

TRAIL MARKERS

Official Newsletter of the
Texas Endurance Riders Association

Volume 8, Issue 1

Winter, 2009

Overwhelming Support From TERA Members

Linda Parrish Benefit Auction — Success!

In the spirit of TERA, and to show our love and support for one of our founders and our most dedicated volunteer, **Tammy Powell** organized a benefit auction for **Linda Parrish** at High Roller Endurance Ride on December 27th, 2008. There were about forty items donated from functional to frivolous, and everything in between! Jimmie “JJ” Jimenez served as a very lively and entertaining auctioneer. The bidding was spirited throughout the evening. Some of the stand-out items included a pink horse blanket with the “Linda Parrish Fantasy Ride” logo embroidered on it. **Mark Dial** purchased the blanket and presented it to Linda! We also had a six pack of home brewed beer that was highly sought after. The final bid was \$175 and we’re not sure who was lucky enough to share in the libations. Our grand finale was a cart-wheel performed by none other than **Bo Parrish**. **Carol Kight** and **Peter Ansorge** duked it out and we finally agreed that each of them would pay \$100 and Bo would have to perform not one, but TWO cartwheels. The auction generated a total of \$2900.00.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Fantasy Ride, the T-Shirt fund raiser and the Auction. Because of your generosity we were able to offer assistance to the Parrish family. And Linda is responding very well to her treatments. What a great way to start the New Year!!

OLD GLORY!!!

Old Glory will be upon us faster than you think! This year it is managed by Robin Howze and Lee Bateman at a new ride site by Lake Whitney, April 11 & 12. Robin and Lee are planning several "trail" weekends that will include minor clearing and preparation. If you are able to help (you get to ride your horse while working!), contact Robin at rhowze@sbcglobal.net. Also, anyone who is able to sponsor an award, etc., please let Robin know.

2009 CENTRAL REGION CHAMPIONSHIP!!!

Be sure to mark the dates for the Central Region Championship in your calendar! It is May 23 & 24, 2009 at the Jo Tate Memorial ride site in Missouri. Watch the Central Region Website for more information, including entry information!

www.texasenduranceriders.org

www.aerccentralregion.org

TERA Year End Awards Program

All award recipients must be TERA members in good standing for the year for which the awards are being given. Awards are figured based on TERA sponsored rides only. Limited Distance and Endurance miles are calculated as separate mileages.

Overall High Mileage Rider is based on the mileage completed by one rider riding any number of equines.

Overall High Mileage Horse is based on the mileage completed by one equine with any number of riders.

The following awards are based on the mileage completed by one rider riding one equine:

Limited Distance High Mileage
High Mileage Featherweight
High Mileage Lightweight
High Mileage Middleweight
High Mileage Heavyweight
High Mileage Junior

High Mileage Husband/Wife award is given to the couple with the most combined mileage ridden.

High Mileage Family award is based on the total miles ridden by two or more family members.

The following awards do not have to be given every year. These recipients are chosen by the Board of Directors and Officers based on the following criteria:

Rookie Rider of the Year

New to the sport, may be endurance and/or limited distance; number of completions; positive attitude; seeking knowl-

edge of the sport; overall contribution to the sport; and improvement/progression.

Volunteer of the Year

Support at TERA rides; contribution to TERA, riders, and equines; number of rides attended; positive feedback from riders, managers and other volunteers; support/promotion of the sport. Rider or non-rider.

Veterinarian of the Year

Contribution to TERA, TERA members and equines; number of TERA rides vetted; positive feedback from riders, managers, animals and volunteers, support/promotion of the sport; seeking knowledge and improvement in skills related to the sport, encouragement/education to riders, participants, one-time spectacular contribution (saving animal/human life, etc.)

Ride Manager of the Year

Safe, well-marked trail; superior organization—camp, registration, P/R and vet checks, availability of professional emergency personnel and equipment, general flow of things, etc; level of commitment—extra events, unique prizes, more than one ride, attendance at ride manager clinics; adequate vet staff—number of vets per riders, introduction & preparation of new vets; overall—sizable ride, new riders, and positive feedback.

Horse and Rider of the Year

TERA member & equine, but not limited to TERA events only, spectacular achievement,

may be any distance; embodies spirit of AERC “To Finish Is To Win!” in relationship of mount and rider—concern of horse foremost; competitive but fair & honest.

Hall of Fame Person

Longterm contribution to sport; best exemplifies “To Finish Is To Win!”. Person must also have been officer, director, ride manager, regular volunteer, regular vet, etc. – someone who has given to the sport and TERA; does not have to be a rider.

Hall of Fame Equine

Cumulative lifetime achievement. Perhaps has overcome adversity and continued on. The horse people remember and talk about.

Trail Markers is published Quarterly in January, April, July, and October.

It is distributed solely to members of the Texas Endurance Riders Association, and is comprised of both their input and the opinion of the editor. Neither of which represent the organization's views or official stance. Of course, if there is no input from members, then you're pretty much stuck with the editor's opinions. Which don't amount to much, really, but they can sometimes make interesting reading. Other times ... well, the term “bird cage liner” comes to mind.

Deadline for the next issue is
April 1.
No foolin'.

Wanna be published?
Get it in!

2008 TERA Award Winners!

Limited Distance High Mileage Rider:

Debbie Quinn
Vickie Roden
Robin Howze

High Mileage Featherweight

Patsy Hoffman
Paulette Brehob
Sheila Dale

High Mileage Lightweight

Peter Ansorge
Jennifer Booth
Caryne Edwards

High Mileage Middleweight

Mike Maul
Kim Reeves
Mark McBride

High Mileage Heavyweight

Lisa Skalski
Thomas Booth
Al Prescott

High Mileage Junior

Gatlin Dale
Gunn Dale
Jordan Israelson
Matthew Urban
Zach Jaffe

Overall High Mileage Horse & Rider: **Mike Maul & Rroco-My-Sol**

Husband and Wife Award: **Thomas and Jennifer Booth**

Family Award: **The Dale Family**

Rookie Rider of the Year: **Scott Godwin**

Volunteer of the Year: **Sherrie Reimers**

Ride Manager of the Year: **David and Sylvia Fant**

Sportsmanship Award: **Al Prescott**

Hall of Fame Person: **Donna Nicholson**

Hall of Fame Equine: **Blue Sky Raider**, ridden by **Sylvia Fant**

Hall of Fame Person

Donna Nicholson

Below is the nomination received by the TERA Board of Directors for **Donna Nicholson's** inclusion in the Hall of Fame. It was submitted by **Paulette Brehob**.

I strongly recommend **Donna Nicholson** for induction into the TERA Hall of Fame. She has been and remains an avid TERA supporter. Her devotion was never more evident than during her five years as TERA treasurer. Upon taking office, she discovered the records were in a shambles causing her to spend many hours straightening out the mess. This caused her to recognize the need for a dedicated laptop for all of the treasurer's records. She researched the best possible deal for the computer and software and transferred all the data. This ultimately made her job easier, as well as her successor's.

“Every organization needs more “Donnas”. Someone who has the organization’s best interests at heart ...”

Before and after the new laptop, Donna was always diligent and prompt in the processing of membership cards, depositing of checks, and paying of bills.

Also during her early years as treasurer, TERA provided RM insurance to all TERA sponsored rides. Donna coordinated with the ride managers and insurance company so that all rides and other TERA events were properly covered. She was then involved in the switch to AERC provided insurance and the decision to help the RMs pay for it.

Donna recognized the need to give back to the membership. She honchoed the TERA financed barbecue dinners

provided to members at the Old Glory ride—including meeting the restaurant driver on the highway and transporting the food to the ride site. She also realized the importance of the TERA Newsletter being published as scheduled so she often provided information to the editor, picked up the completed *TrailMarkers* from the printer, then collated, addressed, and mailed the completed newsletters.

The 2006 AERC Convention held in San Antonio was during Donna's stint as treasurer. I personally know Donna met with the hotel staff on several occasions to coordinate the food and room for the Central Region meeting held during the National Convention. This was just one example of how seriously Donna took her duties. I don't think she ever missed a meeting, including the RM clinics, or an email suspense. She always offered well thought out responses. As a Director myself, I remember one meeting where the secretary was absent and Donna immediately volunteered to take notes. She saw what needed to be done and did it. When her husband was the TERA President, Donna was truly the woman behind the man.

She helped with the original High Roller ride then managed two successful rides at the 7IL ranch--the Whirling Windmill. As a RM herself, she recognized the need for RMs to have a current TERA membership list and she provided an updated list for each ride. She worked hard for the education of new riders and still often personally mentors new riders. Several years ago she purchased the yellow T-shirts for the TERA board members-- “ASK ME ABOUT TERA???”

Every organization needs more “Donnas”. Someone who has the organization's best interests at heart and wants the organization to thrive and is willing to spend the time to make that happen. Donna was not always in the limelight, but spent more time and energy for the benefit of TERA than most of us will ever know. Let's recognize her dedication with this Hall of Fame induction.



Use Your Skills!

Are you a word processing wizard? Wonderful with words? Looking for new challenges in your life? How about putting your creative talents to work putting out the *Trail Markers* each quarter? It's a great job ... a few hours each quarter, you can do it from home in your pj's (like I am right now) and the pay will *not* affect your income tax bracket! Contact Sherrie at SKReimers@aol.com for more information!

Hall of Fame Horse

Blue Sky Raider

*Below is the nomination received by the TERA Board of Directors for **Blue Sky Raider's** inclusion in the Hall of Fame. It was submitted by **Amanda Fant**.*

Many years ago (23 actually) through tragic circumstances, a rather remarkable pony came into our lives. Of course, it would take time to realize just how remarkable he would be. After the loss of my brother's beloved paint pony, **Jenny Simpson** and **Edie Booth** came together to find **Pete** another pony. They knew of a Welsh Arab they felt would be ideal, so Blue Sky Raider came to live with us.

When Blue came home, Pete was still too heart-broken to want anything to do with the little gray pony. After weeks of riding him here and there, Mom told Pete it was time to give the pony a chance and take him to the upcoming ride that weekend. So Blue did his first fifty. It took every minute of their allotted twelve hours, but they made it and Pete was glad to have given Blue a chance.

That was Armadillo 1987 and the launch of an amazing endurance career. Blue went on to accrue 3500 miles, which included 35 Top Tens, seven 1st places, eleven one-hundred mile rides, and many national and regional awards with a 92 percent completion rate. Along the way, he joined a tiny elite group of horses to complete a 2-day 150. Yes, that really is a 100-miler on Saturday followed by a 50 on Sunday. Blue also earned eight Best Condition awards, five of those in 100 mile rides. His last two BC's were at age 18!

However, we feel Blue deserves this hall of fame honor for more than just his decorations. We who know Blue feel he embodies the true spirit of endurance. To finish truly is to win and true partnership can overcome nearly anything. Also, endurance is one of the few equine disciplines that allows success to be defined on your own terms as well as showing that a horse does not have to fit a profile to be great. Blue exemplified these aspects of our sport. Blue didn't always win or even always place, but he never failed to give everything he had.

Pete outgrew Blue after a few years. Mom being all of 5' felt she was perfect to take him over. The new duo quickly realized they were a great match and their journey was off to a fabulous start. The first major bump in the road came during a 100 mile ride Mom and Pete were riding together. Blue went down in an East Texas bog and came up lame. Horses never really understand being pulled and Blue had a harder time than most. When Pete and Ranger went back out on trail, the injured pony jumped his hot wire to join them. He knew he had more miles to cover after all.

After the ride, Blue was diagnosed with a bowed tendon. Prognosis: he would heal but would probably never return to top competitive shape. Mom was determined to help Blue heal completely and return to his job. Looking back, we think she already knew what the rest of us had yet to realize. Many endurance horses enjoy their jobs, but a few live for it. Blue definitely lived for the endurance trail and to travel it with Mom.

*“How do you give up
on a pony who loves
you and his job so
much that ...?”*

Blue healed after weeks of hydrotherapy and wrapping. He stayed sound for many miles, but it was not to last. Mom and I were competing in the Armadillo 105 when Blue bowed his tendon again. This was the ride that showed the rest of us what Mom realized long before. When Mom looked back at her ride, she remembered Blue stumbling and trotting a few lame steps. However, he seemed to be fine after those few steps. Mom didn't give it much thought at the time, but for the remainder of the ride, Blue maintained a very set gait. It wasn't unusual for Blue to pace himself (we had all learned to let him take care of himself), but it was odd for him to be so insistent about it.

Blue went through several vet checks sound, so we still had no idea anything was amiss. At the end of 105 miles a group of people, including the ride vet, watched Blue trot across the finish line sound. One of the most fascinating things about Blue has always been how well he knows his job and exactly how far he is going. He knew he was through with the distance and had done his job for Mom. Blue was off enough in his final trot out to be denied completion. Disappointing though this was, the most devastating blow was yet to come. The ride vet was certain the tendon was damaged again and Blue's career was over.

Mom could not bring herself to give up on her teammate. How do you give up on a pony who loves you and his job so much that he bows his tendon, then trots mile after mile masking his pain? For Mom, the answer was simple: You can't. No possible way.

Continued ...

Blue's next trip was to A&M, who had a possible solution. They felt a ligament was constricting the tendon which was enlarged by scar tissue. This ligament could be cut allowing the tendon more room. Blue wouldn't miss the tiny piece of ligament and his tendon might love the extra room. However, there was no way to know if he would ever be able to return to his former level of competition. Blue had the surgery and Mom faithfully nursed her companion through his strict recovery regimen.

Within the year, Mom and Blue completed the Old Dominion 100 in the top 25. Had we known then that aluminum shoes and extreme rocks don't mix, they would have been in the top 15. His shoes literally wore off of his feet and Mom had to hand-walk him the last seven miles. The unbelievers who had been wondering aloud why anyone would attempt Old Dominion on such a small pony became quiet. A lot of people gained new respect that weekend for the 13.2 pony with the 18 mph trot.

Blue went on to add many more miles with the surgery proving to be a huge success. In 1997, we moved to my parents' current home in Kennard. When Blue came up in the pasture with a swollen hind leg, we had been here long enough to establish a good working relationship with our veterinarian, Dr. Grant. We will never have any idea how he did it, but Blue had punctured his tendon sheath. Due to the risk of infection, this was potentially a catastrophic injury.

“Today he is 27 years old, chubby and happy ...”

By this point, Dr. Grant had heard enough about Blue to not even attempt to predict his endurance future. He was optimistic due to Blue's past, but Dr. Grant made sure we were aware of all the possibilities. This is an injury that frequently results in systemic infections and ultimately death. He stressed that we would have to be extremely vigilant and diligent with his antibiotic shots. With tears in her eyes, Mom administered six shots daily. Though we all tried to help with the shots, she would allow no

one else to administer them.

Blue being Blue, he recovered completely. The duo went on to have three more years of successful competitions. Blue even earned two more BC's, one of them with a perfect vet score. Not too shabby for an 18 year old battle scarred pony. It was easy to see the team was back where they belonged – together on the endurance trail.

In the spring of 2000, Mom and Blue pulled from a ride with a slight right front lameness. The vet, new to the sport, assured Mom it was minor and that she could have another vet look at him to determine if she really needed to pull. As this was Blue's problem leg, Mom had no intention of going any further that day.

When it was determined that the same tendon was injured, just in a different spot, Mom faced the hardest decision of the partnership. At 19, Blue was no longer young and realistically did not have the same healing magic. Though it broke her heart, she decided it was time to retire Blue. Mom knew it was the right thing for her pony though it was hard to watch as Blue just didn't get it for awhile.

“We feel Blue is a Hall of Fame Horse for many reasons.”

Blue did heal again, but Mom only rode him on trails at home. Today he is 27 years old, chubby and happy in our pastures. He takes his job of baby-sitting our foals very seriously and has thus found a new job. Frequently he rests with them under the shade trees and it almost seems he is telling them of his glory days and what they have to look forward to.

We feel Blue is a Hall of Fame Horse for many reasons. His accomplishments are many and he represented great things. He consistently showed that to finish is to win; that a horse's looks and size matter for less than their heart; and that an incredible bond and mutual respect can conquer anything. Those of us who ere there for it all have no doubt Blue would not have tried so hard for anyone other than Mom. Mostly he exemplified that to be great your career does not have to be flawless – it is all in how you get past the obstacles along the way.

There is no way to know if we will ever be blessed with another horse of Blue's caliber. We do know there will never be another quite like him. We just feel privileged to have been along for ride after ride.

Have you joined our Yahoo Group yet?

See the website for a link!

www.TexasEnduranceRiders.org

2008-9 TERA & Central Region Ride Calendar

Feb 14 -- Freeze `R Burn

LBJ Grasslands, Decatur, TX
Bobby Wallis 972.962.2596
(bobbydean@aol.com)
8792 CR 135, Kaufman, TX 75142

Apr 4 & 5 -- Eagle Ranch Spring Fling I & II

Eagle Ranch- Hwy 54 & 13, Collins, MO
Winnie Clutter 573-377-2585
(windo@centurytel.net)
21612 Hwy FF, Stover, MO 65078

Mar 7 & 8 -- Heart of the Hills I & II

Bandera, Texas
Chris & Carol Godsey 830-249-0262
(godsey3@gmail.com)
518 Summit Trail, Boerne, TX 78006

Apr 11 & 12 -- Old Glory I, II

Lake Whitney, TX
Robin Howze 214-244-5909
(rhowze@sbcglobal.net)
2005 Sleepy Hollow Lane, Heath, TX 75032

Mar 28 & 29 -- Shanghai Trails I & II

Pierce Ranch, Pierce TX
Cynthia Kovalchuk 281-961-5810
(cynthia.a.kovalchuk@nasa.gov)
617 County Rd 52, Rosharon, TX 77583

Apr 25 -- Texas Bluebonnet Classic, AHA Reg. IX Champ. 50

LBJ Grasslands, TX
Carla Jo Bass 972-617-8233
(rebelcjb@yahoo.com)
1206 Tater Brown, Red Oak, TX 75154

Thanks to our

RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS:

**Nick Nicholson
Deb Stewart**

A great big *THANK YOU!* from TERA to **Sho Ota** for all of his hard work as our statistician on the awards calculations!

ATTENTION PROSPECTIVE TRAILMASTERS!!!

Monica Chapman is organizing a Trailmaster Class for September 2009! She still has several openings if you are interested. This is an excellent class and is especially helpful and highly recommended for Ride Managers. AERC sponsors most of the cost. Contact Monica if you have questions or are interested, lm-farms@ckt.net.

Hall of Fame

People

1993 — Linda & Bo Parrish
1994 — Darolyn Butler / Pat French
1995 — Ann Pfeiffer
1998 — Sylvia & David Fant
2000 — Dr. Gail and Kay Conway
2002 — Paulette Brehob
2003 — Edie Booth
2008 — Donna Nicholson

Equines:

1993 — “Uno” - owned by Darolyn Butler
1994 — “Spider” - owned by Jenny Simpson
1996 — “Kash” – owned by Bobbie Barber
2001 — “Royal Scout+?” owned by Vonita Bowers
2002 — “Kache” owned by Paulette Brehob
2005 — “AJ Wildfyre” owned by Mark McBride
2007 — “Rroco-My-Sol” owned by Mike Maul
2008 — “Blue Sky Raider” owned by Sylvia Fant

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