

The main barn at High Spirits Farm houses an array of world class show horses, ponies, and prospects and was a great venue for Adult Camp.

HIGH SPIRITS FARM

Adult Camp

BY BOB FUNKHOUSER

The first clue you were in the midst of American Saddlebred history was the sighting of Tom Bass Lane. Yes, the Columbia, Missouri, area has long been a hotbed of the American Saddlebred and the hundreds of acres that make up Anna Marie Knipp's High Spirits Farm is a big part of that. The legendary Tom Bass indeed lived and trained there. An icon of equine education, Shirley Drew Hardwicke operated a barn for Stephens College there. So many others have had long, successful careers in the surrounding area.

Today, the fertile fields produce some 30,000 bales of hay a year and the training team of Jim and Fay Lowry produce an array of world's champions for Knipp and the High Spirits customers. This March weekend, however, was reserved for their annual Adult Camp spearheaded by instructor/breeding manager Allison Cantrell and assisted by Abby Mutrux and Faye Wuesthofen.

The well attended camp offered a great mix of fun and education, with a good dose of watching show horses perform. Attendees were broken down into groups with some riding, while others were being informed about different aspects of the industry. Adding to the list of Saddlebred/equine education royalty, Gayle Lampe was a guest instructor. Jacqueline Visser came in from Kentucky to also give a few group lessons. There was no shortage of expertise this weekend.

Also, on the camp team, Michelle Wycoff was there with her Pulse magnetic wave machine to demonstrate its usage as part of today's sports medicine options and Dr. Tricia Bailey demonstrated reading ultrasounds on legs, the chest, and reproductive tract. Bob Funkhouser shared some tales of his work with Saddle Horse Report and other adventures in the industry.

There was a trip to the broodmare barn to see the new foals as well as the sporty yearlings running out. Cantrell shared her knowledge of breeding and foaling with everyone loving the babies.

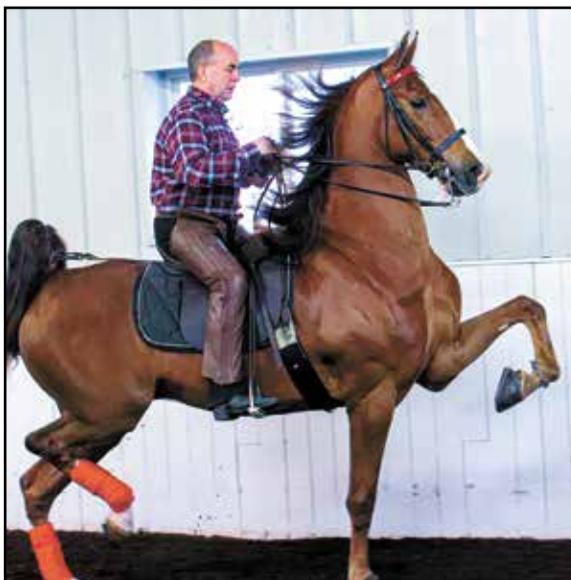
On Thursday evening, attendees gathered at a local restaurant for a night of camaraderie and then on Friday evening Anna Marie Knipp opened her beautiful home for a night of great food to go with tales from guest speaker Neil Visser. The evening opened with everyone watching a video of Visser's World's Grand Champion Three-Gaited ride with We Must Be Nuts and then the floor was open to questions. Visser, who was joined by his wife Jacqueline was peppered with everything from his upbringing in South Africa to training methods to favorite horses and mentors. It was a wonderful setting for sharing their love of the show horse and their passion for it as a career.

Activities ended on Saturday afternoon with a few more group rides, some Equestrian Pictionary with Jim Lowry and then the Champagne Ride Off.

"We have a good time with this," said Lowry. "We don't make it like a drill camp. We try to mix it up with riding, some informative sessions, and lots of fun. Our guest speakers have made it enjoyable every year."



Neil and Jacqueline Visser were the guest speakers as part of the camp. It was a wonderful evening at Anna Marie Knipp's lovely home on the farm.



A winner in harness last year, Benetti is being readied for an under saddle season with Jim Lowry.



Attendees enjoyed seeing the new foals, like this colt by I'm Lookin' For You out of Perfection Me. He is owned by the Glasscock family.



Abby Mutrux presented this athletic two-year-old by I'm A Lucky Charm.



Former world's champions Are You Joeking and CH Take It From The Top.



Malissa Welke was among the participants tuning up for show season.



Grace Markel kicked off her Sweet 16 weekend with a ride on her world's champion of champions, CH So Co.



Faye Wuesthofen assisted Nora Wade and Walterway's Mini Me.



Michelle Wycoff demonstrated her pulsed magnetic wave treatments.



Madeleine Oliver was getting legged up with the top three-gaited pony, Lighter Than Heir.



Nolie Jones and Regal's City Of Dreams had a good morning as they prepared for the show ring.



Susan Courtney had a good drive with her Radiant Doll to represent the pony division at High Spirits Farm.



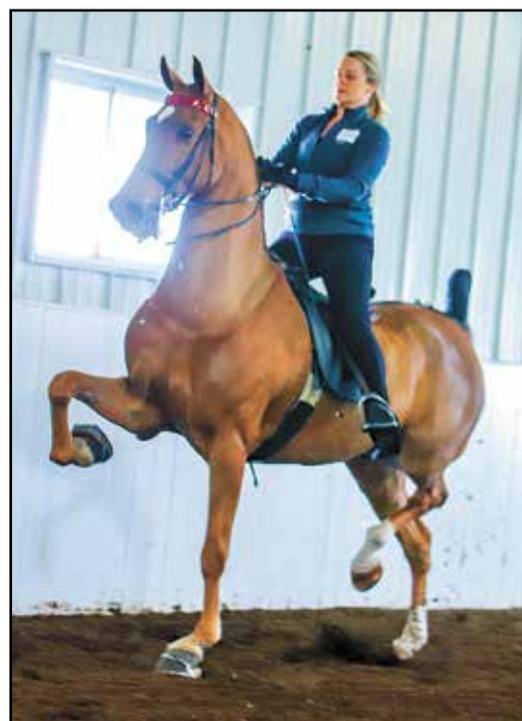
Jim Lowry presented a tasty young gaited filly owned by Bridget Cummins.



Brooke Simpson's yearling by Joe Fabulous out of MBA's Silver Sapphire was a hit with the camp attendees.



Getting ready for the new season, Katie Moeller was paired with Just Gary, an expressive gelding owned by Margaret Strano.



Melissa Madison and world's grand champion CH Madeira's Code Red were getting ready for the upcoming season with a good practice ride.