



Indian Creek Farm

People's Choice Breeder of the Year

BY JENNY GREY



Russell and Jeanette Quilhot's Indian Creek Farm in Columbia City, Indiana, is one of the most beautiful equestrian facilities in the country. Russ and Jeanette Quilhot were influenced by Larry Bolen in the 1980's to consider I Will Command and Trophy's Jade bloodlines.

Russell and Jeanette Quilhot, owners of Indian Creek Farm in Columbia City, Indiana, along with their manager/trainers, Kurt Hufferd and Shanna Gish, have built a superb reputation for consistently breeding and training some of the best show horses in the country. Following an outstanding year for their progeny in 2014, Indian Creek has earned your well-deserved votes as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year. We wrote about the wonderful people and horses at Indian Creek Farm just a year ago (Saddle Horse Report, April 21, 2014). Focusing primarily on more recent events in this feature, it is important to note that Indian Creek has enjoyed a sustained record of success in its breeding choices for the last 25 years. They



have stayed true to their roots, producing big, beautiful, athletic performers who shine brightly in the ring.

Showing under the Cedar Creek banner in the 1980's, Russ and Jeanette were supremely fortunate in their choice of trainers. Larry Bolen gave advice about breeding that would continue to influence their program over 30 years later. Larry had a profound impact on Indian Creek's decision to maintain the focus on the I Will Command and Trophy's Jade bloodlines. "We owe so much to Larry and his wonderful horses", said Jeanette, looking back.

When it quickly became apparent that Indian Creek needed a farm manager, Kurt Hufferd joined the team. Shanna Gish, the farm's spokesperson, came to Indian Creek a few years later. Together, they have been instrumental in carrying out Russ and Jeanette's vision for the farm. Kurt spent countless hours in the early days studying breeding and nutrition, diligently applying what he learned to the program. Shanna is more focused on the marketing, business and teaching aspects of running Indian Creek. With skills that complement each other perfectly, they are both expert trainers who apply their first-rate skills to training the horses they raise.

Making breeding decisions collaboratively, Kurt, Shanna, Russ and Jeanette have built a wealth of knowledge over the years. Capitalizing on their strengths, they have learned what is most likely to work. They look for their best outside sires to cross to their mares. This approach has the advantage of providing more options for crosses that will work as well as the possibility of trying something new. "We like to choose our stallions based on similar crosses that have been proven to work", said Shanna. "We want to choose the stallion that is going to give us the highest percentage to succeed as a quality individual. The whole process can be such a gamble that we want to stack the odds in our favor as much as possible."

Indian Creek's two foundation mares, Cache (DBA Street Talk x Fleeting Heart) and Long Acres Broadway (Tug Hill Whamunion x Mantic Mardi Gras), have produced outstanding foals primarily through the use of embryo transfer. The breeding program has also experienced great success with farm-bred mares Indian Creek Lucky Charm, Indian Creek Redemption and Indian Creek Park Avenue, who have given birth to their own foals. While the focus has primarily been on Cache and Broadway, Lucky Charm (Pot of Gold x Willingly by I Will Command) and Redemption (Clearview Commander x Indian Creek Inheritance by I Will Command) have delivered wonderful foals. "They each produced quality, good thinking performance horses that we could always count on to represent us well and be marketable show horses", Shanna stated.



Indian Creek Farm made history with their home-bred progeny at their first Grand National show in 1991 by winning every two-year old performance class. With Kurt Hufferd at whip, they earned the Two-Year Old Park Harness World Championship with Indian Creek Payday (above) and the Two-Year Old Pleasure Driving World Championship with Indian Creek Jade's Joe.



Although the Indian Creek foundation mares, Cache (left) and Long Acres Broadway (right) are bred very differently, Indian Creek has found that they cross very well to the HVK Bell Flaire sons and the Futurity French Command Lines.

Lucky Charm, herself a performance champion, produced Indian Creek Double R, Indian Creek Sunny Side and Indian Creek High Stakes, with whom the Quilhot's granddaughter, Megan Buckley has experienced so much show ring success. Charm's last foal was Indian Creek Requiem. "All of these geldings thought well, showed well, and are loved by their owners", said Shanna. "Redemption was one of the most beautiful mares we have bred. She was the dam of Grand National champion Indian Creek Quantico; gave us darling twins and has a very exciting two-year old prospect by FCF Capestranno. These mares represent what Indian Creek began in the 1990s with the remarkable influence of Larry Bolen's Cedar Creek Farm, I Will Command and Trophy's Jade. We will never forget our first foal crop that Kurt took to the Grand National in 1991... This was a remarkable beginning and we are so proud to be where we are today." Bringing home four world championships and establishing record-setting wins in every two-year old performance class with 'tour de force' performances, Indian Creek Jade's Joe and Indian Creek Payday put the Indian Creek breeding program firmly on the map.

Although Cache and Long Acres Broadway are bred very differently, the Indian Creek team has learned they cross very well to the HVK Bell Flaire sons and the Futurity French Command lines. The Mizrahi x Cache cross has produced Indiancreek American Girl (the 2014 English Pleasure Amateur Masters World Champion); Indian Creek Cool Brees (the 2014 Reserve World Champion Gelding and Reserve World Champion Senior Gelding) and two other very nice two-year olds that have not shown yet. Cache has also produced world and national champions Indian Creek Warbird (by Futurity French Command), Indian Creek Cachet (by Stand and Deliver) and Indian Creek Nathan Hale (by MEM the Patriot). Broadway has crossed extremely well with HVK Bell Flaire, producing two-time world champion, Indian Creek Bellagio, Indian Creek Belle Haven, Indian Creek Miss

Margret (2008 World Champion Junior Mare) and Indian Creek Cipriani. Broadway has also produced world and national champions by Stand and Deliver, MEM Sambucca, and Mizrahi in Indian Creek Broadway Joe, Indian Creek Highlander and Indian Creek Lady Elizabeth, respectively. "These are all crosses that we have discussed, raised, and gone back to because of their success. That being said, we also want to keep our program fresh and current so we have some new crosses we are very excited about debuting in the months and years to come", said Shanna.

Not only does Indian Creek have a well-established and consistent program that has produced a phenomenal number of regional, national and world champions, they have fabulous trainers in Kurt Hufferd and Shanna Gish who present and market them at their best. When we wrote about them last year, Stan Bodnar of Merriehill Farm observed, "Kurt and Shanna take great care in developing a young horse. When the horse is sold, another trainer can seamlessly continue along the same path. Several years later the horse may be doing the same job very well. You can follow the progression." Larry Bolen added, "Kurt and Shanna are a great team. They are masterful in their attention to detail and turnout. They are sharp, professional and so competitive with the young horses."

Reflecting on their outstanding 2014 show season Shanna stated, "I think what stood out most to us at the Grand National was that our horses were in a lot of different hands with other owners and trainers and doing so well. They all seemed to be thriving and loved by their people. Seeing everyone so happy with the horses we bred or trained means the world to us and is reassuring we are on the right track as breeders."

Indian Creek sold many horses last year, both for themselves and for their clients in all disciplines and at all training levels. Today, by design, they do not have a huge annual foal crop. In 2009, however, they had their largest annual crop with 17 babies on the ground.

Feeling a responsibility to give each one of them an opportunity to shine, they were able to find the right niche for all of them by the time they were four-year olds. "It took us a few years but we were able to give them all a chance...It felt like a big accomplishment to see them all through", Shanna reflected. "Some of them sold young, a lot made it to the show ring and one made his debut at the dressage ring in Lexington, KY, with his 16 year old rider/trainer." Giving each baby in a very large foal crop an opportunity to succeed speaks volumes about the integrity of their program.

In addition to maximizing the potential of each of the Indian Creek offspring, Kurt, Shanna, Russ and Jeanette have provided advice and counsel to other Morgan breeders. John and Patricia Huse of Springmill Morgans, who found their own golden cross with Nostradamus and Treble's Unchained Melody, have entrusted all of their horses to the care of Indian Creek since 1998. Last year they told us, "Kurt and Shanna are a great team who have advised us on how we should be breeding. They keep us very involved and everybody is comfortable expressing their opinion." John and Patricia also appreciate the value system of honesty, integrity and teamwork that Jeanette and Russ uphold. "They are amazing people who have done a lot for the industry."

For Indian Creek Farm, 2014 was a stellar year with results that reflected everything they have achieved since the early 1990s. When talented people the caliber of Russ and Jeanette Quilhot, Kurt Hufferd and Shanna Gish pool their collective skills to arrive at the best possible solution for their breeding program, the results are both outstanding and sustainable. For many awards, we tend to look at performance for the past twelve months. When we vote for a breeder, it is necessary to consider sustainable performance over a lifetime. For Indian Creek to have achieved its goals in every succeeding year for 25 years is nothing short of remarkable. For these reasons, they have received your vote as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year.



Russ and Jeanette Quilhot's granddaughter, Megan Buckley, has taken many victory passes with the Indian Creek bred horses directed by Kurt Hufferd and Shanna Gish.



People's Choice Breeder of the Year Indian Creek Farm



By Jenny Grey

For a superb record of sustained success, Indian Creek Farm has not only earned your vote as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year for the second consecutive year, owners Russell and Jeanette Quilhot have been inducted into the Breeder's Hall of Fame by the American Morgan Horse Association. Also recognized by the AMHA, their outstanding trainer, Shanna Gish, has been honored with the Professional Award and the Quilhot's granddaughter, Megan Buckley, was voted the People's Choice Junior Exhibitor of the Year. It has been a momentous year to remember in an extraordinary 25 year career.

The 2015 show season proved to be everything Indian Creek has worked so hard to achieve. With all the stars in alignment at the Morgan Grand National last year, it took us back in memory to the first time Indian Creek showed in Oklahoma City in 1991. Indian Creek Jade's Joe and Indian Creek Payday made history, winning all the two-year-old classes and returning home with four world championships under Kurt Hufferd's direction. Knowing they had the opportunity to repeat history with their outstanding two-year-olds, the team worked tirelessly to make it happen.

Kurt Hufferd noted they began 2015 with about fifteen two-year-olds from 'the best foal crop ever'. Caretakers Maynor, Manuel and Allan Diaz along with Fernando Lopez and Ambrocio Vasquez all enjoyed a friendly rivalry with these youngsters until it was decided which of them were the most capable of winning world titles. The team also gives a lot of credit to their reproductive veterinarian, Dr. Foss, for having their foals born early in January. By the time they showed in Oklahoma, they were well over fifteen hands and looking like full-grown three-year-olds.

Not only did Indian Creek Mastermind and Indian Creek Recordbreaker succeed in spectacular fashion, the whole show string rose to the occasion at Indian Creek's 25th Morgan Grand National. Big, bold and beautiful, Mastermind (Indian Creek Highlander x Caché) won the Two-Year-Old Park Harness Grand National Championship and the Park Harness Two-Year-Old World Championship and the equally impressive Recordbreaker (Mizrahi x Caché) won the Two-Year-Old Pleasure Driving Grand National Championship and the Two-Year-Old Pleasure Driving World Championship with Kurt Hufferd at whip. They also had World Champions in Indian Creek Triple Play (MEM Sambuca x Long Acres Broadway) in the World Futurity Two-Year-Old In Hand Geldings and Indian Creek Major Finney (SpringMill Superstition x KDS About Face) in the World Futurity Two-Year-Old Park Harness for owner Julie Christopher. These events are not only a retrospective of 25 years of successful breeding, they also represent Kurt's long tenure at Indian Creek Farm. These will be wonderful memories for Kurt who relocated to Oklahoma late last year. "It was



Russ and Jeannette Quilhot, the People's Choice Breeders Of The Year for 2015 as well as 2014, were in Boston to accept the AMHA Breeder's Hall Of Fame award for Indian Creek Farm.



Shanna Gish is at the helm of Indian Creek in 2016 and was honored at the Super Convention with the AMHA Professional Award as voted by her peers.

bittersweet leaving for sure", Kurt reflected. "I love those guys so much!" While Kurt is gone, he is by no means forgotten. He and still Shanna talk on the phone frequently, catching up on news and sharing ideas.

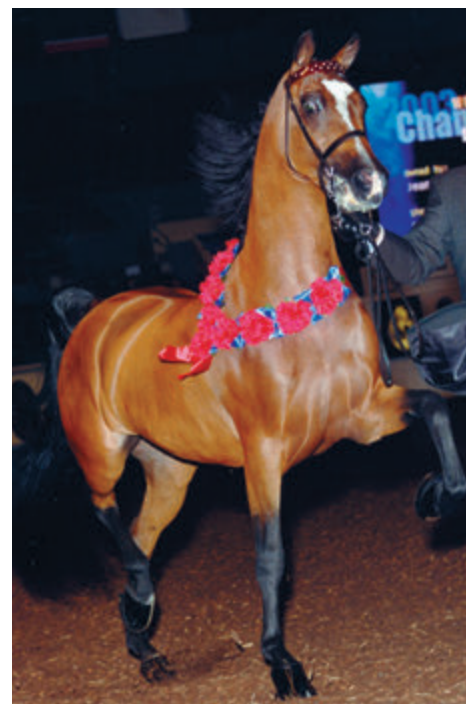
Shanna, now in her nineteenth year at Indian Creek, is excited and energized by what lies ahead. The staff has stepped up to support her and while Shanna works very long hours, she enjoys every moment. The lesson program she built from scratch continues to flourish. There are new training horses and a fresh group of amateurs and junior exhibitors. Many of the staff have worked at the farm for 10 years or more and are invaluable in helping to keep things running smoothly. "We try to create an atmosphere where everybody enjoys coming to work", said Shanna. "It's fun!"

Well-respected for her work ethic and ability to accomplish a broad range of tasks exceedingly well, Shanna is ideally suited to assume a sole leadership role. With her encyclopedic knowledge of the Morgan breed and her depth of skill as a trainer, instructor and farm manager, Jeanette and Russ Quilhot could not be more confident about her ability to carry Indian's Creek's success well into the future.



Caché was purchased by the Quilhots for their granddaughter Sarah's final junior exhibitor season in 2001. The dynamic bay mare has gone on to become one of the top broodmares in Morgan history producing five world champions in 2015.

Three-time World Champion Mare Long Acres Broadway has been a prolific producer for Indian Creek Farm. She is the dam of ten Grand National winners in a host of different divisions. photo by Howard Schatzberg



Jeanette saw 2015 as a year that exemplified everything they have worked so hard to achieve, summarizing the show season as "A dream come true". With a bad injury forcing her to stay home from Oklahoma last year, she was pretty devastated. Not only did she hate missing the Morgan Grand National, it was her granddaughter, Megan's, last year as a junior exhibitor. Anne Buckley and Shanna gave Jeanette frequent updates and Shanna made her a DVD after the show, but there was no substitute for being there in person. "I cried in the emergency room", Jeanette admitted, when the doctor told her it would not be safe to travel. Fortunately, she and Russ were able to attend the Super Convention in Boston to accept their well-deserved AMHA Breeder's Hall of Fame Award and to witness Shanna being honored with the Professional Award.

Jeanette remembered when she and Russ bought one of their foundation mares, Caché, for their granddaughter, Sarah, to show in her last year as a junior exhibitor. Caché, who became one of the best producing mares in Morgan horse history, had five babies who won world championship titles in 2015 by four different stallions. Indian Creek Mastermind is by their homebred Indian Creek Highlander; Indiancreek Recordbreaker and Indiancreek American Girl (the English Pleasure Amateur Masters World Champion with Kim Germ-Cramer) are by Mizrahi; Indian Creek Nathan Hale (the Classic Pleasure Driving Junior Exhibitor World Champion with Megan Buckley) is by MEM the Patriot and Indian Creek Warbird (the Classic Pleasure Driving Masters World Champion with Lexie Ellsworth) is by Futurity French Command. Mastermind, Nathan Hale and Warbird all earned their titles on the same day.

"We would never have bought Caché if it were not for Sarah", Jeanette reflected. In retrospect, it was a stroke of genius to keep this beautiful mare for their breeding program. Indian Creek Farm is also home to three-time World Champion Mare Long Acres Broadway, who has also produced ten Grand National winners in Triple Play, Herald Square, Highlander, Showstopper, Belle Haven, Lady Elizabeth, Broadway Joe, Bellagio, Miss Margret and Cipriani. In more recent years they have included their home bred Indian Creek Lucky Charm (Pot of Gold x Willingly) and Indian Creek Redemption (Clearview Commander x Indian Creek Inheritance), who are both producing wonderful foals, as an integral part of the breeding program. "To be able to produce what we have and get it down to just four mares is pretty special", Shanna Gish said with pride.

In addition to the spectacular success of Caché's foals, Indian Creek High Stakes (DBA Street Talk x Indian Creek Lucky Charm) earned a

place in the limelight as the Grand National Classic Pleasure Saddle Youth Finals Reserve Champion with Megan Buckley in the irons. Also with outstanding performances, Alexander McQueen won the Junior Exhibitor English Pleasure World Championship with Megan Buckley on board; Pinecreek's Second Vision won the Classic Pleasure Saddle Ladies World Championship with Erin Hudy riding and Bill Shean and Patricia West's Stoney Point Bogart won the Two-Year -Old Futurity Pleasure Driving World Championship with Kurt Hufferd at whip. With this win, the team earned world titles with all five of the two-year olds they took to the Grand National. The junior horse wins continued with Kurt and Teri Rumens' FCM No Boundaries, the Three-Year-Old Park Saddle World Champion with Kurt Hufferd in the saddle. All of these horses underlined Indian Creek's ability to develop world champions. "It was a thrilling week!" Kurt remembered, having walked back to the barn multiple times after winning a class and hearing Indian Creek and Springmill horses being announced as winners in other rings. (John and Patricia Huse of Springmill Morgans have entrusted their breeding decisions to Indian Creek since 1998 with outstanding results.)

One of Shanna's long-term goals has been to satisfy Russ Quillhot's 25-year-old wish to produce a foal with Indian Creek on both the top and bottom lines. Russ's wish will be fulfilled this year when Indian Creek Belle Vista (HVK Bell Flaire x Caché), bred to their homebred Indian Creek Highlander, produces a foal this spring. A source of great anticipation, a first baby out of Caché and the late Spice O' Life Present Tense was due the day we wrote this feature; the last Treble's Unchained Melody foal is due in March and they are looking forward to a first Dragonsmeade Sea Dragon baby. Shanna is also thrilled to be showing Indian Creek Braveheart, a full brother to Mastermind, this year.

With so many exciting events on the horizon, Shanna Gish looks forward to another outstanding year with Russ and Jeanette Quillhot cheering her on every step of the way. The consummate professional, she has received nationwide recognition for a job well done. Russ and Jeanette, who celebrated 25 years of producing top-quality offspring capable of winning national and world titles, achieved everything they dreamed of in 2015. An amazing season earned them a place in the American Morgan Horse Association Breeder's Hall of Fame and your well-deserved votes as the People's Choice Breeder of the Year. While the leadership team has changed, Russ and Jeanette Quillhot are confident in a continued bright future with Shanna at the helm. We applaud what Indian Creek has accomplished and wish them every success in 2016.