

# Medicine Man RANCH

STORY BY SONJA BERRY  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MEDICINE MAN RANCH



SCOTTISH DREAM MMR



ZIPS STRAWSAM MMR

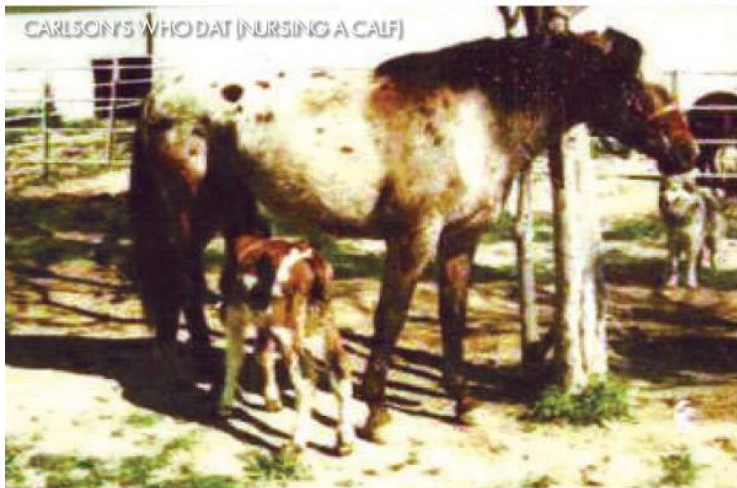




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SILVER STRIKES EQUAL



CARLSON'S WHO DAT (NURSING A CALF)

It was the summer of 1971. Big changes were occurring in our country. The horse industry was booming and the Appaloosa Horse Club registered its 150,000th Appaloosa. Annette McDonald was planning to attend the Appaloosa Horse Club National show to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, a short trip from her home in Flagstaff, Arizona. Annette packed up her daughters Leslie and Tracy, and off they went. Annette's husband, Dr. Richard McDonald, was a general surgeon that had a practice in Flagstaff. He was unable to make the trip that would change his whole family's life. Annette, some good friends, and the girls attended the National Show and were wowed by the incredible horses and the welcoming people they met. The National grand champion halter stallion that year was Silver Strikes Equal. Repeating his 1968 grand championship, he also proved he was not just a pretty horse by winning the hunt seat championship as well. Annette tells the story thirty-five years later as if it had just happened yesterday, retelling what a beautiful horse he was.

The trip to Las Vegas was prompted by a search for an activity the whole McDonald family could share. Annette and Richard grew up with horses and were excited to share their horse experiences with their daughters. The McDonald daughters were participating in 4-H, learning how to ride the local 4-H club horses. It was the 1971 National Show that changed their course. For Christmas that year, both girls received halters. Leslie's reaction was one of disappointment, "On no, halters! Why did we get

halters?" Tracy exclaimed gleefully, "We are getting horses!" After Christmas, and together, the McDonalds set out to buy horses for the family. Their first purchases were not Appaloosas, rather, a thoroughbred mare in foal to an Appaloosa stallion, and a grade half-quarter horse gelding. While the gelding proved to be a good mount for Leslie, the thoroughbred mare proved to be a little too hot for Tracy, so off the family went again in search of a suitable mount. They found that in a well-trained Appaloosa mare, named Carlson's Who Dat, purchased from Andy Watts. Who Dat was perfect for the girls and taught them how to show. She was so well trained she would follow the announcer's commands. More than one time, when the mare heard the click of the announcer's microphone, she would automatically proceed to the center of the ring assuming her class was over, much to the chagrin of the rider.

Annette and Richard both grew up riding horses on Nebraska farms. Annette had a pony she would get on in the early summer mornings, meet up with her friends, and return at dark. Richard was the groom for his father's six half-Belgian horses. Richard and his brothers would help drive the horses during the day, but they really wanted to ride. After their father went to bed, the McDonald boys would get the plow horses out and ride them, but this only lasted until their father caught them. While Annette and Richard both knew how to ride, showing was a learning experience for them both. Annette helped the girls out during practice sessions. She would sit on the fence railing and read the instructions out of the 4-H handbook to the girls. Whenever the horses performed as desired, she would ask the girls to recall what it was they had done. They did not have trainers, they learned by practicing, competing and watching the other 4-H riders. Annette always told the girls, "don't watch the riders who didn't win, watch the





ARCO MISS HYSLOT WITH BRIGHT YANKEE



### Leslie and Hy N Bright's awards

#### 1983 NATIONAL APPALOOSA SHOW

- Reserve high point non-pro
- Champion showmanship non-pro
- Reserve champion western equitation
- Reserve champion hunter hack

#### 1982 NATIONAL APPALOOSA SHOW

- Reserve champion ladies western pleasure

#### 1981 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW

- Champion buckboard driving

rider who won the class."The girls did learn by watching and imitating the winning riders. They became proficient and transitioned from 4-H competition to horse shows.

The McDonalds knew if they were going to be competitive in the horse show arena, they needed better quality horses than they had. They purchased a granddaughter of High Spot, Arco Miss Hyspot, and bred her to Gene Hickey's Arizona stallion, Bright Dude, a son of Bright Auctioneer. With the resulting colt, Bright Yankee, the McDonalds went to their first National Show in 1976 held in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Gene Hickey advised them that to win at the Nationals, they needed to hire a trainer. The McDonalds were determined to compete themselves. True to form, Tracy showed the weanling and the McDonalds came away from their very first National show with a top ten in produce of dam. There were 36 horses shown in the class representing 18 dams. To sweeten their success, they were offered and accepted \$5000 for Bright Yankee. In the mid-seventies, a decent new car could be purchased for the same amount. The Appaloosa bug had bitten the McDonalds, and they were inspired to continue their breeding program. Little did they know—Arco Miss Hyspot was already in foal with their first World Champion, Hy N Bright.

Hy N Bright was a mare before her time. She was big, 16 hands, pretty, an unusual color and super smart. She won in everything including western pleasure, hunter under saddle, pattern classes, driving, hunters, and halter. If there was a class, she would do it and do it well. One year Leslie qualified for the finals at the Nationals in ladies western pleasure. The classes were so packed, the ring call wasn't until two in the morning.

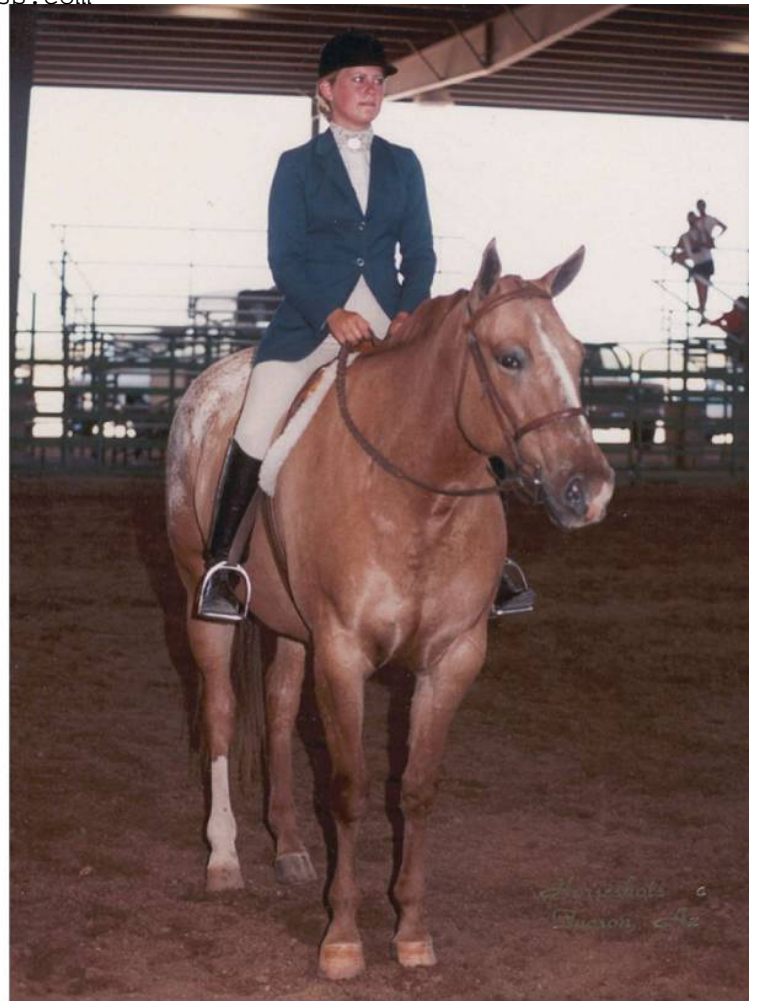




The McDonalds' first win at the World level was in buck-board driving. They also won at the Nationals in showmanship, horsemanship, western pleasure, reserve high point Non-Pro, and countless top tens. Hy N Bright was Leslie's super horse. With her unique rose-dun color with spots, she was noticed in the show ring. She appeared in the *Appaloosa Journal* as an example of what the hunter under saddle horse should look and move like.

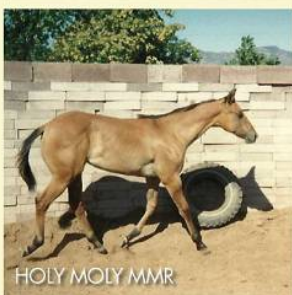
Hy N Bright, called HB, proved herself as a versatile companion. Leslie and Hy N Bright would swim in the pond on hot summer days. HB would drag Leslie across the water, Leslie just holding on to her mane. One of HB's favorite activities was to be scratched, it didn't matter where—rump, legs, belly, you name it she loved it and out stretched the nose and teeth chattered as she enjoyed it. She could be out at the ends of the pasture but if she could see or hear a person she would fly over, stop short of the visitor and swing her rump around for scratches. Long after retiring from the show ring and broodmare band she was allowed to roam the ranch freely.

Leslie says of Hy N Bright, "The best thing that Hy N Bright ever did for me was to give birth to Shakey, Zips Straw Bright MMR, my current show gelding, I waited 23 years for him to be born and it was worth the wait." He was the last foal Hy N Bright produced before she retired. Carrying on his mother's tradition, Shakey is a world champion. What more could a family ask for from a mare?





After her riding successes, Hy N Bright became a broodmare, producing healthy twins her first time in foal, and thirteen foals in all. Four of her produce earned top honors in the show arena: multiple National Champion Holy Moly MMR (still showing today), Canadian National Champion Wahoo MMR, multiple reserve World Champion Zip Straw Bright MMR, and World Champion Halleys Comet MMR.



As ambassadors for the Appaloosa breed, Hy N Bright and the McDonalds have been a superb example. Arizona Appaloosa Association (AAA) members Mary Ann Page and LuAnn Bickford were so impressed by Hy N Bright, they both purchased horses from her line. LuAnn Bickford recalls, "I remember Richard and Leslie riding a tall dun mare at the Flagstaff show. I watched him ride that mare and was determined to have a horse of his or trained by him."

Mary Ann Page adds, "I will never forget the first time I met Doc—I was going to NAU and had a nice little yearling gelding that I took to the Flagstaff fairgrounds to a breed show. Doc was showing this beautiful dun mare with a perfect blanket, Hy N

Bright. From that point forward all I ever dreamed of was owning a creamy dun with a blanket."

The McDonalds continued to show locally and regionally. They made friends and acquaintances at every show they attended. Richard and Annette met Tom Simmons (owner of Goer) at a show in San Francisco. While there, a pretty dun mare owned by Tom and shown by Joan Santos caught their eye. Little Yum Yum was exceptionally bred, being a granddaughter of Wiggy Bar (AQHA) and Mighty Bright. Dick asked Tom for her purchase price and Tom responded she was not for sale. The resulting negotiations started a long friendship between the McDonalds and Tom Simmons. After several weeks, Richard wore Tom down,





*Ramsey '78*  
LITTLE YUM YUM WITH JOAN SANTOS

and he finally consented to sell Little Yum Yum in foal to Goer. Richard and Annette took their prized mare back to the ranch. Broke to ride, Little Yum Yum could perform under saddle and place well in halter. She placed seventh in hunter under saddle at the Nationals and then went on to produce three foals for the McDonalds. Go-Yum-Er, by Goer, was the 1983 National Champion Broodmare and later earned a reserve National Championship in pleasure driving.

Richard rebred Little Yum Yum to Goer and foaled Geisha Girl, later renamed Send Roses. Send Roses, not to be out done by her full sister, became the 1989 National Champion broodmare. Richard kept a colt sired by Deep South out of Little Yum Yum named Final Touch who became the first stallion to stand at the Medicine Man Ranch. Final Touch excelled in the show



FINAL TOUCH



GO-YUM-ER (ABOVE AS A FOAL)



ring, winning high point and reserve high point horse several times. Final Touch did well for the McDonalds, siring 34 horses that earned 772 open performance points and 221 halter points during a time when competition was stiff, single judge shows were the norm, and earning five points at a single show was a lot. Richard and Annette continued to look for quality mares to add to their broodmare band, and kept their best fillies to continue on the bloodlines they liked.

A filly by Final Touch, Miss Sen Sen, became a Supreme Champion at a time when there were only 30 Supreme Champions in ApHC history.



### Miss Sen Sen's awards

APHC CLUB CHAMPION

SUPREME CHAMPION

VERSATILITY CHAMPION

NATIONAL SHOW TOP TENS

- Suitability for Dressage Mares
- Junior Western Riding
- First Year Green Hunter
- Non-Pro Western Riding
- Non-Pro Bareback Equitation

WORLD SHOW TOP TENS

- Junior Western Riding
- First Year Green Hunter
- Non-Pro Hunter Hack
- Non-Pro Working Hunter

ROMs

- Aged Mares
- Suitability for Dressage Mares
- Keyhole Race
- Senior Western Riding
- Senior Trail
- Senior Hunter Under Saddle
- Hunter Hack







**ROCKET STRAW SAM**  
1982 Champion Mare

**BRED TO BE A RACE HORSE**

- Grand Champion at Halter
- Versatility Champion
- Top 10 Follower World 1988 — 4 Events
- In Foal to Dreamfinder
- 250 National Performance Points
- ROM in Seven Events
- National High Point Finisher 1988 — 4 Events
- High Point Performance Horse Arizona & Colorado 1988

Roman's Straw Man x Huggin Sam AQHA (S13 ALW Winner) (AAA)  
By Rocket Hug (AAA)

Shown by Leslie Woolery at 1989 Nationals

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THIS PAGE ROCKET STRAW SAM

In the pretty town of Sedona, Arizona, Bee and Gene Gordon established the Horse Mesa Ranch during the 1960's. They raised quality Appaloosa horses and a few AQHA horses. Gene and Richard worked together frequently as Gene was an anesthetist and supported Richard during surgeries. The Gordons owned an AQHA ROM race mare named Huggin Sam. As racing enthusiasts, the Gordons took Huggin Sam to be bred to the prominent racing champion stallion, Deep South. Deep South's owner did not believe Huggin Sam was of the quality required to breed to his stallion, and suggested their number two stallion, Roman's Straw Man, instead. They bred her to Roman's Straw Man, but the mare didn't take. The following year Roman's Straw Man had been sold and the Gordons were faced with paying a second stud fee. After some debate they decided to go ahead with it. This time around, the breeding took, and the resultant filly was named Rocket Straw Sam and was purchased by the McDonalds.

As a two-year-old, Rocket Straw Sam accepted training easily. She was most eager to please. It was this attitude that enabled her, under the training guidance of Richard McDonald and Brent and Leslie Woolery, to accumulate 258 performance points over a four year time period. Before retirement, Rocket Straw Sam was high point horse at 32 consecutive shows, not counting the World and Nationals. The pretty mare earned seven saddles along the way. At the highest levels, she earned the reserve National Western Horse award and a Versatility Championship. She earned ROMs in saddle seat pleasure, hunter hack, western riding, pleasure driving, western pleasure, hunter under saddle and trail. Rocket Straw Sam even earned a prominent article in the magazine *Western Horseman*. Retired sound to the broodmare band, Rex Kennard, the owner of Dreamfinder, guaranteed the McDonalds that if they bred Rocket Straw Sam to Dreamfinder, the foal would be a halter horse. That horse was Rock Finder MMR, Rocket Straw Sam's first foal.



Rocket Finder MMR, with his spectacular blanket and good looks, was quickly sold to Charles Barnett of Kansas City, Kansas. The young stallion went on to win the two-year-old stallion National championship, 1993 Canadian National champion, and 1992 and 1993 reserve World champion at halter for his new owner.

Rocket Straw Sam's second foal was Patriotrocket MMR, sired by Smokey Poco Dude. Patriotrocket MMR did not disappoint his dam and earned the reserve National champion suitability for dressage stallion in 1995. Rocket Straw Sam's third foal, a full sibling to Rocket Finder MMR, was injured as a weanling and was not shown. She produced Scotch Revenue MMR, the 2009 reserve World Youth champion heritage 18 and under and top ten in western pleasure. Her fourth foal was the stallion Richard had waited his whole life for, Zips Strawsam MMR. And her fifth foal is Zips Scotch Rocket MMR, a full sibling to Zips Strawsam MMR, now a broodmare in New York.



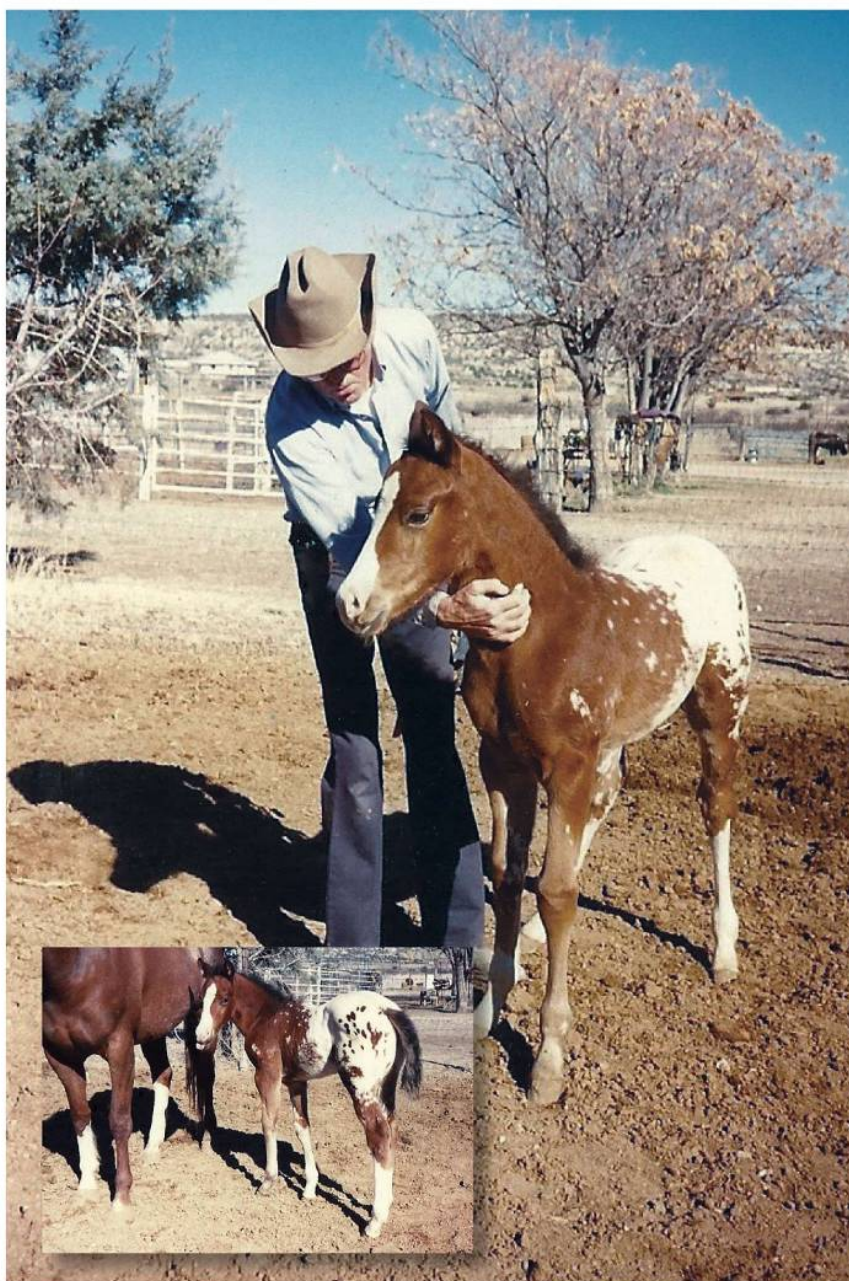
ROCKET STRAW SAM



PATRIOTROCKET MMR



ROCKET FINDER MMR (RIGHT-AS A FOAL)





## Zips Strawsam MMR

### 7 TIME NATIONAL/WORLD CHAMPION

2005 RES. WORLD CHAMPION WESTERN PLEASURE

2005 WORLD CHAMPION WESTERN RIDING

2005 RES. WORLD CHAMPION HORSEMANSHIP

RES. WORLD CHAMPION TRAIL

2004 WORLD CHAMPION SHOWMANSHIP

2003 WORLD CHAMPION WESTERN EQUITATION

2002 WORLD CHAMPION WESTERN EQUITATION

2001 WORLD CHAMPION HIGH POINT WESTERN HORSE

2003 RES. HIGH POINT 35 & OVER WORLD SHOW

2004 HIGH POINT 35 & OVER WORLD SHOW

2005 RES. HIGH POINT 35 & OVER WORLD SHOW

8 Registers of Merit

4 Superior Events

4 Year-end High Points

1 Versatility Championship

1 Club Championship



## As a sire

### 89 APHC-REGISTERED FOALS WHO HAVE EARNED SO FAR:

1023.5 Performance Points

198 Halter Points

18 Registers of Merit

1 Club Championship

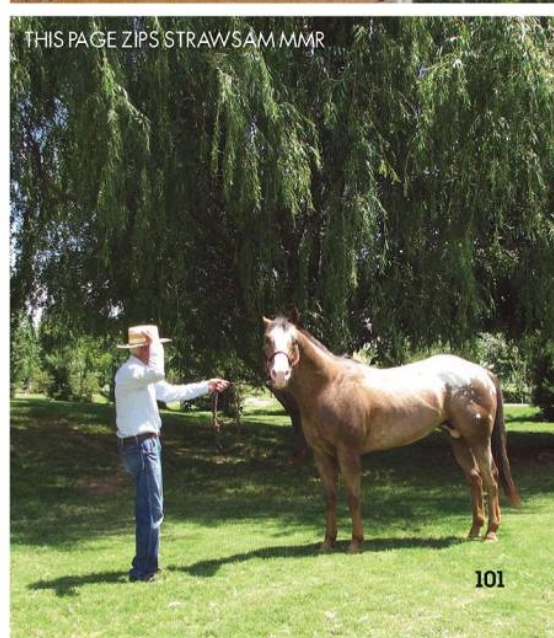
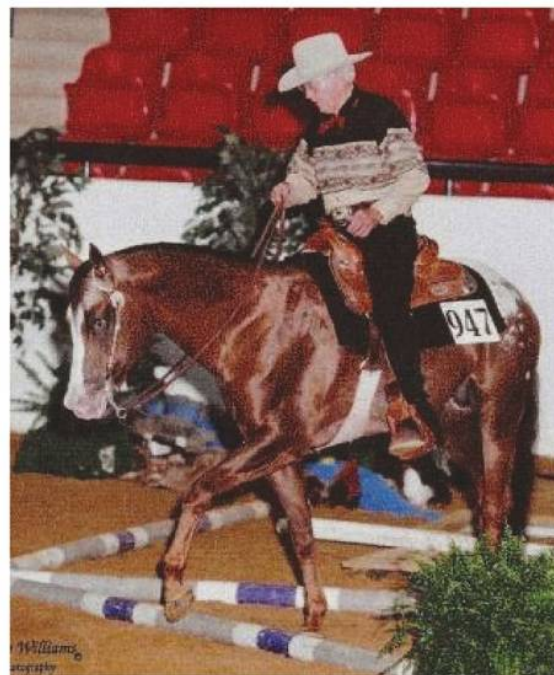
3 Bronze Medallions



Annette McDonald had a very active role in the establishment of the Medicine Man Ranch. Due to Richard's busy practice, it was Annette that helped the girls practice riding, ready the horses for shows, prepared the tack, and packed the trailer. Annette made all the show clothes for the girls when they were young, an accomplishment all on its own. She has helped run numerous shows while her family competed.

As the McDonalds look back at their simple desire to spend quality time with their daughters, they realize that the fun family activity of riding Appaloosas has turned into so much more. Annette and Richard are very proud of their family, Tracy and Smokey Marvelle, both veterinarians who live in Arizona and Brent and Leslie Woolery. Brent is an ApHC judge and trainer, and Leslie is an interior designer living in Colorado. The McDonalds also cherish all the close friends they have made within the Appaloosa community and thank them for their long time support.

Now, as the Medicine Man Ranch has firmly established themselves as a reputable breeding ranch for non-pro and youth horses, Annette and Richard continue to promote the Appaloosa. Richard has served on the Board of Directors for the Arizona Appaloosa Association. He and Annette have taken on leadership roles of setting up and promoting shows in Flagstaff, Arizona, managing stallion auctions and more. Richard and Annette have managed and set up the recent AAA All Breed Scholarship show held in Flagstaff, the proceeds from which help fund the AAA's Youth Scholarship award. The McDonalds continue to be staunch supporters of the Appaloosa horse. They have left a lasting impact that can be felt across the ApHC. 🐾



THIS PAGE ZIPS STRAWSAM MMR