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Volume 3

Winter 2004



COGI FARM  
 AND EQUESTRIAN MONTHLY



## What's News

After a spectacular display of fall leaves in this area we are gearing up for winter. Elizabeth Niemi and Christina Baker have left for Florida with their new horses recently arrived from Europe and we wish them a good season there and look forward to seeing them in the summer.

Reiner Niewisch and his customers have had a busy summer of training and shows, and are now starting their winter schedule.

Welcome to Georjean Hertzwig with Rosie, and to Liz Braverman and her customers who will be with us through the winter.

Suezy Partelow and Courtney King have had a successful showing season and Courtney is planning on spending most of the winter competing on the South Florida circuit along with some of her customers.

Our independents: Fie Andersen and Kathleen Tow have several ribbons to demonstrate their prowess in shows over the summer and Beau Gabriel has been getting his pony Meika accustomed to the sleigh bells, ready to drive in the winter. Liz Berger hosted a well attended trail ride and dinner in late October which was a fine opportunity to view the wonderful colors. Grace Lee and her daughter Abigail have attended several hunter paces on Questions and Annie.

-Paul Kubn

## Down The Trail

We are about to complete five permanent turnout paddocks which will allow for retired or recuperating horses to be outside, each paddock being provided with frost free waterers and run in shed on one acre fields. Please contact us if you have a horse requiring one of these paddocks. There are also new turnout paddocks being constructed around the Boma area which will allow us to rest some of the existing turnouts. Ground has been broken on the new stables and indoor arena and construction will continue through the winter.

-Paul Kubn

## Tackling the metaphysical: DO ANIMALS HAVE MINDS?

I am obligated to my horse, Merci Beaucoup, for the realization that animals do indeed have minds. I do not believe animals to have identical minds to humans, but they have minds nonetheless. There have been thousands of examples of horses exhibiting thought. A famous horse trainer, Monty Roberts, has proven that horses make important decisions. One might say that these decisions are instinctual. A horse is a flight animal; not a fight animal, it runs when it smells fear. If it does not run away, then it is making a thoughtful decision.

If a 1200-pound animal does not want to step onto a trailer, force will not work. Horses have a very strong will, perhaps stronger than a human. I was only five when I witnessed adults beating a horse. The horse would not move even

when they tied a chain underneath its gums and pulled. The horse was bleeding at the gums and had welts on the rump. After several hours the horse's owner came to his senses and brought the horse back to the stable. The horse's mind had won the battle over the brawny humans. Perhaps this situation would have been a little different if the humans used some thought and were more patient.

My patience with Merci is what has brought us closer together. Is everyone familiar with the sport "eventing?" Christopher Reeves competed at the novice level when he had his accident and became paralyzed. Merci and I competed two levels above novice. The courses were difficult; the fences deadly. I made plenty of mistakes, and at a gallop the horse needs to be able to make precise decisions. During cross-country

Merci was in control; he knew the distances to every fence. If he made a mistake, both of us would fall and become seriously injured.

For those of you who do not believe that animals have minds, obviously you have never had the opportunity to meet Merci. Merci has taught me a language between horse and human. If we can communicate efficiently, then Merci must have a mind. His mind is not like my mind. I don't think he contemplates the wonders of the universe. However, I think he is aware of his surroundings and has the ability to think. I am not sure of what his mind is capable of, but he has saved me many times on the trail when I did use bad judgment. Horses do have minds and just because many humans cannot recognize animals' minds does not mean that they do not exist.

-Elizabeth Braverman



## Paul's Call



*The polo field seeding has been completed and hopefully a favorable summer will promote rapid growth. Last week we commenced the extension to the field and plan to have it seeded in early spring. Our polo program will commence once the turf has established properly; the root structure must be sufficient to take the stopping and turning the game demands without being torn up.*

*-Paul Kubn*

## FLASH

BY, Elizabeth Braverman

My steed goes galloping into the night  
Faster and faster he goes, away from my sight  
I can only see a small flash of light  
In the darkened night

Suddenly the clouds begin to part  
I see my galloping friend dart  
Across the fields, never looking back  
My steed, I fear, will fall with his tack

There are holes in the ground  
The terrain is not sound  
I hope I can catch him before he goes down  
To the apple orchards that grow around town

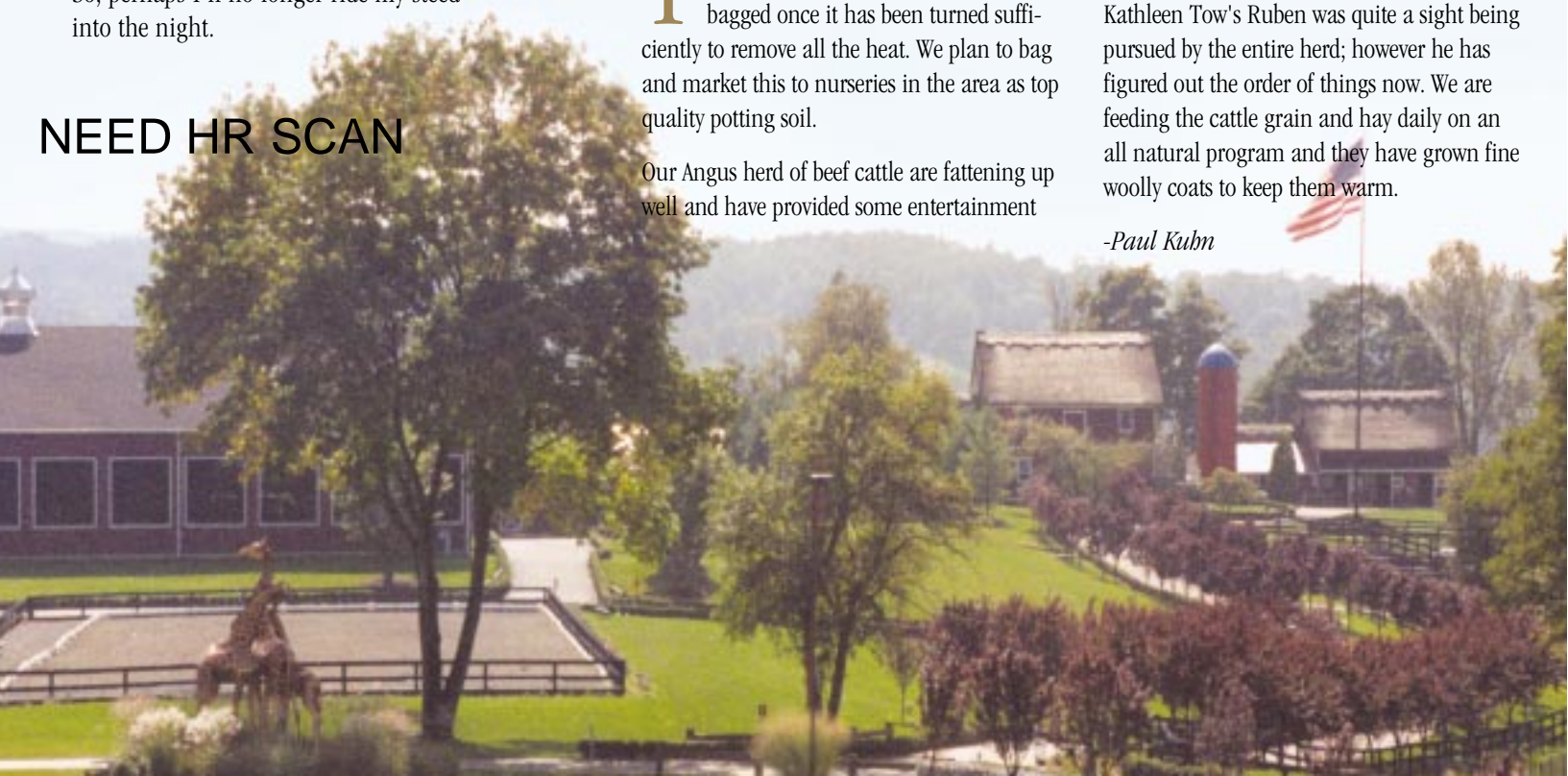
Too many apples can make my steed sick  
I should not have fallen off him so quick  
But it was good to go for a ride in the night  
To experience the rush from the flash of the light

Finally I stopped running and just stayed still  
And my steed came to me of his true will  
When he was ready, I got on his back  
This mighty steed, still dressed in his tack

We rode to the stable before it became light  
My body was still shaking from the fright  
I forbid seeing another flash of light

So, perhaps I'll no longer ride my steed  
into the night.

## NEED HR SCAN



## A Championship Season

It is the close of a very successful and exciting season for me. I was the NEDA Year End Champion of 3rd level, and Reserve Champion of both 4th level and Prix St. Georges. I was the OCDA Year End Champion and Reserve of 3rd, 4th, Prix St. Georges, Intermediare 1, and FEI Freestyle.

I was selected to the prestigious USET "Developing Riders" list through qualifying Lambada for the Festival of Champions/ National Intermediare Championships (for which only the top 12 horses in the country are selected). Zydeco won 15 out of 16 classes he entered with high-score awards at almost every show.

Even more exciting than the actual competitive results are the new opportunities that have come my way for the future. I have a couple of new very talented youngsters I think will have strong careers in front of them. Plus, an

Olympic caliber stallion I trained and showed internationally with enormous success in the Grand Prix ring when he was younger is returning to me. (He is Zydeco's father). If he returns to me in good condition, he will set me back up on the International stage. I have also been selected to an organization called Medal Equestrian which is designed to help Olympic hopeful dressage riders make the financial obstacle of their goals less daunting by offering tax advantages for charitable donations to their causes. I am one of only 5 or 6 riders selected for this honor. Furthermore, since I finally graduated this past May (degree in literature from Columbia University), I am able to return to Florida for some intensive training and top competition. I will train with Lars Peterson for three months with 7 horses.

*-Courtney King*

## Oblong Trail Association

The OTA was created approximately 5 years ago as a means of encouraging equestrian, nature hiking and cross-country skiing activities in this area. Cogi Farm was one of the first landowners to step forward and support this concept. The organization currently has 50 miles of trail and is continually working to refurbish and establish new trails. At this time, there are over 300 individual members. There is no group or corporate membership allowed. It is important to understand the reasons for joining this organization. First, by joining, you support the organizations' efforts to preserve our rural nature. Secondly, you gain access to some of the most pristine parcels of land in this area. Thirdly, you will meet the most extraordinary group of people, in a range of ages, socio-economic status, ethnicity, and

viewpoints. Fourth, you will enjoy attendance for members-only events; i.e. Holiday Party, Spring Paper Chase, Four Audubon Nature Walks.

The OTA is a non-profit organization that currently carries their own private insurance policy; in addition, landowners are also exempt from liability by New York State General Obligation Law. This exemption only applies to current members. Non-members using OTA trails are subject to "trespassing violations and prosecution." More importantly, non-members jeopardize the use of trails for others because landowners threaten to close the trails if control is not maintained. Please visit our new website for further information@oblongtrails.com and come join us!

*-Teri Olson*

## Farm Forecast

The pile of horse manure is being spread into lines to compost and this will be bagged once it has been turned sufficiently to remove all the heat. We plan to bag and market this to nurseries in the area as top quality potting soil.

Our Angus herd of beef cattle are fattening up well and have provided some entertainment

during trail rides, with some horses being somewhat confused as to exactly what cows are. Kathleen Tow's Ruben was quite a sight being pursued by the entire herd; however he has figured out the order of things now. We are feeding the cattle grain and hay daily on an all natural program and they have grown fine woolly coats to keep them warm.

*-Paul Kubn*

## Bits From The Trainer



Winter is here (but what a fabulous fall!), and with the holiday season still in mind, perhaps we should pause to remember those that are not as fortunate as we, including those that are fighting overseas and serving in our armed forces.

With the New Year upon us and with the horse shows all but a distant memory, I would like to congratulate a few of my Cogi students who have achieved exceptional results. Although "age before beauty" suggests an approach to start a list, this concept is fraught with emotional landmines and is best left to minds sharper than mine. So, in no particular order, I would first like to congratulate Abigail Lee, who at a mere 10 years of age competed with her pony, Annie, and scored many times above 60% (and won the ribbons that accompany these scores) at recognized dressage shows. And special congratulations to her first place and 69% at the Lendon Gray Youth Dressage show.

Two of my students, Kathleen Tow and Fie Andersen, broke the 70% barrier this season and joined the list of my other clients who have achieved this result. Kathleen submitted an average score of 71% to the WFDA award secretary. This weekend, they announce the winner. (My highest scoring student is Katherine Copa-Wood who scored a 76% at second level). The greatest satisfaction as a trainer comes from seeing my pupils excel as they learn to ride on their own horses, even as their horses are being trained. Further testament to their achievement comes from the fact that they received these results without my assistance at the shows: They understood the basic concepts well enough that they could duplicate them while away from Cogi Farm and the daily regime.

The coming cold north wind will blow another student into Cogi Farm for the winter season, and so I would also like to congratulate Elizabeth Braverman on her fifth place in the Prix St. George Championships on her ex-race horse, Merci Beaucoup. Although his confirmation and temperament aren't ideal for a dressage horse (he was purchased for 3-day eventing), Liz continues to advance through the levels.

This past season, I took a personal hiatus from the competition arena to work on my book, "The Great Masters of Dressage," to be published by "The Lyons Press." My first interview, with Klaus Balkenhol, exceeded all expectations. In addition to coaching the USA Dressage Team to unprecedented victories in Olympic and international competition, Klaus has trained many successful horses and riders from many countries. Perhaps his most recognizable moments were executing his Olympic rides on a \$3,000 police horse, Gold Stern, while wearing his police uniform. In recognition of his 2 Gold, Silver and a Bronze Medal (among many others) from international competition, Klaus received a special medal of achievement from the President of the German Parliament. He was then the guest of honor at a reception hosted by former Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

When I arrived at the Balkenhol's farm, Klaus was showing his nephew how to start a weed-whacker. Although he trains royalty from Europe and has friends stop by to visit who just happen to own over 400 department stores, Klaus moved back to the farming vil-

lage where he grew up. As he told me about the horses he trains, "They are creatures of memory." Klaus has not forgotten his roots. Perhaps, this contributes to the balanced and harmonious approach with which he trains his horses. It was truly a pleasure to watch his techniques and to witness the dignity in his wisdom as he produced happy, relaxed athletes of the highest standards.

I feel honored that Klaus and Judith Balkenhol have taken a personal interest in my book. I look forward to more visits with them and to the interviews with the other Great Masters. I take great pleasure in conveying some of their stories and wisdom to a wider audience.

*-David Collins*

Here's all you ever wanted to know about this guy with the German accent. Reiner Niewisch graduated from the University of Goettingen, Germany, in Agriculture and Animal Husbandry. With a little luck and the right connection, Reiner Niewisch landed his first job with Klaus Wagner, three time Olympic Equestrian winner. There he met and worked with George Theodorescu, member of the Romanian Olympic Dressage Team and his daughter, a two time gold medal winner. Reiner went with George Theodorescu to the USA to work for equestrian US Hall of Famer, Jessica Newberry Ranshousan, a winner at the 1960 Rome Olympics US Dressage Team. She served as Chief d'Equipe for the USA and is currently the Vice-President for Dressage of the US Equestrian Team.

In addition to Dressage, Reiner has been successfully training both Hunters and Jumpers for many years and loves teaching children and adults alike. Further, Reiner has co-owned and managed River Run Farm for the last 18 years, transforming it from a simple western pleasure barn into a modern 20th century horse facility.

Reiner is very happy to be part of Cogi Farm and is looking forward to an exciting future.

*-Reiner Niewisch*

