

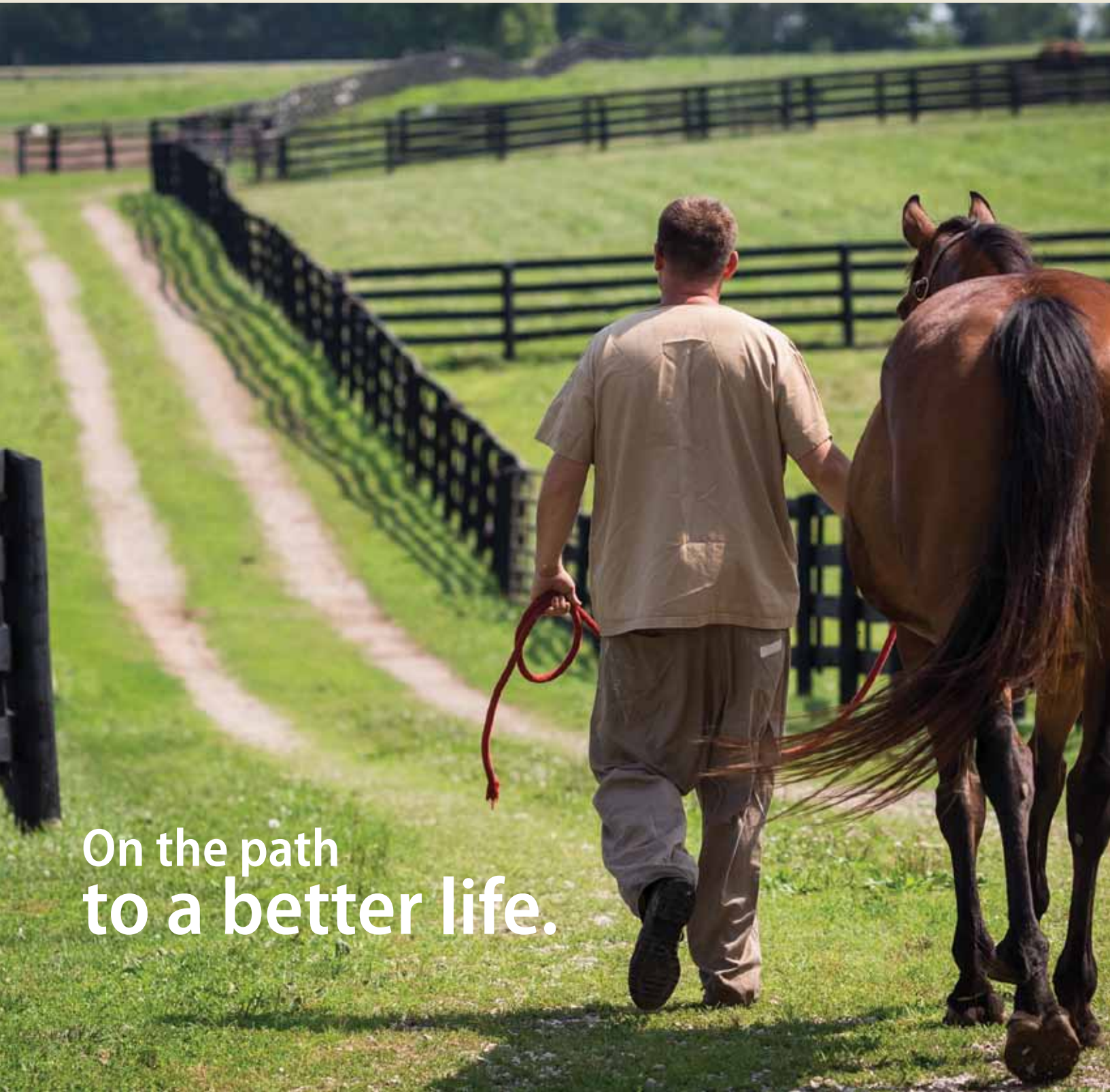
CELEBRATING 30 YEARS



September 2013

RENEWALS

NEWS FROM THE THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION



On the path
to a better life.

Thanks to you, the three great geldings would be proud.



Thirty years ago, on October 14, 1983, at Belmont Park, Forego, John Henry and Kelso paraded down the track for thousands of fans on Jockey Gold Cup Day to raise money and awareness for the newly formed Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation. Those three great geldings made an appearance that

day to help every horse in need of a home at the end of its racing career. Their message was heard.

On its 30th anniversary, TRF is the largest and oldest organization in the world dedicated to providing meaningful retirement homes for former Thoroughbred racehorses and helping all horses through education and awareness. From its outset, TRF foresaw the possibility that through bonding with and caring for retired racehorses, prisoners could learn valuable skills while also experiencing life changing lessons.

The TRF has already been responsible for saving more than 4,000 horses, and today we are caring for just under 1,000 horses at 22 private farms and 10 prisons in 15 states. Hundreds of prisoners have graduated with certificates attesting to their newly-developed skills. These certificates often open the door to new careers and new paths in life, while significantly reducing recidivism.

Yes, Kelso, Forego and John Henry would be proud of how the TRF turned the tide for America's Thoroughbred racehorses and gave meaning to their entire lives. Now we need you to answer their call again.

If you are new to our family or already a donor, please make a gift and contact us to learn more about our work and activities across the U.S. Together we can make a difference in the life of every Thoroughbred in need of a home and a job at the end of its racing career.

Sincerely,

John C. Moore
President

Diana Pikulski
Vice President of External Affairs

THOROUGHBRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION
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On the Cover

Front: A quiet moment between unlikely friends at the Blackburn Correctional Complex in Lexington, Kentucky. Equine Program Director Linda Dyer places a strong emphasis on natural horsemanship techniques, which the offenders utilize to develop positive relationships with the 57 horses who call the farm home.

Image by EquiSport Photos

Renews content written by
Francis LaBelle

SECOND CHANCES CALIFORNIA OFFERS VARIATION ON A THEME



Second Chances California is the first TRF program to have a formal mental health component as a primary aspect of the curriculum

In the 30 years that it has been in existence, the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation is perhaps best known for its Second Chances program. Although the TRF has also promoted foster homes and adoption for former racehorses, the landmark Second Chances pairs horses with prisoners at state penitentiaries to provide a second chance at a respectable life for all.

On April 7, Second Chances California near Modesto graduated its first class and the second class graduated May 19. The third class will graduate right around when this magazine is printed.

Quick success has been the benchmark at Second Chances California. Like all things California, it is a program with a twist.

"The biggest difference with our

program is that not only are we geared to the vocational aspect, but we focus on the mental health aspect, using the EAGALA model," said Julie Baker, Equine Program Director at Second Chances California. "The only other difference is our program here serves people who are on probation, not in-custody inmates. At least, not yet. So, participants have to come out here on their own. The ones who have made it are individuals that are very committed to making this work."

EAGALA is an acronym for the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association. Founded in 1999, EAGALA is a non-profit professional organization whose self-described mission is "that every person worldwide will have access to Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Learning (EAL) Services, provided at the highest standard of excellence."

Baker explains it this way.

"We want our participants to not only learn a vocation and get a good job, but to be able to keep it," Baker said. "To do that, we believe that they first have to learn about themselves. And the horses help them find out about who they are." This is not a riding academy. Rather, participants are introduced to EAGALA's three components: Baker, as well as a Mental Health professional and, of course, the horses. The process of developing responsibility and, ultimately, trust begins with interaction, communication, problem solving and establishing relationships. It brings out the best in everyone.

"One of our graduates, a man named Russell, had been in and out of prison for most of his adult life," Baker said. "He learned about himself and what brought him to this point. Then, he learned about horses and how to take care of them. He found a job, has been working steadily for six months and has good reports."

Those good reports happen to come from Woodbridge Farm in Oakdale, CA, which is owned by Susan Greene, acting president of the California Thoroughbred Breeders Association.

"I went to Second Chances, and saw these people in action," Green said. "I was really impressed with Russell and his desire to make it. So, he came to work here. Twenty-five yearlings were prepped for a sale this summer, and Russell has been working hard and proving to be a willing learner. He understands that this is the 'in' to get him out."

Such a result is pretty much what Baker envisioned from Second Chances California from the onset. She was inspired years ago when she worked as an exercise rider on the California racing

(continued)

circuit for trainer Christopher Speckert, a former assistant to the late Hall of Fame trainer Charlie Whittingham.

“Our barn was next to Charlie’s, and I kept seeing vans dropping off people there in the morning, and they were there to work as hotwalkers,” said Baker, referring to people whose job is to walk horses around the shedrow after a morning workout to cool them down. “I asked Charlie about them, and he told me they were prisoners. He said, ‘It makes them feel good, and it makes me feel good.’”

(Allow a brief footnote: Charlie Whittingham, “The Bald Eagle,” trained 1986 Kentucky Derby and ‘87 Breeders’ Cup Classic winner Ferdinand, and for a while, trained Exceller. Sold to Japanese interests, Ferdinand wound up in a slaughterhouse in 2002. Exceller, who came from 22 lengths back to defeat two American Triple Crown winners—Seattle Slew and Affirmed—in the 1978 Jockey Club

Gold Cup at Belmont Park, had met a similar fate in Sweden in 1997. Despite being in good health, Exceller was sent to slaughter when his bankrupt owner determined that he was just another financial liability. Ferdinand and Exceller became the impetus for public aware-

“Russell has been working hard and proving to be a willing learner. He understands that this is the ‘in’ to get him out.”

ness and the need for Thoroughbred rescue and dignified retirement.)

Baker earned her trainer’s license, but retired from the racetrack in 1992. A single mother with three children, Baker worked for American Medical Response, a Modesto ambulance

service. It was there that she made contact with Stanislaus County Sheriff Adam Christianson and his officers. By 2007, she had also purchased the 10-acre Dependent Ranch.

Her new home, a connection with local law enforcement and the idea sparked years earlier by Whittingham’s hotwalkers were the seeds for Second Chances California.

Now, it’s in full bloom.

The continued growth of Second Chances California is, like all TRF projects, dependent on public awareness and support. Even as June came to a close, Baker was trying yet another innovation to raise funds for Second Chances California.

“We hosted a day at the ranch, featuring ‘Cowboy Polo,’” she said. “Horses, broomsticks and exercise balls.”

Basically, it’s polo—with a twist.

For more information, visit www.trfsecondchancesca.org.



Retiree Spotlight: A 33rd Birthday for SIR PRIZE BIRTHDAY

more aggressive horses—with other horses. In the pecking order of the herd, he was always No. 1 or No. 2. He had to be first at the feed tub, first in everything.

“But he was only aggressive with other horses. Around people, he was easy. In fact, he was so easy that for years we used him as a starter horse for new inmates.

We had a lot of inmates from the inner city who had never even seen a horse before and were scared of them. But when they were around Sir Prize Birthday, it didn’t take them long to get over being afraid.”

It is not hard to understand Sir Prize Birthday’s different personality with horses and humans.

As a racehorse, he is one of the few in the modern era to have made 200 starts. When he left the racetrack, he had a record of 39-38-32 from 206 starts and more than \$300,000 in earnings.

“He is one of my favorite horses,” said trainer Tim Ritchey. “He was just all class with a great disposition. When I got him, he was an older horse, but he tried every time he went to the race-track. He was a hard-knocking horse, and earned every penny he made.”

According to Tremper, the class carried over to Walkill.

“He is so easy, we once sent him out to work at a children’s camp,” Tremper said. “When the owner got sick and had to close down the camp, Sir Prize Birthday came back here.”

These days, Sir Prize Birthday spends most of his days with four younger horses and at feeding time, he is isolated with another.

“I visited him right before his

“He ran more than 200 times and here he is, still sound at 33. They don’t make them like that anymore.”

birthday,” said TRF’s Diana Pikulski. “He is finally showing his age in his body, but he still moves well. He ran more than 200 times and here he is, still sound at 33. They don’t make them like that anymore.”

According to Tremper, Sir Prize Birthday is no longer as aggressive with other horses, but still happy being a horse.

“He has always kept weight easy, but now, he gets senior feed and supplements,” Tremper said.

“He’s doing pretty well for a horse his age.”

Which should come as no surprise.

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Did you know that we offer a variety of items for sale in our online store? From jewelry to books to children’s toys, there is something for everyone. Get an early start on your holiday shopping and help support our horses at the same time!



New items include bracelets representing the colors of the Thoroughbred breed, TRF’s 30th Anniversary pendant, and plush Thoroughbreds with handmade TRF saddle cloths.

Visit www.trfinc.org and click on “Online Store.”

At age 33, Sir Prize Birthday is the oldest horse in TRF’s entire herd.

On May 25, Sir Prize Birthday celebrated his 33rd birthday and marked another year as the oldest member of the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation’s herd. That is no small feat, considering that the TRF, now in its 30th year, currently has more than 950 horses at 32 farms in 15 different states.

Since 1998, Sir Prize Birthday has called the Walkill Correctional Facility in upstate New York his home and, from the start, he put himself in charge.

“We group horses according to how they fit with other horses,” said Jim Tremper, longtime farm manager at Walkill. “He was already 18 when he came here, and Sir Prize Birthday was always among the

HORSES AREN'T JUST ADORNMENT AT LE BON CHEVAL

"Horses are just lawn ornaments." If that remark was said as a joke, Elizabeth Rosenberg certainly didn't think it was funny. If it wasn't, then it was just plain stupid.

"I've heard that from people several times before and it really bothers me," said Rosenberg.

"Horses, especially ex-racehorses are fabulous athletes. Their careers just happen to be over. They need and deserve a good home to spend their retirement years.

She and her husband, Glenn, have backed up their beliefs with action. They not only support the efforts of the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, they even bought a 16-acre farm—Le Bon Cheval Farm in Shelbyville, KY—for the specific purpose of adopting horses.

One of the Thoroughbreds at Le Bon Cheval herd is 11-year-old Interpatation, who, in 2009, won the Grade 1

Joe Hirsch Turf Classic Invitational at Belmont Park over Gio Ponti, one of the top money-earning Thoroughbreds of all time. Interpatation would race 20 more times, but that was his last victory in what would become a 71-race career.

"My husband and I love Saratoga and would go there for the Sword Dancer every year." Rosenberg said of the biggest turf race on the Spa's summer racing schedule. "I saw a saddlecloth on Ebay come up from the Sword Dancer and it belonged to Interpatation. So, I looked him up and was surprised to see that he was nine years old and still racing in California."

It wasn't the fact that Interpatation was still racing, but he was racing in much lower-level races. This, after all, was a Grade 1 winner who had placed in other graded events and whose performances earned him an invitation to the 2009 Japan Cup.

"He had begun the inevitable downslide of his career," Rosenberg said. "I contacted his owner and offered to take him at my own expense. After I was told I could have him, he still raced six more times. Finally, I got the call that I could take him and that was two days after Thanksgiving two years ago."

A horse like Interpatation, who had earned more than \$1.2 million on the racetrack, needed to learn to be an ex-racehorse. Fortunately, Rosenberg had a friendship with Linda Dyer, Equine Program Director for the TRF's farm at Blackburn Correctional Complex in Lexington, KY. Here, non-violent inmates are taught equine care and stable management and the horses, while in a safe environment, learn to become horses again.

Having dropped his head and his old lifestyle, Interpatation settled in at Le Bon Cheval.

"A horse like Interpatation, who had earned more than \$1.2 million on the racetrack, needed to learn to be an ex-racehorse."

farm," said Rosenberg. "I had ridden trails as a kid but I didn't know anything about horses and farms. I was in marketing and higher education. But I wanted a farm just for the purpose of having a place for horses to go when they retire.

"I am sure there were times early on when Paoli was saying to himself, 'Elizabeth, you are a stupid woman.' But we learned together and he's a very happy horse.

The two other Thoroughbreds at Le Bon Cheval are Speedway and Miss Moderate.

Completing the herd is Josh, who Rosenberg said came from, "a quarter-horse puppy mill."

"He didn't fit the mold and they had no record of who his mother was,"

Rosenberg said. "So, he was just let out in a field. When I got him, he was two years old and untouchable. This farm is called 'Le Bon Cheval,' which is French for 'The Good Horse.' Well, we called Josh, 'Le Mal Cheval,' or 'The Bad Horse.'"

Still, all horses have it good at Le Bon Cheval.



Linda Dyer of the TRF Second Chances program at Blackburn Correctional Complex helps horses like Interpatation and Paoli prepare for new careers.

Image by EquiSport Photos.



Interpatation winning the Joe Hirsch Turf Classic in driving rain at Belmont Park in 2009. It was the last victory of his career.

Photo by Adam Coglianese – NYRA Photos

"He requires more food than the others and eats the same as the other four horses together," Rosenberg said. "He fits in beautifully. At Hollywood Park they called him, 'The Old Man,' but he acts like a three-year-old around here. He would like to be the boss of the herd, but that job belongs to Paoli," Paoli is now 14. The gelded son of 1993 Whitney winner Brunswick won only three races in 28 starts while going up and down in the claiming ranks. After he broke down in the mud in his final race at Suffolk Downs in 2005, he was put on a truck for Canada, where he faced the prospect of slaughter for consumption in foreign markets.

Although rescued from that fate, Paoli wound up on a farm that did not have sufficient resources to support him. Eventually, he came to Blackburn. To his good fortune, so did Rosenberg.

While scanning the roster of horses at Blackburn, Rosenberg found Paoli and remembered him from when she lived in Pennsylvania and he raced at Delaware Park.

"He is the reason we bought the

MISSOURI COUPLE INCLUDES TRF IN WEDDING DAY 'DOUBLE'



"I think she realized early that she had to become a racing fan if this relationship was going to go anywhere."

As a racing fan, Dustin Larson loves horses. As a kindergarten teacher, Maggie Kirby loves children. As luck would have it, they love one another.

And, at their July wedding, they chose to spread their love around.

Instead of passing out party favors to their 200 guests, they have come up with their own "double."

"We were pricing out the party favor gifts for the guests, and we decided we could put that money to a better use," Larson said. "I guess we're telling the guests, 'Sorry, no mints.' But we think we came up with a better idea to help out two causes that we love—the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation and the Ronald McDonald House."

Wine corks were set next to the reception guests' places. The guests then dropped their corks into receptacles for either charity and the couple made respective donations based on the number of corks collected.

Dustin has always loved horses and horse racing; in fact, his dream is to own a farm one day for retired horses. He knew about the Thoroughbred

Retirement Foundation from its newsletter and we wanted to help.

Larson became a fan of racing when he was six, and his father, Tim, would take him and younger brother, Tyler, on the 30-minute ride into Illinois and Fairmount Park.

His first date with Maggie, who he met in a statistics class while attending Missouri State University, was to Fairmount. "I think she realized early that she had to become a racing fan if this relationship was going to go anywhere." What really sealed Kirby's fate as a racing fan was when Larson took her to Churchill Downs in 2011, where Drosselmeyer won the Breeders' Cup Classic.

"Maggie got the full bettor's experience," Larson said. "She hit an \$1 exacta box early that paid pretty well."

"We love horses," she said. "And we're just trying to help."

ADOPTION CORNER

MERLIN AND WATCH MY LASS

Merlin seemingly had it all going for him when he made his debut as a racehorse.

He was bred in Kentucky by well-respected Freddie Seitz, had a noteworthy pedigree and a rising star on his back in jockey Javier Castellano.

To top it off, his owners were avid and enthusiastic horse people.

But in that race, in July, 2005, Merlin was off slowly. Evidently, he liked the pace and finished last in a field of eight, beaten by 24 lengths.

Any attempts to make him into a racehorse proved futile. Merlin just wanted to be a horse, and he wanted to be a horse on his own

“Merlin just wanted to be a horse, and he wanted to be a horse on his own terms.”

terms. Twice he was adopted and twice he wound up back at the TRF’s Second Chances program at James River Work Center, VA.

But then, along came Brooks Lyon Clement and Merlin worked his magic.

Now as she tells it,

Clement’s day starts at around 3 a.m., where she assumes the roles of wife, mother, overseer to about dozen horses at a time at Soldier’s Farm training center in Crozier, VA and trainer at TRF’s nearby Second Chances Farm at James River Work Center.

“We just clicked,” said Clement, whose husband, R.P. “Clem” Clements trains a modest stable of Thoroughbreds out of Colonial Downs. “Merlin just never wanted to be a racehorse, and somewhere, he learned to get what he wants by intimidation.”

Now 11 years old, Merlin is at home with Clements.

“He’s just got to take you seriously, or he will try to intimidate you to either get his way or leave him alone. We’ve had our episodes. The farm at James River is surrounded by a dairy, and we always had to go by these Holstein cows. Merlin didn’t like them. But little by little, he got used to them and even got to where he would go down there and they would sniff noses.”

Merlin, who came to Clement in June, is her second Thoroughbred adoptee. In April, 2012, she adopted Watch My Lass. An 8-year-old daughter of Sir Cat, “Lassie” made all 10 of her career starts between February 10 and July 30, 3008. She had seven different jockeys and one victory in that span.

“She’s the exact opposite of Merlin,” Clement said. “She has a beautiful, round jump and she is extremely powerful. But she is very sharp and super sensitive. You have to be very quiet with her and have a lot of finesse. She wants to be a good horse, and when she goes to shows, she’s all business. But you can tell she might have been a high maintenance horse when she was at the racetrack.”

Merlin simply couldn’t be bothered.

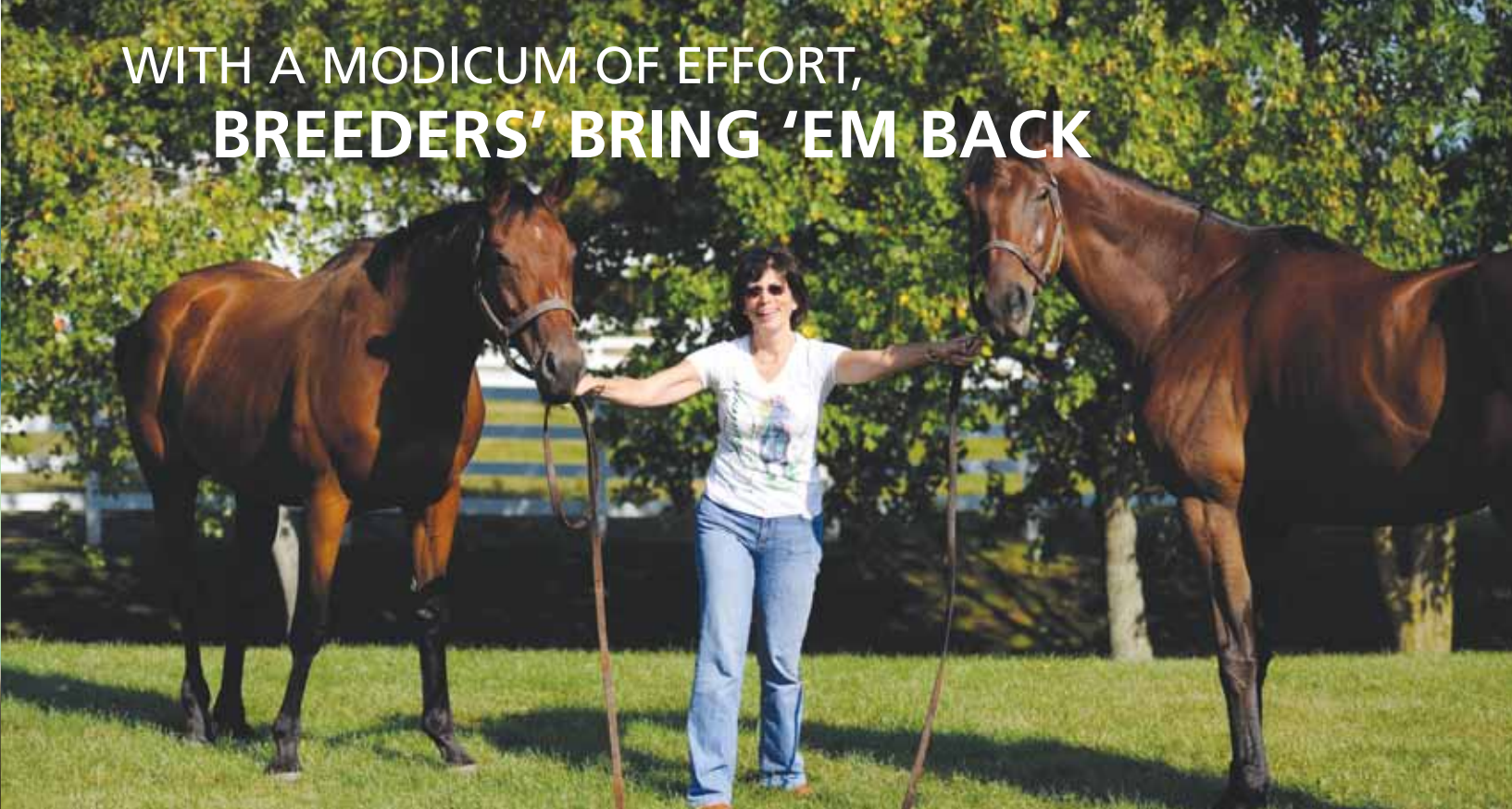


Although he had absolutely zero interest in being a racehorse, Merlin now excels in the hunting field and the jumper ring.



Watch My Lass prefers a relaxed lifestyle at home but is a fierce competitor at shows.

WITH A MODICUM OF EFFORT, BREEDERS’ BRING ‘EM BACK



Upon learning that TRF was caring for four of their homebred horses, Tina and Jim Bond brought them home for good.

Established Thoroughbred farms like Bonnie Heath Farm and Song Hill Thoroughbreds have far more in common than good looks, which they have in excess.

These farms, which are located, respectively, near Ocala, FL and Saratoga Springs, NY are the model operations that the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation hopes sets an example for others to follow. Both Bonnie Heath and Song Hill are headed by people who understand that breeding and selling horses are not the only aspects of the business.

There is also responsibility.

Instead of cutting ties with a Thoroughbred after its foaling, possible sale and racing careers, these farms have demonstrated that horses they have bred always have a home.

Kim and Bonnie Heath have maintained the tradition of one of Florida’s more successful breeding and training operations. Needles, the juvenile champion of 1955 and the Kentucky Derby winner a year later, put Bonnie Heath on the map and horses like Horse of

the Year Holy Bull, Grade 1 winners Honor Glide, Tsunami Slew, Quick Mischief, Pardala, Spectacular Tide and even the unfortunate Dancer’s Image, who, amid controversy, remains the only Kentucky Derby winner to be disqualified, have kept it there.

Bonnie Heath Farm has maintained its reputation for not neglecting horses it has bred.

Now relocated to a new 78-acre facility, Bonnie Heath Farm has also maintained its reputation for not neglecting horses it has bred. The former president of the Horse Protection Association of Florida, Kim Heath backs up her words with action.

“I was involved with Thoroughbred rescue, and in November 2009, we had a monumental influx of abandoned and starved horses,” Heath said. “There

were a lot of rescue groups: one had 50 horses, another 30 horses and still another had 80 that needed homes. The economy had crashed and people simply couldn’t afford to keep horses. They might have been doing the best they could, but they couldn’t feed them or take care of their needs. They needed help.

“We started making phone calls to breeders and owners. One year alone, we had re-homed about 200 horses. I could count on one hand the number of people who did not try to help in some way or adopt. If a breeder couldn’t take a horse back, that person would spread the word, ask someone else to take the horse or send money or services to care for the horse.”

Two years ago, Heath contacted the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation looking for horses they had bred. She brought home four, and one of them, Ishkoodah, found a job.

“He babysits our weanlings and yearlings,” she said. “He loves them and stands watch while they are sleeping.”

Heath also credits her friend and



Photo: Debby Thomas

Tommasi's owners were impressed by the detailed record-keeping and obvious high standard of care that their homebred received while at the James River Work Center in Virginia.

neighbor, Amanda Pope at Whisper Hill Farm in Citra, FL, who has partnered with Bonnie Heath in breeding horses and later bringing them back home.

"I feel responsible for them because I bred them," Pope said in a recent interview. "They are my kids, I can't just abandon them."

This sentiment is shared by Tina Marie Bond, and her husband, trainer H. James Bond. Their years of hard work and dedication led, in 2005, to the completion of their 100-acre Song Hill Thoroughbred farm. For all their success, however, the Bonds were bothered by the fact that they could not track down Tommasi, a horse that Tina had owned and bred.

"He had been claimed, and we couldn't find what happened to him after he was done racing," she said. "Last summer, at Saratoga, Jim found out that Tommasi was with the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation at the Second Chances Farm at James River in Virginia."

As a surprise for his wife, Bond arranged for Tommasi to come to Saratoga. One day, he called Tina to the barn.

"I thought, 'Uh oh, what did I do now?,'" she said. "I went to the barn

"I feel responsible for them because I bred them. They are my kids, I can't just abandon them."

Ishkoodah (center) now happily serves as a babysitter and companion for the farm's young horses and mares



and Jim was standing in a stall next to a horse. As soon as he turned around, I recognized Tommasi. I was so happy."

She was also impressed by how well Tommasi looked and the attention to detail that was afforded him at James River.

When he came back to us, he came with a file full of medical records, blacksmith records and notes about his appearance and other veterinary problems. It was all done very professionally."

Tina was so moved by the care given to Tommasi that it prompted her to write a letter to the editor of the Thoroughbred Daily News. In it, she also thanked trainer Steve Klesaris, who had contacted Bond about another home-bred, Ruffino, after a third-place finish at Monmouth Park in New Jersey.

"Jim had told Steve that whenever Ruffino needed to be retired to let him know and he would bring him back," she said. "After that last race, Steve called and said that it was time.

"These horses meant a lot to us and they were a big part of our success. I am so thankful that they both got great care while they were away from us, and I am so happy that they are back.

"I am also grateful to everyone involved in getting them back to us. I just hope that owners, breeders, trainers, jockey and racing fans appreciate that these are good people who do this for no other reason than the love of the horse."

SAVING HORSES, SAVING LIVES

Every year, thousands of Thoroughbreds leave the racetrack, not for rolling pastures, but for uncertain futures. Many are at risk of slaughter, abandonment and neglect. For the past 30 years, the TRF has been there to rescue, rehabilitate, retrain for adoption, and/or retire as many of these deserving ex-racers as our facilities and finances will permit.

At its renowned corrections-based vocational training and equine therapy centers in 10 states, the TRF's rescued horses are helping incarcerated men and women reclaim their own lost souls.

Individuals who participate in the TRF's pioneering Second Chances program often credit it with literally saving their lives. People like Evelyn Spillman, an inmate at the Lowell Correctional Institute in Florida, who finally found unconditional love where she least expected it.

Please join our family of donors to ensure another 30 years of saving and preserving the lives of so many gallant Thoroughbred horses so that they may save more lives. They are counting on you.



**THOROUGHBRED
RETIREMENT
FOUNDATION**

To make a contribution, please use the enclosed envelope, visit www.trfinc.org, or call (518) 226-0028.

Unconditional Love



Photo by: Bruce Ackerman and Ocala Star-Banner

"When I wake up every day in prison and know that I have a purpose, to know that I'm not just that number AFTER a name, to know that these horses are depending on me, an inmate, to love them, to care for them, well that's what makes me believe it..."

They don't see my blue shirt or white striped pants. They don't GOOGLE me or my charges. They could care less if I grew up in a trailer park or the suburbs. They only care that I'm going to be here and that I'm going to LOVE them. And I'm ok with that..."

--Evelyn Spillman, inmate-caretaker for retired Florida champion Shake You Down.



Photo courtesy of: Karen Tweedy-Holmes



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Sovereign Kit, the only stallion in the TRF herd, lives at Blackburn and teaches advanced Second Chances program inmates how to safely handle stallions.

Image by EquiSport Photos