



The story behind First NFQHA Champion Peppermint Brick, and his Family

The Banks & the Brick

Behind every great competitor is a group of loyal supporters and loving family. In the same way, special horses need special people to realize their potential, and our First NFQHA Champion, Peppermint Brick, is no exception. The following article, submitted by Linda Banks, gives an intimate look at a family that treats their horses as individuals and members of their extended family, and are rewarded in turn by horses that give their all, no matter what is asked of them. Horses are an important part of their family recreation and they have used them for everything from just playing, to world class competition in a variety of events. They practice and preach good sportsmanship at all times, and are very active in encouraging youth participation in horse activities. The entire family contributed to Peppermint Brick's NFQHA Championship, with Linda riding him in Working Western Pleasure, Western Riding, Working Ranch Horse, and Using Cow Horse; Bob riding him in Steer Daubing, Heading and Heeling; and Mardi riding him in Cow Work, Cutting, Reining, Break Away Roping, Barrels, Poles, and Keyhole.

Versatility is the name of the game.....

Peppermint Brick, alias 'Cowboy' of Roseburg, Oregon, became the first horse in the National Foundation Quarter Horse Association to receive the title of NFQHA Champion.

This honor is achieved by accumulating 50 Versatility points. To earn Versatility points, one must compete in the different categories of classes, i.e.: Cat I = Working Western Pleasure & Working Ranch; Cat II = Reining & Western Riding; Cat III = Barrels, Pole Bending & Keyhole; Cat IV = Cow Work, Roping, Steer Daubing & Ranch Cutting; and Cat V = Versatility conformation. It is only possible to earn a few Versatility points at each point earning NFQHA show, so the title of NFQHA Champion is a hard earned honor, not easily achieved.

Cowboy and his family, Bob and Linda Banks, and Mardi and Kenny Paulson, have been working toward this prestigious mark for the last three years. Luckily this close knit Christian family have an extremely versatile horse background to call on. Bob, Linda, and daughter Mardi, have a rodeo background as well as a horse show background. They do their own training, and are 4-H judges and leaders. Bob is an International Professional Rodeo Association judge and a Northwest Professional Rodeo Association judge, an avid roper, and makes his living as a firefighter for the city of Roseburg. Linda has been competing for years and has an award ribbon business, Rockn B Ribbons. Kenny is an avid hunter and team roper, and Mardi literally grew up on a horse.

The Banks feel that having fun with your horse (using him for work and play) is what makes him versatile. "Use him and enjoy

him" is their advice to their friends and students. This was the case with Poco Pitty Pat, a 1960 gelding given to Linda by her parents when he was a 2-year-old. He was by Poco Willy, Cow Horse Hall of Fame member, but Linda didn't know anything about cow work at that time, so she put him to work doing everything from pulling her sled in the snow, to trail horse classes and

Right is Linda Banks on Poco Pitty Pat showing off their barrel racing skills.



Below is Mardi Banks many years later on 26 year old 'Pitters' becoming one of the youngest riders and oldest horses to qualify for the AQHA World Championship Show.



barrel racing.

When the first AQHA World Championship Show in Kentucky in 1974 came along, Poco Pitty Pat and owner/trainer, Linda, were the only entries from the state of Nevada to qualify. They not only qualified, but came home with a Reserve World Championship in

trail! Later at the tender age of 24 'Pitters' qualified in AQHA in Trail, but this time it was with daughter Mardi, age 6! While they did not make the top ten at the World Show, AQHA sent them a letter saying that Mardi was one of the youngest riders to have ever qualified for the World Championships, and that Poco Pitty Pat was one of the oldest horses! The well-loved Pitters

died at the age of 32...but God replaces things with something just as good or better.....

While keeping a mare for a friend who was attending school in another country, the Banks bred the mare to a near by up-and-coming stallion. The result of the first breeding was a mare named Skippi Brickett, (destined to become one of Bob and Linda's wonder horses, and the family is currently competing on one of her daughters, My Skippen



4 Month old Peppermint Brick

Cody Kid, in NFQHA and other shows). They were then offered a free breeding if they would show the offspring of the first mare. The result of this breeding was Peppermint Brick.

From the beginning Peppermint Brick (Cowboy) was his own person. He was never a real affectionate horse and has definite likes and dislikes. However, he and Linda bonded when he was young and some days she is still the only one he will let catch him. In spite of his personality quirks, (he bucked Bob off a time or two, and when bored with rail work would run his rider's leg into the fence), the Banks decided he was a keeper.

When Mardi needed a better Pony Club horse, Cowboy was elected which provided some more interesting things for him to do. He already pulled a cart (later he would pull the carriage at Mardi and Kenny's wedding), and did the 'boring' rail work and trail. During their pony club career he jumped 4'9" and learned the value of dressage.

His 4-H career was also a new challenge, not for the classes but for the people. As a not-so-social country bumpkin, Cowboy hated everyone looking in his stall. By the end Fair he would be grumpy and have his ears pinned at whoever came by. Luckily disenchantment with his accommodations did not effect his arena performance. During their 4-H days Mardi and Cowboy won a championship at all but one of the available 4-H events; English Equitation, Western Equitation, Equitation Over Fences, Driving, Trail, and Showmanship. The one event that the Championship eluded them in was Dressage and they won a Reserve Champion title there. In addition the Oregon State 4-H Senior Barrel

Racing record time is still held by Mardi and Cowboy.

At about this time Bob's older rope horse had begun to show signs of age and Cowboy was elected to become the new 'back up' horse, and roping was added to his list of things to do. He loved it, was quick to understand the game, was always quiet in the box, and ready to go.

As in most families, the 'raising the children' years put a restriction on Bob and Linda's personal horse activities, as they channeled Mardi's abilities in various directions, and the 13 years they spent on the NRCHA World Championship staff in Reno, NV provided yet another avenue in which to let Mardi learn about horses.

They were able to borrow an old Snaffle Bit horse from a friend and began cutting lessons. After hauling up and down California

and Oregon for the next show season Mardi and Red Marino won the title of World Champion Little Buckeroo at the NRCHA Championships in Reno in 1988, age 10. This led to later achievements in cutting in the Oregon High School Rodeo Association.

After getting their daughter raised and through school Bob and Linda had reached the point in their lives where they were ready to do 'their own thing' again. After hearing about the fledgling Foundation Association, NFQHA, they decided that it was the right thing at the right time. They felt that it would be a place where they could have fun with their horses the way they used them.



Peppermint Brick & Mardi at an Oregon Foundation Quarter Horse Club show.

There was just one problem - they had always had a variety of bloodlines, enjoying all types of Quarter Horses and Cowboy was the only one of their horses that qualified for NFQHA registration. Sold on the NFQHA concept, they began to disperse their horses, and to purchase horses that met the 80% Quarter Horse bloodline standards. They bought back a mare they had sold as a 3 year old, who is a daughter of Mardi's original mare, Skippi Brickett, My Skippin Cody Kid, who won the Novice Versatility Championship at the Madras, OR show, was the High Point Novice horse and Barrel Racing Champion at the National Show, and Reserve Champion Novice Versatility at the Roseburg, OR show.

The NFQHA 'bug' spread quickly through the whole family. Linda's parents, Preston and Glenrose Allen, who are also involved with Rockn B Ribbons, purchased a yearling colt last winter by El Gato Uno, and Mardi shows him in the Yearling In Hand Trail classes and Linda shows hers and Bob's Kings Only Colonel in Yearling In Hand Trail.

Mardi and Kenny purchased a gelding on which Kenny ropes and Mardi rides in Category III events. Mardi and Cowboy have performed the grand entry at many of the NFQHA shows, and

circuit and won High Point Youth on him at the Roseburg show. Tyler Greer, age 10, rode him at the 1999 National Show in Utah and won three National Titles. Mardi also rides him in the Super Senior events, and the 1999 Oregon Foundation Super Senior Champion saddle

was awarded to 'Grandpa John' at the Roseburg, OR show.

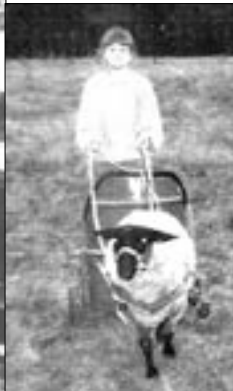
A goal of Linda's was to have a 2-year-old to compete in the In Hand Trail Futurity hosted by the Oregon Foundation Quarter Horse Club in July. With that in mind they purchased a dun colt, Jaz Destind For Gold last winter. After a busy spring 'Destin' lived up to his name and he and Linda realized her goal of winning the 2-year-old In Hand Trail Futurity, and placed second at the National Show.

However, life is not always blue ribbons and awards. Two years ago, in the middle of his NFQHA campaign, Cowboy was diagnosed with E.P.M. E.P.M. is a serious neurological disease, carried by possums, that has been active in the Southern Oregon region, and can be fatal if not detected or treated in time. Another horse in the Bank's horse family had also contracted the disease, and had to spend a week in intensive care at Oregon State University. After much prayer, constant care, and medication both horses are back to their old selves, and of course, Cowboy went on to become First NFQHA Champion.

Cowboy's Family is honored by the NFQHA Versatility award, and feel they have been blessed with special horse family members. Each horse is an individual and their personalities are dealt with separately. They even have their own Christmas stocking to hand on their stall doors!

This year Cowboy will probably want a bigger one!

By Linda Banks



The Banks Family believes in having fun with their animals. Left is Linda on the 'Frito Bandito' (Cowboy), right is Mardi age 10.



Mardi growing up with Peppermint Brick. On right he pulled the carriage at hers & Kenny's wedding.



have also performed their beautiful exhibition of bridle-less riding at several shows.

Bob and Linda's 'thing' has become a family 'thing', and Bob's parents are not exempt from these Foundation enthusiasts. John and Luella Banks, owner of 19 year old gelding, Poco Ty Bar, have also been smitten with the bug. They bred and raised Ty Bar and John used him for packing and hunting trips, and his rope horse for the last 16 years. It has just been the last couple of years that he (Ty Bar), has learned that he has a right lead. In spite of this he has helped to build confidence in a couple of young riders. In fact, so much confidence that Chantelle Henrikson has ridden him on the Oregon Foundation

More on the Brick

Peppermint Brick and the Banks family have been a tremendous asset to the Oregon Foundation Quarter



Sometimes dad (Bob Banks) gets to ride Peppermint Brick.

Horse club. Bob and Linda have been great supporters of our Youth program, encouraging 4-H exhibitors from their club by offering them NFQHA horses to ride in our shows. The Banks are incredible to watch at a show. They are all tough, serious competitors, that show in all NFQHA events on up to 7 horses. Yet they always find the time to help out during the show, remain supportive of their fellow exhibitors, and exhibit sportsmanship equal to none, even under adverse conditions.

For those who think Peppermint Brick is a prima donna show horse, think again. Despite showing in all NFQHA events, he hazes for other steer daubers, scores cattle for headers and heelers, and even holds herd, and turns back for the cutters. Many times you will see him coming out of the rope box 3 or 4 runs in a row, as he helps other contestants. How many horses will put up with that and remain quiet in the box? My point is, he is a one in a million horse owned by a one in a million family. I'm so grateful they are all a part of the OFQHC family. Thank you.

Carol Hassebroek

Congratulations to Peppermint Brick & The Banks Family

Will Receive **\$1,000.⁰⁰**



For the First:

Mare to attain NFQHA Championship
Stallion to attain NFQHA Championship
First Gelding is Peppermint Brick #7000

The NFQHA Registration Numbers 7000, 8000, and 9000 will be assigned in the order the NFQHA Championships are attained by the above horses. These commemorative numbers are a historical guide to NFQHA's growth with special significance to the Association, and were withheld to be awarded to special horses.

Requirements for NFQHA Championships are as follows per NFQHA rulebook:

NFQHA Champion is to be awarded to any horse which has earned 50 points in Versatility Horse Competition and who has earned 10 individual class points in any combination of Open Category IV classes.

In the event of a tie (achievement the same day), the horse with the most points in category IV shall win.