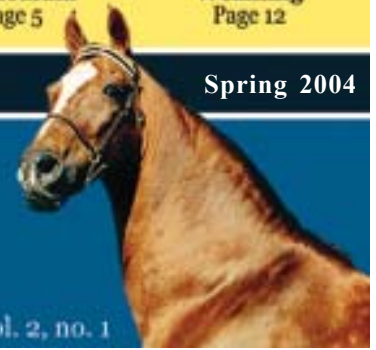


# Equine Innovator

*Teaching students and horses one stride at a time ....*

vol. 2, no. 1



## MTSU Horse Science Welcomes Three New Faculty Members



**Drs. Day, Hoffman, and Haffner,**  
holding tools of their trade.

What a year! 2003 will forever be remembered as the year the "Field of Dreams" was finally harvested. The Miller Coliseum hosted its grand opening on March 18 and the Horse Science Center was finally occupied in the summer. Those dreams alone made 2003 very special, but the real icing on the cake came with the addition of new people to our staff. Two

endowed Chairs of Excellence made possible through the bequest of John and Mary Miller, and Dr. Jerry Williams' retirement in July of 2003 brought about the openings of three positions for Horse Science.

After extensive searches and interviews, three persons were added to our staff. We feel fortunate to be able to attract

these top-quality people. They are smart, competent, motivated, and just good folks! Their addition along with the new facilities

see **New Faculty**, page 6

## MTSU Named Reserve National Champion Team, Sarah Elder National High Point Rider

Excitement overcame sheer exhaustion the first week of May 2003 as the MT Equestrian Team looked straight in the eye of the opportunity they had been riding for all year.

After topping the Zone 5 Region 1 ranks by fifty points, MT went to Zones in Savannah, Ga., and won four of the five Western Team classes. Sarah Elder won both Team Open and Reining; Lydia Whitlow won Team Ad-



vanced; and Amanda Craddock won Team Beginner. Laurie Adams filled out the day's points

with a third in Team Intermediate. In addition, MT riders earning Nationals slots were Jaclyn Craddock, second in Open Flat, and Sarah Elder, first in Open and second in Reining.

Several other riders were third and fourth in their classes at  
see **Nationals 2003**, page 8

## MTSU Hosts IHSA Nationals...Again!

Flags hanging from cables and surrounding the mezzanine, plants everywhere, vendor booths around the walls, and Elk Valley Ford's trucks brightened up the Tennessee Miller Coliseum for the 2003 National Championship Intercollegiate Horse Show the first weekend in May last year.

Fast forward to May 6-9, 2004. Here we were again in the Miller Coliseum, only this time for four days instead of three. With a new Western division added in team and individual competition, the show boasted even more riders, visitors, vendors, and sponsors than ever before.

The Equestrian Team, with help from Rhonda Hoffman and Anne Brzezicki, prepared in several ways. One group of students prepared for the trade fair, soliciting vendors and organizing sponsors, booths, and other space. Another group collected

see **Nationals 2004**, page 8

## 2004 Notable Dates

**May 6-9**  
IHSA National  
Championship Horse Show,  
hosted by MTSU

**May 8**  
MTSU Horse Science  
Alumni Chapter  
Luncheon

**June 6-9**  
Tennessee 4-H  
Horsemanship Camp

**June 13-16**  
Tennessee Walking Horse  
Youth Horsemanship  
School

**August 28**  
Celebration All Youth Day  
Horse Judging Contest

**November 6-7 and 20-21**  
Horse Breeding  
Management Short  
Courses

**November 20-21**  
MTSU hosts IHSA Horse  
Show

## Horse Science Alumni Chapter Formed During Nationals

When was the last time you got to visit with your old college friends and reminisce and feel like you were nineteen again? Two Horse Science reunions have convinced us that we all want to catch up, keep up, and get together with many of our old friends from generations of graduating classes. Our MTSU family consists of students, Equestrian Team riders, Judging Team competitors, and Horseman's Association members, all of whom meant a lot to us, and to each other, over the years.

A group of alums from the early '80s spearheaded a campaign resulting in an official Horse Science Alumni Chapter for the purpose of keeping up with each other, networking, and providing help and support

and information on internship and job opportunities for each other and the current generation of students here in Horse Science.

The chapter's chartering occurred during the IHSA Nationals May 6-9, a perfect occasion for the group's beginning. Many of our alums have memories of riding in, preparing for, managing (and surviving), or just aiming to qualify for IHSA Nationals past during their four years here at school. Some of you remember hosting the 1979 Nationals the week before ground was broken for the Tennessee Livestock Center, when Vice President Walter Mondale attended to watch his daughter Eleanor ride our old Quarter Horse, Cue, in the show. He was accompanied by Secret Service agents and bomb-sniffing dogs, and

there were phones installed in the grass outside the arena. Some of you remember trips to New York where folks marveled at our Southern twangs, or when it snowed in May and we went across the border to eat lunch in Canada just to say we did. Some recall trips to Texas, where we went shopping at the Western stores in Houston, or how beautiful it was in Colorado, or

the Nationals in Massachusetts when we ate supper near the beach in Newport Rhode Island and saw the great mansions of the folks who went down with the *Titanic*.

The 2004 show was a great chance for alums to come back and visit, see the new coliseum, renew old acquaintances, and make new ones.

The festivities took place on Saturday, May 8. A luncheon was held for alums at the Foundation House adjacent to the Miller Coliseum. Alumni toured the facility, met new faculty members, and watched the show.

Please come and join us in this new organization. We want to reconnect with our old family once again.



MTSU Horse Science Alumni test their memories during "Purina Checkardy" at the Horse Science Alumni Reunion, October 2003. Pictured L to R: Wendy Boyd, Reba Schettler, Cliff Lamb, and Nikki (Johnson) Lane.

**For information  
about the MTSU  
Horse Science  
Alumni Chapter,  
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### Equine Innovator

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Photographs: MTSU Horse Program  
and Chris Landrum

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## Dr. Jerry Williams Retires

An era ended in August 2003 when Dr. Jerry Wright Williams announced his retirement after 37 years on the faculty of the School of Agribusiness and Agriscience.

Dr. Williams came to MTSU after receiving a B.S. in 1965 and an M.S. in 1966 from East Texas State University. Attending the University of Tennessee during the summers, he finished a Ph.D. in 1975. He taught several Horse Science classes as well as Elements of Animal Science and Animal Nutrition and Feeding.

Dr. Williams organized and served as advisor of the MTSU Horsemen's Association until his retirement.

The Middle Tennessee Arabian Horse Association has been the beneficiary of his devoted interest; he actively served as a liaison between the MTSU Horse Program and the MTAHA. His leadership led to establishing a scholarship program for deserving students. This spring, six students were awarded \$500 scholarships provided by the MTAHA.

Additionally, Dr. Williams served as advisor for the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity through its colony to chapter status, and he continued to serve as its advisor until 1983.

Dr. Williams and his wife Glenda are still active in the Middle Tennessee Arabian Horse Association, and he continues to keep several horses on his acreage here in Murfreesboro.

## MT Riders Qualify for 2004 IHSA Nationals

The incredible growth of the IHSA has brought on many challenges in its development over the years. Over 7,000 riders from 315 colleges and universities now compete across the country in 46 states. Equestrian competition is getting more news coverage now than in its entire history, and it is a sport that has come of age and gained respect in the world of collegiate athletics as well as in the horse industry.

In order to qualify for Nationals these days, riders must first amass 35 points in their respective divisions, or 28 if they ride in Open or Alumni. That qualifies them to ride in the Regional Championships with the rest of the qualifiers in that division. The top three riders from each Regional Championship go on to

the Zone Championships, which in our case includes Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, and southern Kentucky. The Zone Championship show really thins out the competition, and only two riders per division advance to Nationals from Zones.

We wish good draws and great rides to senior Dionne Stigge in the Cacchione Cup High Point Hunter Seat Rider; junior Racheal Hunt riding in the Intermediate over Fences; junior Rusty Rea in Open Western and the AQHA Cup; senior Lydia Whitlow in Advanced Western; senior Danielle Nadeau in Intermediate Western; alumna Allison Brannon in Alumni Western and Alumni Reining; and the entire Western team.

2003–2004 has been an incredibly successful season for the MT team. Of the 11 teams of Zone 5, Region 1, our riders have had the following successes:

- Regional High Point Western Team
- Regional Reserve High Point Hunter Seat Team
- Top three Hunter Seat Riders, headed by senior Dionne Stigge of Murfreesboro, who will represent our region in the Cacchione Cup class at Nationals
- Two of the top three Western riders, headed by junior Rusty Rea of Prospect, Kentucky, who will represent the region in the AQHA Cup competition.
- Ten individual riders qualified for Zones
- Five individual riders and the Western Team qualified for Nationals

## AQHA Honors Dave Whitaker

Against the glowing stage of the Disneyland Hotel and accompanied by an orchestra and the cheers of hundreds of members at the annual AQHA convention, Dave Whitaker was called to the podium to accept the Merle Wood Humanitarian Award last March.

One of AQHA's premiere honors, the Merle Wood Award is given in memory of a man who was loved by thousands across the country for a life that was full of concern and help for others. He is remembered by acknowledging those rare folks who, along their way, serve their country, their fellow human beings, the horse industry, and AQHA.

Dave's qualifications are well recognized by those of us who know him well. He served as an Army medic in Vietnam and then worked in extension in Virginia for several years, where he met his wife Pat, a native of Murfreesboro and the real reason Dave has settled here. In 1976, he found his true calling leading the Horse Science program at MTSU. Dave started off as director of public service and quickly established horse owner schools around the state, a Horse Science seminar, and the judging team.

In 1979, Dave spent three years at Texas Tech to get his Ph.D. and become an AQHA judge before returning to MTSU. For many

years he has persevered in developing his vision of what our program can and will be. His personal interest in our students and that they each try to discover and fulfill their own particular gift in life has been and remains a driving force. His interest in developing a great breeding herd of Tennessee Walking Horses has been a long-term goal that has come to fruition slowly but with tremendous success over the years. The national success of the horse judging team has helped make the MTSU Horse Science program more famous out of state than in.

see Whitaker, page 11

## IHSA Lifetime Achievement Award to Anne Brzezicki

Typical in many ways, Anne grew up in Connecticut in a family of four. Like many aspiring horse-loving kids, her family knew nothing about horses. But a connection to 4-H and a Dad who supported her addiction fed the hunger that consumed her. Riding horses bought by modest funds, she made the most of what she had. Dickie Woolam was the 4-H leader who inspired her 4-H career, and she spent the summers teaching riding at 4-H Horse Camp.

Anne went to the University of Connecticut and majored in Animal Science and competed on the livestock and horse judging teams, as well as the original UConn

Equestrian Team. She rode on and co-coached the IHSA National Championship UConn Team in 1972. Dr. Nate Hale and Bob Church were her favorite mentors there, and she credits them with helping her realize that teaching and horses were her real life's work.

After graduation, she was named coach of the equestrian team. She married Michael Brzezicki and in 1976 they moved to Franklin, Tennessee, to be near Michael's new job at St. Thomas Hospital in Nashville. At first Anne worked for Sissie and Mac Anderton of Brownland Farm. In the fall of that year an instructor's job came open at MTSU and Anne was the chosen one. The program changed

overnight. Anne not only taught but also brought the IHSA into the South, starting a new region and recruiting other schools to enter the world of equestrian teams and the IHSA. She had known Bob Cacchione and been on the IHSA board in Connecticut and somehow managed to convince them to hold the IHSA Nationals at MTSU in 1979.

Several eventful things happened at that show. Through her work with AQHA, she and Kenny Copenhaver from Miami University of Ohio brought Stock Seat to the IHSA and the Nationals for the first time. AQHA Hall of Fame member and AHSA judge Suzanne Jones came

see Brzezicki, page 11

## Therapeutic Horse Program Is Underway at the Horse Science Center



The therapeutic horsemanship program at MTSU was formed because many disabled children and adults do not have access to the benefits that might be offered through therapeutic riding or “hippotherapy.” To address this problem we are developing a specific educational program focused on

teaching horsekeeping and horsemanship skills to disabled persons and their families. We hope to provide the entire family an opportunity to develop a basis for success, thereby cultivating a lasting interest in horses. In this way we hope to improve the chance that horses can have an enduring positive impact on the quality of life enjoyed by each disabled person we encounter.

An important part of the MTSU therapeutic horse program mission is to promote safe and responsible utilization of horses in therapy. Many therapists who are interested in offering hippotherapy to their clients simply do not have a background with horses. By providing horse-related education and handling skills to these therapists, we hope to help them on their way to achieving their certification requirements in hippotherapy. Another problem is that more stables would offer therapeutic riding if they had the ability to offer safe and effective programs. This fall we will be offering a course that will provide much of the training and information necessary to start, administer, or play an essential role in the operation of a successful therapeutic riding program.

One of the initial goals of the MTSU therapeutic horse program was to acclimate horses that could be used in a hippotherapy program. This task was undertaken by horse science students Rachel Scheffler and Audrey Balthrop with assistance from Amanda Malone, David Pierson, Rae Nelson, Erin Killebrew, and Matt Jarrett. Over a three-week period they conditioned three horses (Legend, Frankie, and Levi) to work calmly, confidently, and safely while constantly surrounded by people and while being introduced to objects they might encounter during a therapy session. These horses are now available to serve as outstanding examples to show the level of performance that should be expected of horses to be used in therapy sessions.

### Therapeutic Horse Program Mission

1. To teach sound principles of horse safety, selection, training, and husbandry to students and the horse community at large.
2. To produce professionals who can effectively train others.
3. To participate in research that advances horse science.

## MTSU Joins Other Horse Science Programs by Offering Breeding Management Short Courses

Horse breeding management short courses were first offered at MTSU February 28–29 and March 12–13. Each course consisted of about ten hours lecture and seven hours of hands-on instruction in the MTSU Equine Reproduction Laboratory. Participants were presented up-to-date information pertaining to the principles of reproductive physiology and how these principles relate to modern breeding management practices in horses.

The instructors included Dr. Rhonda Hoffman, Dr. John Haffner, D.V.M., and Dr. William Day. Specific lecture topics included broodmare nutrition, reproductive anatomy and management of mares and stallions, foaling, neonatal care, semen evaluation, handling and shipment, artificial insemination, evaluation and shipment of semen, and factors that affect fertility in mares and stallions.

Afternoon laboratory sessions provided participants with a hands-on opportunity to practice semen collection, evaluation and handling procedures, breeding hygiene, artificial insemination, and packaging of semen for cooled storage or for overnight shipment. To insure that all procedures were done correctly, all participants were attentively overseen by students enrolled in a senior-level course in equine breeding management (ABAS 4090) offered at the Horse Science Center by the School of Agribusiness and Agriscience.

Fourteen breeders attended the first offering of the two-day short courses and reviews were outstanding. All felt that the short courses were well worth the \$350 fee. Some comments included “I feel much more capable,” “This course is an outstanding value,” “It’s hard to believe that we covered so much information in just two days,” and



“I’ll be telling my friends about this.” All surveyed noted that the course had helped them reevaluate their breeding management practices and improve their skills.

The breeding management short courses will be offered next November 6–7 and November 20–21, 2004. The fee will remain at the introductory rate of \$350. Interested persons should contact Dr. William Day at (615) 494-8849 or by e-mail at [wday@mtsu.edu](mailto:wday@mtsu.edu).

# Horse Science Curriculum

With the addition of new staff and a new Horse Science Center, the Horse Science curriculum is undergoing changes. The wheels of the University turn surely but slowly, thus not all of the proposed changes have been implemented. The following list of courses is presented to let everyone know where we are headed and hope to be in the near future.

## Fall Semester

- **Basic Horsemanship - Equitation.** Preparation for recreational horseback riding and horse handling skills.
- **Fundamentals of Horsemanship.** The first in a three-part series: philosophy, psychology, language, and practice of communicating with and controlling the riding horse (fall and spring semesters).
- **Horsemanship and Equitation.** Second in the three-part series: lateral exercises, lateral balance, and controlling the functional parts of the horse.
- **Development of Horse Breeds.** The historical development and contributions of modern breeds, roles of breed associations, principles of genetics, coat color, genetic abnormalities and lethals, selection of desired traits.
- **Equine Reproduction and Breeding.** The application of the principles of managing the horse breeding farm.
- **Behavior and Training of Horses.** Psychology, behavior, and practice of breaking, training, fitting, and using horses with an emphasis on the competition horse.
- **Selecting and Judging Horses.** Methods and practices used in selecting and judging horses for production, recreation, and sport.
- **Seminar in Horse Science.** Horse health care and maintenance with emphasis on veterinary care for horses.
- **Seminar in Horse Science.** Selection, training, and use of horses in therapeutic horse programs and management of such programs.



## Spring Semester

- **Stable Management.** Practices used in managing a teaching and training stable.
- **Horses and Horsemanship.** The basic requirements of horse ownership and care and associated expenses, safety, and resources in the horse industry. For non-Horse Science majors.
- **Advanced Horsemanship.** Third in the three-part series: longitudinal exercises, collection and extension, stride control, longitudinal balance.
- **Techniques of Teaching Horsemanship.** Philosophy, methods, and practice of teaching horsemanship.
- **Advanced Judging of Horses.** Systems of judging current horse show disciplines and exercises for students who aspire to become professional judges.
- **Light Horse Production.** Scientific principles relevant to production requirements of horses as related to exercise physiology and performance, growth, reproductive physiology, age, and clinical support.

## Proposed New Courses

- **Therapeutic Riding and Hippotherapy.** How to work with horses used for treatment of those with physical impairments.
- **Equine Nutrition and Feeding.** Equine digestion and utilization of nutrients, appropriate feeds and feeding management, diseases with a nutritional component.
- **Equine Health.** Horse anatomy and physiology, health care, and distinguishing between health and illness along with basic health care techniques.
- **Equine Industry.** Covers subjects specific to the business aspects of equine industry management.

## MTSU Horseman's Association News

The MTSU Horseman's Association ushered in the 2003–2004 school year with a variety of activities planned. Students Jackie Brito, John Lovell, Whitney Humphrey, and Ben Elkins and advisor Dr. Rhonda Hoffman raised \$150 in donations for a Ride-A-Thon to benefit Southern Starrs Therapeutic Riding Center in fall 2003. Other activities this year included a welcoming of new members with a pizza party and movie night; a visit to Mule Day in Columbia, Tennessee; and guest speakers Dawn Cooper, TPM, regarding equine myotherapy; and Don Galvin, reporting his summer experience working for the Bureau of Land Management in the Pryor Mountain Range.

The newest and greatest challenge was the formation of a Therapeutic Horsemanship Program as a subset of the Horseman's Association. Students Audrey Balthrop and Rachel Scheffler took the lead on this program under the direction of Dr. Day (see Therapeutic Riding, page 4).

The highlight of the year was a horse industry field trip to tour farms, veterinary, and research facilities in the Lexington, Kentucky, area. Thirteen students and Dr. Hoffman traveled to Kentucky on the evening of March 19 and met the dawn on March 20 at Keeneland Racetrack to watch the morning



MTSU Horseman's Association members at Thoroughbred Park, Lexington, KY.

gallops. Robin Murray at Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital provided a fabulous tour of the facility, and the group was able to observe

see Horseman's Association, page 8

## New Faculty *from page 1*

elevates our program to another dimension.

**Dr. Johnny Haffner** is a native Tennessean and has lived in middle Tennessee most of his life. He got his start in the horse industry at Harlinsdale Farm in Franklin, Tennessee, breaking and showing Tennessee Walking Horse yearlings. He currently lives in Columbia, Tennessee, with his wife, Cathy, who is also a veterinarian, and their three children, Anna, Barbara, and Will.

Since August of 2003, Dr. Haffner has served as director of equine health at the Horse Science Center. There he is involved in the veterinary care of MTSU's horses, teaching, research and public service. He received his D.V.M. degree in 1982 from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Dr. Haffner had an equine practice based in Spring Hill, Tennessee, where he provided veterinary care for horses in the middle Tennessee area. In 1995, he returned to the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine and completed a residency in equine practice. He is certified by the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners in equine practice. He has also served as a relief equine ambulatory instructor at the University of Tennessee and Oregon State University Colleges of Veterinary Medicine.

In 2000 Dr. Haffner limited his practice to equine dentistry and has provided advanced equine dental services to horses across Tennessee. In addition to the routine dental floating, he provided services such as

extractions, fillings, and periodontal treatments.

For the last four years during the summers Dr. Haffner has traveled to Mongolia in conjunction with the Christian Veterinary Mission to teach in veterinary conferences, treat horses at the Naadam Festival horse races, and conduct research. Horses are a very important part of Mongolian culture, and teaching and research on the horses have proven to be effective means of developing relationships with the Mongolian people.

**Dr. William Day** has long held an interest in equine reproduction, having spent a good deal of time in his youth helping his veterinarian father breed mares. Before completing his college education, he held a variety of positions on breeding farms, including stallion groom at Calumet Farm, broodmare manager at The Oaks, assistant manager at the Texas A&M University Horse Center, and farm manager at Cedar Creek Farm. Dr. Day is a native of Texas and earned his B.S. in Animal Science, M.S. in Physiology of Reproduction, and Ph.D. in Reproductive Physiology at Texas A&M University. Prior to coming to MTSU, Dr. Day worked as the extension horse specialist at Utah State University and established an equine management consulting business, DayEquine. He is also a member of the board of directors of the American Association for Horsemanship Safety. Dr. Day has been involved in a variety of research projects related to reproduction in horses, including hormone regulation, embryo

cryopreservation, and uterine function in cycling and pregnant mares. As an equine reproductive physiologist at MTSU, he is dedicated to helping horse breeders by promoting sound breeding practices.

**Dr. Rhonda Hoffman** is an equine nutritionist and works in both Horse Science and Animal Science at MTSU. Dr. Hoffman is originally from central Missouri and received a B.S. in Agricultural Science in 1992 from Truman State University in Kirksville, Missouri. She earned a Ph.D. in Equine Nutrition from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in 1997. Her graduate research at the Virginia Tech MARE Center, a 120-acre Thoroughbred breeding farm, provided the basis for her continued work in horse nutrition as well as a strong practical foundation in day-to-day equine care and management. Prior to coming to MTSU, Dr. Hoffman worked as the horse extension specialist at the University of Connecticut and as a research assistant professor at Virginia Tech. Since August 2004, Dr. Hoffman has worked as an associate professor at MTSU in teaching, research and public service and as the primary advisor for all students majoring in Horse Science. Her research addresses optimal nutrition of horses with an emphasis on carbohydrates: sugars versus fibers and their effects on glucose and insulin. She most enjoys teaching horse nutrition in a manner that relates the digestive physiology and nutritional needs of horses to objects and concepts used in everyday life.

## MTSU Judging Team Places Well at NRHA Contest

Will members of the MTSU Horse Judging Team someday judge at the Olympics? Don't count them out. Especially since the MTSU Horse Judging Team placed among the elite

teams at the recent NRHA (National Reining Horse Association) Futurity. In fact, the team placed third in a competitive field of 21 teams. The contest is held annually in association

with the NRHA Futurity, one of the horse industry's major events that attracts entries from around the world.

Judging a reining class is very similar to judging dressage or even figure skating because each maneuver earns a score.

Kathryn Duncan, senior from Normandy, proved she could excel in the evaluation of the performances and placed fifth individually among the 105 competitors. Other members of the team were Joey Myers, senior from Gallatin; Barbara Sherman, senior from Mt. Juliet; Lori Puckett, sophomore from Cookeville; and Hannah Toban, junior from Franklin.

The team was awarded a \$500 scholarship for placing third.

West Texas A&M University took top honors, and the University of Wisconsin at River Falls placed second.

Drs. Dave Whitaker and Tiffany Day coached the team.



**The MTSU Horse Judging Team places their class at the APHA Collegiate Judging Contest, held at the Will Rogers Equestrian Center in Forth Worth, TX. The MTSU team placed first overall, topping seventeen others.**

See page 12.

## Lydia and Theresa Whitlow Win Honor Roll

Senior Lydia Whitlow walked across the stage at the 2004 AQHA Convention in Reno, Nevada, on March 6 to receive TWO of three major awards. Equestrian Team rider Lydia and her freshman sister Theresa from New Market in east Tennessee have swept the AQHA Honor Roll in Jumpers with their horse One Fresh Dude (alias "Louie") and Lydia has won the AQHA High Point award, or Honor Roll, in both Amateur and Open Jumping. Louie and Theresa have won it in Youth Jumping. We believe this is the first time ever that a single horse and his family have accomplished this feat in all three divisions in one year.

In addition, Louie was named High Point All Around Horse for the Tennessee Quarter Horse Association. Lydia, who will graduate in December 2004, will continue to show Louie in amateur and open events, and Theresa will start all over with a new young horse in preparation of her forthcoming change from Youth to Amateur status when the girls won't be able to share the same horse.

Louie has an interesting story. After a career in racing he was shown successfully for several years. Known to be a difficult horse, Louie decided he had had enough and was no longer going to play. He was "retired" to be a pony horse for a racing stable, and then turned

out for a couple of years. A trainer friend of Michele Whitlow, the girls' mom, told Michele that Louie could be purchased and would be a great chance for the girls to move

to a higher level of competition. But Michele couldn't meet the price.

On a trip home from school with a horse and trailer, Lydia had been caught in a traffic jam in Knoxville, when a tractor-trailer truck rammed her trailer, severely injuring her horse and ending his show career. Lydia's old truck was totaled, and she had received insurance money to replace it. She decided to replace it with Louie instead, and, sight unseen, she purchased him. When Louie arrived at the farm Michele thought she had let Lydia make a huge mistake. Louie had a giant melanoma and looked more like an old has-been than a show horse. The girls worked him back into shape and gave him a lot of TLC, and after a few months, they were showing and figuring one another out.

At their first trip to the Youth World Championships in Ft. Worth, Texas, trainers were coming up and saying "I can't believe this horse is jumping around that great!" and "He really LIKES them, doesn't he?" Louie likes his new family and his new life and has paid the Whitlows back with a string of wins from the Tennessee State 4-H Horse Championships to the All American Quarter Horse Congress and now the High Point in the Nation. Way to go, ladies and gent!



**Lydia Whitlow and One Fresh Dude winning the Amateur Jumper class at the All American Quarter Horse Congress, 2001. Jeff Kirkbride Photography**

## Horseman's Association *from page 6*

Dr. Larry Bramblage directing periosteal stripping surgeries (used on young horses to correct crooked legs) on two horses at the same time. The next stop on the trip was Ashford Stud, where farm manager Fergus Galvin provided a grand tour, taking time to bring the likes of Grand Slam, Thunder Gulch, and Fusaichi Pegasus out of their stalls to stand up and visit the group. Viewed in their stalls were Giant's Causeway, Johannesburg, and High Yield. Everyone noted the rubber footing, wall padding, tongue-and-groove finished ceiling, and skylights in the breeding shed while Mr. Galvin explained the meticulous management of the breeding stallions and incoming mares.

After a lunch break, the tour reconvened at Kentucky Equine Research, where nutritionist Dr. Larry Lawrence and research farm manager Delia Nash gave an explanation of exercise physiology and a demonstration of equine speed on a high-speed equine treadmill. Leaving KER, the group completed a driving tour past additional farms, including Calumet, Lane's End, Three Chimneys, Donamire, and Darby Dan, ending eventually at Thoroughbred Park in downtown Lexington to view the life-size bronze statues. Before leaving Lexington on March 21, the group visited Kentucky Horse Park.

Each year the MTSU Horseman's Association sponsors the Horseman of the Year

Award at the Ag Banquet. The 2004 MTSU Horseman of the Year is senior Barbara Sherman from Mt. Juliet. Runner-up is Jackie Brito, and second runners-up were Stephanie Ille and Audrey Balthrop.

The MTSU Horseman's Association is open to students of any major as well as faculty and staff interested in horses. It is an all-encompassing group that includes members of all experience and disciplines. The first fall semester meeting will be October 9, 2004, 7:00 p.m., at the MTSU Horse Science Center. New members are welcome. For more information about the MTSU Horseman's Association, contact Dr. Rhonda Hoffman, rhoffman@mtsu.edu.

## Nationals 2003 *from page 1*

Zones, but only the top two advance to Nationals.

Sarah Elder qualified for her fourth Nationals in a big way, with a perfect score of High Point Rider at all ten western shows in the region during the year.

Meantime, plans for Nationals, the first major event in the Miller Coliseum after the grand opening, were well underway. Students were involved in the Parade of Teams, the trade show, announcing, caring for horses, hospitality, press room, show program, and whatever else was needed by the out-of-town guests from all over the country. 2001 alumna Jessica Schultz took her vacation to come and help; 1980 grad Pat McAfee served as announcer for his sixth Nationals. Jane Stanfield and Deborah Moore were among the

other alums who helped put on our first Nationals in 1979 and came back to see what the new generation looked like.

The very first class of the show was the Alumni Western, and former Eq Team president Lisa Ligon came all the way from California to smoke the competition and take home the saddle, riding a horse Andy Moorman brought for us all the way from Florida. Allison Brannon was third in the same class. After that, Sarah Elder won the Team Open, then the Team Reining and then the Individual Open! She was fourth in Individual Reining, earning a spot at the NRHA Derby Collegiate Challenge in Oklahoma City two weeks later.

Amanda Craddock was fifth in the Team Walk-Trot, which put us solidly in place for

Reserve National Champion Team. Texas A&M and West Texas A&M tied for National Champion Team two points ahead of us.

Jaclyn Craddock rode well in the phenomenal Individual Open Hunter Seat class, taking tenth place.

The final workoff of the weekend for MT riders was the finals portion of the AQHA High Point Rider class. After the rail work, several riders looked really good including Katy Forrest from Texas A&M. But Sarah Elder nailed her pattern with accuracy and style and won the saddle, the spurs, and the big trophy, finishing the year with a perfect score of High Point Rider every time out.

Final tally: four National Championships, a fifth, a tenth, and High Point Western Rider.

## Nationals 2004 *from page 1*

Western horses from far and wide with support from AQHA and TQHA. A third group worked on a Web site so that information about Murfreesboro, MTSU, and the Nationals was available to all. A fourth group worked on public relations and inviting adults, schoolchildren, 4-H and Pony Club members, and everyone else interested in riding and competition.

Hunter Seat judges were Sarah Good of Belton, Mo., and John Roper of Franklin, Tenn. Western judges were Gretchen Mathes of Connecticut and Betsy Tuckey from Virginia. Show manager was Jon Conyers from Virginia,

and the announcer was our own alumnus Pat McAfee, back for his seventh stint as Nationals announcer. MT senior Dionne Stigge was announcer's assistant and 2003 alumna Sarah Elder orchestrated the Parade of Teams on Saturday morning.

Saturday afternoon, May 8, there was a special reception in honor of the 25th anniversary of AQHA's involvement with IHSA. We were pleased to be the hosts in this anniversary year, especially because the first AQHA participation was during the 1979 Nationals when MTSU hosted the first Nationals to include Western competition.

The four-day format included an all Hunter Seat day on Thursday, both seats on Friday and Saturday, and an all-Western day Sunday. Hunter Champions were pinned on Saturday and Western Champions on Sunday.

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## Short News

### MTAHA partners with Equestrian Team on shows and scholarships

For many years, the Middle Tennessee Arabian Horse Association has hosted a Class A show each September. Members of the Equestrian Team have been working the show for ten years, earning money for transportation and other team expenses throughout the year. Our Dr. Jerry Williams, Arabian owner and active member in the MTAHA, has led a campaign within the MTAHA that has benefited the Eq Team and other Horse Science students by helping both the MTAHA and our teams. Approximately 30 Eq Team members help out in numerous ways at the September show. We serve as paddock masters, gatekeepers, scorers, bit checkers, scribes and award givers and on ring crews and in many other positions that allow our students to see how a recognized show works from the inside out.

For the help provided, MTAHA has sponsored a cash award to the team and, for the past four years, a scholarship as well. The scholarships are given out at the annual Ag Banquet in April. We appreciate Dr. Williams and the MTAHA for providing this assistance.

### TQHA helps sponsor AQHA 25th Anniversary Celebration

Back in 1979, when MTSU hosted IHSA Nationals for the first time, there were several other “firsts” of note. It was the first time Nationals was held in the South. It was the first time Western classes were included in the show. And it was the first time the American Quarter Horse Association sponsored awards for IHSA competition.

Dr. Dave Whitaker saw the natural connection between an organization founded on the idea that riding could be available to all college students, regardless of their financial status, their ownership of a horse, or their previous experience, and one that promotes the world’s largest breed by providing great programs for people. Dave asked AQHA to help out with the Western awards, and after a few explanations, trophies arrived for the show.

Through the succeeding years, AQHA has increased its sponsorship of the Western Division of IHSA to far more than just trophies. Today IHSA is a sponsored program of AQHA, which provides saddles to the winners of the Western Horsemanship classes at Nationals, custom spurs to the High Point Western Rider, buckles for the members of the Champion Western Team, and jackets for the members of the Reserve Champion Western Team at IHSA Nationals. AQHA always sends a representative to the show to meet the riders and parents and cover the competition for the *AQHA Journal* or the *America’s Horse* television show.

This year, in addition to AQHA staff members, President Scoop Vessels was at the show Friday through Sunday to meet riders, parents, coaches, and visitors interested in learning more about the American Quarter Horse.

We are more than pleased that twenty-five years later, the Nationals were again here at MTSU in the new Miller Coliseum. We were proud to host AQHA’s 25th anniversary reception at this year’s IHSA Nationals. On

Saturday, May 8, the Tennessee Quarter Horse Association helped sponsor the reception, helped provide horses for the show, and hosted an AQHA “Test Ride” for folks interested in horses but not yet horse owners. In addition, AQHA held a Team Wrangler Clinic for basic horsemanship skills the evening of May 8. This was a great opportunity for youth and amateurs interested in improving their horsemanship knowledge to learn from leading AQHA Professional Horsemen.

### Fundamentals of Horse Ownership Seminar Series

In February and March of 2004, the MTSU Horse Science faculty in conjunction with the UT Ag Extension Service offered an evening seminar series to horse owners. Over 50 horse enthusiasts from the Middle Tennessee area heard lectures on various subjects related to horse ownership and care. The topics covered included buying a horse and opportunities with your horse, feeding and forages, diseases and parasites, behavior and training, horse welfare, safety, and the law. The seminars were held in the new MTSU Horse Science Center located on West Thompson Lane adjacent to the Miller Coliseum.

Visit the new MTSU  
Equestrian Team Web site at  
[www.mtsu.edu/~eqteam](http://www.mtsu.edu/~eqteam).



FFA Judging Team members evaluate a conformation class at the FFA State Horse Judging Contest hosted by MTSU.

### APHA Judging Win *from page 12*

the second overall competitor, placing fourth in conformation, second in performance, and second in oral reasons. Sophomore Lori Puckett from Cookeville placed third in performance judging and ninth overall. Senior Rachel Crawford from Lafayette, Arkansas, finished eighth in performance judging, and freshman Paula Gambill from Shelbyville earned eighth place in conformation judging. Senior Barbara Sherman from Mt. Juliet placed eighth in oral reasons.

Other team members include Lucas Ayers, a freshman from South Carolina, senior Anthony Douglas from Loudon, junior

Kathryn Duncan from Normandy, and freshman Elaine Miller from Jackson, Mississippi.

In addition to competing, the team traveled to farms and ranches in Oklahoma and Texas for four days prior to the contest. These visits afforded not only practice for judging but also planted seeds for internships and job placement in the future.

The MTSU Horse Judging Team is coached by Dave Whitaker.

## World Champion Weanling *from page 12*

showing again in the big ring? With the expertise of a true professional, Karen led Reuben to the championship and the placement of the floral horseshoe around his neck.

With the Celebration win, Reuben became the third generation of his family to be named World Champion at the Celebration. Not only

had his mother been named World Champion, but his granddam, Queen's Lady Love, had been named World Champion in 1989 with then-student Joey Kovalick in the saddle.

Our American Idol became a favorite of fans and students—just like the TV show.



**MTSU's World Champion Mare and Foal, Blue Nun and Our American Idol, at the 2003 Celebration.**

## Whitaker *from page 3*

Meanwhile, he was instrumental in the successful establishment of the Tennessee Horse Council and its annual project, the Volunteer Horse Fair. He founded the MTSU Youth Horse Judging Contest and is fond of telling those who marvel at its immense size, that the first year we offered it, nobody came! He has been a 19-year AQHA director and is

best appreciated for the progress made during his chairmanship of the AQHA Youth Committee. He has been president of the Tennessee Quarter Horse Association, helped found the Plantation Walking Horse Association of Tennessee, and teaches in judging schools all over the east. He has also judged in France, Switzerland, Germany,

Argentina, Paraguay, Japan, Canada, Mexico, and New Zealand.

Through these endeavors on behalf of the horse industry, Dave has always found the unique value of each person he has met. He has made friends everywhere for himself and for MTSU. We are proud that Dave Whitaker has been acknowledged as a true humanitarian.

## Brzezicki *from page 3*

from New Mexico to judge both disciplines that year. It was the first year of team competition at the Nationals. The show was also eventful because Vice President Walter Mondale attended the show to watch his daughter Eleanor compete.

Anne left MTSU in August of 1979 and moved to Virginia Tech where she taught and started her third equestrian team before moving to Florida to work for Andy Moorman. In 1987 Anne was back in middle Tennessee at her own training barn and was asked to coach the MTSU team again. She eventually came back to her former position at MTSU, where she finally knows she should stay.

Anne has been a major influence in the growth of IHSA. While region borders

changed, Anne worked to include and encourage new participation. Serving on the national board of directors several times since 1972, Anne has closely monitored and encouraged changes to support the fabulous growth IHSA has experienced.

Chronological happenings, while informative, do not always portray the person. To truly appreciate her, one must watch her in action, doing what she was gifted to do – teach. While Thomas Edison invented the light bulb, Anne gave new meaning to “light bulb moment,” that time when a student or horse achieves a moment of success and new understanding or skills are born. Always challenging a person to the next rung on the ladder, Anne finds each student's or horse's

personality buttons to push to create those light bulb moments.

Anne also takes time to be a committed member of the Tennessee Quarter Horse Association, this year serving as vice president. She also serves on AQHA's Membership Services Committee and is an AQHA Professional Horsewoman.

Anne has coached several riders to World and National Championships and Reserves, yet she will tell you that her greatest moments are achieved by watching the kid who was challenged by lack of talent or funds achieve anyway—in essence, the true meaning of a light bulb moment.

## 4-H Clinics *from page 12*

Jones brought an American Saddlebred to show in Saddleseat Equitation, and again Sara Womack brought her own horse for Walking Seat Equitation. We covered position, use of the aids for communication, and how patterns can help develop the horse and rider as well as test their skills.

In March the 4-Hers held their meeting without us in order to do enrollment paperwork and some other important jobs.

In April, spring break provided three opportunities for the 4-Hers to come to campus with their own horses for hands-on clinics with the Equestrian Team. Twenty-three horses came with their young riders, including Hunters, Western horses, Tennessee Walking Horses, Spotted Saddle Horses, and a variety of ponies. Two hours for each of three nights provided good progress for everyone, and it is hard to tell who had the better time, the 4-

Hers or the Equestrian Team members. The series ended with a session on “Dressing for Success” to demonstrate how to plan, fit, and find a wardrobe that will stand out for a trip to the winner's circle.

We are happy to provide this series of clinics and hope that the experience gained by our members will be matched by the help we can give the 4-Hers.

## MTSU Breeds World Champion Weanling

*American Idol* was a favorite TV show during the summer of 2003, so MTSU Barn Manager Wendy Boyd gave the grey foal out of Blue Nun by Our Star Spangled Banner an appropriate name: Our American Idol.

As his personality developed, his nickname became "Reuben" after the TV show contestant. Shown by student Karen McGee, "Reuben" won a second his first time out at the Lewisburg show. His next showing was at the WHOA International where he won his class and the championship. At the same show, he and his dam, Blue Nun, were named champions in the Mare and Foal Class.

Of course, the big test would be the Celebration. Would the judges let Reuben win against colts handled by professionals who had won before? Reuben was shown in the Futurity on Wednesday night and placed fourth. Then on Monday prior to his weanling



Wendy Boyd with son Colin, Dave Whitaker, and Karen McGee with "Our American Idol" at the Celebration.

colt class, Reuben fell sick. He had become dehydrated in the excitement and heat of the day. His condition looked bleak for 24 hours,

and not only was his show career in jeopardy but his survival as well. Thanks to the watchful caregiving of Wendy, Karen, Dr. John Bennett, and Dr. Johnny Haffner, Reuben recovered and was shown in the Mare and Foal Class on Wednesday evening.

The combination of a talented, beautiful grey mare and a grey colt who can walk with great timing and length of stride won not only the admiration of the judges but also became a favorite with the crowd, and the pair was named the World

Champion Mare and Foal of the 2003 Celebration.

The only class left was the World Championship Weanling Class. Had Reuben recovered enough to handle the stress of

see **World Champion Weanling**, page 11

## Equestrian Team Hosts Rutherford County 4-H in Clinic Series

Spring Semester 2004 was the opening season for a unique service program the Equestrian Team has established with the Rutherford County 4-H Horse and Pony Club. Many of our own members and coaches grew up in 4-H, and we understand that we can provide a service to the next generation by making our experience available.

In January, the local group met at the Horse Science Center classroom for its monthly business meeting followed by a demonstration clinic on showmanship in the Miller Coliseum. Senior Jaclyn Ohman showed Smoked in Western Showmanship, junior Sara Womack

showed her own mare in Walking Seat Showmanship, and freshman Theresa Whitlow showed Goob in Hunter Showmanship. We explained the reasoning behind showmanship and that it is based on a system for safely handling horses from the ground.

February's monthly 4-H meeting included a clinic on horsemanship and equitation. Dionne Stigge and Theresa Whitlow showed Comfy and Hershey in Hunter Seat, Rusty Rea and Jaclyn Ohman showed Smoked and Cupcake in Western Horsemanship, Shandell

see **4-H Clinics**, page 11



Freshman Wade Parks helps 4-Her Gavin Clark with his pony.

## Judging Team Wins at APHA Collegiate Horse Judging Contest

From "Deep in the Heart of Texas" comes the good news that the MTSU Horse Judging Team walked away with top honors in the American Paint Horse Association Collegiate Judging Contest. MTSU's team competed against seventeen others to win the contest, held in Fort Worth on April 22. The APHA contest is the largest collegiate judging contest of the spring competitions and sets the stage for the teams going into the fall season.

The MTSU Team placed first in performance judging, first in oral reasons, and fourth in conformation judging, accumulating



enough total points to place first overall, ahead of Colorado State University's team.

Judging Team, L to R: Anthony Douglas, Paula Gambill, Elaine Miller, Sara McKee, Lori Puckett, Rachel Crawford, Kathryn Duncan, Barbara Sherman, Lucas Ayers, and coach Dave Whitaker

Other top five finishers were Oklahoma State, University of Wisconsin at River Falls, and Kansas State.

Individually, the team had several Top Ten awards. Freshman Sara McKee from Gallatin finished the day as

see **APHA Judging Win**, page 10