

# MIKE GOEBIG & DWAYNE KNOWLES:

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE *Trainers Of The Year*

# JOHN VELARDI:

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE *Assistant Trainer Of The Year*

# ALLYSON NORD WANDTKE:

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE *Amateur Of The Year*

BY SARA PIZZUTO

Mike Goebig (left) and Dwayne Knowles (center) have been at the helm of their Pennsylvania based Broadmoor since its inception in 1986. John Velardi (right) joined the team as the assistant trainer in 2020.

**W**hen working horses, Broadmoor assistant trainer John Velardi explained that head trainer Mike Goebig can often be heard reciting his infamous phrase, "Throw spaghetti at the wall."

"It's a great piece of advice," Velardi said. "Trust your training. Allow the horse to do the correct thing to confirm whether or not you are going in the right direction with a horse."

Throughout the past show season, Velardi, Goebig, and Dwayne Knowles have trusted their training at their Pennsylvania based establishment. The results were remarkable with many of the Broadmoor horse and rider combinations rising to the top of their respective divisions. Their stall fronts were well decorated during the year with victories in open divisions, tricolor ribbons from amateur and junior exhibitor classes, and world titles awarded to junior horses. The Broadmoor team earned the approval of the judges in 2022 and now your approval with Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles being named the People's Choice Trainers Of The Year, John Velardi earning the title of People's Choice Assistant Trainer Of The Year, and Allyson

Nord Wandtke yet again being honored as the People's Choice Amateur Of The Year.

Broadmoor has been a premiere destination for Morgan horse enthusiasts since its inception in 1986. The facility sits on 50 acres of land and is the home base for both Morgan show horses as well as breeding stallions. Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles have been at the helm of Broadmoor since the facility opened its doors-combining their shared passion and knowledge about the Morgan breed.

John Velardi is one of Broadmoor's latest additions-joining the team in January of 2020. A young Velardi began taking riding lessons at a local Connecticut farm at the mere age of six. He discovered the world of competitive horse shows while as a groom for a farm showing at the Eastern States Exposition. He then pursued his desire to compete, showing aboard his western pleasure Quarter Horse, Sans Brazen Cougar, before entering the show ring on his first Morgan saddle seat horse, CBMF Ricochet in 2014.

"My fascination for horses engulfed my growing up," he said. "If I wasn't at the barn I was counting down the minutes until I was. Horses have always been



Carol Dawson GCH is one of the many legendary performers linked to Broadmoor. Amateur rider Allyson Nord Wandtke bested a group of trainers to garner the top honors aboard the mare as the 2022 Park Saddle World Champion. This was Carol Dawson's third time to claim this honor, having done so in both 2019 and 2020 with Mike Goebig.

Howard Schotters  
2022  
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Broadmoor celebrated the success of a multitude of top junior horses in 2022 including Wingman. Kim Cramer's homebred earned dual world titles in the park saddle three-year-old ranks with John Velardi in the saddle.



Many of the horse and rider teams directed by Broadmoor have consistently been at the top of their divisions. Blurred Lines GCH and Kim Cramer were crowned the Ladies English Pleasure World Champions in 2022—claiming the roses for the fourth consecutive year.

one major constant in my life and I knew since a young age that somehow my life would revolve around horses.”

Both Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles agreed that Velardi is a strong asset to the Broadmoor team.

“He is a great student, and he is motivated to do great things,” Goebig said.

Goebig explained that he and Knowles each have a string of horses that they work on a daily basis. Velardi has two horses that have been assigned to him to train and spends the rest of his time working alongside Goebig or Knowles on whatever is needed throughout the day.

“He works between the two of us so when he rides my horses, I am on the one on the ground,” Goebig said. “When John works Dwayne’s horses, Dwayne is the one on the ground. He gets input all day long.”

Velardi said that he has learned valuable horse training skills from working with Goebig and Knowles—two highly respected trainers in the Morgan industry.

“They both have so much to offer and are so generous with their knowledge not only about horses but life,” he said. “One major honorable piece of information I use daily from Mike and Dwayne is there are one million ways to do one thing, especially training horses. They are repeatedly saying if something doesn’t work try something else. There is no book on training horses. There is an ongoing joke between Mike and I that when we make a breakthrough with a horse, we ‘add that to the book.’”

Velardi has been learning to hone his skills with junior horses while working at Broadmoor. Goebig and Knowles were linked to a myriad of talented youngsters throughout the 2022 show season with many of them wearing the roses in Oklahoma City. Goebig drove IBA Shall We Dance to the title of the Park Harness Three-Year-Old World Champion, while Khaleesi was presented by owner and breeder Tony Lee to the tricolor as the Futurity Classic Pleasure Driving Three-Year-Old World Champion. Ledyard Thunderbolt and Velardi earned a world championship round of honor in the three-year-old English pleasure ranks, while Close Up captured dual reserve world titles in both the futurity two-year-old pleasure driving ranks

with Knowles on the lines and in the futurity in-hand two-year-old gelding division with Velardi. Lastly, Kim Cramer celebrated the success of her trio of junior horses including reserve world champion Newmont’s French Bellboy, world champion Wingman, and Mesmer-Eyes, who was tagged team by both Velardi and Knowles once again. She garnered the world title from the Futurity English Pleasure Three-Year-Old World Championship with Velardi and the roses from the Futurity Pleasure Driving Three-Year-Old World Championship with Knowles.

“The thing I enjoy most about working with the young horses at Broadmoor is how they improve your training skills,” Velardi said. “Nothing will develop you quicker as a rider than riding young stock. They increase your timing, they teach you patience and they expand your creativity in training.”

The aforementioned Wingman was one entry that turned heads in his debut season in the show ring under the Broadmoor banner. Kim Cramer’s homebred is the son of the late Queen’s Glory Days and SPR Wing It GCH and quickly gained a following in the Morgan community. Knowles explained that he broke Wingman to harness as a two-year-old and then had Velardi ride him following their return from the 2021 Morgan Grand National.

“He just came on his own,” Knowles said. “We had him for a year jogging so we weren’t really sure what we had but we liked what he looked like at home. So we just brought him along. We try not to put tags on our horses, and he showed us what he wanted to do and we followed.”

With the help of Knowles, John Velardi and Wingman ended the 2022 season with an undefeated record, including the titles of the Park Saddle Three-Year-Old World Champion and the Futurity Park Saddle Three-Year-Old World Champion.

“Wingman’s personality is as big as he is and by far my favorite thing about him,” Velardi said. “All of his sound effects make me giggle. No matter out in a field or in the ring if his tail is flagging, he is grunting. Since he first came into the training barn, he has had this grunt that he lets out when he’s feeling frisky. So much of our success in 2022 involved Dwayne. Wingman has

been a team effort and his success has been a dream come true. To have the opportunity to not only swing a leg over this caliber of horse but to actually complete an undefeated season is such an accomplishment. Six-year-old me is ecstatic.”

From junior horses to junior exhibitors and amateurs, Broadmoor has put their stamp on all facets of the Morgan breed. Goebig, Knowles, and Velardi have been responsible for a variety of combinations that have consistently excelled in the show ring, with many horses earning repeat trips in the grand national spotlight. Get Out earned yet another park harness world title in 2022, this time as the Park Harness Amateur Reserve World Champion with Christine Matthews. Out Late added another set of roses to his resume as the Pleasure Driving Junior Exhibitor 14-17 Reserve World Champion with Isabella Charon and Kim Cramer with Blurred Lines GCH were crowned the English Pleasure Ladies World Champions for the impressive fourth consecutive year. Knowles said that they pay extra attention to the care of their show horses, allowing them lengthy time off after the show season is finished.

“We are very big on care—feet, mind, and body,” Knowles said. “We try to give them time as a horse. I think that is the big key to it. They get a break, and they get their shoes pulled after Oklahoma. They just went back to work last week. They are fresh. They come back the same as they went out. And they don’t have to do that daily honing and when they go out, they keep themselves pretty fit.”

While the horses at Broadmoor get to enjoy a well-deserved break after the Morgan Grand National, many of the amateur and junior exhibitor riders continue to strengthen their skills throughout the winter.

“They all take lessons on lesson horses,” Goebig said. “So if their horses aren’t working in the winter, they still come and take lessons. That way we aren’t really picking things up and starting again.”

Allyson Nord Wandtke is one of the many amateurs that makes her home base at Broadmoor. Wandtke travels from her home in Georgia to train with her



Broadmoor was represented in all facets of the Morgan industry in 2022. Mike Goebig, Dwayne Knowles, and John Velardi were responsible for the success of many horse and rider combinations, all achieving excellence in a variety of divisions.

show string that she owns with her mother, Cindy Nord. She began the 2022 show season aboard Carol Dawson GCH-in what would be the grand mare's final year in the show ring before retiring to the broodmare band at Rick Lane's.

"She can go and go and go and then she wants to go again," Wandtke said. "She's always ready. You can't wear her out. It is hard to let her have a day when she takes it easy. We try to 'Keep the genie in the bottle' as Mike says. But then all of a sudden, she takes that next step and says, 'Oh but look what I can do.' She doesn't know how to relax that much. She's not wired like that. She just likes to go and do her thing."

Wandtke and Carol Dawson GCH began their week in Oklahoma City with a repeat win as the Park Saddle Amateur Grand National Champions, this time under the ownership of the Robinson Family Trust. However, the Broadmoor team elected for these defending amateur world champions to skip out on the amateur championship in 2022. Carol

Dawson GCH, already a two-time Park Saddle World Champion, would contend in the open world championship instead, one more time, with Wandtke in the saddle. They closed out the 2022 Morgan Grand National as the Park Saddle World Champions-an impressive feat for this legendary mare and her amateur rider.

"We were really one with each other," Wandtke said. "I could just put her anywhere and I could tell what she was thinking, and she could tell what I was thinking. That's the kind of ride I look to have every time I go in the ring. So, when I have that kind of ride and it ends up being in a class like that, it's even better. 'Kiki' goes from 0-100 in one step. When everyone is cheering and yelling, she adds another level. You have to let her think that she is in control while you are helping her. Mike makes his horses so light in the bridle, and she just frees up with her ears up and takes that big step. It is just a magical feeling. I have never ridden anything like it."

Wandtke's open world championship win with Carol Dawson GCH wasn't her first time winning the large blanket of roses. She previously piloted What's Up GCH to the title of the 2019 English Pleasure World Champion. The talented amateur has excelled in classes typically reserved for trainers.

What's Up GCH and Wandtke continued their winning streak in 2022, being crowned the English Pleasure Amateur World Champions for the third consecutive year. While their win marked the third time that "Doc" had carried off this title, it was the ninth time that Wandtke had topped this world championship in her career. She previously earned the roses in the amateur world championship on six separate occasions aboard the famed CBMF Restless GCH.

"I never thought that I could go from Restless who was a horse of a lifetime to then go and have another great horse that is equally as amazing in What's Up," she said. "You hope to get one of those yet alone two back to back. I have been really fortunate."

Both Goebig and Knowles said that much of Wandtke's success comes from her foundations in horsemanship learned from instructor Jane Bennett. They explained that her strong skills in the saddle and her drive to succeed allow them to pair Wandtke with high intensity performers.

"She is incredibly motivated," Goebig said. "She is willingly to fly up here and practice a lot. She has shown for so long and ridden for so long that for her, it's fairly easy within a couple rides, for her to style herself for that horse. And I haven't always bought her easy horses. Restless was a lot of horse. The bay horse is a little gift from heaven that we got. He is just who he is. I genuinely love him. But Carol Dawson is a whole other level of a challenge. So Allyson is willing to put the time in. But basically, we don't change the horse for her. She has to change the style and her way of thinking for the horse."

Wandtke isn't the only member of Broadmoor that rises to a high level in the Morgan breed. Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles have elevated the industry and set the standard for excellence within the saddle seat discipline.

"We have done it for a long time and we have kind of figured out what we do well and we stay in our lane," Goebig said. "We don't have a high customer turnover rate and so we are really able to continue setting skills in our riders."

Broadmoor's clients continue to return each show season due to the level of greatness that defines who Goebig and Knowles are. They are knowledgeable, fiercely passionate about the Morgan breed, and have developed a reputation as leaders in their sport, with Broadmoor at the forefront of the industry. Their clients trust the process that Velardi previously spoke about, as it has continued to work and resulted in impressive achievements both in 2022 and for decades.



Mike Goebig and Dwayne Knowles pride themselves on establishing long lasting relationships with their clients. Tony Lee has long been showing under the Broadmoor banner and garnered both a grand national and world title with his homebred, Khaleesi, at the 2022 Morgan Grand National.