

---

SPRING 2024 | VOL 20 | ISSUE NO. 5

---

# HORSE OF THE AMERICAS NEWSLETTER



COPPER CONCHA  
HOA #2I75

---

## IN THIS ISSUE

---

Save Our Stories to Save Our Horses

Spanish Sport Pony

A Childhood Dream on a Closet Wall

From Extinction to Award Winning

On Choosing A Mentor

An Artist's Love Story

Thanks, Sonya

Registrar's Report

Samantha Borders-Shoemaker

Vickie Ives

Ginger Hipp

Blue Oaks Center

Steve Edwards

Amy E-D Speissegger

Becca Pizmoht

Gretchen Patterson

---



## Save Our Stories to Save Our Horses

### Samantha Borders-Shoemaker

It is safe to say that the people who have fought to preserve Colonial Spanish Horses are a group of passionate people. Their drive to keep these pieces of North American heritage cannot be understated, and everyone who has the privilege of knowing and loving these horses have them to thank. It is for this reason that we must honor and preserve their stories.

We are experiencing a generational shift as breeders and enthusiasts of these horses, and we risk losing the stories of those who came before us. The sudden death of Bob Painter and the passing of D.L. Lowther puts into sharp focus just what's at stake if we do not make an effort to compile both stories and specialized knowledge of our horses into an easily accessible and shared format. While we have general reliable information, much of the records that exist are either in paper format scattered across numerous public depositories or are in private collections. Even experts on Colonial Spanish Horses such as Dr. Phil Sponenberg agree that overall, the "origin of these horses is shrouded in myth and speculation." Although we cannot help what history did not write, we as the current conservationists have a profound responsibility to protect the knowledge of our horses and record it appropriately for future generations. That includes the deep knowledge of individuals who lead the effort in preserving these horses.

What does this entail? I would propose a more concerted effort from the up-and-coming generation to record the stories of these people and the horses they have, their training and observations of the breed and strains, what insights they overall have learned about Colonial Spanish Horse health and breeding, and any other kernels of wisdom to pass on. We have great treasures in people like Bryant Rickman with his Choctaw herd and lived connection with the legendary Gilbert Jones. To lose their unique and well-earned knowledge would be to lose a vital part of the story of the Colonial Spanish Horse. We cannot always rely on the serendipity of finding steamtrunks full of records and priceless information to carry forward our knowledge.

It is known all too well that our horses are still well on the periphery of the average equestrian's notice, if there at all. Part of saving these horses is to share their incredible story of survival, and that includes the breeders who committed their lives to ensuring new generations get to love these amazing creatures. And, if I may add, also appreciating and learning from them now while we can still enjoy them and their wisdom. Consider this a call to action and to collaborate on how we can preserve this essential piece of the Colonial Spanish Horse story.



# SPANISH SPORT PONY

by Vickie Ives, HOA President

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE COLONIAL SPANISH HORSE OWNERS AND BREEDERS HAD TO LISTEN TO MODERN HORSE OWNERS COMMENT THAT OURS ARE WONDERFUL PIECES LIVING HISTORY; BUT THEY ARE JUST TOO SMALL FOR TODAY'S RIDER. THAT HAS TO BE DISPUTED. I USUALLY TELL THEM ABOUT OUR GELDING CWH UP 'N ADAM FROM THE BARRIER ISLAND COROLLA OFF NORTH CAROLINA. THAT LITTLE SORREL SEAHORSE HAS OPENED THE EYES OF LOTS OF FOLKS OVER THE YEARS. HE AND CYNTHIA WON SWEEPSTAKES AT THEIR FIRST NORTH AMERICAN TRAIL RIDE CONFERENCE COMPETITION. HE HAS CARRIED BIG GUYS AND GALS ALL OVER OUR PLACE ON GUIDED TRAIL RIDES FOR YEARS (AS WELL AS SCARED GRANDMAS, FEARFUL FIRST TIMERS AND GIGGLING CHILDREN OF ALL SIZES). HE HAS GLEANED LOTS OF RIBBONS IN AMERICAN INDIAN HORSE SHOWS, BOTH ON THE RAIL AND IN SPEED EVENTS. HE CARRIES BEGINNER LEVEL ENGLISH STUDENTS OVER EASY 2 FOOT AND UNDER JUMPS AND TACKLES HIGHER LEVEL ONES FOR OUR MORE EXPERIENCED STUDENTS. HE DOES PARADES AND CARRIES FLAGS BEAUTIFULLY. HE WORKS STOCK. OFTEN THE LITTLE RED HORSE AND HIS RIDER LEAD 2 OR 3 OTHER HORSES HOME FROM OUR PASTURES SO THEY ALL CAN WORK A RIDE. HE IS SO STEADY THAT HE IS OFTEN RIDDEN TO COLLECT OUR TRAIL HORSES BY A VOLUNTEER RIDER HANDLING HIS REINS--AND THE LEAD ROPES OF THE OTHERS. HE IS ONE OF OUR MOST VERSATILE AND HARDEST WORKERS. THE KICKER? ADAM IS 13.1 HANDS TALL. IN 2024 HE TURNS 21 YEARS OLD. HE LOOKS GREAT AND STILL EARNS HIS KEEP AND THEN SOME.

HOA REGISTERS FOUR STRAINS OF COLONIAL SPANISH HORSE THAT ARE USUALLY UNDER 14 HANDS AT MATURITY: THE ISLAND HORSES FROM COROLLA ISLAND AND SHACKLEFORD BANKS, THE VERY RARE GRAND CANYONS STRAIN ONCE USED BY THE HAVASUPAI INDIANS, AND THE WELL-KNOWN MEXICAN COW HORSE STRAIN, THE GALICENO, JUST RECENTLY ADDED TO THE SPANISH ORIGIN HORSES ACCEPTED BY HOA. THE GALICENO BREED REGISTRY SAYS THAT MAYBE FEWER THAN 100 PURE GALICENOS ARE LEFT. NUMBERS ARE SIMILAR WITH THE OTHER THREE OF THESE STRAINS.

ONLY A HANDFUL OF THE GRAND CANYON STRAIN ARE LEFT, PERHAPS LESS THAN 20, AND NONE ARE PURELY OF THAT BLOOD. FROM THE TWO BARRIER ISLAND GROUPS, ESTIMATES I FOUND ONLINE POSTED BY THE LOCAL VOLUNTEER GROUPS THAT PROTECT THEM, THERE ARE LIKELY ONLY 150+ COROLLAS, COUNTING THE 100 OR SO ON THE ISLAND AND PRIVATELY OWNED HORSES INLAND. SHACKLEFORD BANKS HORSES ON THAT ISLAND NUMBER AROUND 100+, BUT I DID NOT FIND ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF PRIVATELY OWNED SHACKLEFORDS. ALL THESE STRAINS ARE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED ACCORDING TO THE LIVESTOCK CONSERVANCY.



CWH UP "N ADAM WITH YOUNG TRAIL RIDER UP

WHEN CYNTHIA AND I WERE DISCUSSING THE DIFFICULT PATH AHEAD FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THESE, SHE COMMENTED: "WE SHOULD BE SOMEHOW PROMOTING THESE STRAINS, AND SHOWING THE WORLD WHAT THEY CAN DO. WHAT DO YOU CALL THEM AS A GROUP?"

"SPANISH SPORT PONIES," I REPLIED. THE NEXT TIME I HEARD MY PREFERRED NAME FOR THESE SMALLER, ATHLETIC HORSES OF STRONG SPANISH DESCENT, IT WAS ON THE NON-PROFIT STATUS DOCUMENT IN CYN'S HANDS WHICH SHE HAD FILED. IT HAD BEEN APPROVED.

"WHAT DO YOU PLAN FOR YOUR CLUB TO DO?" I ASKED.

"I WANT TO SPONSOR AN AWARDS PROGRAM JUST FOR THEM. I WANT TO MAKE OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE THEM AT WORK, IN COMPETITION AND AS GREAT TRAIL HORSES. THEY HAVE LESS UPKEEP AND PLENTY OF 'TOUGH', SUITABLE FOR ALL SORTS OF WORK AND PLAY. MAYBE EVEN HOLD SHOWS OR OTHER COMPETITIONS FOR THEM. I WANT MY MEMBERS TO TELL ME WHAT THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE US DO TO PROMOTE THEM."

SO HERE WE ARE. SO MUCH TO DECIDE: DO WE WANT THE SPORT PONY HEIGHT LIMITED TO UNDER 13.2 HANDS FULLY GROWN? OR MORE? MUCH BIGGER AND MOST CS HORSES WOULD FIT THE HEIGHT REQUIREMENTS. LESS? I HAVE OWNED A STRAIGHT CS MARE THAT MATURED AT 11' 2". SHE WAS GRULLA AND WAS SHOT BY A TRESPASSING POACHER WHO THOUGHT SHE WAS A DEER, SO SHE NEVER REPRODUCED. AROUND 12+ HANDS IS NOT TOO RARE, AND 13 HANDS IS COMMON IN THESE SMALLER STRAINS. SHOULD THE NEW CLUB ACCEPT SMALLER HORSES FROM OTHER STRAINS THAT ARE USUALLY LARGER? SHOULD ANY HOA REGISTERED HORSES SHORTER THAN THE UPPER LIMIT SET BE ELIGIBLE FOR SPORT PONY COMPETITION OR SHOULD THESE FOUR STRAINS THAT ARE USUALLY THAT SIZE BE THE ONLY ONES ELIGIBLE? WE DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT ANYONE IS NOT PROPERLY FEEDING THEIR HORSES JUST TO KEEP THEM SMALL. THE CLUB IS NOT TO AWARD HORSES THAT WERE NOT ALLOWED TO GROW TO THEIR GENETIC HEIGHT BY UNDER-FEEDING OR ANY OTHER MISTREATMENT. THIS NEW IDEA NEEDS TO BE DISCUSSED BY THOSE WHO RAISE PURE CS HORSES FROM THESE GENETICALLY SMALLER STRAINS.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN CYNTHIA'S PROJECT TO PROMOTE OUR SMALLER HORSES, PLEASE CONTACT HER AT [CYNTHIATUS1@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CYNTHIATUS1@GMAIL.COM).

WE ARE GOING TO TRY TO WRITE A HISTORY OF EACH OF THESE FOUR STRAINS IN OUR UP-COMING NEWSLETTERS. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO WRITE THE HISTORY OF ONE OF THEM FOR US, WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE YOU VOLUNTEER. GIVE NEWSLETTER EDITOR DANIELLE MAULDIN OR I A CALL AND LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RESEARCH ONE OF THEM AND TELL OUR MEMBERS AND BREEDERS ABOUT THEIR HERITAGE. I RESERVE WRITING THE COROLLA ARTICLE UNLESS YOU REALLY WANT TO DO THAT ONE. LETTERS ABOUT THIS SPANISH SPORT PONY PROMOTION ARE ALSO WELCOME.

"PRAISE THE TALL, BUT SADDLE THE SMALL," WAS A SAYING FROM THE OLD WEST. IT'S TIME WE REMINDED FOLKS WHY.



## A childhood dream on a closet wall

When I was 8 years old I drew a heart on my closet wall with all my ambitions and desires. The largest piece of the heart was owning a horse farm and rescuing animals. I started rescuing at 10 years old and never stopped. Taking in birds, squirrels, cats, dogs and horses, I saved them all or at least were there with them for their final moments. It wasn't until the age of 42 I was able to buy 10 acres and start my dream of a horse farm. Horses have always been my passion and when I moved to Georgia to be near family, home sickness of South Carolina took me over. So I bought a Carolina Marsh Tacky, the states heritage breed to remind me of home. While I love every horse I meet, the Tacky won me over through and through. So I bought another and then another and now I have my first foal due to be born this spring. I show in endurance riding, dressage, and give horsemanship lessons using my tackys.

My childhood dreams of raising horses and rescuing animals has come full circle. It's no longer a dream drawn on a wall but right in front of my eyes every time I walk out my front door and I'm so thankful to be able to share this dream with others.

### Ginger Hipp

from Manzanita Farm LLC

**\*Photo by Daniella Snyder**





## **Carol Fuller Powell, Founder of BOC, From Extinction to Award Winning:**

With 35 years of working in the field of Education and Mental Health, I recognized the value of equine therapy when working with children, youth and adults with emotional trauma. I experienced that with highly trained professional and natural horsemanship based practices; the outcomes for healing and growth were truly remarkable.

My search for the perfect horse with the exact temperament, character and willingness to engage in relationship building began. This is how I found the Baca Herd which had been dispersed from the Baca Chica Farm in New Mexico. When I realized they were on the Endangered Equine List, I continued my search across the United States for remaining breedable Bacas and transported them to my ranch, Blue Oaks Farm, CA. In 2015, I founded Blue Oaks Center to pursue my passion and developed an Equine Assisted Learning program utilizing the Bacas. I liked the combination of the rare Baca Barb Horse's gentle spirit and character combined with knowledge and skill-based training as it does result in growth for the horse, client and instructor. At Blue Oaks Center, it is the cycle of communication and learning that creates the strong bond of healing and sense of belonging for our community's youth, families and seniors.

In addition to Equine Therapy, the Baca Barbs have the ability to achieve in other performing disciplines such as Trail Riding, Working Equitation, Dressage, Endurance and Camping. In 2023, the first foal born at BOC has achieved national recognition in Working Equitation. Today with the help of our University partners using DNA Testing and Analysis, the Bacas' ancestry was found to be one of the first herds brought to the colonial Americas. Because of their ancestry and versatility, I knew I had to do everything possible to prevent their extinction. I developed an extensive Preservation Program to maintain a pure bloodline which has proven successful.

For more information on Blue Oaks Center's Baca Preservation Program, please visit our website:

[www.blueoakscenter.org](http://www.blueoakscenter.org)





**BC El Sevillano**

**HOA-2198**



**BC Santino Adelmo**

**HOA-2192**



## **ON CHOOSING A MENTOR**

**STEVE EDWARDS**

---

**I BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE OF THE HORSE INDUSTRY LIES IN KIDS AND NOVICES. I ALSO BELIEVE THAT WITH ALL OF THE INFORMATION THAT IS AT HAND ABOUT NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP THERE IS NO REASON FOR A PERSON WITH A REAL INTEREST IN HORSES TO REMAIN A NOVICE MORE THAN A FEW MONTHS. ONE OF THE THINGS THAT KEEPS PEOPLE IN THE PERMANENT STATUS AS NOVICES, OR EVEN WORSE DRIVES THEM AWAY FROM HORSES ALTOGETHER, IS THE CHOICE OF A POOR MENTOR.**

**THE WORLD IS FULL OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THEMSELVES TO BE AUTHORITIES ON ALL THINGS EQUINE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE WORLD IS NEARLY DEVOID OF THOSE WHO ACTUALLY ARE SUCH AUTHORITIES. A GOOD MENTOR RECOGNIZES THIS LIMITATION AND WILL CONSIDER HERSELF A STUDENT WHO IS ALWAYS LOOKING TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HORSES. A GOOD MENTOR WILL NOT BE A FIERCE DISCIPLE OF ANY INDIVIDUAL CLINICIAN TO THE POINT THAT SHE DENIGRATES ALL OTHER CLINICIANS. A GOOD MENTOR WILL HAVE A LIBRARY OF RESOURCES FOR THE NOVICE TO READ AND VIEW. MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE MENTOR'S STORE OF KNOWLEDGE IS THE MAKE-UP OF THE MENTOR'S PERSONALITY. THE KEY POINTS ARE THESE--DOES THE MENTOR TRULY WANT YOU TO LEARN OR DOES THE MENTOR WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU REMAIN A NOVICE, ALWAYS IN AWE OF HER SKILL? DOES THE MENTOR'S VIEW OF HER OWN EXPERTISE EXTEND TO AN INCREDIBLY WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS, MAKING HER AN EXPERT, NOT JUST ON HORSES, BUT ON EVERY TOPIC THAT SHE ENCOUNTERS?**



**IS SHE ARROGANT OR HUMBLE? NOTHING HUMBLER ONE LIKE HAVING A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENCE WITH HORSES. VERY FEW ARROGANT PEOPLE UNDERSTAND HORSES AND EVEN FEWER ARROGANT PEOPLE UNDERSTAND HUMANS. LISTEN TO HER TRAINING STORIES. DO THEY OFTEN CONCLUDE WITH "SO WE FINALLY SOLD THAT HORSE!"?**

**LISTEN TO HER STORIES ABOUT HER STUDENTS/DISCIPLES. DO THEY TEND TO EXPLAIN ALL FAILURES AND INJURIES AS A RESULT OF THE STUDENT/DISCIPLE DEVIATING FROM THE INSTRUCTION THAT THE MENTOR GAVE?**

**WHAT IS THE POTENTIAL MENTOR'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE CONCEPT OF POWER? IS GAINING POWER AND CONTROL A GOAL IN ITSELF OR IS IT ONLY A MEANS TO GAIN A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH A HORSE? DOES THE MENTOR RECOGNIZE THAT PATIENCE IS THE BEST INDICATOR OF TRUE POWER AND SELF-CONTROL?**

**DOES THE MENTOR POSSESS SELF-CONTROL? IS THE MENTOR'S SELF-CONTROL SO STRONG THAT IT GENERATES CONFIDENCE IN BOTH HORSES AND HUMANS?**

**DOES SHE BELIEVE THAT HORSES ARE INCAPABLE OF FEELING HUMAN EMOTIONS, SPECIFICALLY LOVE? DOES SHE APPEAR INCAPABLE OF FEELING HUMAN EMOTIONS, SPECIFICALLY LOVE?**

**WITHOUT A DOUBT HORSES CAN BRING OUT THE BEST IN PEOPLE. UNFORTUNATELY, THEY CAN ALSO BRING OUT THE WORST IN SOME PEOPLE. IF YOUR POTENTIAL MENTOR IS DRIVEN BY ONLY A DESIRE TO CONTROL A HORSES AND STUDENTS, YOU WILL HAVE A PROBLEM IN YOUR DEVELOPMENT AS A HORSEMAN. IF YOUR POTENTIAL MENTOR IS DRIVEN ONLY BY A DESIRE TO TEACH HORSES AND STUDENTS, THEN YOU WILL FIND MANY OF YOUR PROBLEMS SOLVED ON THE ROAD TO BECOMING A DESERVING PARTNER TO YOUR HORSE.**



*An Artist's*



*Love Story*

By: Amy E-D Speissegger

Sitting in the salon contemplating life, marriage, freedom, and watching my daughter, I looked down to see a S.C. Wildlife magazine on the table. I picked up the magazine and read the article about the Colonial Spanish Marsh Tacky horses. That reminded me of the time when I was nine years old, my dad asked me what I wanted to do when I grew up. I said I would own a horse farm on rolling hills. The spirit of the horses I was reading about pierced my soul and I decided I had to capture their essence in my artwork. That day set a course of events that changed my life and the lives of my children completely.

I called Mr. Lee McKenzie, a breeder, who allowed my mother, daughter, and me to come meet his Marsh Tacky horses. The photographs I took of his horses were used in my series of Marsh Tacky paintings. One of the photographs was Madeline when she was 4 years old reaching up to touch Blackberry on the nose and Blackberry leaning down touching Madeline's finger. Sadly, the photo was lost in cyberspace. We visited Mr. McKenzie a few times and I was able to take many beautiful photographs to paint.

In 2011, I attended the Kiawah Beach race. I met Mr. D.P. Lowther without realizing his horse was one I photographed and became the next painting I created titled "Sweet Grass Marsh Tacky". The painting was displayed at The Coastal Discovery Museum "Marsh Tacky Now and Then" Exhibition and received "Best in Show" award. At the 2020 CMTA member's meeting I took a framed print of the painting for their silent auction. D.P. Lowther recognized the horse immediately. It was his horse "Bubba", that is now owned by Marc Hudson. The original painting is owned by the family of D.P. Lowther.



**"Sweet Grass Marsh Tacky" Bubba Acrylic on board**

While I was a member of the Charleston Artist Guild, I displayed my first “Marsh Tacky Horse” painting at Piccolo Spoleto. The following year I displayed “Cypress Marsh Tacky, Blackberry” painting which received an “of interest award”. This painting features Blackberry while she is pregnant standing in the cypress nulls of Caw Caw swamp. She paused before going into the dark swamp, getting prepared to go through hard times. The light shines from the swamp onto her depicting God will lead their way. “Cypress Marsh Tacky, Blackberry”, painting has been donated to the Hitchcock Woods Foundation 2024 Auction.



**My first “Marsh Tacky” painting and “Cypress Marsh Tacky, Blackberry” both acrylic on board**

Life at home was getting worse. Painting was holding me together. February 16, 2018, I mustered up the courage to take the kids and leave my bad marriage for the first time. Shortly after I left, my mother was diagnosed with stage four cancer. I had to make a tough decision. The kids and I went back in hopes we could make the marriage work and I could spend time with my mother in her last days. Nothing changed. Mother’s Day, May 11, 2019 my mother crossed the rainbow bridge. Later that year, November 2019, Madeline wanted to go to the Charleston Steeple Chase and see Marsh Tacky horses at the CMTA booth. Madeline spent the day on a Marsh Tacky named Stella and I was at my table a little way from the horses trying to sell a painting. At the end of the day, Loretta came over and started talking with me. She was telling me about her son John who breeds Marsh Tacky horses to preserve the horses his great grandfather had. His great grandfather would wrangle the horses out of the Berkeley County swamps and train them to sell to plantation

owners. The more she talked the more I put pieces together.

Back in 1996 my mother was an ER nurse at Summerville Medical Center. She introduced me to an EMT named John. I rode with him one shift to see if it would be a possible career path. We became friends, but I went back to college to get my art education degree and we lost touch. John was Loretta's son sitting by the horses that Madeline spent the whole day with. We walked over to the horses and John was sitting in a chair with his Argos jacket and leather cowboy hat on. I said John, "I am Amy Dalton, Betsy Dalton's daughter." John looked at me and said, "You're the girl that can draw and roller blade!"

**Madeline and Stella at the Charleston Steeple Chase November 2019**



February 16, 2020, exactly two years after the kids and I moved out the first time, Blackjack was born. John posted on Facebook he was going to help a friend, PJ, whose mare just had a colt and he didn't know what to do. PJ did not live far from my Dad's house. I was taking the kids to my Dad's to spend the night. If Madeline was going to ride horses I wanted her to learn everything she could about horses so we went to see the colt. Madeline named him Blackjack. John and PJ asked me what I was going to do when they saw our interest in these horses. I said, "I am going to get divorced and buy a horse." They both laughed and did not believe me. March 6, 2020, COVID hit, and the kids and I moved in with my Dad.

Since we moved we were close to Blackjack and I would take Madeline a few times a week to see him. PJ was impressed with Madeline and how she was working with Blackjack. He told her he would give her the colt if I would paint him a picture of Sasha and Blackjack. At the time we were living with my dad and brother, I had no job, little money, was fighting the wealthy soon to be ex-husband in court, and had no place to put a horse. PJ told Madeline Blackjack could stay there as long as needed so I could get back on my feet. I painted Sasha and Blackjack. Thank you, PJ! Blackjack is 4 years old now and the bond between them is amazing.

Since we moved we were close to Blackjack and I would take Madeline a few times a week to see him. PJ was impressed with Madeline and how she was working with Blackjack. He told her he would give her the colt if I would paint him a picture of Sasha and Blackjack. At the time we were living with my dad and brother, I had no job, little money, was fighting the wealthy soon to be ex-husband in court, and had no place to put a horse. PJ told Madeline Blackjack could stay there as long as needed so I could get back on my feet. I painted Sasha and Blackjack. Thank you, PJ! Blackjack is 4 years old now and the bond between them is amazing.

**"Sasha and Blackjack" Acrylic on canvas**



My goal was to learn everything about these horses. The true history, their heritage, their behavior, social patterns, confirmation, genetics, everything. In order to do so I had to engross myself in all of their world to be the best equine painter I could be. First, I had to learn to ride. I called John. He thought I was a rich stay at home mom going through a midlife crisis and I was not really serious about riding. He put me on a green quarter horse named Ginger, his Dad, Mr. Johnny, and he were training. He figured if Ginger threw me and I hit the ground I would be done wasting his time. Little did John know, how much hard times had made me tough and stubborn. Ginger tossed me a foot off her back and I landed hard on the ground. I got back up, and rode her again.

A few months went by and Mr. Ricky Warren had a few Marsh Tacky horses for sell. John advised if I was going to own a Marsh Tacky I needed one of those horses because they were high quality with great lineage. Madeline and I met Mr. Ricky and Mrs. Tammy Warren. I picked Lil Darlin and bought her with a gold coin. John and his dad, took Lil Darlin for me back to John's place. Every other weekend John and Mr. Johnny would teach me how to train Lil Darlin in the old ways like John's great grandfather trained the Colonial Spanish horses he got out of the swamps in Berkeley county. I took what I learned, showed Madeline, and she trained Blackjack.

**Photograph of Lil Darlin in the middle and her pasture mates at Mr. Warren's place.**



In September 5, 2021, my dad passed over the rainbow bridge. The kids and I moved to the country and started Hardihood Acres. My artwork is taking off, with commissioned jobs, and future plans for my equine art. Hardihood Acres and our Colonial Spanish Marsh Tacky breeding program is developing and growing.

My mother was right all along. John is my best friend, the love of my life, a great father, and has a passion for the Colonial Spanish horses as big as mine. Finally, in 2022, after 26 years apart, encouragement from the kids, we got married. Today we live happily on Hardihood Acres with our combined Colonial Spanish Marsh Tacky herds, two teenagers, four dogs, three cats and bunch of chickens.



**Photo of John and Amy Speissegger**

# THANKS, SONYA

By Becca Pizmoht

[Rpizmoht@aol.com](mailto:Rpizmoht@aol.com)

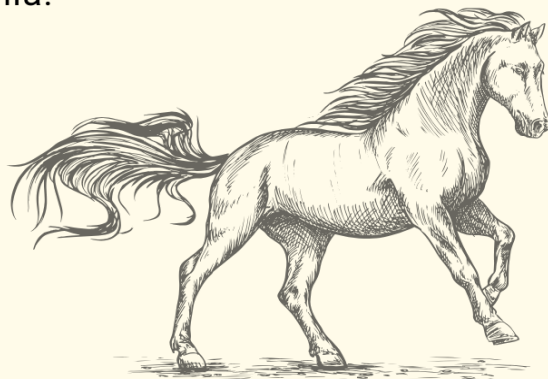
7084 Piedmont Dr.

Rapidan, VA 22733

(540) 537-1203

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to work with horses. In third grade we had to write an essay about what we wanted to do when we grew up and my essay about becoming a horse trainer was illustrated with drawings of horses. Despite my parents hopes it was not a phase and in my early twenties I began a career as a rider and trainer. Every year at Thanksgiving and Christmas I was asked when I planned to get a real job. At 28, I married someone who shared my passion and we continued training, breeding and riding. My parents finally stopped asking me about getting a "real job". Everything was on track until my husband was gravely injured in a breeding accident in 2000. Because he was limited in what he could do, by 2004 I ended up going to work for a prominent breeder. Bad horses and stupid situations got me hurt a handful of times and over the next nine years what had once been a driving passion became a nightmare. My desire to ride was near zero and I began looking for work in any other field.

For three years I applied for any job I was remotely qualified for and actually managed to land several interviews but most were put off by a forty-something with no experience anywhere but a barn. Finally I landed a position at a small newspaper in central New York. I quit my job, packed up everything we owned and prepared to move into my uncle's house. About two hours after my last day of work I got the message that Roman and I wouldn't be able to move into the house because it was being auctioned as a condition of my uncle's pending divorce. While I had lined up a job, it wasn't going to be enough to support us, move us and our animals and pay rent. I had to quickly rethink everything and find a job and a house here in Virginia.



About two weeks went by and I wasn't having much luck with either. I eeked out a living teaching a couple of lessons and did some freelance writing for local publications. One morning I got a call from a friend and she told me that she had the perfect job for me. Actually, she left me two messages, left one with my husband and another with a friend before I called back.

"It's the perfect job for you," said my friend Martha.

"What is it?" I asked.

"It's taking care of some horses," she said.

"I'm not doing horses Martha. I'm done and all horse people are crazy!"

"You'll love it! Jack does. It's low pressure and they need someone now. Go interview this afternoon. They want to hire someone now. You have to go!"

I acquiesced, primarily because I knew she would call me to see if I had gone to interview until I did.

They offered me the job because I was the only person with qualifications that had interviewed and I took it because I was desperate. With \$23 in my checking account and rent due the next week, I had to do something. I intended to take the job and keep looking for a non-horse job.

For the first few weeks I learned the all the horse's names and the farm routine. The owners wanted me to evaluate some of the older stock that were going under saddle to determine what direction they needed to go; whether they were trail horses, hunter ponies or dressage mounts. I rode the five that were broke and started three previously unstarted three year-olds.

One day I was asked to make a decision about Sonya. The previous trainer had determined that she was unsuitable for training. She had been nearly impossible to halter break and one of the barn workers was convinced she was vicious. The owners wanted my opinion whether to try training or euthanize her. Sonya was relegated to a small dirt lot with a catch pen as she was considered uncatchable. I grabbed a rope and a bucket of grain and set out to catch her with another competent horse person. Jack and I were trying to catch her when she walked over to the fence. Her owner, not knowing any better reached across the fence and grabbed her halter. Horrified but not wanting to spook the horse, we quietly told the woman to let go. The little mare just stood there and we hooked a rope up to the front of her halter.





Surprised by this supposed man killer's reaction, I brought the filly in the barn and started to work with her. I was pleasantly surprised by how intelligent and willing she was. The next day I was able to catch her and I continued with the process. Within a week I was lunging and driving this little filly and was ready to get on her. By week two I was riding and the third week I was riding the filly out all over the thousand acre property. Sonya was amazing, brave and willing and absolutely the smartest horse I ever met. She was getting a good foundation on her when I realized she was only 18 months old. I had been led to believe she was three and never would have started her had I known her real age. Mankiller Sonya was turned out to grow up.

Sonya was the first of the Choctaw horses that rekindled my passion. Somewhere along the way my interest in riding came back. Instead of finding reasons not to ride, I was eagerly waiting for the horses to finish eating so that I could work with them.

Left to my own devices, I happily started a group of youngsters. For the first time in years I couldn't wait to get to work, to tack up and do flat work, school a baby over their first jumps or hack out. I stopped looking for a "real" job. My confidence came back. I no longer questioned every move I made and enjoyed the process. For three years I worked with this group of horses watching them learn and grow. Along the way the horses helped me find myself again. The fire that had been extinguished was now burning brightly again. Thanks, Sonya!



*In Loving Memory*  
of  
**CWH THE SEA KING**

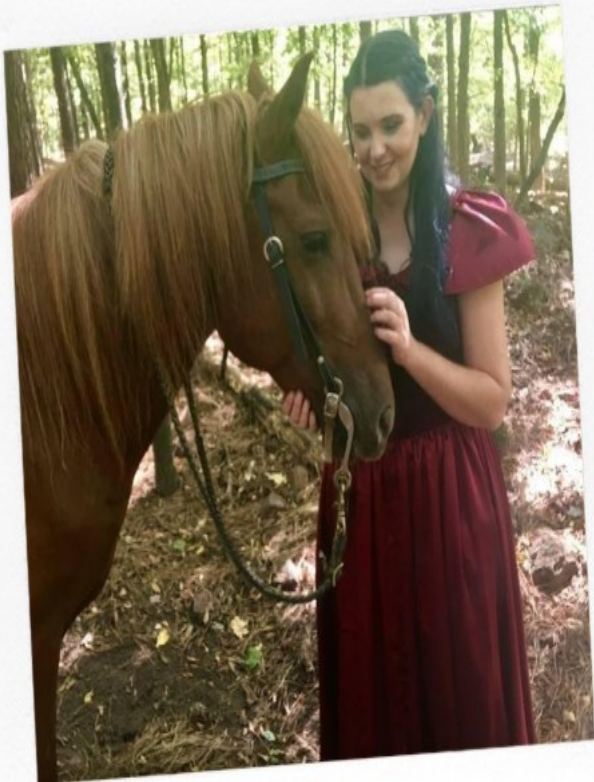
#1834



how lucky was i to have  
something that makes saying  
goodbye so hard



The



Sea



King



Lady Stella, HOA-2407 with 2024 foal  
Madeline Broadway  
Sire: Barrier Island Nightlight, HOA-1934



LL175-Tipsy with Tipsy In Georgia (2024);  
HOA-2242  
Sire: JE Cowboy, a registered Marsh Tacky

2024

Happy Foals

**HAPPY**



**MEMORIAL DAY**

**FROM AMERICA'S FIRST HORSE**



**Remembering and honoring  
all who served**



# **2023 HORSE OF THE AMERICAS RIDING AWARDS**

**MARCH 28, 2023**

**Corazon de Caballos (1,000 Cumulative Points)  
Ta Sunka Witco #1769; Steve Edwards & Mill Swamp Indian  
Horses**

**Legends (500 Cumulative Points)  
Two Hands At Midnight #2007; The Andrew Kors Family  
Carol Stone Ambassador**

**Two Hands At Midnight #2007; The Andrew Kors Family  
English Performance**

**Copper Concha #2175; Rebecca Pizmoht  
Western Performance**

**Colonial Dream #2002; Kendra Chavez  
Sawbraw Cami #2396; Ginger Hipp  
Farm & Ranch Work**

**Spark #2388; Caleb Jensen  
Colonial Dream #2002; Kendra Chavez  
Trail Riding (Individual)**

**Colonial Dream #2002; Kendra Chavez  
Two Hands At Midnight (The Andrew Kors Family)  
Trail Riding (Group)**

**Steve Edwards & Mill Swamp Indian Horse Riders  
Colonial Dream #2002; Kendra Chavez**

**Endurance:  
Senior: Steve Edwards on Windrider's Average Joe #1908**

**Junior: Audrey Teller on SWH Diamond City Pony Boy  
(Holland) #1649**



## Registrar's Report—April, 2024

by Gretchen Patterson

Registration of horses continues a steady upslope with an upswing of the Marsh Tacky horses of South Carolina. In 2000, HOA started the numbering system with #1000 and today, we are at #2425. This is our twentieth-fourth year as a registry and we are still going strong.

I encourage breeders to keep good records of their foals and offer a buyer a completed application when a sale occurs. The Colonial Spanish Horse is an antique breed now in the 21st century. Every Mustang must realize the importance of recording the names and bloodlines of each horse for future generations. When selling a registered horse, please fill out a transfer form to go with the registration certificate.

To make registration easier, HOA has payment by PayPal which is available through the website at: <http://www.horseoftheamericas.com>

The online application can be emailed along with the registration photos. Please submit pictures in one of three formats: regular photographs; digital scans on photographic paper or via email. I would like to stress that digital pictures must be printed on glossy paper. I cannot use pictures that are printed on regular copy paper.

If you send pictures via email, try to reduce the size to **1 mb** to **800 kb** and should be formatted and saved as a **.jpg, .png, or tiff**. Picture files saved as a **.gif** extension have been compressed and do not reproduce well.



One Dance Left & Gretchen Patterson

All photos should be taken in open space, preferably in the morning or early afternoon. Pictures with lots of shadows do not scan well, and the horse's true color is difficult to reproduce. Trees or other busy landscape should be out of the background whenever possible. I require pictures of both sides as well as a front, a rear, and a good facial. If a horse has unusual white patterns on the head, a close-up photo is also needed.

For more information or assistance, please contact Gretchen Patterson, 14750 Hillside Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78233 or by email: [glpatterson62@gmail.com](mailto:glpatterson62@gmail.com). My telephone is 903-

407-3260. You can also leave me a message on the HOA Facebook page.

# REGISTRATION & TRANSFER FEES

WEANLINGS REGISTRATION: \$15.00

YEARLINGS REGISTRATION: \$20.00

OVER 2YRS REGISTRATION: \$30.00

TRANSFER: \$10.00

TRANSFER WITH NEW CERTIFICATE: \$20.00

## INTERNATIONAL FEES

WEANLINGS REGISTRATION: \$20.00

YEARLINGS REGISTRATION: \$25.00

OVER 2YRS REGISTRATION: \$35.00





A photograph of two white horses standing in a grassy field. The horse on the right is facing forward, while the one on the left is slightly turned. The background is a dense forest of green trees under a bright sky. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

# HOA HORSES FOR SALE?

Do you have an HOA horse up  
for sale?

Contact [mickeypliakos@hotmail.com](mailto:mickeypliakos@hotmail.com) about  
posting them on our website!

# ADS WANTED!!

HORSE OF THE AMERICAS  
NEWSLETTER WANTS YOUR ADS!  
HAVE AN EQUINE RELATED BUSINESS? POST AN  
AD IN OUR NEWSLETTER! CONTACT US TODAY  
TO GET YOUR AD INTO OUR NEXT ISSUE



Advertising Rates  
Full Page = \$ 30.00

1/2 Page = \$ 15.00

1/4 Page = \$ 7.50

1/8 Page = \$ 5.00 (Business Card)