seminars on strategy and troubleshooting for Purina retailers. He also gives classes at Purina expos.

When Greene was brought in, the ground for the Hawk's Ridge store had been purchased next to the site of the future horse park. The design of the lot and building was set, but nothing was thought out for the inside, and Greene had to create it.

The location hasn't worked out as the boon it was thought to be

Continued on next page

Shop talk

Continued from previous page

from horse park traffic. The store is not visible to horse show exhibitors, and it is cut off from traffic since most trailers are parked now north of the National Equestrian Center. Greene had to rethink his clientele. He now is targeting the local horse and pet people as well as all people who enjoy an outdoor lifestyle.

Greene himself was out of the store for 3½ years overseeing portions of the program nationally. Once Land O'Lakes purchased Purina Mills, the concept store itself no longer was needed. Rather than close the store, Greene decided to take it over.

"We bought the store because we saw potential," Green said, referring to his wife agreeing it was worth the effort and his father partnering with him to buy the land and building. "We refused to let it go. The market is here and the people are here."

The store's four main focuses are pet, horse, wild bird and

lawn and garden.

Greene had so many plans for change that he had to close on Sundays so workers could get things done. Now, back open seven days a week, the store has been rearranged and new products brought in, such as the new tractors sitting on the lot, a consignment deal that has led him to consider doing used equipment consignment, as well.

Greene plans to keep adding more variety. He will redo the hay storage area in the back of the store so that customers can drive through rather than having to back to the hay stacks. He also is considering fencing the store's lake area in front and adding a changing display of animals.

"I want fun, interesting stuff," Greene said. One example of that would be personalized color photo blankets he just added. He's always looking, he says.

He also wants to give customers consistency and low prices with the basics. For horses, that would be feed, replace-

ment tack and health goods. The store has gotten out of doing apparel because Greene didn't feel the store was doing it well.

Greene and his wife, Milissa, live on a 135-acre farm, Sudden Valley Ranch, south of Warrenton. They board horses in addition to taking care of their own managerie, including horses, cows, sheep and chickens. They also bale their own hay.

Milissa and daughter Emily, 16, are the riders.

"I'm more of the fence fixer," Randy says.

The family got into horses in Colorado because Emily started riding with a Therapeutic Horsemanship program there. Greene now makes an effort to support the local TH riders and programs. His other two children, Daniel, 18, and Justin, 12, take after their father and help around the farm from the ground.

The family has taken its own battles with diabetes and created an annual summer horse show to raise money for diabetes research.

Advertising rates

FULL PAGE (7.5 by 10 inches): \$100

HALF PAGE (7.5 by 4.5 inches): \$60

QUARTER PAGE (3.6 by 4.5 inches): \$35

BUSINESS CARD (3.6 by 1.9 inches): \$25

CLASSIFIED AD: \$1.25 per word.

CLASSIFIED OBIT FOR PET: \$1.25 per word.

Photo of pet's face is free and encouraged.

DIRECTORY LISTING \$10 per listing per issue
\$50 per listing for the year

More than one listing \$5 per additional listing per issue
\$25 per additional listing for the year

Advertising deadline

The deadline for advertising in the February 2006 issue of *Whinny Magazine* is Jan. 15, 2006. Classified and display ads must be submitted with payment by the deadline. If you need help with a display ad, please call us for assistance.

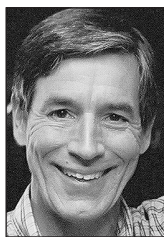
Whinny Magazine
636-398-5067

Tack Room Saddlery | Don Granger

Walking through the front doors of the Tack Room Saddlery is a trip down memory lane for long-time St. Louisans.

The display's may have changed over the years, but the store feels and smells the same as it did when it moved to its current location almost 30 years ago.

The face behind the counter hasn't changed, either. Manager



Don Granger

Don Granger is still keeping the family business humming some 44 years after helping his mom when she opened up her first shop at Fairmount Park Racetrack in Collinsville.

"As soon as school let out, I was there," Granger says, of his early days helping customers at age 11.

His mom, then Jean Granger of St. Louis, trained her own racehorse at the track, and also had experience working at Sickles Saddlery in St. Louis, so her decision to open the first Tack Room Saddlery at the racetrack was a logical step.

Within a few years, she opened a second store on Lindbergh Boulevard to tap a more general market. She and her husband, Bill Patterson, became some of the most well-known names in the local horse world. Eventually, the store at the racetrack was sold.

The store on Lindbergh moved again, a couple blocks south to its current location on Lylewood, north of Highway 40, in September 1976. The Pattersons built a new store to give them more space and a nicer facility. Both



The Tack Room Saddlery.

Tack Room Saddlery

10325 Lylewood
St. Louis, MO 63131
314-993-1377

Web: Thetackroom.home.att.net

Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday through Saturday

Pets are welcome as long as they get along with the resident cats.

Jean and Bill still can be found at the store most mornings.

Wherever the Tack Room has been located, it has kept the same focus.

"We have always tried to be anything and everything for the horse and horseman," Granger says.

Nowadays, when people can order from a catalog as easily as walking in the door, Granger says his store tries to have everything a customer might be looking for in stock. But with there being such a wide array of products

available, it's easy to run out of display space.

One of his biggest challenges is guessing tastes. Sometimes he thinks a product won't catch on and it does. The joy for Granger continues to be in helping people find what's going to best suit their needs, such as picking out a bridle that will feel good, last a long time and not break the bank.

As for his own equine background, Granger's is as diverse as his products. He's ridden Saddlebreds, hunter/jumpers, Western, even dabbled in barrel racing. He's not a horse addict, he admits. His primary passion: photography.

His wife, Leslie, is the equine nut in the family. She is a familiar face at dressage and combined training competitions.

The store sells English and Western tack and riding wear, equipment and supplies, gifts, jewelry and house decor. Granger repairs tack, and also sends out clippers for repair and blades to be sharpened.

The Tack Trunk | Maura Tobler

When Maura Tobler opened a tack consignment business in her garage in 1994, she was hoping to make a little extra money to cover her growing horse bills. The Louisville native had waited to adulthood to become involved in horses, after moving to St. Louis with her family. She and her children had been riding in hunter/jumpers for a few years.

When the Strawhorse stopped selling consignment items, Tobler saw an opportunity, and she and a partner jumped at it.

They ran the new business out of Tobler's garage in Chesterfield and a minivan, taking the van to horse shows, such as the Midway Hunter/Jumper Series in Columbia, Animal Health Foundation events, even as far as Tennessee. The partner left the business after a year.

Tobler was getting a good feel for the market but said she was frustrated with one aspect.

"The problem with consignment is you can't control the inventory," she says. She decided to add retail sales and opened The Tack Trunk store at Clayton and Kehrs Mills roads in 1996. She began with one store unit and within six months extended into a second unit for her growing inventory.

She doubled her space again this year in August with her move to Chesterfield Towne Centre at the corner of Long and Edison roads. It's a posh setting, with a "sit down and stay a while" feel. Two years ago, she also opened a satellite store inside the main building at the National Equestrian Center.



The Tack Trunk.

The Tack Trunk

133 Chesterfield Towne Centre
Chesterfield, MO 63005
636-812-0146

Pets are welcome.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
Monday through Saturday.

The NEC satellite store tries to be open during all the shows and events, but call the main store to be sure it's open if you're heading to the NEC.

The focus of the stores is primarily hunter/jumper.

"That's what I know," Tobler said. "That's what everyone who works here knows."

Their No. 1 priority is customer service, which takes many forms. One store employee, Corinne Gilliam, enjoys going to barns and doing saddle, bridle and blanket fittings. The store can make deliv-

eries. The store also tries to support horse activities, such as offering all items at a discount to intercollegiate team members at Washington University.

As the business has grown, so have Tobler's children.

Nina rode on the intercollegiate team at Truman State and now is in veterinary school at the University of Missouri at Columbia.

Rachael is a junior at St. Louis University; while she has not had an opportunity to ride often recently, she hopes to get back to it someday. Jason, who rode for a short time, is a second-year medical student at Mizzou.

Maura Tobler has no plans to leave the area.

"I really like St. Louis. It's a very liveable city," she says.

She just retired her 24-year-old gelding, Ty, and will be looking into getting another horse in the spring.

Spotlight

Spanish Riding School performs at Savvis Center in St. Louis

The Spanish Riding School of Vienna chose St. Louis as one of six cities on its tour of the United States this fall. The famous Lipizzan stallions were at Savvis Center on Nov. 12 and 13. It was their first U.S. visit in 15 years and coincided with the 60th anniversary of U.S. General George Patton's rescue of the 425-year-old breed.

The troupe of 30 stallions, known for their snowy white coats, included one nearly black 25-year-old; the announcer said the dark coat was a symbol of luck.

While no attendance figures are being released by Savvis, the crowd for each St. Louis performance appeared to fill

about a third of the roughly 20,000-seat arena.

The audience Saturday was an enthusiastic crowd, giving the riders two standing ovations during the performance. Six people who attended the Saturday or Sunday performance gave a range of opinions on how much they enjoyed the show; it generally held more appeal for dressage enthusiasts. All appreciated how much work went into getting the stallions to that level.

Fran Jurga, who served as EquiSearch.com's blog guide for the Washington D.C. performance, reported that the footing was moved from city to city with the horses. While a base of "rodeo dirt" was ordered locally, the top

layers were a special sand mixed with washed Fibar to help make it safer for the Lipizzans to do all their moves. It took 19 dump trucks to move the footing each time. St. Louis had the added challenge of Savvis holding a Blues hockey game two nights before the performances began.

The horses stayed at the National Equestrian Center while in St. Louis.

The other selected cities were:

- Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 5-6
- Washington, DC, Nov. 19-20
- Philadelphia, Pa, Nov. 25-26
- Atlanta, Ga Dec 3-4
- Houston, Texas, Dec. 10-11

One of the D.C. performances sold out, Jurga reported.

"If It Eats, We Have A Feed For It."

BLAIR FEED & GRAIN

New Melle, MO

636-828-5314

Pet Supplies, Horse Feed, Tack
Bird Houses & Feed
Grass Seed, Mulch, Fertilizer

Hours: M-F 7:30-5:00 Sat 7:30-12:00



Delivery
Available

Jim Blair

Second chances

Whinny Magazine is looking for stories about animals — horses, dogs, cats, cows, pigs, llamas, etc. — who have overcome major obstacles or beaten the odds to keep living happy lives.

The animal does not necessarily have to be alive today. Please contact us by phone or e-mail and tell us about your special story.

whinnymagazine@aol.com

636-398-5067

If you have a special commercial or private barn with features that you think would be interesting or helpful to readers, please contact *Whinny Magazine* about being the subject of our Barn Beautiful feature for April.

636-398-5067

whinnymagazine@aol.com

Missouri horse organizations

Missouri Equine Council

The Missouri Equine Council Inc. is a non-profit organization representing Missouri's equine industry, from the major breeders and exhibitors to the weekend riders. Membership is open to individuals, families, clubs, organizations or businesses interested in supporting the industry.

www.mo-equine.org
Missouri Equine Council
P.O. BOX 608
Fulton, MO 65251

Missouri Quarter Horse Association

The Missouri Quarter Horse Association provides beneficial services and activities for its members to enhance and encourage Quarter Horse ownership and participation.

www.moqha.com
Missouri Quarter Horse Association
1800 Pinnacle Point
Holts Summit, MO 65043
573-896-3974

Missouri Horse Shows Association

The Missouri Horse Shows Association promotes the breeding, development, exhibition, marketing and ownership of light horses by offering year end and high point awards in more than 140 divisions. Membership is not limited to those residing within the state of Missouri. Currently, approximately 500 individual members and their nominated horses compete in over 130 member shows and competitions.

www.missourihorseshowassociation.com
612 Roundstone Drive
St. Charles, Missouri 63304
636-441-9812

The Missouri Hunter Jumper Organization

The Missouri Hunter Jumper Organization is dedicated to the promotion of hunter/jumper shows and competition in the area. It represents more than 150 riders and 180 horses.

www.mohjo.org

Mid-America Saddlebred Horse Club

The Mid-America Saddlebred Horse Club promotes the American Saddlebred through clinics, seminars, barn tours, mall presentations and an annual charity horse show. Members are amateurs and professionals, owners, breeders, exhibitors, grooms and trainers, often, all in one.

www.midamericasaddlebred.org
Mid-America Saddlebred Horse Club
301 Lincoln
Lee's Summit, MO 64064

St. Louis Area Dressage Society

The St. Louis Area Dressage Society was created to foster an interest in, and greater understanding of, dressage in the greater St. Louis area. Dressage is the execution by a trained horse of precision movements in response to barely perceptible signals from its rider.

Web: www.slads.org

Whinny magazine wants horse groups to consider using the publication as a place where their news can be printed on a regular basis. The sections for each group could be set up on consecutive well-marked pages. It is being done successfully in other states. To discuss it further, please call 636-398-5067.

Barn beautiful

Hamilton Stables LLC

Ann Hamilton's dressage training center is nestled on 22 acres on a road dotted with beautiful equestrian facilities near New Melle. Hamilton Stables LLC opened in December 2001. It provides boarding and training for dressage horses and also holds many popular clinics.



The main barn and indoor arena run perpendicular to each other. A storage barn is set up as a separate building (far right).



The indoor arena, which is large enough to hold a full-size dressage ring, has mirrors on three sides for riders to watch their movements, and a viewing window for visitors or boarders to watch the riders from a lounge.



Ann Hamilton hired Morton Buildings to construct the barn, but she served as general contractor on the project.



The lounge has a monitor for boarders to view tapes of horse prospects.

Barn beautiful



Trainer Hanne Hartelius gives “Ramsey” a morning workout in the outdoor arena. Ramsey is owned by Deborah Golemon.



The Hamilton family's home looks out on pastures, paddocks and the main barn.



A stall aisle, one of two that run parallel to each other, is made up of 12-by-12-foot stalls. The wash rack area and tack and locker room are in a connecting walkway.

Hamilton Stables LLC | Dressage training center

3955 Hoffman Rd., Wentzville, MO 63385
Hamiltonstables@aol.com, www.Hamiltonstables.net

Owner: Ann E. Hamilton **Phone:** 636-398-8121

Features:

- Indoor arena: 200 feet by 72 feet, with a sand and rubber riding surface and arena mirrors.
- Lounge with 23-foot viewing window to indoor arena and monitor to view tapes of horse prospects.
- Outdoor arena: 200 feet by 80 feet with sand and rubber surface.

- 12-by-12-foot stalls, with rubber mats and Nelson waterers. Some of the stalls have private turnout runs.
- Tack room, with private lockers and shower room.
- Fire alarm system.
- Daily turnout schedule in paddocks and pastures.
- Dressage training for horse and rider.



Two pastures run along the driveway and give the horses much to watch.

Directory of Equine Businesses and Services

Boarding / training

Hunter/jumper:

■ Baskin Farm

18124 Baskin Farm Dr.
Wildwood, MO 63038
636-458-5053
www.baskinfarm.net

■ J.M. Pierce Stables

2315 Baxter Rd.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
636-394-4733

Dressage:

■ Hamilton Stables LLC

3955 Hoffman Rd.
Wentzville, MO 63385
636-398-8121
Hamiltonstables@aol.com,
www.Hamiltonstables.net

Boarding / pasture

Horses Boarded:

Spacious, plush pastures.
17' x 9' stalls. Professional
care. \$250 monthly.
636-398-8003.

Other categories

Small animal veterinary service
Farriers
Hay supplier
Bedding supplier
Tack rooms

Veterinary Services

Large animal / equine

■ Homestead Veterinary Hospital

3615 Bassett Rd.
Pacific, MO 63069
636-451-4655
Homesteadvet@
mindspring.com

Feed Stores

Blair Feed and Grain Inc.

3600 Mill St.
New Melle, MO 63365
636-828-5314

Greene's Country Store and Feed

8621 Highway N
Lake St. Louis, MO 63367
636-561-6637

Barn construction

R.C. Barns Building Inc.

1573 Sugar Grove Rd.
Troy, MO 63379
636-528-0958
www.rcbarns.com

Trailer sales/service
Blanket repairs
Hauling
Braiding
Pet portraits / photography
Carriage rides | entertainment
Trail rides

Classifieds

Horses Boarded:

Spacious, plush
pastures. 17' x 9'
stalls. Professional
care. \$250 monthly.
636-398-8003.

Get out your

message: Use the
classified section
to sell a horse,
product or service
directly to the local
equine community.

Pet obituaries

Whinny Magazine
encourages those who
have lost a loved one
to pay tribute to your
horse or pet with a
classified obituary.
A sample would look
like this:

IN MEMORY OF CAPPER:

The Dalmatian — a smiling,
happy-go-lucky fellow — died
at 14 after a
life full of
travel and
adventure.
He will be
remem-
bered for his
beauty, wis-
dom and sense of humor.
Donations in Capper's memory
can be made to the Humane
Society of Missouri, Tribute
Fund, 1201 Macklind Ave.,
St. Louis, MO, 62110.



For classified rates,
see Page 19

Yarn expert weaves dog fur into hair-loom

From time to time, Whinny Magazine will report on trying a product, service or offer that might be appealing to our readers.

A few years ago, I heard about a local woman who handspun yarn from dog hair to make keepsakes for pet lovers. Her business was called Rover's Comb. I just adored the idea of having something made from my dog's own hair.

Unfortunately, I didn't have a dog who shed very often, or not the kind of hair you could collect. She shed tufts of hair once a year.

So, each of the past few springs, I've dutifully collected her little fur, mostly off my comforter, and tried to fill a sandwich bag. We were a long way from having enough hair for anything significant when Whinny passed away.

Nonetheless, I contacted the owner of Rover's Comb, Fran Pike of Cottleville, and sent her my sad little bag of hair and a photo of Whinny. Fran said the short coat was not ideal to work with, but she would see what she could do.

I wanted something I could display more than wear because I'm allergic to a lot of different animal furs, so we settled on two paw-shaped ornaments.

In the end, Whinny's hair could not be spun, even blended with wool, because it wouldn't hold together. Fran next tried felting. She described that as taking Whinny's hair, mixing it with some wool to hold it together, and rubbing it with soap and very hot water. The agitation and heat causes it eventually to shrink and hold together. She formed the material into a flat piece and then was able to work



Paw-shaped ornaments created from Whinny's hair surround her photo on the Christmas tree. The old tree went up in October but had to go tinsel-less until the major stores stocked their holiday shelves.

with it to create the paws.

I asked for them so late in the year, I wasn't expecting to get them before 2006, because I figured lots of people would be placing holiday orders early.

Within weeks, I had my precious, perfect ornaments, and my old Christmas tree went up the last weekend in October.

In the back of my mind, I thought if this project turned out, I might mention it in *Whinny Magazine*, but I didn't say anything to Fran until she gave me the ornaments.

When you talk to Fran, you see that she gets as much joy in making the future heirlooms as the owners get in receiving them.

Rover's Comb

Fran Pike of Cottleville
www.roverscomb.com
636-441-3895

■ Handspun yarns and keepsakes made from dog hair. Mittens, hats, scarves and more.

■ Chiengora, angora and wool products.

This is a woman who loves her work. And pet owners everywhere are the winners. Thank you, Fran.

— Joanie McKenna

When you talk to Fran, you see that she gets as much joy in making the future heirlooms as the owners get in receiving them.

"Integrity built into every building"

R.C. Barns Building Inc.



Irish Fox Stables interviewed four builders before choosing R.C. Barns Building Inc. of Troy to build its new facility on Highway DD in 2004.



The stalls are a very bright and airy 12 feet by 10 feet and made of tongue-and-groove Southern pine.



The boarders' tack room looks out on the indoor arena.



1573 Sugar Grove Rd., Troy, MO 63379
Phone: 636.528.0958 • Fax: 636.528.2468

www.rcbarns.com