

Century Club News

An annual magazine about the members of The Dressage Foundation's Century Club.

ISSUE 28 / JANUARY 2024



Two-time Century Club horse, Eddie, with riders Lynn Crivello and Gail Wegner.

Photo credit: Denise Berry Hanna



Congratulations to the 2023 Century Club Teams!

A few fun facts from the year...



Number of Teams:

109

A new record!

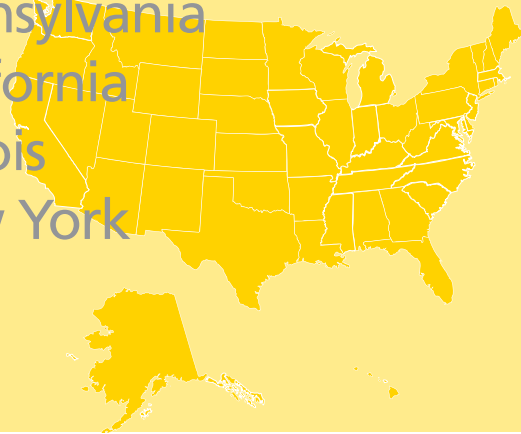
States with the Most Rides:

Pennsylvania

California

Illinois

New York



Oldest Riders:

87 years

Rhoda Kerr
Team #675

Nancy Gannon
Team #719

Oldest Horse:

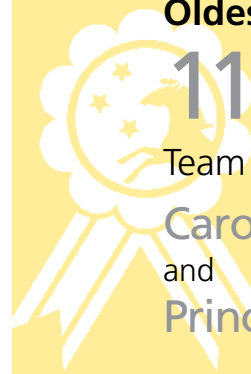
33 years

Gunner
Team #629

Peter
Team #694



Oldest Combination:



112 years

Team #633

Carol Ann Mattsson (81)

and

Principe Curioso PBF (31)

Most Popular Test:

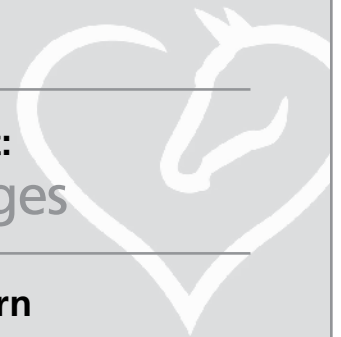
Introductory

Highest Level Test:

Prix St. Georges

Number of Western

Dressage Tests: 5



To join the Century Club, the ages of horse and rider must equal at least 100 years. The full list of Century Club members from 1996-2023 can be found at www.dressagefoundation.org

> Grants and Programs

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Celebrating the Century Club

The Century Club stands out in the equestrian world as an inclusive club welcoming all who celebrate the enduring partnership between a horse and rider. The Century Club is not about a high score on a dressage test or a championship trophy. It is a celebration that is not restricted to a particular breed or type of horse. Whether it's a majestic Warmblood, a versatile Quarter Horse, a spirited Arabian, or any other breed, the Century Club welcomes all. There are former Grand Prix dressage stars, racehorses who were a bit too slow to win, lesson horses, hunter/jumpers, and team penners.

For riders, their pathways to the Century Club are as diverse as their horses. Some riders have been riding their entire lives, and others have waited until they were in their 70s for their first lessons. Many have spent years dedicated to the pursuit of dressage perfection, while others have dabbled in dressage amongst other equestrian pursuits. This inclusivity reflects the essence of dressage—a discipline that values the partnership between horse and rider above all.

The Century Club is not just a recognition of age, but a celebration of wisdom, experience, and love of horses. The journeys that Century Club



Jenny Johnson and Sara Weiss

riders and horses have taken inspire younger generations and highlight that dressage is a sport for a lifetime and a sport for all. As the Century Club continues to grow, so does its legacy, and we are grateful to be part of it.

Jenny Johnson *Sara Weiss*

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Team #615: **Julie Inghram and Adahs Alexander**

From: Liberty, Illinois

Ages: 70 & 30

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

A passion that moves the soul will live eternally! I was two years old when my father acquired an old perlino mare called “Nancy.” The mare came to Quincy, Illinois, on a cattle train with the cattle and nobody knew why. My father bought the mare for \$25 and the saddle for \$75 along with some cattle and transported them down to the farm in the south bottoms. Nancy had a huge brand on her hip, was “long in the tooth” and most likely some cowboy’s horse that was hoping to see her live out a good life. This mare and my father would become my first riding instructors that ignited a lifelong journey with horses.

I trained my first horse at age 12 and barrel raced all through high school. During this time, my sister had attended college in Boulder, Colorado, where I met an Arabian horse trainer who would become my mentor. I continued to train Arabians while in college and launched my own training career after graduating from Colorado State University. Most of my training has involved Arabians and Morgans in the disciplines of Western, English, and hunt seat pleasure classes. Later in my career I began dressage with a Morgan, a Shagya Arabian, and Adahs Alexander (my lifelong partner)!



Adahs Alexander (Alex), a purebred Arabian horse, was born March 4, 1993. I owned his sire and dam. I bred, raised, and trained Alex. His mother, sister, and brother are all buried on my farm. Alex is a special horse! He has taught me way more than I have taught him. Our accomplishments and accolades are noteworthy, but the ride has been the best. Here’s to acknowledging a best friend and partner, Adahs Alexander!

Team #616: Elizabeth Wenner and Nyzielster Boy

From: Wadmalaw Island, South Carolina

Ages: 73 & 28

Combined Age: 101

Test: Training Level Test 2

My early riding in the 1960s and early 1970s was in hunter classes and fox hunting. After not riding for decades, I decided to take up dressage lessons in 2012. Dressage was totally new to me, as was my understanding of how riding had changed since the 1990s.

I started by taking lessons on some wonderful school horses. After a while, I thought that it would be good to look for a horse that would be safe and suitable for me. My husband, Charles, was so supportive of my getting a horse. When I met Nyzielster Boy (aka Star) in 2014, it was love at first sight.

Star took great care of me, even though I was often unbalanced and lacked a good seat. I had so much learning to do and so much work to be done on my seat (and still do). I decided to let some talented amateur riders take him to dressage shows. He was ridden by several wonderful riders who got their USDF bronze and silver medals on him.

I entered him in several USDF shows and progressed to showing in Training Level Test 3. We got respectable scores thanks to him.

When we reached the age that we could do the Century Club ride, I knew that I wanted to do it at a South Carolina Dressage and Combined Training Association show. This is a wonderful group of people who do so much good work to further dressage in South Carolina.



Photo credit: PHorse Images

So many people wished us well at the show, and my husband, my trainer, and my barn mates were especially supportive. The icing on the cake was to receive a 65.1% and second place in our Training Level Test 2 class. The judge wrote that we had a “good partnership!” I truly believe we have that with each other through both good and difficult times.

Along the way, Star has accumulated quite a fan club of people in this country and abroad who met him and loved him. His trainer in Belgium, Mieke Cappon, summed it up nicely by saying that Star was out of sight but not out of her mind. Since he came to me, Star has been ridden by adult amateurs, juniors, and six-year-old children. His temperament, kindness, and willingness to do dressage have been incredible. He truly has my heart, and we will be together as long as we live.

Team #617: Marta Airala and Avanti of Cedar Lane

From: Miami, Florida

Ages: 84 & 22

Combined Age: 106

Test: Introductory Level Test C

I am humbled and honored to become a member of The Dressage Foundation's Century Club. Growing up in Argentina, my father had polo ponies but did not encourage me to ride because he wanted me to focus on my studies. I became a physician and moved to the United States where I opened my practice, married, and had children. My children must have inherited my love for horses because they became interested at a very young age and began taking lessons and competing in shows.

Although my children and grandchildren are now all avid equestrians, it was not until I retired as a physician after 52 years of practice that I would finally have the chance to ride. At 83, I began taking dressage lessons with my trainer, Kati Dagge, and my Haflinger stallion, Avanti of Cedar Lane. Avanti is the ultimate schoolmaster, and when I decided to start learning dressage, he was the one I felt safe to ride. Kati worked with me on the fundamentals and helped give me the confidence and courage to continue.

I trust Avanti. He knows me and takes care of me. He is my "soul" companion. When we



ride, I feel free. He has given me the chance to fulfill something I felt had been missing in my life, perhaps I have had this feeling for my whole life. Dressage as a sport has helped me immensely. It has strengthened my body and mind. I like to tell people that Avanti and dressage are my therapy.

Being able to participate in the Century Club ride gave me a great feeling of accomplishment and the fact that I was able to do it on my brave little Haflinger made it even more special.

Team #618: **Lindsay Shea and Obligato**

From: Germantown, New York

Ages: 74 & 27

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test B

Lindsay Shea and Obligato entered The Dressage Foundation's Century Club under the supervision of Sarah Geikie, an FEI 4* dressage judge at the Aering Green Equestrian Center located in Schodack, New York.

Lindsay rode most of her life, though as she said, "I was just a backyard rider, no real training." She did a lot of trail riding, and some fox hunting and enjoyed clinics, but not disciplined training. That changed when she had a serious accident that required surgery and significant recovery. While many would have called it quits after a serious fall, Lindsay did not. Instead, she recognized it was time to get some serious training.

Living in Germantown, New York, a town in Columbia County, horses are part of the social fabric. Lindsay reached out to a friend and asked if she knew of anyone who might take on a student. Her friend sent her to Aering Green Equestrian Center owned by Laura Fay. One of Lindsay's goals was to work with a trainer on a safe, highly trained horse to learn skills that she could not only bring to her riding but also to her 17-year-old Andalusian mare, Zoey. She wanted to gain more confidence as a rider.



Enter Laura Fay's Obligato, known to many as Kody. Laura would often say she'd love to see Kody complete the Century Club ride, but as she is only in her early 50s and Kody is now 27, the dream of the two of them being able to do it together was not to be. In the past, Laura generously allowed many of her students to compete on Kody, resulting in three USDF bronze medals, two silver medals, and regional championships.

After seeing Lindsay ride in lessons, Laura knew that this huge honor for her beloved Kody could happen. Congratulations to Lindsay, Kody, and Laura for this remarkable achievement.

Team #619: Jane Hays and Odysseys African Dancer

From: Aubrey, Texas

Ages: 77 & 23

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 1

Odysseys African Dancer, aka Africa. She is my needle.

Thirteen years ago, my “perfect horse” suffered a suspensory injury and I found myself as a horseless, not headless, horsewoman. I turned to my trainer, Bre Dorsett, and said, “Please find me a mare that I can ride and continue to lesson/show with, and when my ‘perfect horse’ is sound again, this mare must be a girl that can graciously accept my grandkids, husband, old high school girlfriends, and next door neighbor.” Bre looked back at me with glassy eyes and said with gusto, “You’re looking for a needle in a haystack.”

Months later, while she was horse-shopping for another client in another state, she called me back and said, “I think I’ve found your needle.” I always trusted her advice, so I hopped on Southwest Airlines, headed east and after one ride, I knew that Africa was the one! And today, I declare with sound mind and sort-of sound body that Africa has been “My Perfect Horse.”

I have relished the journey that loving horses and dressage brings. My parents blindly bought my first horse when I was eight, and he died in our pasture at 21. My mother called the “family” funeral home owner and said, “What do I do with Jane’s ‘not-living’ horse who is in our back yard?”



“No problem,” he said. The funeral home owner sent a crew to give Misty a proper burial (he had already buried my grandparents and subsequently my parents – but not in the backyard).

From then ‘til now, horses have been a blessing to my life. I am so grateful that I can still throw a saddle on and go with my amazing girl, Africa, and for the many friends and memories I have made along my dressage journey. I’ve shoveled enough poop to fill the Empire State Building but wouldn’t trade that or anything for the joy that horses have brought to my life.

Team #620: Judith Myers and Dancer

From: Spring, Texas

Ages: 82 & 18

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

My horse journey began at about the age of six with my younger sister at a carnival. Our parents offered to let us ride a pony around a fenced ring for 25 cents. We rode by ourselves! No person led us. It was magical! We did not want to get off. From that day forward, for our lifetimes, we shared a deep love of this four-legged animal.

My sister, Susan Jeffers, became a world acclaimed children's book illustrator. Her many books include *My Pony* and *My Chincoteague Pony*, which includes a letter to Susan from Marguerite Henry, author of *Misty of Chincoteague*.

Later in my life, before children, I bought my first horse for \$250. He was a red chestnut off-the-track Thoroughbred. He was a special horse—kind, gentle, and generous. After my three boys were grown and through college, I bought a Quarter Horse who was doing Training Level dressage. He had originally been trail ridden through the streets of Brooklyn, New York, before learning some dressage in Maryland. He was patient and eager to please, a wonderful soul.

Recently, I moved to Texas and found a great barn. I was able to lease Dancer, a wonderful 18-year-old grey Quarter Horse mare. This lovely mare had an accident in her younger years and



then was turned out for seven years. She is owned now by a sweet woman who put Dancer into gentle training with a USDF gold medalist.

The farm was recommended to me as a very fine barn, and I have indeed found my Texas horse family. Everyone there is a true blessing to me. I am immeasurably grateful to all of the wonderful ladies for making my Century Club ride come to be.

My family, including my grown boys, flew into Texas from Florida and Alabama and my Texas family hosted the whole event. It is among my life's most cherished memories, and I thank God for it.



Team #621: Suzanne Reed and Muztagh

From: West Sacramento, California

Ages: 75 & 26

Combined Age: 101

Test: Third Level Test 1

I met Muztagh, affectionately known as Muzé, in early 2022 when my own horse, Leonardo (Leo) sustained a suspensory ligament injury. Riding the more highly trained Muzé has not only kept me fit while I rehabilitate Leo, but he has been patiently teaching me how to ride the higher-level dressage movements.

I started riding hunt seat at age 13 in New England. I advanced to a working student teaching lessons to beginners and riding the greener horses. When my family moved to southeastern Washington State, I became a working student in a more eclectic horse environment. I learned to start horses and to ride saddle seat and Western pleasure. I competed five-gaited horses and jumpers on the rough and tumble county fair circuit. Returning to the East Coast after high school, I rode on the hunt seat team for Smith College.

I rode intermittently after college as I pursued my career and ultimately landed in Northern California where I realized I could afford to buy my very own horse. Chocolate Moose and I competed in hunters and jumpers. When I married, my husband offered to buy a horse property as an enticement for my agreement to relocate for his career. I simultaneously started a family and ran a small boarding facility in Southern California. Alas, the marriage ended as did my involvement with horses for 15 years while I raised my two children and resumed my career. Once my children entered college, I filled my empty nest life with horses. I sadly lost my jumper



to colic and was diagnosed with osteoporosis in my 60s. I transitioned to dressage, the most difficult of the disciplines I have ridden. It is clearly an endless journey of continuous learning.

Carolyn and Jim McMullen purchased their cherished Muztagh in Sweden as an eight-year-old. A Swedish Warmblood, Muzé was sired by Maraton. His FEI training was advanced by Jeremy Steinberg. Unfortunately, after six months, Muzé developed chronic lameness from ringbone and Carolyn and Jim brought him home to retire at McMullen Ranch. They consulted with Dr. Jack Snyder who offered a new approach to ringbone—pastern fusion. The surgery was a stunning success and Muzé has been happily sound ever since. At age 26, he continues to teach dressage enthusiasts advanced skills. It was most exciting for me to learn to ride the piaffe and passage!

In full circle, Muzé and I completed our Century Club ride judged by Jeremy Steinberg during a clinic at McMullen Ranch.

Team #622: **Katherine Gerscovich and Lucy**

From: Winter Park, Florida

Ages: 72 & 29

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test A

I first met Lucy almost a decade ago when my trainer, Kiersten Main, and her husband, Jed, purchased the barn from Lucy's owners. She remained on the property and became part of our equine family. I began my training in dressage at the age of 63 and continued to move through the levels and watched Lucy school many children.

Kiersten and I spoke of the Century Club ride and I investigated what was involved. I spoke to Lucy's owner and determined that she turned 29 years young in January, and I turned 72 in February. Our combined ages met the requirements at 101!

Lucy and I began training together for our big ride. The day of the competition I was blessed to have much of my family and my barn family cheering me on. It was a terrific day and one I will never forget!

I am continuing my training at Third Level and will compete for my USDF bronze medal on my Arab/Friesian gelding.

Thank you so much to The Dressage Foundation for the opportunity to join the Century Club and to Kiersten Main for always believing in me.



Team #623: Sharon Everson and Jamaican Hearthrob

From: Orlando, Florida

Ages: 74 & 27

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test A

“How old are you?” I heard on innumerable occasions over several years from my riding instructor, Hilda Donahue. She would continue to explain about the Century Club. “You might ride Krista Hoepfner’s Mia,” who was somewhere in her 20s and going strong. For many years we were both too young.

Well, gratefully, we both aged well...and on a Saturday, while our spirits believed we should show in Grand Prix, we rode our Century Club ride instead in a lower-level dressage test. It was the culmination of many competitive experiences for both of us.

Mia, the barn name for Jamaican Hearthrob, is a 27-year-old registered Paint whose breeding goes back to Secretariat. She has been shown successfully in horse trials, lower-level dressage, and show jumping. She has been a reliable trail horse (her preference) and attended several Parelli camps. The Secretariat genes came through the one time she was bred and produced a bright chestnut filly. She is currently a schoolmaster who has patiently and safely taught many to ride and jump.

When I first moved to Florida and started taking lessons with Hilda, she put me on Mia to assess my skills. Mia was a willing partner and could raise her game to the level of the rider. I subsequently moved on to other horses and currently ride Hilda’s talented Arab, Al Marah Speed, whose barn name is Malone.



I came to riding in my mid-30s after a competitive fencing career. I was soon hooked and at Main Line Farm, trainer Cheech Barber found my heart horse, a seven-year-old sorrel Quarter Horse, Santelli. With an assortment of other horse addicts, we trained and competed in horse trials at Novice Level. It was challenging, exhilarating, humbling, and fun! After about 10 years of horse trials, we moved to Willow Hill Farm, where Santelli excelled in hunters! Who knew all along he was a hunter? More fun with the Willow Hill family until Santelli’s retirement at 25. I loved him every day for 23 years. He’s buried on a knoll at Willow Hill.

To answer Hilda’s question, I’m 74. I am so grateful for her encouragement to do the milestone Century Club ride, to Krista for allowing Mia to share the adventure, to the Ashmore Team for their support, and to The Dressage Foundation for providing this unique experience. It is one that I will fondly cherish.

Team #624: Deborah Towle and Justin

From: Los Alamitos, California

Ages: 70 & 30

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

I grew up in Maine, and always had a love of horses. My dad used to tell me that when I was five years old, I spotted a very old sway-backed horse in a field and said, “He is so beautiful.” I did some childhood pony riding, and in college, my physical education requirements were fulfilled by taking equitation lessons.

I moved to California in the early 80s, and shortly thereafter, I started taking jumping lessons in the Long Beach area. I trained on school horses and then leased for decades.

I eventually transitioned from jumping to dressage, and about eight years ago, I arranged to lease Justin from his owner, Tiffany Jarvis. Justin had been a jumper in his earlier years, but eventually took to dressage. As we’ve grown older together, we’ve taught each other a lot. I am so lucky to have Justin in my life, and we both love our daily routines whether it’s going down the trail, working on dressage, or just walking and grazing all the good spots.

I have to thank my good friend and equestrian, Ann King, who started talking to me



about the Century Club. Both she and my husband were a constant source of encouragement as we approached the magical 100-year mark. I also want to thank all my Lakewood Equestrian Center barn buddies for their friendship and support.

I am so appreciative of the opportunity to ride in the Century Club, and look forward to riding Justin for as long as he still has fun and comes out of his stall excited and asking, “What cool things are we going to do today?”

Team #625: Suzanne Kennison and Quincy

From: St. Simons Island, Georgia

Ages: 76 & 26

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test A

My Century Club ride adventure started with an offhand comment to a younger rider who was polishing tack for an upcoming show, “You know, it never ends. Even at 76, I would still love to show again. Take the lessons, do the prep, load the horses. It’s an incurable disease!”

Almost immediately this message reached trainer, Allie Zorn, and within the next hour, it was official. Suzanne, the oldest rider there, was going to show. She was going to do the Century Club ride!

Great! But then it was time to “get Cinderella to the ball.” First of all, she needed a horse. Quincy, of course!

A 15.2-hand Quarter Horse gelding, with careers both as a trail horse and competitive jumper, Quincy has twice rejected retirement. The beloved chestnut is presently a much-adored lesson horse and IEA mount.

Wonderful! Suzanne now had a horse! However, what was she going to wear to the ball?

Like Quincy, retirement did not suit me. In the retirement process, however, I had sold or donated ALL of my show clothes. Like Cinderella’s mice, my barn friends jumped in and in no time, I inherited a jacket, shirt, show breeches, and boots! My husband, Al, was no less enthusiastic, becoming not only my coach but also my cheerleader.

Now came the training. Quincy was no problem; he was quite up to the task. Suzanne was another story!



At 76, though active, my riding consisted of moseying around the property with the occasional outburst of a decent trot. The dressage ring was a distant memory of more than 20 years. Again, my barn family came to the rescue. Between formal lessons with Allie, great tutelage from trainer Mary Katherine Williams, and my younger barn friends giving me tips as I practiced, we reached the day of the show.

Quincy entered the ring like the prince that he is and carried me through the test as if we were both in our teens (well, maybe me in my 40s or 50s!). Quincy and I were both ecstatic and humbled, loving that this was not just our moment but a great moment for all of those who made this fantasy come true!

Team #626: Bernadette Carter and Sparks

From: Sylvan Lake, Alberta, Canada

Ages: 76 & 27

Combined Age: 103

Test: Training Level Test 2

My journey to the Century Club ride has been long, always with a love of horses. Growing up there were heavy horses at the farm, ponies at the fair, carousel horses, and sleek Thoroughbreds at the track. It wasn't until my 30s, while living in Spain, that I got on a borrowed horse and followed my friends on their horses on the trails.

After 13 years in Spain, we returned to Calgary. In 1987, I began weekly lessons at age 40 on school horses. In 1997, I bought Spike, a wonderfully kind, ex-ranch horse who was a dark bay Thoroughbred. Spike was my partner for eight years. I rode flat classes at the hunter barn where I boarded and enjoyed the grass ring for summer fun.

Sadly, Spike was injured and never recovered to be ridden at more than a walk. I moved him to an acreage to live out his days with other retired horses. I continued to ride at the stable until we moved to Sylvan Lake.

There I met Klara Bystrom, who had three horses and no time to ride them all. Klara and I rode out around the crops that fall, then had basic dressage lessons in her sand ring. We traveled to lessons and some shows. I earned Senior High Point Walk-Trot Champion at DoubleW Ranch in 2011 on Ted, a Quarter Horse who eventually threw me, knocking me out.

After recovering, Ashley Radtke invited me to ride her Appaloosa. Peavy was a kind, safe partner for 10 years while taking lessons with Rebecca Cade at Burnt Lake Stable. Last May, Peavy retired at 26 and Rebecca found me another ride for weekly lessons and rides.



The completion of my journey to the Century Club came as a surprise. Upon return from Spain in mid-February, Rebecca had planned for me to join one of her senior students, Cheryl Coates, and ride our tests the same day. I would ride Sparks, a 27-year-old Canadian Sport Horse belonging to Judy Brock, another of Rebecca's students. Sparks and Judy have been partners since she first rode him when he was five, and she has ridden and shown him since.

I had some rides on him in mid-March, later we began an intensive two-week program to prepare for the test. Rebecca's lessons pushed me to strive for my best effort in this challenge, while Judy's generous help and support were immeasurable. Sparks was a special horse to ride on this journey to the Century Club.

Many thanks to everyone at Burnt Lake that encouraged me on this voyage and to The Dressage Foundation for this exciting opportunity.

Team #627: Cheryl Coates and Cervantes

From: Red Deer, Alberta, Canada

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 1

I truly believe we develop a love for horses at a very young age. For as long as I can remember, I have enjoyed everything related to horses. When I was young, we moved to a small town in central Alberta. My parents bought me my first horse, Chips, for \$100. He was old and had a sway back, but I didn't care. He was a perfect beginner's horse for me. I was over the moon with excitement and slowly learned how to take care of him. Since we lived in a small town, I had to board him a couple of miles away. Every day, I would walk to see him after school and then walk home! I continued to ride through my teen years, instilling my love for horses.

Eventually, I went to college, and I could only ride during the summers. During this time, I kept my horse at a farm in Red Deer, Alberta. It was here that I met my husband, David, and we have been married for almost 55 years! Once college was over, we built a house on the family homestead so I could keep my horses close to me. I have been very fortunate to spread my love of horses to my three children. I spent much of my time when they were younger, driving them around while they attended Pony Club and various horse events. Even though I wasn't riding much myself, I loved watching and supporting them as they were living out my dreams.

After my children had grown and moved away, I got back into riding again for myself. This is where I found my love for dressage. I purchased my current dressage horse in 2012. Cervantes is a 16.2-hand Holsteiner gelding and was 15 years



old at the time. He has been a wonderful partner throughout the years. He is so patient, kind, safe, and he's always there for me. Even though he is 26 years old, I am still riding him at Third Level. He has taught me so much and I was thrilled to learn how to do flying changes and half passes on him. He is the best horse I could have ever asked for. I have developed a great friendship with the group of ladies at the stable. They are supportive and encouraging, and like Cervantes, they are always there for me. My "Barn Buddies!"

Throughout my riding career, I have had many wonderful coaches and I especially want to thank my current coach, Rebecca Cade, for all her help and encouragement in preparing me for this ride of a lifetime. Thank you to the Century Club for making all this possible and I am so happy I could share this ride with Cervantes. Thank you, David, for being there for me all these years and especially for supporting all my crazy horse dreams. I feel so blessed.

Team #628: **Fran Ferro and Gunner**

From: Beavercreek, Oregon

Ages: 68 & 33

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test A

I bought Gunner 22 years ago as a mount for my husband. Gunner was sold as Missouri Fox Trotter that had been used in the movies. When that was over, he was shipped to Oregon to be sold and our journey began.

My husband spent many years trail riding Gunner on beaches and mountains all over the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Upon a dental visit to the vet, it was discovered that Gunner had a lip tattoo, which meant he was NOT a Fox Trotter and was instead a Standardbred, born in 1990, named Crisis Management. He had been trained as a Pacer and ran a few times at the track.

Gunner retired after a Cushing diagnosis and several bouts of laminitis to light riding duties such as teaching the grandkids how to ride. Then while I was recovering from hip replacement surgery, I began thinking about the Century Club ride I had seen a rider do several years ago. After some quick math, I realized that Gunner and I were eligible.



My daughter helps put on dressage schooling shows and she offered to have one of her shows host my Century Club ride. With that, Gunner came out of retirement and got in shape to head down centerline one last time.

Gunner endured having the shaggy hair, mud, and his old man beard clipped off to turn into a dressage star. At the show, he snorted and pranced letting me know that at 33 years old he still had the star factor.

Our ride brought tears to the judge's eyes and inspiration to all the spectators there enjoying a day of showing. And now I have five more years and can hopefully ride again with my Thoroughbred mare!

Team #629: **Jackie Gallant and Donnie**

From: Cambridge, Ontario, Canada

Ages: 68 & 32

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test C

I was bitten by the horse bug when I was eight years old. My mother loved horses, so bought a black Shetland pony for my three brothers and me. No formal lessons, no saddle, no hard hat, and sometimes no shoes. Despite his somewhat diabolical pony nature, I fell in love with horses. I outgrew him and moved on to a chestnut mare named Holly, then continued with her son until I sold him to go to university.

The next years were horseless as I earned a BSc in Microbiology and established my career in the veterinary vaccine business. The riding bug bit again but was sporadic as I worked on growing my family with my husband Adrien, three children, and a career in science. In 1995 I had the opportunity to start my own vaccine business, following the shutdown of the company I was working for.

Our daughter, Melissa, was now nine and showed an interest in horses. My horse shopping started with a high school friend who had a nice little chestnut Quarter Horse gelding. This was the first horse I looked at and I was instantly drawn to his muscular physique, rich color, and confident demeanor. So “Danny” became Donnie, and he came home with me. Donnie was a do-anything-and-go-everywhere type of horse. He was strong, opinionated, and very smart, but also very agreeable. In the early years Melissa learned to ride, but his size and strength were overwhelming (he is only 14.2 hands but has an 18 hands personality) so she was not comfortable with him. Somebody needed to ride him.



I had never had so much fun on a horse; we went everywhere hacking, eventually training to jump as a hunter, and then dressage. He retired from hunters at 19 years and started his dressage career at 20. By the time he reached 23, I decided the rigors of showing in the heat of the summer and traveling in a trailer were too much to ask. At 25, I thought he would probably want to retire or slow down, but apparently not. Donnie is 32 and I still ride him two days a week.

Many thanks to the patience and support of my husband of 42 years, Adrien. He never complained about my riding adventures or the ridiculous cost of owning a horse. Happy wife, happy life, I guess!

Team #630: Barbara Baboyian and Chica

From: Palm Beach Gardens, Florida

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 3

My first introduction to horses was in Germany as a child of an Air Force officer. It was a strict riding school and I fell in love with horses. After leaving Germany in 1958 and with all the moving around as a military child, I did not get back into horses until I was 45 years old. My husband and I bought a farm and fell in love with the Paso Fino breed and owned four beautiful Pasos. I met my trainer, Caroline Jordan of Good News Stables in Boyds, Maryland, and started my dressage journey on a green off-the-track Thoroughbred named Terrific Hope (Snickers). I loved every minute of learning to ride and spending time with my horses.

Many years and horses later I met my present trainer, Heather Bender of Treasure Coast Dressage in Palm City, Florida, and moved my three Lusitanos to her training barn. Heather's assistant trainer at the time was Bethany Buchanan, and she has been asking me for two years to please ride her horse, Chica, when we both reached the "Century Club status." Bethany now has her own training business called Quiet Ride also located in Palm City, Florida.

Well Chica and I have officially qualified for the Century Club ride as I am now 74 and she is 26. Bethany has been extremely good to me and my horses over the years that I have known her, and this was a goal that was very important to her, and I wanted to grant that wish.

Bethany bought Chica as a semi-sound 7-year-old for \$1 with the thought that she could rehab the young mare, train her a bit, and sell her as



Photo credit: Joanna Jodko

a pleasure ride. Jumping irritated the old injury, so Bethany spent many years riding Chica on trail rides, occasionally with the local fox-hunt club, and dabbling in a few introductory dressage lessons. The longer Bethany and Chica were together, the less Chica was for sale. Ha!

When Chica was 17 years old, Bethany started working for Heather Bender and their dressage training began in earnest. Together they showed through 4th Level in 2019 and did a little schooling of some Prix St. Georges movements at home in 2020. Despite her age, Chica remains quite sound and active, so the Century Club ride is the perfect objective to keep her fit!

We have felt so much love and support from all our teammates at Treasure Coast Dressage, with everyone from the barn coming to the show to cheer us on! It has been such a fun journey, and I look forward to many more rides in the future. Maybe even another Century Club ride with one of my own wonderful Lusitanos when he gets old enough!

Team #631: Cary Bowen and Cha Cha Cha

From: Franklin, Kentucky

Ages: 76 & 24

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

I cannot remember a time in my life when I did not want a horse. When I was nine my mother found a teenager who would teach me to ride American Saddlebreds. I was not the most talented, but I was the most persistent. When I was 10, my dad, a lawyer, took a five-gaited pleasure horse as payment for services rendered. She was wonderful and patient, and brought me years of pleasure. Her name was Fair Oaks Treasure, but we all called her Mama. After showing her for several years, I retired her and bought a five-gaited show horse, Beau's Merry Waltz. I showed her several years too. All my friends had trail horses, so I had the best of both worlds and lots of help at horse shows.

I had a wonderful childhood that had to end when I got married and raised three boys. That was wonderful as well. At the age of 43, I decided it was time for me to get back into riding. I bought a flat-shod walking horse for trail riding. Then my husband started riding just so we could do things together. He had a beautiful, quirky racking horse named Rebel, and I had a racking horse named Daisy. My husband eventually could not ride anymore due to medical issues. I sold Daisy to a friend and kept Rebel until he died.

By this time, I had two granddaughters who loved horses. When the older one was 10, I rescued a Walking Horse. Her name was Misty.



If ever there was a horse angel, she was it. She was 21 when I got her. After the first year, my younger granddaughter wanted her and the older one wanted a horse that could jump. I had a foot in both camps now. Misty showed, gave riding lessons, and trail rode until she got sick one day at age 34 and we had to put her down. People came to say goodbye for several hours while we waited for the vet. She was well-loved.

For my granddaughter that jumped, we leased a Quarter Horse, Cash. He too is well-loved and is now 34 and still giving riding lessons at Creek's Bend Farm. My children grew up and now have their own lives, but I still wanted to ride. Holly Moyers at Creek's Bend Farm let me start taking dressage lessons. With her patience and excellent teaching, I have been able to compete in dressage several times. She let me ride her horse Cha Cha Cha (Greta at home) in several shows. I am forever grateful.

If you love horses and are lucky enough to have the health and access to ride and learn, then you are lucky enough.

Team #632: Celia Burros and Miss Mary Max

From: Suwanee, Georgia

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

I first met my beautiful Morgan mare, Miss Mary Max, when she was six years old. My older Thoroughbred was no longer able to do the mountain rides that I enjoyed, and a friend of mine had purchased Mary only to find she was a bit too hot for her tastes. Mary and I, however, got along great from the start, and my friend let me borrow her for those long trail rides.

In the beginning, Mary was pretty green and always in a hurry which made for some interesting rides, but she was always a trooper when it counted. On one particularly memorable ride, we found ourselves in what could have been a tragic situation – upside down in a culvert! I credit Mary’s sensible nature (and my riding buddies’ quick thinking) for keeping us safe until help could arrive. That situation solidified our bond, and I bought her from my friend the next week.

I’ve found it is always necessary to channel Mary’s active brain and never-ending energy. In our early days together, I started her over fences, and we did some hunter schooling shows. When I moved her to a dressage friend’s farm, we took dressage lessons and did some of those shows as well. But our favorite thing to do was hit the trails and that has been our primary activity for the past two decades.



A couple of years ago, a fellow Morgan enthusiast friend told me about this Century Club she had read about in the *Morgan Horse* magazine. When we figured out how close Mary and I were to being eligible, all my friends and family encouraged me to go for it. So here we are doing a dressage test again after all these years.

Mary is always up for a challenge; she is a testament to the Morgan horses’ versatility and stamina. I would like to thank all my wonderful horse friends and family who have helped us and cheered us along the way.

Team #633:

Carol Ann Mattsson and Principe Curioso PBF

From: Fairfield, Connecticut

Ages: 81 & 31

Combined Age: 112

Test: Introductory Level Test B

As a child I always had a love for horses. I started riding in 1964 at the age of 23. I first learned to ride hunt seat, jumped, and did some schooling shows. Along the way and for many years I also was a member and volunteer treasurer of the local United States Pony Club and Fairfield Bridle Trail Association.

In 1972, I acquired my own horse, a registered Quarter Horse named Jodi Norris. She was just turning four and started under Western tack with a bosal, so I learned Western riding. Later I trained Jodi to go in hunt seat with an eggbutt snaffle and for 21 years either rode her Western or hunt seat.

When Jodi passed in 1993, I started looking for a place to continue riding, and in 2009 found Gray Friesian Farm with Kirsten Gray (Sonnenhof Equestrian Center). I thought, "Why not learn dressage?" I have been riding with Kirsten ever since.

The "grand gentleman" I'm riding is a Spanish-Norman horse named Principe Curioso (barn name of Oso). He is owned by Kirsten and is 31 years old. I have ridden him on and off for years. Now I have been steadily on him for the last three years and he was my partner for my Century Club ride.



Photo credit: LMC Photo

Team #634: Karen Czapanskiy and EAF Kidman

From: Sabillasville, Maryland

Ages: 76 & 24

Combined Age: 100

Test: WDAA Level 1 Test 1

As a little kid, I would come down to breakfast announcing which cowboy I was that day—Roy Rogers, Hopalong Cassidy, the Lone Ranger, etc. You get the idea. Nothing thrilled me more than a pony ride. My bike was a poor substitute, but it was all an urban kid had. Then I lucked out—five years at a summer camp that had horses!

There wasn't much riding after that until decades later, when my daughter, who had become an accomplished equestrian, trainer, and teacher, bought a horse farm. She taught me so much, introduced me to dressage, and helped me buy and learn to ride an amazing Lippizan, Romeo (aka Siglavy II Romanza). Sadly for me but happily for her, she then left horseback riding behind for a new and wonderful life in a different place.

Romeo and I found a new trainer, Christine Betz, who took us on the journey toward the Century Club ribbon. Her school horse, Sport, cared for me while helping teach me how to be a better rider on him and on Romeo. When Romeo had to retire, I continued to ride Sport and even showed him once. I thought we would do a Century Club ride together, but we lost Sport to colic quite suddenly. His passing left the entire barn in mourning for his great heart and caring spirit. Almost immediately, Beth Belack reached out to offer me a lease on her beautiful Arabian, Kidman.



With Christine's guidance and a few more years of riding, Kidman has been teaching me to be focused, relaxed, and a lot braver. He is a gift who keeps on giving. On April 29, 2023, a week after Kidman turned 24 and a few months after I turned 76, we rode a Western Dressage First Level test at a recognized show. Even though we scored 8 and even 8.5 on a few elements, the best part was the score of 7.5 for harmony. The judge's comment was, "Lovely pair."

It took me what feels like 100 years to experience connecting and communicating with a horse in a way that makes us both happy. After our wonderful ride, my very supportive husband and I got to celebrate with Christine, Beth, their families, and other competitors from the barn—they'd arranged for flowers and a cake that said "100!" That kind of crew is hard to find and easy to treasure. My plan had been to compete one time, qualify for the Century Club ribbon if possible, and then retire from competition. I'm rethinking that plan now!

Team #635: Stayner Haller and Comet

From: Lansing, Michigan

Ages: 85 & 15

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

After having become Team #77 of the Century Club in 2010 with LGM Challenger, I didn't imagine that another opportunity for a Century Club ride might come my way, but it did!

In the summer of 2020, I drove to Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, to look at a black Morgan, Briarlane Regal Fortune. Regal, as he was then known, was a 13-year-old black Morgan who stood about 14.3 hands. He was primarily a trail horse and companion and his formal training consisted of two lessons and a lot of home schooling. He was very polite and had excellent ground manners. A trial ride showed him to be a bit resistant to picking up his left lead, but he was otherwise quite agreeable.

I went home and thought about him. There was something intangible that made me want to see him again! When I returned for a second trial ride, Jeanine "interviewed" me and asked what I planned to do with him if I bought him. She was clearly very concerned about his happiness. I told her that we would do a lot of trail riding, and that I felt strongly about the importance of learning dressage. I also indicated that we might do some jumping, if he liked it.

Jeanine agreed to a two-week trial period.

It wasn't long before I had Regal out on the trails. When I asked for a trot, he immediately sped off with his Morgan road trot! His feet spent



more time in the air than on the ground! Then I asked for a canter. He erupted and accelerated so rapidly I had to force myself forward to counter the G forces that wanted me to somersault off backward! He had all the speed and more that I wanted to ride. That is how he earned his new barn name, Comet!

Now it was time to learn dressage. With Ruth Hill-Schorsch's expert guidance and patience and my persistence, we managed to accomplish our goal.

When my Century Club ride arrived, a great number of the Stapleton Farm barn family was there to lend moral support to cheer us on. Soon we were on our way up the centerline. The first 3/4 of the test went well, then Comet decided that things were too tame. He threw in a bit of his own choreography! As we exited the ring, everyone was grinning from ear to ear and giving us a big thumbs up. What a warm fuzzy feeling that was!

Team #636: Kathleen Brunken and Marimba

From: Staten Island, New York
Ages: 73 & 29
Combined Age: 102

Kathleen and Marimba rode at the SLM Dressage Schooling Show in Westampton, New Jersey, to join the Century Club.



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Susan J. Stickle

Team #637: Janice Mize and Cheyenne

From: Valparaiso, Indiana

Ages: 70 & 32

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test A

Once upon a time there was a little girl who loved horses. That little girl was me. I grew up watching Fury, My Friend Flicka, Snowfire, Roy Rogers and Trigger, Gene Autry and Champion, National Velvet and King, Mister Ed, Tonka Wakon, and many others. From the age of five, I wanted a horse—never a pony—but a big, beautiful, majestic horse

We were poor and lived in the city, so the reality was, there was no hope. However, my dream of someday having a horse never changed. I was able to go on a few trail rides and worked at a riding stable where I became a trail guide. Still, I did not have my own horse, which was my heart's desire.

I had children, and once they were older, I went to college and obtained a degree in Radiologic Technology. I went to work at a hospital and started to save money. I went to a local barn to inquire as to the cost of owning a horse. I decided I was finally in a position that I could afford this and started shopping for a horse.

I finally purchased my dream horse, Cheyenne, on September 3, 2002. I was 49 years old when I finally actualized my dream of owning a horse.



He was 11 years old, a big 16.1 hand, chestnut gelding, with a white blaze, one white sock, and a heart shaped chestnut on his hind leg. I was absolutely head over heels in love with him!

I was very green, and he knew it. I had to work very hard to develop a partnership with him. I was determined, and over time we achieved a very strong bond. He has been an amazing horse! We showed hunt seat, saddle seat, and finally dressage. That is when I truly learned the art of riding. He was also a trail horse extraordinaire. He would go over bridges, through water, and always trusted me to keep him safe, as I trusted him!

Thank you, God, for the privilege and honor of having this magnificent horse in my life. Thank you to all the people who have assisted me on this journey, you know who you are! It has been amazing!

Team #638: Deborah Ann Dickson and Sara

From: Kurtistown, Hawaii

Ages: 76 & 26

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test B

I was hooked on horses by age seven and had lessons for a couple of years when we could afford it. My family bought a 12.2-hand pony for \$55 when I was 16. We taught him to jump, and he taught us how to land when he disappeared. After a year of college, I was hired by Audrey Holt to help teach and train jumpers at her thriving lesson barn. I showed jumpers mostly and did some fox hunting and a lot of teaching.

In 1974, I moved to the Big Island of Hawaii. I finished college in Hilo and taught in the Hawaii school system for 32 years. We formed a dressage and eventing club, and I had to learn how to ride dressage. I took a few lessons at Lowell Boomer's in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the 1980s, and we had some good clinicians come through Hawaii. In 2005, ten of us were invited to go to Germany to test for our little bronze medal. I went back the next year for three more weeks of training and sweeping. Competitive driving was also introduced here. At 68, I was talked into taking up polo with a crackerjack group of incredible people.

My friend Lehua had purchased Sara as an unhandled five-year-old in May 2003. No papers, but her color and teeth matched her age of five. She was a 14.1-hand Quarter Horse type that was almost all white, but she still had a dark mane and tail. After a two-week boot camp, Sara became a solid citizen who usually tried to be accommodating to her riders. Lehua went off to Minnesota for veterinary school, so I purchased Sara from her. That was the best move of my life.



Sara loved learning to jump, event, and teach youngsters how to ride, and she was a terrific trail horse at the volcano. She was about 18 when we took up polo together, and we are still playing. Early on it came to my attention that Sara only enjoyed dressage if it was at a show and there were plenty of spectators to watch her. Now at 26, we go out for a hack almost every day, but no way is she going to get forward, round, or on the bit unless there is a sufficient audience and show atmosphere. When Sara saw all the trailers, tents, new horses, and spectators the day of our Century Club ride, she rose to the occasion, puffed herself up, and felt like a 16-hand horse. We got a 67% and won the class!

I just can't imagine what my life would have been like without knowing all the wonderful horse people and horses that have blessed my life. We are absolutely the luckiest people on earth.

Team #639: Klara Bystrom and Felina

From: Red Deer County, Alberta, Canada

Ages: 79 & 21

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 3

Growing up on a farm in central Alberta, horses were a major part of my childhood. Horses played an important part in farming in those days and our riding horses were part draft as they served dual purposes. We rode to school and tied them up to a post until school was over. I still remember my first day of school. I was more than a little scared, but the horses were brought up, I was lifted on, and away we went. We only had one saddle, so the oldest child got that. We had three miles to ride, and my parents felt it was spoiling children to drive them to school. As we got older, we did acquire riding-type horses and the highlight of my life was being able to show at the local fairs.

After school and starting a career, I bought a horse and bought one for my husband too. We enjoyed riding together and going on cattle drives. We eventually moved from the city to our present farm. I ended up trading my horse to a neighbor for a milking machine, which we needed. That was the end of my riding for a few years as raising children and working as a Medical Laboratory Technologist consumed all my time until the children were old enough to need a pony.

After that it was Pony Club time and helping the girls with their horses, leaving very little time for me to ride. We sold the horses when the girls went to university, and for 20 years we didn't have any horses on the farm until a neighbor pastured his horses at our place. My daughter saw that and decided that it was only right that she should buy



a horse. I agreed to feed and look after it for her, as I was now retired; however, I certainly wasn't going to ride it! A short time later I got the urge to ride again, borrowed a saddle, and off I went—I was hooked! This is the same horse I am riding today, and we have come a long way.

My brother had built a riding arena on the family farm, so I boarded my horse there and started lessons with Sheri Cameron, who is still my coach. It has been a wonderful adventure, with lots of ups and downs along the way. A week before my 80th birthday I rode my Century Club ride. I never dreamt I would still be enjoying the challenges of doing dressage and moving up the different levels. I really appreciated the support of Sheri, who always has urged me on and helped me continue to achieve higher levels. It has been, and continues to be, a wonderful experience. I also would like to thank my fellow riders for all their encouragement and the Yzerman family for allowing me to ride in their arena for the last five years. Thank you also to The Dressage Foundation for recognizing seniors, and the PA/ADA organization for the celebration after the ride.

Team #640: **Linda Ward and Ms. Pietra**

From: Hamburg, New York

Ages: 69 & 32

Combined Age: 101

Test: Training Level Test 1

I was 44 years old when Pietra, an Arabian mare, came into my life. I'd always been horse obsessed as a child but never had the chance to actually ride. My love for horses never wavered even after moving on to a busy life. Then, in 1998, I visited my newly retired parents in Arizona who surprisingly had three horses, one being a seven-year-old Arabian mare. She was my dad's favorite and they would ride the range together. Knowing that Dad was going to sell the horses, I asked him if I could have one, and soon my dream came true. Three weeks later, Pietra stepped off the trailer in Western New York. Our exciting and wonderful journey was about to begin.

As a total beginner in all things equine, I found myself a trainer after a pretty interesting first year. Judy West, an accomplished dressage instructor, worked with both of us as we learned dressage together. By 2006, we were ready to show and did so through 2014. It was lots of fun, and though Pietra was often the only Arabian showing, we did well and learned a lot.

Life changed again and showing ceased but my bond with Pietra never wavered. Our great times continued. It was then that I heard about the Century Club and made it a goal to someday complete. This year, Pietra turned 32 and we hit our magic number of 101.



We moved back to Judy's barn in April to get ready and what fun we had! Then on May 13, 2023, we completed our ride in front of super supportive friends and family, most notably my husband, Doug, who always encouraged my incurable horse habit.

The past 25 years have gone by so quickly. Pietra is an amazing mare, full of sass and heart. She has taught me patience, given me confidence, pulled me through tough times, and provided me with immense joy. I am truly thankful for my "equine spirit." And thank you, too, to TDF's Century Club for giving us more "mature" riders the chance to continue that special partnership we will always have with our horse through dressage. Ride on...

Team #641: Molly Fine and Tuxedo 'N' Tail

From: Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

Ages: 77 & 24

Combined Age: 101

Test: First Level Test 3

My infatuation with horses started in California at the age of five, and continued until I was 17. By that time, my family lived in Northern Virginia—my father was in the Navy—and we moved many times during those years. At 17, my friends and I had no concept of self-preservation and seldom wore helmets. On one ambitious cross-country ride, my riding career came to an abrupt halt with an accident that put me in the hospital. I don't remember anything about the accident and when I was able to ride again, I was terrified. Due to money difficulties combined with my sheer terror, I lost my desire to ride and quit.

Fast forward 23 years, after college, an MBA, marriage and two children, my daughter at age eight wanted to take riding lessons. My husband and I agreed that we would enroll her in lessons and Pony Club. I tried to help my daughter with the grooming of her pony, to which she promptly responded that in Pony Club, she was not allowed help with her horse management and that if I wanted to do that, I should take lessons myself. She was a very smart cookie, getting her mother back into riding. I started lessons that led to a five-year career in eventing.

By facing my fear of jumping and riding in general, I was able to move past the trauma of my accident and face fear in a much more productive manner in all phases of my life.

In 1999, I was introduced to a four-year-old Trakehner named Ricco. He is a beautiful seal-bay with great athleticism and an unbeatable mind. When his trainer went back to Germany, I began



riding him in earnest, earning my USDF bronze and silver medals.

In 2017, at age 71, after many delays caused by joint replacements and cancer for me, and colon surgery and a corneal transplant for Ricco, I rode him in my first-ever FEI test. What a thrill! Unfortunately, he was too young by one and a half years to do the Century Club ride. It was around that time that I met Tuxedo 'N' Tail (Tux) and we began our relationship. His owner, Shaaron McCabe, let me ride him while she and Ricco were laid up.

Shaaron and I had agreed that we would do our Century Club rides together. When that did not work, Shaaron and Tux did their ride last year. When Shaaron was laid up in 2023, she offered to let me ride Tux for my Century Club ride. What a gift! We began our planning, and with the help of many people, we were able to pull it off. Tux and I have always gotten along well, and with Shaaron's support, I was the second Century Club ride for Tux. He deserves a medal and much praise for taking the two of us on this journey.

Team #642: Teri Vierima and Sir Serenity

From: Mount Horeb, Wisconsin

Ages: 74 & 30

Combined Age: 104

Test: Introductory Level Test B

In praise of older horses.

I am a 74-year-old retired scientist who did not start riding horses until I was in my early 40s. I was a perfectionist then and usually didn't attempt things that I knew I couldn't be good at, but despite not being strong or confident or coordinated, I wanted to learn to ride badly enough to try.

After several years of taking group lessons around and around in an arena, a friend told me I should lease a horse and she knew just the one. Enter Quinn into my life. He was an Appaloosa who was 25 years old when I started riding him. He taught me real riding. Out on the trails, up and down hills, through the woods, cantering bareback. I was heartbroken when the stable closed down and his owner took him back home. He died a year later at age 31.

After a brief stint leasing a Percheron who wasn't very fond of my inadequacies, I was again steered by a friend to leasing a big 21-year-old Thoroughbred, Flannery. Six months after I started riding him, his owner decided to sell him, so for \$1,000 I now owned my first horse. He was my dream come true. I started taking dressage lessons to become a better rider, but my true love was still riding the 400 acres of trails at Green Meadows Stables. We had eight years of joy, until, at age 29, he died suddenly of a heart attack. And my heart broke again.

One more stint on an eight-year-old Pinto who couldn't stand me. I sold him, and he entered the new, younger owner's trailer with a big smile on his face.



Photo credit: Brynn Bruijn

This time, I put an ad on Craig's List: "Older lady looking for an older horse for regular, moderate English riding." Lo and behold, I received a response from a woman in Illinois offering me a 19-year-old palomino Quarter Horse. Her daughters had gone off to school, he hadn't been ridden in three years, and she was looking for a good home for him. Enter Sir Serenity. She sold him to me for \$1. I have had him for 11 years.

Now, cataracts (Sir) and arthritis (both of us) limit our trail riding and cantering, so we have turned our focus back to dressage, which one can do at any age. Under the excellent, patient tutelage of my long-time riding instructor, Kate Van Sicklen, we are now doing decent leg yields, shoulder-ins, and turns on the forehand. So, my 30-year-old, one-dollar horse and I now qualified for TDF's Century Club membership. I hope we can continue to have this much fun for some time yet before my heart breaks one last time.

Never underestimate the talent, willingness, and love in an older horse.

Team #643: Pamela Pirkle and Pescador ESF

From: Mission Viejo, California

Ages: 79 & 22

Combined Age: 101

Test: Training Level Test 1

I've been a horse addict for as long as I can remember. For years I begged my parents for a horse to no avail. At age 14, while working at a rental stable, I negotiated to buy my first horse, Warrior, for \$250. He was unfit to be used as a rental string horse, hence the name. He turned out to be a wonderful, calm trail horse that any kid could ride. After that, except for during college, marriage, and two babies, I've had at least one horse.

I began showing dressage 26 years ago. When I was 65 and feeling my age, I knew it was time to give up, shall we say, the "hotter" mounts. As I searched for a partner, the breed or sex was not important, but I looked for one that was athletic, kind-hearted, and level-headed. I certainly was not expecting a young Andalusian stallion to be my lifetime equine partner. Lucero (aka Pescador ESF) was way beyond what I ever could have dreamed of. I regularly declare that he is my dream horse!

In his earlier years, both with me and his trainer at that time, we won at First, Second, and Third Levels, and numerous local, regional, and national awards.



Photo credit: Aston Kingsley

For the past 13 years, we've been with our friend and trainer, Susan Hoffman Peacock, who has brought Lucero to Grand Prix and has successfully shown him through Intermediate 2. This was during times when I was seriously ill. During those years, I never gave up my plan to ride again, and much of my motivation to regain my health and fitness came from my focus on our Century Club ride. On May 3rd, 2023, we achieved our goal. It was a wonderful, challenging experience way beyond my expectations. We were treated like royalty by the California Dressage Society Santa Barbara County Chapter at the Earl Warren Show Grounds including flowers, a cake, and a barbecue celebration.

I greatly appreciate this wonderful opportunity and thank The Dressage Foundation for everything.

Team #644: Joyce Getrost and Roxey

From: Las Cruces, New Mexico

Ages: 83 & 20

Combined Age: 103

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 2

My story is like so many others. I rode as a kid and then life got in the way. My father was an Air Force officer. When I was 10 years old, we went to Peru where I took English riding lessons and jumped. As a teen, we went to a relative's ranch in Wyoming in the summers for 30 days where I "played cowboy." Then for 50 years I raised two daughters, had two husbands, and had a career at the National Geographic Society. My husband and I retired to Las Cruces, New Mexico, in 2002.

At 65, in preparation for a vacation to a dude ranch in Wyoming with my daughter, I took riding lessons to see if I could still get on a horse. It went well. I continued the lessons and after a trail ride with the Backcountry Horsemen on a borrowed horse, I won a horse brush during a raffle.

So, I felt obligated to buy the accessories to go with my horse brush. At age 67, I bought my first horse, Cisco, a Spotted Saddle Horse. Then came a saddle, bridle, tack equipment, vet visits, farrier work, a truck, a horse trailer, another horse—Roxey, a Rocky Mountain—another saddle, another bridle, another horse trailer, and so forth.



Along the way were training, clinics, and lessons. I learned from many—Pat Parelli; Larry Whitesell, a gaited horse guru; Mark Rashid, softness; Warwick Schiller; and Sandra Welch, dressage basics. I consider myself a trail rider first, with a love for obstacles, fun intro endurance rides, and the discipline of dressage. My ponies do what I ask (most of the time).

Thanks to my ponies, Cisco and Roxey. It was a great ride with silent support from my husband, Dick.

Team #645: Janet Hadden and Pippin der Kurze

From: Avella, Pennsylvania

Ages: 80 & 20

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

I always loved horses, even before I met my first one. It was just something I was born knowing. I grew up on Pittsburgh's North Side, about as far from a farm and equestrian life as you could be. My German immigrant parents didn't share my love of horses because it wasn't industrious or practical. Instead of riding lessons, I learned how to play the trumpet and clarinet.

I didn't get to be around horses until I took my oldest daughter for riding lessons to get her Girl Scout badge. She eventually moved on to other sporting activities, but my youngest daughter was as smitten with horses as I was. She continued to take lessons and compete in hunter/jumper shows around the area and ultimately competed nationally. She now makes part of her living as a trainer.

In the late 1980s I went back to school for my Master's degree and became an intake supervisor for Allegheny County Children Youth and Family Services, where I worked for 24 years. While I was working, I was lucky to ride one or two days a week. It made me feel better no matter what stress I had in my regular day-to-day.

I was 40 years old before I finally got to have a horse of my own. Rocking C King, "Rocky," aka "Cotton Club" was a Quarter Horse that I would trail-ride and compete in some hunter/jumper shows. Dressage wasn't much of a thing at that time, but we were lucky that we found some excellent instructors and I grew to love the sport. Even though Rocky didn't have the expected look



for a dressage horse, he would pack me around and we always came home with a ribbon.

In 2015, I was able to realize the next part of my dream and that was to have enough land where I could live with my horses and wake up with them every morning. It was a lot of work, but I wouldn't have it any other way.

In 2019, I had the opportunity to purchase Pippin, a Canadian Warmblood. Although he has difficult gaits, very bouncy and elevated, he has the perfect temperament to be a partner for a senior rider. We have a partnership and we both must do our jobs; he makes it very clear when I am not holding up my end!

Queen Elizabeth rode into her 90s and I hope to do the same.

Team #646: **Judy Ludwig and Diamond**

From: Sellersville, Pennsylvania

Ages: 79 & 23

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test A

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, all my dimes and nickels went into my bank to save up for when the carnival came to my local neighborhood. For 25 cents, I could take two times around a 10-meter circle on a pony ride. I was their best customer. I was a town kid, and although we were not poor people, the cost of owning my own horse was not in the budget.

Then it was school, marriage, babies, and life just took over. I still dreamed of having my own horse. When I was 44, my husband said, “If you still want a horse, go out and get one.”

My first horse was an Appaloosa. His name was Tucker and I loved him beyond words. We did trail rides, Western horse shows, and enjoyed each other’s company. Then came Dazzle, a gorgeous dapple-gray Quarter Horse who knew all the right moves for showing Western pleasure. We competed for 15 years and had a ball. Along came Diamond and the knowledge of dressage. Wow, did we ever love that discipline! Diamond is a Haflinger mare and is quite beautiful. She took first place in the Breed Show at Devon.



Photo credit: Friends of BC Horse Park

To this day, we are still taking lessons. Dressage is something that makes you want to keep learning and perfecting. Just feeling the movement of the horse beneath you and knowing the action is finally what you have been striving to achieve. Diamond and I spend many hours together working and practicing our moves. She is my best friend.

My love for horses has influenced my life in many ways. We have a gang of girls that ride together, and they are my soul mates. We ride, vacation, dine, and hang out together. Once a year, we go to either Portugal or Spain to lesson and tour—we call it our girl’s time out. Awesome times.

Team #647: Tina Luick and A Passing Glimpse

From: Dexter, Michigan

Ages: 72 & 29

Combined Age: 101

Test: First Level Test 2

I bought my Thoroughbred mare, A Passing Glimpse (Tira), when she was nine. I brought her to Sandhill Farm, a boarding facility that I own and manage in Dexter, Michigan. The woman I bought her from was thrilled when I told her about our Century Club ride. She was so happy to know Tira has been with me for 20 years!

With the help of several people, including Jennifer Merrick-Brooks, Barb Duncan, Alice Preketes, and Sherry Nelson, I trained Tira to be an event horse. We competed through Training Level throughout the Midwest. We were chosen to be on the Eventing Association of Michigan team that competed at the team challenge event at the Kentucky Horse Park in 2005 and 2006. When she began having issues with arthritis, I stopped jumping and focused on dressage.

I then enjoyed showing Tira through Second Level at dressage shows in Michigan at Woodbine Farms and Waterloo Hunt Club. After I bought a younger warmblood gelding to work with, I leased Tira to a young rider who learned a lot from the experienced Tira. She is now a reliable lower-level dressage horse.



I learned about the Century Club from my friend, Judy Ward, who rode one a few years ago. She provided me with information, and I am grateful to her and others for the support I have received. Also, thanks to Sari Clapperton, owner of Woodbine Farms, for the opportunity to ride my Century Club ride at one of her shows. We scored 69.55% riding First Level Test 2, good enough for first place and champion for First Level and above at the show.

Team #648: Frances Keller and La Donna

From: Chester Heights, Pennsylvania

Ages: 83 & 17

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 3

The first time my dad took me for a trail ride at the age of three, I was hooked. Unfortunately, the second World War started, and my father was a Naval Officer. We never stayed in one place long enough to have a horse or pony, but that never deterred me. We moved to Miami, Florida, and my dreams came true. I was able to ride and show Saddlebreds in the Sunshine Circuit. After two years my dreams were shattered. We moved back to Ft. Myers Beach on the West Coast of Florida. My dad once again came through and bought me my first horse. There were no shows, farriers, or vets on the West Coast at that time, so we had to order shots from our small animal vet, and I was the farrier. Swimming in the Gulf of Mexico and running on the beach bareback agreed with her.

I married in 1960 and began my motherhood journey. I still rode and taught riding in New York's southern tier. I was interested in the Appaloosa horse and their story so when we moved to New Jersey, I bought my first App. This started a 10-year journey of breeding and riding Western. The Fox and Hounds Pony Club was where I boarded, so I changed my discipline from Western to combined training. The Appaloosas I bred were wonderful and I loved breeding.

I moved again to Pennsylvania with my remaining App and stopped competing. My tenant was riding dressage in West Grove, and I went to look at a Dutch Warmblood gelding. He was imported from Germany and was perfect for me. I would ride every morning before work and had the



wonderful experience of riding with Reiner Klimke, Herbert Rehbein, and Lars Peterson. Stravinsky was the last horse I bought, and he was a superstar. I became interested again in breeding and was able to breed for about 10 years. My love of mares is well known. My mare J'Y Suis won every breed show starting at six months of age and continued until she was Grand Champion mare at Dressage at Devon.

I saw an interesting mare advertised at Hilltop Farm, named La Donna, and went down a couple of times to try her. She is the love of my life. She is everything you could want—kind, intelligent, talented, and beautiful. I had her at home for 10 years and was able to ride her as much as possible with travel and work. I retired when COVID-19 hit, and it was the best thing for me as I could spend full time with her. I started working with Megan Mendenhall (now Huf), and it was the best decision I could have made. She has pushed me forward like I'm a teenager, always expecting the best from me. She is why I am still working towards my USDF silver medal at 83 years young.

Team #649:
**Carlie Beisel
 and Siglavy Reba II**

*From: Emporia, Kansas
 Ages: 77 & 26
 Combined Age: 103
 Test: Introductory Level Test A*

As I considered the journey that brought me to the Century Club ride, I realized that there were so many wonderful people who accompanied me at various stages of the process. First is the wonderful friend of my parents, Ethel Barrett. She convinced them that I really should have a horse, connected us to a marvelous horsewoman who had the perfect horse for me, and who became my first mentor. Mrs. Barrett also was the first person to acquaint me with the Spanish Riding School, with pictures from a trip and a book.

Evelyn Wellen, my first mentor, raised Thoroughbreds. I spent all my free time at her farm from the time I was 14 until I graduated from high school. We went to local all-around shows with two-year-olds, did bigger hunter shows, prepared horses for eventing, trail rode through the mountains, went foxhunting, and did all the care and barn work. The summer we schooled a horse to go to a national eventing championship, I learned a lot about dressage.

After college, my husband and I moved to Kansas, and then Kansas City. I had a nice young mare I started to event. As I learned more about local resources, I took her to Lincoln, Nebraska, to ride with a man named Lowell Boomer! I returned several times in the next few years. I also built a teaching and training business in Kansas City, doing hunters, jumpers, eventing, and dressage. Clinics with Karl Mikolka continued.



Twenty-seven years ago, I went to Arkansas and came home with a truckload of Lipizzans. Siglavy Reba II, my wonderful partner for the Century Club ride, was born on our farm 10 months later. He competed with me as a young horse, and then family responsibilities curtailed our show career. He went back to work with his usual marvelous attitude for six weeks to prepare for our ride, and I think he really enjoyed his outing. Many of my former students came to support us for the ride, and George, as he is called in the barn, was glad to see them!

The opportunity to do this ride was one of the most fun events in my career. Thanks to The Dressage Foundation!

Team #650: **Jane Barrack and Sara**

From: Colorado Springs, Colorado

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

I am grateful that my mare, Sara, and I have accomplished our last goal which was the Century Club ride. It was a long journey for both of us. It began with my friend raising sport horses by crossing Clydesdales and Thoroughbreds. Sara was from this stock and was born on June 27, 1997. I knew almost immediately that she was a special horse, very sure of herself, smart, and liked to learn.

Even though I didn't need another horse at the time, I bought Sara as a weanling. She has been my horse of a lifetime. She has a calm and steady demeanor, is a superb trail horse, and is proficient at dressage. She has learned all the movements up to and including Third Level work. She always loved a challenge, one that she could work through and add to her repertoire. If my trainer and I didn't keep her mentally challenged, she would have grown bored and annoyed, she did have her opinions.

My earliest memories are of drawing horses. I played with toy horses, making cardboard barns. I read every kind of horse story. My dream of a real horse came true in the summer of 1958 when my dad bought a Pinto Quarter-type Horse from an auction. When my dad later asked me what I wanted for Christmas I answered that I had what I wanted and didn't need anything for Christmas. A few years later when we had a foal born at our



home, I became interested in learning how to teach and train horses. There were few available riding lessons in the early 1960s in Colorado and the only English riders were jumpers. There was little in the way of systematic training of horses. I turned to reading dressage books, which were all about teaching and learning.

Sara and I have learned from each other. She is the one I've owned the longest, 26 years, and the one that I've reached the highest level (for me) in dressage. I was truly happy that family and friends could be with me at my Century Club ride event on June 3, 2023.

Team #651: Karleen Hubley and King Hickory Star

From: Southern Pines, North Carolina

Ages: 80 & 24

Combined Age: 104

Test: Training Level Test 1

Does everyone dream of being a Grand Prix rider? I dreamt, but the German mare I imported put me on the ground four times. I said, “She is for sale!” With an empty dream, I was approached by my farrier who did Quarter Horse competitions. He said to go to the sales at the Horse Center in Lexington, Virginia. After watching a few auctions, I got the hang of buying a horse this way. I saw beautifully trained and bred Quarter Horses for a fraction of the price of an imported warmblood.

Finally, an auction of trail horses was coming up at the Center. There were 250 horses to sell. I circled the catalog of every horse that was 16 hands. We went to the stalls and checked them out. There was this bay with a beautiful eye who tracked straight. In the competition, he was eighth out of 90 trail horses competing. The following day he came into the auction ring. I was so nervous as he really showed off. The trainer stood on his back and cracked a bullwhip. The gelding did not flinch. I said that is my “old lady” horse.

I outbid the competition and the bay came home. He had been used for team penning so first I had to change out the reins and then the saddle, of course. A few days later, I called the trainer



and asked how anyone could sell such a beautiful, easy, and smart horse. He said he grew too tall for cutting cattle.

In the last 18 years that I have owned King Hickory Star (Johnny), we have competed in dressage, jumped, been swimming, driving, and many miles on the trail. Johnny just asks, “What are we going to do today?”

On June 3, 2023, it was time for our Century Club ride. We are both losing that high energy, but we still came in second at Training Level. After buying Johnny, I got his Quarter Horse papers, and wow! He goes back to the original Quarter Horse, Traveler. And so, my best friend and I never did Grand Prix dressage, but we made it to our Century Club ride and are still going strong. Thank you to our wonderful coaches who helped me. And a big thank you to the person who bred this special mount.

Team #652: Sharon Petrone and Bubbey

From: Prescott Valley, Arizona

Ages: 76 & 25

Combined Age: 101

Test: WDAA Level 1 Test 2

I grew up on a farm in Iowa and animals have always been an important part of my life. I inherited my love of horses from my dad who put me on an old Shetland pony when I was two. I do not know how we survived childhood, and any of you with a little “vintage” know what I mean!

Dad was a hard-working farmer and Mom stayed home to do the “mom things” in the 1950s. It was tons of hard work for both, but we were kids and in another world which, thank heavens, they insisted on. We were never rich or even well-to-do—a factor that does not enter a child’s head.

Occasionally there was time to take me to a fun show. We rode all day for a dollar, falling in the dirt and getting right back on to do it again. The Shetland taught me to treat her right or into the water tank I would go. My wild mare from Montana, who only knew how to run, taught me to hang on and think fast! At 13 years old, I saw my horse born from that same mare, which is a night I will always remember. The big grade Quarter Horse showed me a spin and how chasing calves can be really fun (until Dad caught me!).

Then came a 20-year hiatus after marriage, then I went back into the saddle as quickly as I could! A little Arabian taught me English riding, but never wanted to get in a trailer. All we had was what we



had seen in the 1950s and it was always very rough. To the books I went to try and learn a better way.

Now at the ripe old age of 77, I find it’s easy—just slow down and listen. My two boys are 20 and 25 years old and both have been blessings. Bubbey, my Paint, got me through chemotherapy for cancer and then the tables were turned, and I got him through two colic surgeries. We will be there for each other as long as I am blessed to have him in my life.

Western dressage was entirely new to us when we moved to Arizona to live out our days. Bubbey loves it! He will let me know when we are “done,” and I’ve told him I will respect that and out to the pasture he will go—with an occasional easy ride now and then. He is well-loved and has plucked the heartstrings of many, and will continue to do so as long as that is what he wants.

Team #653: Patty Johnson and Timer

*From: Woodstock, Illinois
Ages: 72 & 28
Combined Age: 100
Test: Introductory Level Test A*

Timer (Dancastle Timeline) and I have been a team for 15 years. At that time, I found myself without a horse (my 34-year-old Appaloosa mare, Queenie, had just passed away), and Timer's mom had just succumbed to a second bout of lung cancer. June Pedersen, owner/trainer/matchmaker, at Castle Ridge Keep in Crystal Lake, Illinois, saw a possibility there that has been one of my life's most beautiful partnerships.

After a rocky start—I fell off this rather spirited horse in our first mount-up—we have learned how to work together, accepting each other's quirks! Timer likes to be in the show ring, so we entered many schooling shows, working our way up from Intro to Training Level classes.

One of our highlights was in June of 2019 when we did a musical freestyle to a medley of Beatles' songs at Fox Valley Saddle Association. Another highlight was competing at the Morgan Grand National in Oklahoma in October 2019. Timer not only got a big ribbon for being the "most senior" horse there, at the age of 24, out of over 900 other horses, but we won the Adult Amateur Intro Level division.

In the spring of 2021, Timer started to show some signs that he was in pain and was diagnosed with high ringbone. The decision had to be made to either have Timer become a "paddock pal" or to have surgery on his foot. Timer and I discussed



it, and we quickly agreed on surgery. The surgery was wonderfully successful, and Timer turned out to be a rock star of a patient, now complete with a plate and screws in his hoof.

We took a break from competing from October 2019 until the Century Club ride came around. On that day, I couldn't have been prouder of Timer. He entered the ring like he'd never left, and told me, "I got you, Mom!" It was one of our best rides ever, in that I didn't have to either push or pull him—he totally remembered the Intro A test and did it with ease! Our results reflected that, and we got one of our best scores ever!

Thank you to The Dressage Foundation and the Century Club for creating this opportunity. And thanks to June Pedersen for her coaching, patience, and extraordinary match-making skills.

Team #654: Mary Jago and Taseko

From: Prince George, British Columbia, Canada

Ages: 79 & 21

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Freestyle

Where to begin?

Mary had a father who was a true horse whisperer. He used to break horses as a hobby. Once a horse was started, he put his four-year-old daughter (Mary) on the horse's back and lunged them in a round pen. Hence Mary's love of horses.

On the evening that Charles Jago proposed to Mary on bended knee in the Niagara Falls Garden, she said yes on one condition: that he buy her a horse. Mary went on to have a nursing career and trained as an Enterostomal Therapist and a nurse specialist. Her career and supporting her husband's career as he eventually became President of the University of Northern British Columbia left no time to follow her dream. At 55 years of age, she told her husband that he was not a man of his word. She asked, "Where is my horse?"

Mary began riding lessons on a school horse, and at age 57, her husband bought her an elegant dark bay Thoroughbred named Decadence. Decadence passed at 17 years old, and it was then that Taseko came into Mary's life. She bought "Taz," a Trakehner gelding, on August 13, 2007, as a five-year-old talented but spooky horse.

Eventually, she connected with an amazing trainer, Jodie Kennedy, who stuck with the pair through thick and thin. Jodie also trained Taseko. They traveled to horse shows where he did very



well. Taseko and Jodie did perform at Prix St. Georges and placed second. He had championed at the levels below Prix St. Georges and in freestyle competition. Mary didn't want to tax his soundness, so she pulled him back at that point. Consequently, their last show was in 2023 where they completed a Third Level freestyle to receive the honor of becoming a Century Club member.

Honorable mention to Wendy Christoff, an outstanding coach and rider, who encouraged Mary to do the Century Club ride, provided her with the contact information, and spent a week correcting riding faults regarding her ride. It is a true honor to become a Century Club member!

Team #655: Susan Chase and Serengeti of Cedar Lane

From: Richmond, Indiana

Ages: 77 & 23

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test A

Like many Century Club members, I grew up a horse-crazy youngster, taking every opportunity to ride, though I never rode a pony of my own and never rode enough to satisfy my appetite for equine fun. As an adult, I had two wonderful riding adventures in Iceland and, as I look back on those trips, I feel fortunate to have got home in one piece. I was by no means an equestrian.

A geographic relocation into the country's heartland in 2016 brought me within the orbit of a truly gifted riding coach, Sheila Wilson. For the first time in my life, I was able to embark on a systematic program of learning to ride, to ride so neither I nor the horse got hurt, to ride with a sense that it was not a just short-term lark. Luckily, Sheila was fearless in her willingness to take on a 71-year-old novice. Lucky too she had a wonderful Arabian pony, Thunder, who could be my partner because, when I first met Sheila, I declared I only wanted to ride a pony to be closer to the ground. (I do not remember saying that, but I am assured I did make such a demand.)

Thunder, a 21-year-old Arabian gelding, knew a lot about dressage. Sadly, injuries he had sustained early in life meant he had to retire before we could make a Century Club ride. Luck smiled on me again when, as Thunder retired, Serengeti of Cedar Lane (Sera) joined the horses under Sheila's care. Sera satisfied my "must be a pony" requirement and we teamed up to learn together. Though Sera had had training, including police horse training (though she was never a



police horse), she had never actually been in any horse show. Now Sheila had TWO novices on her hands.

Sera was 22 when I rode her in her first-ever horse show and she did an outstanding job, winning first place on her first test. She has become a beautiful, fit creature and has proven herself an excellent partner. From the start, we've been a happy team and trotted into the arena for our Century Club ride proud of being newbies, a rider with just shy of six years of dressage training and a pony with two years of dressage practice. If Sera could offer her two cents to the narrative, she'd say we're just two old sassy gals having fun together. I would not argue with that for an instant.

My goal in riding is to be engaged in the work needed to be a good rider. Just being on that journey is an immense source of joy. How lucky am I to have guidance from a patient, optimistic, enthusiastic coach like Sheila Wilson and to be partnered with ponies who brought fun to the process?

Team #656: **Nancy Marcinko and Tommy**

From: Coopersburg, Pennsylvania

Ages: 77 & 23

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

A former art teacher, Nancy retired after cancer closed that chapter of her life while opening the door to new passions—riding horses and painting them. She has been riding for about 10 years and hopes to continue as long as she can.

In 2013, her husband, encouraged by a friend, signed Nancy up for riding lessons at a nearby farm in Coopersburg, Pennsylvania, as a form of exercise and strength training following cancer treatments. Her first encounter with horses was met with some trepidation. She had never done a sport in her life. At first, Nancy was upset with the idea. To both her husband's and her own amazement she was smitten on day one and the rest is history. She joined the Traveled Riding Academy barn family in 2017 and has blessed the program with her enthusiasm, kindness, and grace.

Tom Krewse LOA, more affectionately known as Tommy, is a 23-year-old half-Arabian and half-Saddlebred gelding. He was bred by the prestigious and historical breeding program, Live Oak Arabians. He had an extremely successful career as a saddle seat show horse, winning a national



championship and reserve national championship and countless other regional and national titles under the ownership of Springwater Farm in Stockton, New Jersey.

Tommy joined Traveled Riding Academy's lesson program in 2017 and has been an incredible asset to the program. He teaches riders from tiny tots to advanced show riders with the patience and wisdom of an old soul.

Team #657: Rhoda Kerr and Bruno

From: Saint Lazare, Quebec, Canada

Ages: 86 & 14

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

Growing up on a dairy farm in Hudson, Quebec, it only seemed natural for me to love all animals. My dad was a real horseman. He taught us to love and respect the workhorses. He also taught us to love the horses and ponies involved with the Pony Club.

My first horse was a buckskin Quarter Horse given to me by a generous lady when I was 14. As he had been perfectly schooled, I was invited to hunt with the Lake of Two Mountains Hunt. This became my passion for most of the following 45 years. I was a happy hacker in the off-season, and Dad always supplied suitable horses for both activities.

Fast forward to marriage and children. I became involved in the Canadian Pony Club, the Prince Philip Mounted Games, and eventing. The fun of eventing drew me in while watching our two children, Bill and Carolyn, progress, so I took part in some clinics and local events as well.

At 80 years of age, I needed another horse. I was looking for a quiet, happy hacker. Enter Bruno, a 15.3-hand Thoroughbred from polo lines who decided that he did not want to play polo. Bruno and common sense guided me to try to improve my riding, stay close to home, and



never ride alone. Currently, Bruno is stabled here at home with me in St. Lazare with three stable mates that I look after (with help).

Early in 2023, while visiting Sandridge Saddlery in Hudson, Tracey Dickson questioned me about Bruno's and my age, which set in motion the idea of joining the Century Club. I decided it would be fun to try. We rode our test at Amy and Mark's Melanderosa Farm in Ste. Marthe. Amy organized the whole event with judge Claude Diotte. I was happy to have the support of good friends throughout the planning, practicing, and the actual event. Yes, I was nervous. Yes, it was fun, and the ride confirms the fact that there is much more to learn and many more ways to improve. I am still looking forward to riding in the years to come.

Over the last few years, I have been fortunate enough to have had wonderful instructors including Valère Francoeur, Anita Bouman, and Pierre Plouffe.

Team #658: Patrick Strupe and Flying Solo

From: Waverly Hall, Georgia

Ages: 72 & 28

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test A

On June 10, 2023, Patrick Strupe (Pat) and Flying Solo (Solo) completed their Century Club ride together at Sandra and Jean Carnet's beautiful Ozer Farm in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Pat's riding career began around the age of nine, riding ponies bareback with his childhood friend, Denny Campbell. In 1977, Pat moved from Cincinnati, Ohio, to Waverly Hall, Georgia, with his wife, Maxine (Max). Pat and Max hunted with the Midland Fox Hounds and evented in Georgia throughout the 1980s and 1990s.

Pat and Max's son, John, also enjoyed riding and participated in Pony Club and lessons with Allina Bell at Meadowbrook Training Center. Pat served as an outrider and Max and Allina as organized race officials in horse-related activities from 1985 through 2001 for the Steeplechase at Callaway Gardens. Pat still attends the Steeplechase each year and enjoys watching the Maxine Strupe Perpetual Pony Race, a race named in memory of Max who passed in 2002.

After stepping away from riding for nearly two decades, Pat returned to the saddle in 2018 after



reconnecting with Allina at her Spring Creek Farm in Waverly Hall. Pat shifted his focus from eventing and foxhunting to dressage. Partnering with Spring Creek Farm's Oldenburg gelding Dakota, Pat showed through First Level at Poplar Place Farm. In 2023, the stars aligned for Pat to add a Century Club ride to his riding resumé.

Pat completed his Century Club ride with Solo, his daughter-in-law Elizabeth's beloved Connemara pony. Elizabeth first met Solo when he was a plucky, spitfire of a five-year-old, and the pair have been best friends and competition partners ever since. Throughout his career, Solo has adventured in many different disciplines. Much like Pat, Solo spent his early years campaigning as a show jumper and eventer and has more recently transitioned to a dressage focus. At 28 years young, Solo still enjoys learning and has embraced his new title as dressage wonder pony and Century Club partner.

Team #659:

Ray Denis and Neokolis

From: Georgetown, Massachusetts

Ages: 70 & 30

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

Neokolis had 30 racing starts and was in the money six times. From there, his career path took him into the world of hunter/jumper competitions. Then Neokolis went on to help special needs students through a therapeutic riding program. At the age of 23, he was turned out to pasture and found by his current owner, Jonathan Hall. Jonathan took Neokolis to Atkinson Riding Academy in New Hampshire for recovery and restored him back to working condition with the help of Crystal Little, owner/trainer of the Academy. Jonathan and Neokolis continued together with a kind and inspirational therapeutic riding program of their own, assisting those individuals in need, including me!

I began my riding career as a professional in 1971 at a Myopia Hunt Club polo night game. A polo player came galloping off the field to change mounts, tossed the reins to me, and said, “Go walk this horse in a circle!” He repeated this process throughout the night with his three mounts and invited me to work for him. My involvement included polo groom/trainer, fox hunting, and later combined training. I was given Combined Training Technical Delegate status and Dressage Technical Delegate status by the American Horse Show Association (now USEF).

My accomplishments in the field of humane equine welfare blossomed from my work as a Technical Delegate. This included presenting the first equine ambulance in the U.S. at the Fair Hill Three Day Event in 1994 in preparation for inclusion at the 1996 Equestrian Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta. This Equine Ambulance Project is still the prototype in the U.S. today.



Photo credit: Susan Irene Photography

While officiating at the Groton House Farm (GHF) Horse Trials during the same period, it became apparent that the “excessive use of the whip” rule for eventing was not defined or effectively applied by officials during competition. As a result, through the GHF Events Committee, I worked with them to establish an addendum to the existing rule. The rule was adopted by the GHF Officials for the final selection of the Olympic Equestrian Team that year. Within five years the rule became officially a USEF rule change. In 2012, I was given the task to address equine abuse on the polo field—I had come full circle from where I started my career! Through the Myopia Equine Welfare Committee, we drafted Equine Welfare for Polo Guidelines, and in 2013 I received a request from the United States Polo Association (USPA) to include the guidelines as part of the USPA rules governing all 350 polo clubs in the U.S. and U.S. Territories. I currently officiate an average of 20 dressage shows and events each year and am the voice for the horses in competition, because they cannot speak for themselves.

I thank TDF’s Century Club for the opportunity to re-test my equine skills with Neokolis and I thank God for the ability to do so after four major surgeries during 2021. Neokolis and I are both very proud of each other!

Team #660: Susan Chamberlin Hall and Hercules

From: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

I have loved horses as long as I can remember. When I was six our Navy family was stationed in Carmel, California. I took riding lessons there and we rode on the beach. My dad was a naval aviator and back then Navy families moved every two years. My grandfather was a farmer and lived in Shelby County, Tennessee. I had the opportunity to ride my grandfather's horses when we visited. My horse was named Daisy.

After our sons were grown and my granddaughter was seven, I wanted her to be around horses. I looked for a stable for us to ride together. I started taking lessons once a week and my granddaughter would lesson when she visited. It was so much fun.

Hercules was in the riding program, and I loved him dearly, but I was not allowed to lease him because he could be naughty and I was a new rider. Instead, I bought Traveller, a very handsome Andalusian from Spain. And for five years I had two horses in my life. Hercules' owner retired him in August 2021 because he started bucking. Traveller died two months later (after being rushed to North Carolina State for colic). My friends found horses from all over the country for me to consider buying. I was heartbroken and appreciated their help, but it just wasn't in me.



My husband and I visited Hercules in December. He was very skinny. What if I brought him back to Virginia Beach and we just did liberty? He could help my broken heart and I could take care of him. Well, I did, and he gained weight and five months later with the vet's ok, we put a saddle on him and just walked. We blossomed again.

We moved to Whispering Miracles Equestrian Center and their support was wonderful. Our Century Club ride idea became a reality. Oh, and our judge for that special ride was a renowned trainer that I had visited several clinics to see, Michael Poulin!

Team #661: Michael Pasquale and Jammy

From: Haverhill, Massachusetts

Ages: 80 & 24

Combined Age: 104

Test: Training Level Test 3

I started riding at age 46 when I got the idea that I wanted to ride a horse through the woods. I began by taking weekly group lessons, never knowing which horse I would be riding. I wanted to ride more, so I began taking private lessons. Riding was a great escape from my very stressful career as an architect and interior designer.

After a couple of years, I naively bought a four-year-old racehorse off the track called “Jack be Nimble.” My 24 years with Jack were quite an adventure. He taught me patience, how to “stay on,” and the meaning of the word “terror.” After Jack passed at 28, I continued riding. I half leased a horse and occasionally rode a friend’s magnificent Friesian. I decided that my next horse would be a Friesian, and while I was searching for one, Firenze (Flo) from my barn came up for sale.

Flo was a beautiful 18-year-old Hanoverian who had an illustrious dressage career. When it was suggested that I buy her, I didn’t think I should because I was 73 and had very little dressage experience. I did buy Flo and we trained with Keith Angstadt at Bradford Equestrian Center. We entered several dressage competitions, and in 2020 we did a Century Club ride (Team #442). Since then, Flo (now 25) and I have continued to train with Keith. We’ve competed at Second Level and are now working on Third Level movements.

I first met Jammy and his owner, Pam Tenaglia, about 15 years ago at Rivergait Farm in Haverhill, Massachusetts, where I was boarding Jack. We met again about three years ago when Pam and Jammy joined me and Flo at Bradford Equestrian Center.



During our time apart, Pam and Jammy competed in breed classes with the Northeast Friesian Horse Club, took part in the Susan G. Komen Ride for the Cure, and successfully competed at Second Level. When I mentioned that I needed a partner for my second Century Club ride, Pam generously offered Jammy.

Jammy is a very energetic 24-year-old, which required some retraining on my part since Flo is a somewhat laid-back Hanoverian. To that end, Jammy and I have been working with Kaylee Angstadt, Pam and Jammy’s trainer. Five days before the show, Jammy and I were practicing the test when he was spooked by something in the shrubbery, spun around, tripped, and fell onto his side. Miraculously, neither one of us was seriously injured.

On the day of the show, my bruised ribs were aching and my confidence was shattered, but I kept telling myself, “JUST DO IT,” and we did! We were first in our class with my personal-best score of 69.6%.

Team #662: Teena Olson and Em a Pro

From: Doylestown, Pennsylvania

Ages: 75 & 25

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Test 1

Spending my 30s and 40s as a horse show mom introduced me to the sport of riding. Although I did not ride and knew very little about horses, I spent hours trailering my girls to horse shows. It was a great way to be supportive and spend quality time with my two horse-crazy daughters, Wendy and Brooke. Even though I spent many hours horse-showing and cheering for the girls, it did not help me understand their desire to spend day after day with a horse or to jump around a cross country field! As they moved up the levels and the jumps grew bigger, the knots in my stomach grew bigger. When Wendy did Rolex, I literally wanted to crawl under a rock! Then...

At the age of 50, I decided to try riding myself. Quickly, I fell in love with the animal and the sport. Starting on lesson horses was good, but soon I wanted something more consistent. First, I leased a horse for a few years and with the help of my daughter, who is now an event trainer, I began eventing. After my first lease, I took a huge step and took over Wendy's retired 4-star horse, Maelstrom. Needless to say, I was overmounted and challenged. However, slowly but surely, we became a team, and I was totally hooked. Moving on after Maelstrom, I have owned two horses as well as leasing a few more.



Em A Pro (Mickie) and I have been together for about 10 or 11 years. She is owned by Carey Williams, a student of my daughter. When Wendy and Carey first brought Mickie for me to lease, I said that I would never get on "that horse" as I had watched Mickie compete through preliminary eventing. Wendy assured me Mickie would be the challenge I needed but safe. Mickie and I have had our difficult moments but have become great partners. Mickie has been a wonderful opportunity for me. My daughter was right. Mickie has been the challenge I needed.

As I made the final halt, I met my goal for Mickie and me to complete a Century Club ride. Leaving the ring I felt so fortunate to have had the opportunity to ride Mickie all these years. Looking up as I exited the ring it was so special to see so many friends who came to support me. Over the years I have met and become friends with so many other horse crazy people. Riding is a very special sport!

Team #663: Edwin Miller and Fleetwood Magic

From: Ashland, Oregon

Ages: 80 & 20

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

My journey into the horse world is probably not atypical. I started riding in my mid-40s when I bought a horse for my daughter to keep her from running off with the boys. She ran off with the boys anyway, and I got stuck with the horse, a little 14.2-hand hot Welsh/Thoroughbred cross. I figured that since I was paying board, I might as well ride him. Not knowing any better, I saddled him up and got on, my very first time on a horse's back, and went for a long trail ride, all by myself, of course. It was a beautiful fall day in Maryland, with cool, blue skies and brightly colored leaves. All my worries and woes vanished and I was hooked. In retrospect, I realize I was extremely lucky to return from that ride in one piece.

My first lessons were with a young event rider who had me jumping in and outs before I could post. A broken ankle taught me quickly that I preferred to be "grounded." I found a teacher who focused on dressage and instantly recognized my thing.

Fast forward to my 60s when I retired and started taking dressage lessons seriously. Ultimately, I was able to earn my USDF bronze and silver medals on my homebred Trakehner. Sadly, our quest for the gold was stymied when he contracted cancer at 14. At that point, I was ready to give up riding but soon realized that riding is therapy for the soul and that I CANNOT NOT ride. So, at 70, I started over with a green broke four-year-old Canadian Warmblood and took him to the FEI Level.



When I started competing, I met many wonderful people dedicated to the sport whether it be riding, teaching, or being behind the scenes providing extraordinary support. I also learned that it takes dedicated people to be involved in active organizations for dressage to exist. I became involved with the Oregon Dressage Society, serving on the Board of Directors for over 20 years, including a stint as President at a time when there were nearly 1,100 members. I was also a Delegate to the USDF for many years, serving on various committees.

Many thanks to Michele Matzen who was gracious enough to allow me the opportunity to do my Century Club ride on her semi-retired 20-year-old Dutch Warmblood cross, Fleetwood Magic. He was a real trooper. The acknowledgment and support I received from everyone at the show was heartwarming.

Yes, the ride itself went well. I managed to keep Magic between me and the ground and ended up with a score of nearly 67% even with a rider "senior moment," going off course. Becoming a member of the Century Club is a great source of pride and a sense of accomplishment.

Team #664: Eva Lund and Cragganmore

From: Sunland, California

Ages: 71 & 29

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test C

Eva Lund, born in Stockholm, Sweden, became horse and animal crazy at an early age. Lars Holmberg rode at the same riding school and all the girls drooled over Lars.

Eva moved to Los Angeles in 1979 and 12 years later, she worked in the office of Arnold Schwarzenegger and Lars trained Arnold's horses. Lars is now a high-level dressage trainer in California with his partner, Ulf Wadeborn.

Cragganmore SWB (by Chapman SWB, out of Daga by Bacardi SWB) aka "Algot" was born on June 24, 1994, in Sweden, bred by Carina Forsen. He was sold to Lars at age 10 and was imported to the U.S. At age 16, Lars donated Algot to Eva. Lars, having known Eva since childhood, knew Algot was in good hands.

Eva enjoyed riding this fancy horse and participated in clinics and some lower-level dressage shows in the Los Angeles area. It was on trails that Eva and Algot enjoyed themselves the most. When a friend suggested that Eva come along on a hunt with the West Hill Hunt Club, she was game. Eva looked forward to allowing Algot to experience running in wild open spaces... and Algot did. Eva ended up needing a hip replacement.

Not being able to ride for a while, Eva felt this very talented and diverse horse needed a new "job." So in between his "work" as a therapy horse with special needs riders, Algot became part of the USC Equestrian Team where he enjoyed being a hunter horse and was always in the blue ribbons.



In 2015, Algot participated in the Special Olympics held in Los Angeles, where he helped riders from Guatemala and Gibraltar bring ribbons back to their teams. In 2017, Algot became the trot horse for the Los Angeles Equestrian Vaulting Team, under the leadership of Blake Dahlgren, a job he thoroughly enjoyed.

Eva and Algot continued to enjoy little trail rides in their neighborhood. Algot became part of Special Spirit's Equine Assisted Therapy program helping clients struggling with addiction and other mental issues. He took care of all the riders in the adaptive/therapeutic riding programs.

It is a totally different story with his mom, Eva. Algot, even at age 29, almost got her off in their test for the Century Club ride. Three steps from halt and salute he did his trick, but she stayed on. They are now both semi-retired; Algot is Eva's heart horse.

Team #665: Jane Doctor Paul and Unhao Interagro

From: Lake Balboa, California

Ages: 77 & 23

Combined Age: 100

Test: Prix St. Georges

Jane Doctor Paul could never have imagined becoming a member of the Century Club. Raised in the suburbs of New York City, the very overprotected child was not allowed to have anything to do with horses because of her allergic condition. There was, however, an irrepressible love of them and it wasn't until almost 40 that horses would become a reality.

Moving to Los Angeles and pursuing a career as a fashion stylist in the film industry, Jane found herself shooting a commercial at the newly built Los Angeles Equestrian Center. During lunch, she snuck over to the riding school and inquired about taking lessons. And so it began...first lessons, finding an off-the-track Thoroughbred, and training with Jaye Cherry. This occurred around the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles and dressage was still a very esoteric sport.

Jane became hooked on this challenging and difficult discipline. A Warmblood was next but sadly had a bad colic and it was off to horse shopping again.

An opportunity presented itself to lease a trained Grand Prix Dutch Warmblood named Wilfred who was owned by Kathleen George. When Kathy relocated to Texas, Jane was able to have Wilfred as her own. German Schneider took over as the trainer at the facility where Jane and Fred boarded and with his help and guidance, they achieved their USDF silver medal. They almost made it to gold, with one score short before it was obvious Fred was not up to the task and greener pastures were ahead. He lived to the ripe old age of 28 and was



the most stoic, hard-working, and serious horse she had ever owned.

Finding herself horse shopping again and being a bit older (plus with her back a lot aching), she'd heard that Iberian horses might be more age appropriate. She found Unhao Interagro, aka Atticus (also known as "Who's the best boy, Kisses!"). He'd just turned five.

Holmberg/Wadeborn Dressage at Middle Ranch has been their home for the past 17 years. Lars Holmberg and Ulf Wadeborn were committed to fancy Swedish Warmbloods when Jane and Atticus arrived. With their help, Atticus has shown Intermediate 1 and helped their working student earn her USDF silver medal. Unlike Fred, Atticus is a bit silly with an endearing personality and seems to relish the various hats that he has worn at the many HW Dressage quadrilles over the years.

Jane is incredibly grateful every single day to have the gift of horses in her life.

Team #666: Ann Harris and Hugo 22

From: Centerville, Ohio

Ages: 76 & 27

Combined Age: 103

Test: Training Level Test 1

Ann began riding Saddle Seat as a young girl at Normandy Riding Club in Miamisburg, Ohio. She took time off to raise a family and then started riding again as an adult at Trail End Equestrian under the tutelage of Sue Black.

Ann has owned her Century Club partner, Hugo 22, a Westphalian, for 17 years, and has shown him through Second Level. Hugo has quite a large personality and is known for his turnout antics, his loss of enthusiasm at the end of lessons, and his love for Ann.

From Roma Mount, Ann's Friend:

I was very proud to be a part of Ann's induction into TDF's Century Club! What makes Ann so very special is that she is mostly blind (retaining about 15% of her vision for only a portion of time—imagine riding with barely open eyes for only a portion of her ride) and dealing with the effects of atypical Parkinson's disease.

She is a trooper and a tough cookie, and through the craziness and trials and tribulations, she earned her way into the Century Club. I am so very proud! A huge thank you to our trainer, Kim Patterson, who is amazing and to the barn owner, Carolyn Palmer, who is just as amazing!



Team #667:
**Jean Murphy-Ashton and
Geartsje fan't Reidfjild**

From: Parsonsfield, Maine

Ages: 80 & 21

Combined Age: 101

Test: Second Level Test 2

I want to thank The Dressage Foundation's Century Club for having this great opportunity to be able to do this. It meant so much to me.

Also, I thank my family and my State of Maine Dressage Association horse friends for being there for me.

My message is just to keep on riding as long as you can and enjoy life every day.



Team #668: Mark Satterlee and Earl's Everest

From: Spokane, Washington

Ages: 84 & 17

Combined Age: 101

Test: First Level Test 2

By Mark's wife, Suzanne

Mark's journey to the Century Club started with a horse trip into the Bob Marshall Wilderness with our older son, Scott, in 1989. They were celebrating Scott's new status as an Army Ranger. Not to be left out, our younger son, Daniel, and I signed up for riding lessons. Never a family to do things halfway, the next step was a horse of our own—one of many to follow.

We were spending so much time at the barn with Dan, that Mark and I started taking lessons as well. Very soon Dan was introduced to dressage. Intrigued by the process and the art of dressage, he went straight into competition. Next came our first warmblood, a Trakehner gelding, Arias. You can guess what comes next: a Trakehner mare, Freya, buying a small farm, more mares, and 25 years of breeding and selling young warmbloods. Dan became a young adult; however, Mom and Dad continued with horses. Mark was still working as a computer analyst, and I was teaching. Time was tight; but Mark persisted.

Mark began competing with Freya. When she became our first broodmare, Mark continued to compete on Mint Julep, a Trakehner mare by Martini. Mark retired from computers in 2003 and concentrated on riding and caring for our small herd.

Minty was to be Mark's Century Club ride 10 years ago. However, concern for her arthritic back overruled his desire for an award. Mark switched to one of our homebred, ET, a Trakehner Swedish gelding born in 2005. An 18-hand youngster, ET



was perfect for a tall man's ride. He had a willing disposition, intelligence, and athleticism, but no training other than walk, trot, and canter. Not a recipe for instant success.

By 2017, Minty had died, and our herd was down to one—ET. We sold our small farm and moved to Spokane, Washington. It was a much better environment for us and ET. We were fortunate to be surrounded by a fantastic support network for Mark to continue his quest for a Century Club ride with Mary Brown (instructor), Regina Agren (clinician), and Mike Edwards (farrier). As the magic century mark approached in the summer of 2022, we started to plan. Colic made those plans null and void. Washington State University did all they could to no avail. ET was humanly euthanized. Mark was devastated.

Enter Carissa Schmitz with the generous offer of a lease on her older gelding, Earl's Everest, aka Eddie. He is a big chestnut, perfect for Mark. Who knew 58 years ago when we said "I do" that we would have such an interesting journey? Everyone should be so lucky.

Team #669: Sharon Curran and Dash

*From: Bethlehem, Connecticut
Ages: 78 & 22
Combined Age: 100
Test: Introductory Level Test B*

Team #670: Sharon Curran and Prinz Peter

*From: Bethlehem, Connecticut
Ages: 78 & 23
Combined Age: 101
Test: Introductory Level Test C*

The horses in my small boarding/training barn are getting older. This means I can be getting younger to qualify for the Century Club distinction! The two horses that I rode this year, Prinz Peter and Dash, have boarded with me for many years at my Rbarn Stable. Their owners are both clients and good friends who are part of the Rbarn gang that loves horses and enjoys many social events together.

I'm very proud of both Prinz Peter and Dash that won both of their Intro Level dressage classes, although neither had been in a dressage ring previous to their Century Club rides.

Since Prinz Peter also qualified for the virtual Regional Championships, we will also give that a go! It's so much fun that we can now take part in some of these virtual shows without the expense of trailering, etc. And it's great to get feedback from professional judges on what can be improved.



It is so inspiring that The Dressage Foundation provides a goal for us senior riders and horses. Some of my most cherished ribbons are the Century Club black and golds! It's important not to let age end our equestrian journey. Keep on keeping on, seniors!

Team #671: Claudia Deffenbaugh and Celtico III

From: Montara, California

Ages: 76 & 24

Combined Age: 100

Test: Pas de Deux

I started riding in Daly City, California, at the age of seven. I took lessons and rode school horses until I got my first horse at about 12 years old. As a kid, I jumped over everything that was in the way and showed jumpers for several years.

I went off to college and took my horse for two years. I graduated from the UCSF School of Pharmacy and worked at Stanford Children's Hospital in oncology for most of my career.

I had two children and took about a 10-year break from riding. I started riding again when my daughter turned five. My daughter was in Pony Club and achieved her H-A Certification. I taught within the Pony Club for over 20 years.

I bought my horse, Celtico, when he was 12. Celtico is a P.R.E. Horse and is blind in one eye. I have owned him for over 12 years. We have been to the California Dressage Society Championships and been Reserve Champions in the Second Level freestyle. It was such a thrill to ride this Pas de Deux with my daughter on my younger horse, Captain.



Team #672: **Joan Edwards and Peaches**

From: Frankfort, Illinois

Ages: 80 & 20

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

I have been fascinated by horses for as long as I can remember. Growing up in Chicago, my experience with them was limited to pony rides at Lincoln Park Zoo. After college, I became a mom and a juvenile court probation officer. Horses were still not a part of my life until a part-time job as a recreation worker in a children's home gave me the opportunity to trail ride. It was great until a bad fall.

When I recovered, I decided it was time to take riding lessons. I had wonderful teachers and many equine adventures. I was inspired to become a riding instructor myself. It has been a rewarding career for over 30 years.

Peaches came into my life shortly after the loss of my first horse, Major. She was trained as a reining horse. She was beautiful, but she was lame. She suffered from navicular even though she was only six years old.

We started the journey to soundness, and I was fortunate to have talented and dedicated farriers and veterinarians. She has been fine for years and transitioned seamlessly from reining to dressage.

During our 14 years together, Peaches has helped me through some difficult times. I hope we have many more years to come.

Thanks to The Dressage Foundation for this wonderful opportunity. Peaches seemed to enjoy our special day!



Team #673: Lynne Schramer-Miller and Loganmotion

From: Redgranite, Wisconsin

Ages: 79 & 22

Combined Age: 101

Test: Prix St. Georges

Loganmotion (aka Logan) is a 22-year-old Thoroughbred gelding. He was never easy and kept me on my toes. Next to going to college, he is the biggest challenge of my life. I have shed many tears and have had many bruises, but I wouldn't even think of having another horse. When we are together, this beautiful, sensitive Thoroughbred lights up my life.

I did my first Century Club ride on Logan's dam, Locomotion, in 2018, to become Team #369. She belonged to my dear friend, Ellen Newman, who also did her Century Club ride on her. They have both passed but had a great influence on my going for this award with Logan. When I lived in Florida, I purchased Locomotion and had her bred to a Thoroughbred stallion. When Logan was weaned, I sold Locomotion to Ellen.

Riding went well until one day Logan spooked, and I went flying. Then my problems began—he spooked and bolted at everything. We then spent the next two years trying to get him under control.

When he was five, I took him to a schooling show. I managed to stay in the ring and stay on him as we tried to do a Training Level test. After a few schooling shows it started to get better, and my granddaughter, Vanessa, wanted to show him. We decided to let her, then she and Logan spent nearly two years at Olympian Mike Poulin's



Photo credit: Copper Arrow Photography

farm in Florida. When she returned, they earned their USDF bronze medal. Then she started her family and I decided to ride him again as I was retired.

We started at Third Level with much difficulty, but we got our USDF Masters Award in Third Level. Logan and I then moved to Fourth Level and earned our USDF Masters Award and the scores needed to progress to Prix St. Georges.

Over the past few years many older and younger ladies have told me that I was their inspiration... no, they are my inspiration. They gave me the determination to keep going. This year it was my USDF Masters Award in Prix St. Georges and it was very difficult for us. Maybe next year, God willing, we will be good enough to earn my USDF silver medal. It's not easy and sometimes staying in bed instead of doing chores and riding seems like a good idea, but once I get in the barn and get going, I always feel better.

Team #674: Catherine Jacob and Grenadine

*From: Okeana, Ohio
Ages: 76 & 30
Combined Age: 106
Test: First Level Test 1*

I owe many of my life experiences to the noble steed – THE HORSE. My earliest memories are of riding my pony over the neighboring farms. As a teen, fox hunting was a sheer joy that lasted for over 45 years. Riding with different hunts across the United States gave me the opportunity to see many different vistas through my horse’s ears. Through the various disciplines of breeding, training, racing, showing hunters, hunting, and dressage through the levels to earn the USDF gold medal at the age of 74, and earning the USDF Learner “L” Judge certificate, I have met so many people from different walks of life that I would have not known but not for the horse. Because of the commonality of the horse, some people have become lifelong friends.

In 2004, I met Nancy Wentz at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, Delaware, Ohio, where I entered Training Level classes at the USDF dressage shows where she was the manager. Nancy is one of the founders of the Mid-Ohio Dressage Association (MODA), a USDF Group Member Organization. As a member, I have met others who have become longtime friends. Nancy and I have volunteered, shown, and traveled together to the USDF Conventions for the last 20 years.



Grenadine, foaled and owned by Nancy, was evented by Barney Mullady in the late 1990s and early 2000s through Training Level. Nancy rode Grenadine (25 years young) in July 2018 at the MODA Classic for her Century Club ride. She was kind enough to let me ride Grenadine (now 30 years young) for my Century Club ride on July 30, 2023, with a total age of 106 years. Even at 30 years old, the old master Grenadine was full of pep and energy for our First Level ride.

Taking good care of older horses shows that they can still be functional and healthy in their later years, and a long-lasting friendship provided me with this Century Club ride.

Thank you, Nancy, Grenadine, and The Dressage Foundation for this special opportunity to showcase senior citizens!

Team #675: **Margaret Dean and Ms Imperial Robin**

From: Dalkeith, Ontario, Canada

Ages: 79 & 25

Combined Age: 104

Test: Training Level Test 2

We have “bookends!”

Two Century Club ribbons from two Century Club rides on two different horses. After my ride on Mister Mo in October 2021, I thought, “Why not take Ms Imperial Robin for a spin to achieve another milestone for us both?”

It took almost two years in the making, but we finally did our dressage test on July 20th, 2023. I had a small group of friends who were snapping away with their cameras/phones. The results were not the best photos, but we managed to salvage a few that were not out of focus. Unfortunately, there was not one photo with Robin and her ribbon, but both ribbons are well displayed on the kitchen buffet.

The day was hot and sticky, and the flies were relentless. Robin had an armor of fly spray on her, and still they landed. The ride was bumpy and not as smooth as desired, but we completed our test and received our ribbon!

I am a ribbon hound, so this was my goal. Robin’s goal was to stop practicing these moves over and over. So, the pressure was off, and we just rode for the fun of it.

I can now focus on my painting, stained glass, mosaics, and other creative projects that have been patiently waiting for me to return at full attention. Perhaps even spend more time with my family, friends, and community projects.

Thank you to The Dressage Foundation for making it possible to relive the thrill of getting a ribbon one last time!



Team #676: Sandra Carnet and Tamara

*From: Clermont, Georgia
Ages: 75 & 27
Combined Age: 102
Test: Introductory Level Test A*

I was a horse-crazy kid. My life with horses started at age five when my mom would take me to Stilles Pony Farm in what was then suburban Atlanta, Georgia. For 25 cents a round, you could ride a pony around their track. When I was eight years old, I graduated to real riding lessons at the Vogts Riding Academy and rode until I went to college. Then I became a wife and mom and had a successful career. Although I always dreamed about horses from day one, I never had a horse of my own.

Fast forward to 1996, when my pent-up demand for a horse and owning a horse farm spurred our move out of Atlanta to northeast Georgia where our beautiful OXER Farm became a reality. In the interim, my daughter rode the jumpers competitively, my husband and I started foxhunting, and our little farm became a favorite venue for many wonderful schooling shows for combined training, recognized by the Georgia Dressage and Combined Training Association. We have been honored to host three Century Club rides at our farm, but I never thought I'd have the opportunity.

However, my Century Club ride is not about me. It's a tribute to Tamara, my courageous Clydesdale-cross foxhunting partner of nearly 20 years. She's been with me since she was four years old. She retired sound from foxhunting a few years back. At 26, she willingly and with every fiber of her noble heart, rose to the challenge of getting back into shape for us to do a little dressage together.



Starting in early July, we trained for brief periods, early in the mornings and late evenings. We enjoyed warming up on the hills and lanes at our farm. She gradually came back into shape and started working through the stiffness that comes with less activity. Thanks to the goal of riding together at a combined age of 102, we did our Century Club ride! Just the two of us foxhunting gals headed down the centerline.

Along the way, we've had a fantastic team of friends, coaches, equine therapy professionals, and my steadfast husband, Jean, who is our photographer, chief farm manager, and riding partner. But the lion's share of the credit goes to my incredible mare, Tamara. As she always has, Tamara carried me safely, enthusiastically, and with great dignity. She is, indeed, the horse of my lifetime and deserves great credit for this achievement.

Team #677: Lynn Crivello and Eddie

From: Chicago, Illinois

Ages: 69 & 32

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test B

Ten years ago, my husband died after a long illness. After 35 years of being a partner, wife, caregiver, and breadwinner, I was at a point where I had to redefine who I was and find a path forward into a new life.

That first year was the hardest of my life. But I learned to ride a motorcycle at age 60, and while riding my Triumph Bonneville down a country road, I discovered Hannaberry Farm, owned by Denise Berry-Hanna. I had taken lessons there years ago, but this encounter sparked a memory of my 12-year-old horse-obsessed self. So, it was back to the future for me. I scheduled a lesson, and little did I know how it would change my life.

In my first year after “getting my legs” and mastering the basics, I started traveling to ranches and farms across the U.S. and the world. I rode a cattle drive in Wyoming, through the hill country of Texas, in southern France, in a wildlife refuge in South Africa, Hyde Park in London, and the glacial and volcanic landscape of Iceland (three times). I fell in love with equestrian travel. In the future, I’m planning a ride to Portugal (for Golega) and of course, I want to get back to Iceland.

I learned early on that my weight would limit my choices in riding and that I needed more in the way of physical fitness if I was going to ride 150 miles in a week or roam the plains of South Africa. So I started eating a healthy diet and began working with a personal fitness trainer. In the last two years, I’ve lost 85 pounds and I can now bench press 85 pounds and deadlift 105 pounds.



I could not have achieved all of this without the support from the community I discovered at Hannaberry Farm. There was no judgment from my peer group although I think there was some curiosity from the kids trying to figure out what this old lady was about. But we talked the same language about falling off and getting back on, about the new horse or the ones that step on your foot. Today I’m just one of the gang, and they were there with me on the day of my Century Club ride to help saddle Eddie, get fly spray, check the girth, and cheer when I won a blue ribbon.

Denise Berry-Hanna is the force that won’t stop. The word ‘cannot’ is not in her vocabulary and woe be to you if you utter it. I learned from Denise that there is always a path forward. It may not be easy, it may take some hard work and commitment, and it may not be the path you started on. The path never ends, learning never ends, and evolving never ends...until the end.

Team #678: Gail Wegner and Eddie

From: Munster, Indiana

Ages: 75 & 32

Combined Age: 107

Test: Introductory Level Test A

My horseback riding experience was limited to pony riding at carnivals and a few trail rides. I was always attracted to English hunt pictures and thought someday, I am going to learn English saddle riding. It took me 72 years to finally reach this dream! Achieving educational objectives, working as a nurse and university professor, and family life were priorities.

When I retired from the professions of nursing and university teaching, I received a gift of *Midsomer Murder Mysteries* DVDs from my brother, Jerry. Watching people ride English saddle through the English villages captivated and reawakened my desire. At the age of 72, I began taking English riding lessons at Hannaberry Farm in Crete, Illinois, under the guidance of barn owner and trainer Denise Berry-Hanna. I began gradually becoming more confident, and eventually taking weekly lessons. Despite a health issue that prevented me from riding for nine months, I continued to take lessons several times a month.

I consider myself a novice at dressage and as a member of the Illinois Dressage and Combined Training Association (IDCTA), have participated in a few schooling shows. I am still passionate about improving my abilities and hope to continue riding for a long time. I learned about the Century Club from Denise, and she encouraged me to achieve this goal. I am grateful for the assistance



and support from Denise, her husband Dave, the barn staff, and riders.

I rode Edvin (Eddie) who is a 32-year-old Norwegian Fjord for my Century Club ride. Bred in Wyoming by Nancy's Fjord Horses, Eddie has been at Hannaberry Farm since 2005. He has done it all in trail, hunt seat, dressage, jumping, and eventing. Now at his age, semi-retired, he does lower-level dressage with young and older riders. Eddie and I participated in the Century Club ride together on Aug. 5, 2023, at Hannaberry Farm's IDCTA Dressage & Combined Training Schooling Show. Thank you, The Dressage Foundation, for providing Eddie and I with the opportunity to join the Century Club.

Team #679: Ricki Bunkin and Dodi Ben Krushan

From: Chagrin Falls, Ohio

Ages: 78 & 23

Combined Age: 101

Test: Training Level Test 3

During a recent discussion in book club, the question was posed as to a book that had an influence on our life. Without hesitation, I replied, the *Black Stallion* series. I dreamed of having that black horse. That was the beginning of my equine journey.

While in my late 20s, a serendipitous opportunity happened. I was given access to a horse through a local camp. They were looking for horse counselors, and my friend and I were up for the challenge. Luckily, Bay, the horse we cared for, was kind and forgiving as my friend and I were “greenhorns.” We moved Bay to a family friendly stable in Newbury, Ohio. I began to discover all the opportunities, lessons, and lifelong friendships that the horse world affords.

After some time of sharing Bay, my sister decided to take her over and I bought my first horse. His name was Sir Leo. He was a registered Quarter Horse. As I began trying new types of riding, I realized I needed instruction and wanted to pursue eventing. Eventing really excited me, but Leo was not the most cooperative mount for this type of riding. It was then that I got my black stallion (really a gelding), Phantom Dancer (Clyde was his barn name)! A beautiful specimen with intense talent. He was an Anglo-Arab. It was with Clyde that I learned more about dressage. We were successful in events and loved to take exciting rides around the Chagrin Valley.

When Clyde became too arthritic to compete, I bought a red dun Quarter Horse named Kansas.



He was steady, but not as exciting as Clyde. As it happened, one of my friends that loved Clyde bought a mare that was the same breed. Surprise, surprise—she was pregnant! My friend offered me the foal. I said no at first, but my husband was all for the challenge. In comes Dodi Ben Krushan (DNA confirmed that his daddy jumped the fence and had his last hurrah with his mom)!

This lanky, feisty colt came home with me at three months old and the adventure began! To say that training this hot blood was challenging is an understatement. He is very athletic, but highly reactive. My daughter and I were not sure he was going to ever settle down and cooperate. After continued hard work and perseverance with my granddaughter, daughter, and myself, Dodi has become a family horse and beautiful dressage horse! He is my joy, my friend, and a great partner.

Team #680: Beverly Patrick and Rockin' Rodney

From: Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania

Ages: 79 & 28

Combined Age: 107

Test: Introductory Level Test B

A lifetime's passion began when six-year-old Beverly fell in love with an ancient "beautiful in the eye of the beholder" horse named Palagie at a Rhode Island summer camp in 1949. After camp, she began taking lessons and joined the Green River Pony Club. As a teenager, Beverly saved her hard-earned babysitting money for lessons and riding. Throughout high school, she never owned her own horse but avidly competed on a fantastic variety of borrowed rides. She did jumpers, Western pleasure, side saddle, saddle seat, and one season in the hunter ring which qualified her for the Maclay Finals. Beverly appreciated the generosity of those big-hearted owners and has returned that favor time and time. Some countless children and adults have found themselves on a Patrick horse without expectation of repayment, whether it be for a local show, long trail ride, Pony Club rally, intercollegiate competition....and the list goes on.

After earning a BA in Interior Design at Skidmore College and an MFA in Weaving and Textiles from the prestigious Cranbrook Academy of Art, Beverly married David Patrick and convinced him that they should get two horses for fun. David had no idea what he was in for. Starting with those two horses and several students, Beverly's operation steadily expanded over the next 55 years. Some seasons her teaching schedule topped 80 students and, well, it's never polite to ask how many horses a lady has.

Beverly served as the Beaver Valley Pony Club's District Commissioner for 19 years and



Chairman of Tetrathlon at Pony Club Nationals for six years, including hosting and providing horses for international teams at the Kentucky Horse Park. Her three daughters grew up in Pony Club and continue to ride and compete as adults.

After chronic back problems and two knee replacements, Beverly gradually stopped riding. Then, at the age of 62, she discovered Combined Driving. She started with one pony, then quickly expanded to a pair of horses. When the pair retired, Beverly and David chose to return to ponies, and when she turned 75, Beverly decided to take on the challenge of a four-in-hand. Her black Fell ponies are now a regular sight at CDE competitions in Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

During the COVID lockdown, Beverly's daughter convinced her to try some gentle trail rides. This summer, the same daughter convinced her to compete in a Century Club ride with Rockin' Rodney, an off-the-track Thoroughbred. In Rodney's heyday, he evented with Beverly's middle daughter through the preliminary level, babysat her youngest daughter at beginner novice, and has been a delightful trail horse, lesson horse, and barn pet for years. He is usually quiet and laid back, so seeing his visible excitement to get on a trailer and go to a show again was absolutely heart-warming.

Team #681: Elizabeth Jacoby and Jet

*From: Union, Missouri
Ages: 74.5 & 25.5
Combined Age: 100
Test: Second Level Test 3*

“Can I have a pony?” I remember constantly saying as a child on birthdays or Christmas. My parents were used to seeing this as the first item on my Christmas list. As I grew up it became “Can I have a horse?” But the results were the same: socks and a new sweater!

I spent plenty of time on horses at camp and dude strings. In my efforts to convince my father, I would describe how easy it would be to keep a horse, how cheap I could make it (haha), and how I knew just the animal which was only \$150. One day my dad replied, “But you would want something better than that?” And so, it began.

I started out riding Western and used to go to all the little local horse shows with a friend. After I moved to Colorado, I started riding English pleasure on my “Quarter Horse with spots” named Chubby. One day, after I had moved him to Table Mountain Ranch in Golden, I was watching Julie Sodowsky school one of her horses. I thought that I would like to learn to ride like that. I signed up for lessons. Julie suggested that I not rush out and buy a saddle or breeches until I decided that this was what I wanted to do. I rode in my hunt seat saddle and cowboy boots. It didn’t take long to get hooked and when Julie returned from wintering in Arizona, I not only had a saddle but was decked out with breeches and boots, too. When Julie stayed in Arizona, Dolly Hannon took over my instruction.



Photo credit: Leah Strid

My time in Colorado didn’t last as long as I would have liked. I moved back to Missouri, which, in the mid-80s, was a wasteland for dressage. I retired Chubby and bought a young Trakehner, Hal, and spent the 90s doing combined training. I picked up dressage lessons where I could.

As Hal approached retirement, I began looking for another horse. Tim and Cheryl Holekamp invited me up to their farm in Columbia, Missouri, to view one of their young horses. There was Harrier (Jet), steel gray and lanky, just a three-year-old. The selling point was that he had a great temperament.

Jet and I have been a team for 23 years, through ups and downs, wins and losses, suspensory injuries, knee replacements, hock injections, and rotator cuff repairs. I found a great instructor in Brianna Zwilling, who moved to the area about 10 years ago. With her help, I have shown him through Third Level and earned my USDF bronze medal. He’s been a great partner for me.

After my Century Club ride, I brought Jet home and he did what I knew he would, roll in the mud. He has earned every muddy patch on him.

Team #682: Mary Beth Kuester and Sons of the Wind's Valioso

From: Merrimac, Massachusetts

Ages: 84 & 21

Combined Age: 105

Test: Training Level Test 1

My Century Club ride is just the beginning for me. In the fall of 2022, it had been almost 40 years since I had ridden when I discovered Sons of the Wind stable and inquired about lessons. Fortunately, they accepted my application as an 84-year-old who had not been on a horse in over four decades, since I assured them that I was physically active as a ski racer and regular gym attendee.

During my life-changing week of lessons with international dressage master Vitor Silva, a fellow student and now dear friend, Jane, told me about her goal to do a Century Club ride in a few years. That was the first time I had heard of this wonderful opportunity. This changed my plan from just taking lessons periodically to owning a horse to complete a Century Club ride. With this in mind, I was able to convince Vitor and Maggie to allow me to purchase the one horse at Sons of the Wind that was NOT for sale, the famous Valioso (this amazing horse has performed all over the country piaffing on a piano as well as earning several riders their USDF medals and teaching hundreds of riders at the school) with the promise that he would never leave the farm or program.

As a child I aspired to dog ownership, never dreaming of owning a horse, but loving to trail ride in the summer at a neighboring stable. I started taking lessons at age 50 with French native and USEF 'r' judge, Marie Johnson, and purchased two horses. Then life happened and I



didn't have horses or time to ride for almost four decades.

Now I feel so fortunate to own four incredible Lusitanos from Sons of the Wind that I ride daily: Valioso, age 22; Furacao, age 13; Otimo, age six; and an amazing 10-year-old stallion, Juiz Da Sasa.

I split my time between Massachusetts, Florida, and Wisconsin, ski racing from December until February, and then concentrating on riding the rest of the year. I am now working toward the USDF bronze medal.

My Century Club ride took place at Sons of the Wind Equestrian Center in Massachusetts. International judge Kathy Connelly found time in her busy schedule to judge this event and everyone loved the comment, "shows great promise for the future" on the test. Vitor Silva and Maggie McDonald made the day so magical. It was truly the best day of my life! Thank you to my prince, Valioso! And thank you TDF for this wonderful program. I am excited about the future and look forward to continuing to learn and enjoy my beautiful Lusitano horses and spending time with the great new friends I'm making at Sons of the Wind!

Team #683: Patricia Borders and Reba McIntyre

From: Woodstock, Georgia

Ages: 75 & 27

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test B

Twenty-seven years with Reba has been a wild and wonderful experience. Her personality and her story are as colorful as she is. Foaled here on the farm, Reba was the sixth and last baby out of a broodmare that I rescued from a kill pen. The mare had impressive American Saddlebred registration papers and all five of her previous foals became champion competitors for me. I had always dreamed of having a spotted horse, so I bred for color to a spotted Saddlebred. Be careful what you wish for: at a very early age I knew Reba was not destined to enhance my winning reputation in the Saddlebred world. At a loss of what to do with her, advice came from a friend at the local tack store to try dressage with her.

My only exposure to dressage was the Spanish Riding School and the 1996 Olympic Freestyles. I had no clue what “dressage” meant. Fate connected me with trainer, Laura Wharton, who started Reba and me together on the long and endless road of learning. Every lesson and every ride was a learning experience. I was hooked.

Reba, though smart, talented, and well-suited to dressage, thought the lower levels were boring; she was famous for adding spice to a test thus not impressing the judges. Laura kept saying she was going to be an FEI horse; be patient. I didn’t know what FEI was either.

Success did come and the upper levels suited her. Reba became AHSA All-Breed Champion, GDCTA Year-End Champion, and she shined at freestyles, her favorite. In 2010, at the World Equestrian Games in Lexington, Reba was



honored with a special display at the American Saddlebred Museum.

I was riding for my USDF gold medal at the Grand Prix when I felt something go wrong. A trip to Rood and Riddle resulted in surgery for a bone chip. Successfully rehabilitated, I could have brought her back, but with other horses coming along, I decided to retire her. She had done so much for me including being my pathway to dressage. She is the horse of a lifetime. Reba never looked back; she loves her freedom and being a boss mare.

That was almost 10 years ago, and I am indebted to Parker Mallernee for his patience and gifted horsemanship in preparing her for this class. I would also like to thank GDCTA for their hospitality and including me at their wonderful show. Also thank you to the overwhelming number of fans, friends, and show participants who supported us. Special thanks to The Dressage Foundation for this and all their other wonderful programs. This was a great experience that I will always treasure.

Team #684:

Lois Ferson and Top Hat Lady's Choice

From: Hillsborough, North Carolina

Ages: 76 & 24

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test A

When my husband and I moved to North Carolina in 1979 with his horse and another pony I had at the time, I met another horse lover. She and I became best friends, and we spent many happy days trail riding my pony and her horse in Duke Forest.

While riding in Duke Forest, we met and rode with two other Century Club members. After I learned about the Century Club, I put it on my bucket list. Several years later I acquired another pony, Top Hat Lady's Choice (aka Louise) from a breeder and author in Vermont. In her book, *Kinship with Horses*, Leslie Carlson calls Louise "the Self-Trained Horse."

She wrote that Louise was part of a package deal that she bought from another trainer one spring when Louise was four years old. In her book, Leslie states that because Top Hat Lady's Choice came from another trainer, and she was so well-mannered, she assumed she had some training.

One day she saddled, got on Louise, and they went for a short trail ride. They had a good ride, but Louise did not want to pick up her canter. When she contacted the trainer to ask



Photo credit: High Time Photography

about her canter cue, she learned that because Louise had had a foal as a three-year-old, they had never had an opportunity to train her or do much with her. As a result, she had never been ridden before being sold as a four-year-old to Leslie.

Then Leslie thought back to how Louise would stand at the fence whenever another horse was brought in from the field, saddled, and rode. Hence Louise became "the Self-Trained Horse."

A few years later, I was lucky enough to buy Top Hat Lady's Choice from the author. Since then, my trainer and instructor, Emeraude Dandurand, has qualified Top Hat Lady's Choice for the USDF Finals in Training Level and she also helped me and Louise prepare for our Century Club ride.

Louise is the best pony I have ever owned and ridden. I am looking forward to many more wonderful years with her.

Team #685: **Kathy Stoddard and Marumba**

From: Glenmont, New York

Ages: 79 & 21

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Test 1

Marumba was foaled in New York at a local Thoroughbred farm and went to the Saratoga Yearling Sales to be sold as a potential racehorse. He was purchased and sent off with a race trainer. However, relatively early on Marumba decided this was not going to be his career path. Fortunately, his owner kindly decided to retain ownership and brought Marumba back to New York to begin new training toward becoming a hunter/jumper mount.

I began taking weekly riding lessons at age nine at the Boulder Brook Club in Westchester, New York. My early childhood “love of horses” has stayed with me ever since. Over the years I competed as a junior and an amateur in the equitation and hunter divisions. I started horse show judging in the 1980s and eventually became a USEF ‘R’ rated judge in equitation and hunters. I judged for almost 30 years before retiring my license.

When my daughter was a young rider, I was involved as a District Commissioner for her Pony Club in Michigan. While in Michigan, I attended the Cheff Center to learn about therapeutic horseback riding and I became certified to teach by NARAH (now known as PATH) and subsequently helped to start a therapeutic program that is still operating now some 40 years later on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Additionally, I have enjoyed foxhunting with several recognized hunts across the country.



Marumba and I happily went out together on Opening Day a few years ago. I even had an exceptional opportunity to take a trip to Ireland to test my bravery with those crazy Irish foxhunting lads. “Jump it or stay behind and get lost!!”

Marumba and I each have been beneficiaries of many positive and enjoyable experiences. Although I do not own Marumba, I have been fortunate to ride him when my own horse was unavailable. Marumba has had excellent care throughout his life by some very special and caring people. He continues to be a generous and patient partner for me and riders at Larkin Hill, owned by Margaret Hutchison.

Many thanks to TDF for hosting the Century Club as a goal and an opportunity to celebrate senior horses and riders. Indeed, it has been fun and heartwarming to have so much support from family and friends.

Team #686: Sandra Hyde and Flo

From: Peabody, Massachusetts

Ages: 75 & 25

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

As a child, I did not have the opportunity to indulge in my horse addiction. But when I became old enough to earn my own income, I began taking riding lessons, beginning with hunt seat and an introduction to jumping. After getting married I went for a long period without horses in my life due to work and other commitments, but knew that wasn't permanent. After lots of lessons, both English and Western, I bought my first horse together with a friend. After a bad fall, I purchased a three-quarter Arabian/one-quarter Morgan gelding whom I had for 23 years and rode and showed primarily Saddle Seat. After he passed at the age of 34, I leased or half-leased several different horses in my quest to learn dressage.

A friend and I leased a beautiful Hanoverian mare, and when the lease ended the owner wanted her back. The friend I was leasing with contacted several trainers, when Aspen came into our lives as a 22-year-old Hanoverian/Thoroughbred cross, 17-hand schoolmaster whose owner had too many horses and was looking for an on-farm lease. We each half-leased him for about a year when my friend decided to look for a younger horse. As luck would have it, Aspen's owner offered him to me. At that point, I called a friend who had recently lost her horse to see if she would be interested in half-leasing him. After one lesson she was hooked, and it became a wonderful partnership. In fact, she completed her Century Club ride a month before me!

I was able to complete my first Century Club ride in September of 2020 on my then 28-year-old



horse Aspen, whom I lost in March 2023. Having turned 75 this year, a fellow boarder, Michael Pasquale, suggested I ride his registered Hanoverian mare, Flo, in a Century Club ride this year, since she had just turned 25 in January. This offer took me totally by surprise. I had never ridden her before, but she had a stellar dressage background at Second Level and was a horse I had always admired from afar. I had reservations about riding her, but Michael didn't give me time to procrastinate. It was time to submit the entry form for the August show at our barn. He said to take a few lessons on her before the show and "just do it!"

After just five lessons from my trainer, Lynda Angstadt, she gave me the confidence I needed to go forward. On August 13, 2023, I rode Flo for the Century Club and was incredibly pleased with the results. Flo was wonderful and I had one of my best rides ever!

Many thanks to Michael Pasquale for encouraging me to ride his beautiful mare, my husband for his support, my trainer, Lynda Angstadt, and the support and inspiration I received from my fellow boarders. I am so happy to have completed my second Century Club ride, and again thank TDF for this opportunity.

Team #687: **Mary Beth Hilburn and Mango**

From: Captain Cook, Hawaii

Ages: 86 & 20

Combined Age: 106

Test: Training Level Test 1

Hawaii has suffered unimaginable tragedy in 2023. People and animals lost their lives in the awful fires. I dedicate my Century Club ride to Maui.

I feel fortunate to have been able to borrow an adorable Quarter Horse from Jennifer Dodson, M.D. Our combined ages are 106—Mango's and mine, not Jennifer's and mine.

My support crew consisted of a cast of 1000s. Thanks Toni, Chad, Jennifer, Scott, and the village that got me in the ring.

I have ridden since I was 10, and came to dressage late, at about 40. I loved it at once and have ridden pirouettes and all the fun upper-level movements due to the help of my trainer Greta Freisen. She is amazing. I intend to continue riding with my great-granddaughter after a move to California.

This was a wonderful opportunity. Thank you for making it all possible.



Team #688: Cindy Kavan-Winfield and Cinco

From: Los Lunas, New Mexico

Ages: 72 & 28

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

On April 16, 1995 (Easter Sunday), my beloved mare, Sombra, gave birth to Cinco. Sombra was half Quarter Horse, half Arabian, and the best horse anyone could ever own! We had spent our time together exploring the mountains, entering endurance races, jumping logs in the bosque, and learning dressage. She'd been bred to Rancho La Querencia's Holsteiner stallion, Columbus, at age 20. This was her first and only foal and she allowed me to be present for the birth.

Cinco was quite the little rascal with a big personality from the very beginning. He was (and still is) one of those "in your pocket" type horses. He always made sure everyone stayed safe but loved to make you laugh with his shenanigans. He turned into the horse of my dreams.

His first career was dressage, becoming First Level champion in our local dressage club. After many years, his hocks started bothering him and we turned to trail work. We did some trail/obstacle competitions, which he excelled at. He later gave my friend her first dressage lessons and helped another friend with her trepidation at cantering.



Cinco has been retired for the past few years. He has Cushing's and arthritis. But with Adequan, chiropractic, and gentle consistent riding the past six months, he performed a pretty great Training Level Test 2 at the New Mexico Dressage Association August Schooling Show. I was amazed at how much he remembered about showing. What a pro he is at it! I never had to worry about going off course. He memorizes the tests for me. He seems so happy to have his old job back.

Huge thanks to TDF for this wonderful club! Thank you to the New Mexico Dressage Association for making this such a special day!

Team #689: **Suzanne Cook and Paddys Irish Starlet**

From: Edwall, Washington

Ages: 80 & 22

Combined Age: 102

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 1

In 2021 I moved to eastern Washington state. It was time for me to live closer to family. I found a house in the middle of the woods. I also found the Relational Riding Academy and began taking lessons with Michelle Zolezzi. I love all the kids and adults at RRA. They have become my barn family.

Riding Scarlet is pure joy. Together we float, we dance, we soar, and I'm thrilled. She is one of the school horses and has been teaching students to ride for six years. She has done many clinics and shows and has taken four youth riders to the WDAA World Championship Show. She has won so many buckles, ribbons, and trophies that we've actually lost count. Now, Scarlet just completed her USDF bronze metal. She has many diamonds in her "crown."

When Michelle said that Scarlet was 22 years old, I thought we could do a Western Dressage Century Club ride. I entered the Heart Western Dressage Series show. Mackenzie and Carilynn were also showing Scarlet on Saturday and Sunday. We all did great on Saturday. Because Scarlet is 22, she was tired at the end of Saturday. These wonderful, thoughtful, caring girls chose to ride different horses in the show so that Scarlet and I could do our best ride on Sunday for our Century Club ride. And we shone with a 74.000%. I'm so happy to have added another diamond to Scarlet's crown.



Team #690: Nancy Reale and A Pretty Penny

From: Rochester, New York

Ages: 77 & 26

Combined Age: 103

Test: Training Level Test 1

I think I was born with the horse-crazy gene. From early on, I can remember begging for pony rides and any opportunity to be near the four-legged beasts. When I had the opportunity to take regular lessons, I happily spent my free time at the barn grooming creatures that needed a little extra attention. Fortunately, being at a barn with many young horses, I was afforded the opportunity to catch ride frequently in the local hunter shows. I wanted the spirited, uneducated equines. I was super happy to jump anything and find ways to survive the experience.

College, graduate school, marriage, and the birth of three lively sons prevented me from riding again for the next 16 years. It wasn't until my four-year-old son, Will, announced that he would like to ride, that the addiction returned! Within a few years, we had a truck, a trailer, and two horses. Traveling up and down the East Coast, we joyfully indulged in the sport of eventing together.

When Will left for college in 1994, I continued with a series of horses both in eventing and jumpers. The only time I had to aggressively kick myself to ride was when I was diagnosed with ovarian cancer 20 years ago. The prognosis was bleak, but here I am to tell the tale.

In the last few years, I reluctantly decided to stop competing in eventing and focus on dressage. Double hip replacements and a wonderful life with a loving husband, sons/wives, and 10 grandkids led me to question why I was so obsessed with galloping cross country through pouring rain and somewhat questionable



footing. My current horse was not purchased as a dressage horse, and her conformation did not invite serious dressage success. However, with the help of instructor, Sandy Hider, we have just managed to receive our USDF bronze medal! Doubtful that a silver is in the future, but who knows!

I thought I had reached the top of the mountain when I returned home with the final Third Level score to procure that medal. Then a fellow barn member asked me if I would like to ride her steed, A Pretty Penny, to achieve admission into the Century Club. What a way to end a year! This mare, as described by Sandy who knew her as a four-year-old, used to be a terror to ride—perhaps something I would have enjoyed in years gone by. She has matured though, and many riders, both junior and adult have learned to ride as a result of her patience. How lucky I am to have Penny to achieve entry into this prestigious club. Thank you, Anne Gohlke, for your generosity!

I will treasure this award. It represents a life filled with exceptional equine adventures that have kept me young and excited about getting up and facing every new day!

Team #691: Sarah Asby and Imnaha

From: Lake Oswego, Oregon

Ages: 81 & 19

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

On a sunny Oregon Friday in September, I rode my horse Imnaha (aka Immy) down the centerline and completed a Century Club ride on her. This was a special ride because I bred and have raised her since she was born.

Imnaha is out of a well-known Oldenburg stallion in the northwest named Ideal. To get the breeding, I worked two and half years at the barn where he lived, mostly feeding horses at night, to earn the equivalent of the stud fee. To be able to do my Century Club ride on her 20 years after I finished tossing hay was something I never thought of at the time.

Immy had a past career as a hunter/jumper. She has competed in open jumper shows, as well as a hunter in Arabian breed shows. Only recently has she been transitioned to competing in dressage. The Century Club ride was her sixth time being shown in a dressage court and she adjusted fine.

One career highlight that I had riding her was at the Arabian Horse Association Sporthorse National Show in Nampa, Idaho, several years ago when we were reserve champions in the Amateur Half-Arabian Hunter Hack championship class.



Photo credit: Mary Cornelius

I feel very fortunate to still be able to ride Immy and my other horse. Six years ago, I had open heart surgery to correct a defective mitral valve. The repair gave me renewed stamina and I like to joke that the repair took five years off my life.

I would like to thank the Oregon Dressage Society for making my Century Club ride extra special for me. Also, Bill Burke for his insightful coaching and encouragement. And of course, my family for allowing me to spend so much time at the barn.

Team #692: Catherine Jacob and Durango

*From: Okeana, Ohio
Ages: 76 & 24
Combined Age: 100
Test: First Level Test 1*

When I was a baby, my father said, “What if she doesn’t like horses?” That was never a problem. My parents couldn’t keep me away from the stables. I was always found in the barn with my pony. Whether it was through riding on old hunt trails, hunting, racing, showing, breeding, or training in dressage through the levels to Grand Prix and receiving my USDF gold medal at 74 years young, the love of the majestic steed has been a constant passion.

I have met many wonderful people that I would never have known if it wasn’t for the horse. One of them is Amy Rothe-Hieter. We would exchange horses to further our goals in dressage. When I turned 76, she offered me Durango, a 24-year-old schoolmaster to complete my Century Club ride.

We accomplished that wonderful goal on August 29, 2023, at Amy’s Southwind Stables riding a First Level test. It was a treat to ride such a well-trained fellow after not riding for several years. The Dressage Foundation provides a platform to highlight senior citizens, both horse and human. The proper care and maintenance given to them during their formative years shows how they can still be productive later in their life.

Many thanks go to Amy, Durango, and The Dressage Foundation for providing this opportunity to achieve another dressage goal.



Team #693: Kathleen Dunstan and Up in Smoke

From: North Kingstown, Rhode Island

Ages: 76 & 29

Combined Age: 105

Test: Introductory Level Test C

I do not remember a time when I didn't love horses. I can remember "cantering" everywhere I went and waiting in vain for Santa to bring that pony. There was a riding stable in a nearby state park, and my dad would occasionally take me there to ride. In my late 20s, I managed to take a few lessons, but work, family, and life got in the way.

In my early 30s, I saw a newspaper ad for a 10-lesson riding package offered by Johnson & Wales University. This was the beginning of my real life with horses. The instructor for the program was Holly Whitney and 40-plus years later, she is still my instructor and dear friend.

After the program ended, I decided it was time to acquire my first horse. It was a classic case of green horse and green rider. Moonraker wouldn't load and had a nasty tendency to buck, especially if it was windy. He instilled fear in me that I am still fighting today.

Somehow, Holly found someone willing to trade their 12-year-old Thoroughbred for Moonraker. Normandy, "The Norm," my heart horse, came into my life. For the next 20 years, he would be my best friend and loving companion. Unfortunately, he did not have the movement for dressage. I ended up making another bad purchase, a talented but dangerous gelding.

Holly and I started the search once again. What we found on that February day in 2002 was a very pretty 15.2-hand gray and white registered Paint that had just turned eight. He had been trained as a carriage and parade horse. His registered



name is "Beaver's A Boo" and I changed it to "Up In Smoke," but to the world he is "BOO." He is a grandson of the Paint Hall of Fame and Foundation stallion, Hank A Chief. Boo has proved to have enough intelligence, lust for life, and heart for 10 horses.

Though he had the looks and the talent to please any judge, he didn't love the work, although he competed successfully at First Level. At 20, he sustained a major injury, and I was told he would be a "lawn ornament." Thankfully no one told Boo. It took a year, but he brought himself back. Over the last 10 years, we have both had injuries and the wear and tear that comes from age, and our riding was reduced. As our combined ages reached the magic number of 100, Holly started to encourage me to do a Century Club ride. Then COVID struck and Boo had what looked like a career-ending injury. It looked like our dream wouldn't happen. In spring of 2023, Holly said to me that Boo certainly looked sound as he thundered around the property. With her support, we started working again to reach our goal. Finally, on September 4, we did it. After almost 22 years, we are still partners.

Team #694: Jayne Baker and Peter

From: Avon, New York

Ages: 74 & 33

Combined Age: 107

Test: Introductory Level Test A

I found Kim Sanford's Leg Up Stables through a friend. Initially, the riding lessons were for my daughter's eighth birthday, but it looked like so much fun that it didn't take long before I joined in and rode once a week, too. Before that, I had not ridden anything beyond sitting on a friend's pony when I was a child. I have done a little dressage as well as jumping, but I have not competed.

Of course, it was only a few years before I had two horses of my own: a Quarter Horse named Molly, who has since died of old age, and a New Forest Pony named Fame from Manoravon Farms in Guelph, Canada. I love New Forest Ponies as I saw many of them when I visited the New Forest in England, and I wanted to have one of my own. Fame is 25 now but wasn't quite old enough to do the Century Club ride this year—perhaps next year!

While Fame was injured, I was given the opportunity to ride Pete. Pete was given to Kim a few years after I started riding at Leg Up. He was named Pepper, but he's always been called Pete. He's a half-brother to Erin Go Bragh—"The Little Horse That Could"—and this might explain his athleticism. He was well-known in the Genesee Valley and even had a book written about him called *Pete the Pony*, which is sadly out of print.



Pete has had a lengthy and varied career. He has foxhunted with the Genesee Valley Hunt. He has evented. He has also gone to Nationals for Pony Club Games Rallies. Kim, who is also the coach of the Genesee College Equestrian Team, frequently used him in the intercollegiate horse shows. He was a favorite with many riders who scored well riding him.

At the ripe age of 33, Pete is still being ridden lightly and he is just as athletic in his old age. He jumps, he goes on long trail rides, and he is always game to participate.

Team #695: Susan Aquino and Philippides

From: Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Test 2

I have always loved everything about horses. An early memory was my refusing to put on a dress for my kindergarten teacher's "meet and greet" and instead wearing my Annie Oakley vest and boots. The guns had to be left at home. My favorite Christmas present was a horse mounted on a frame with four heavy-duty springs for great bouncing. I think I might still have a photo of me in my cowgirl outfit with my "Buttercup." Those heavy springs needed to be replaced frequently.

I enjoyed my first riding lessons at summer camp and during the school year I was able to take weekly group riding lessons with the Girl Scouts. It wasn't until after college that I was able to get a horse of my own. Looking back, I learned that riding is only one small part of owning a horse! After graduate school came another horse, a Lippitt Morgan named Stillwater Pistol. We enjoyed trail rides and made new riding friends. I first heard about dressage from a fellow barn mate who had a dressage horse!

Family and work brought a horseless gap of about six years and then came the urge to find time again for what I loved. In the early 1990s, I found a terrific Thoroughbred, Uncle Larry. We enjoyed eventing through Training Level and had some fun success at dressage shows. Uncle Larry lived a well-loved 29 years under the care of a good friend.

After I found Larry a well-situated home close by, I purchased a rather green six-year-old gelding named Philippides ("Flip") in 2003. He didn't particularly care for eventing or hunter paces. Flip



was a bit squirrely, and I did not like it when the going got rough. So, we focused more on dressage. Flip became better trained, and we had good fun showing at dressage schooling shows in eastern Massachusetts for many years.

Flip had a serious incident on January 4, 2020. A call from my barn mates saying Flip was acting stressed and the vet had been called. I rushed to the barn, hooked up the trailer, and Flip was at Tufts Large Animal Hospital by 4 p.m. Surgery started at 7 p.m. to remove a dangling lipoma that had wrapped around his colon. Recovery was easy, just a few months, as there was no damage to his intestine. The *USDF Connection* Jan/Feb 2023 issue has an excellent article titled "Pedunculated What?" about Flip's ordeal and this form of colic.

And just like that, our combined ages are 100! Flip is still so much fun to ride. We ride a few times a week, including a weekly lesson with my wonderful instructor who focuses on where Flip might be a bit stiff, with fun exercises to loosen a stiff poll, jaw, or back. I cherish my time at the barn, my lessons, and time spent with Flip and my barn friends.

Team #696: **Mary Cuevas and Hannah Synnove**

From: Bend, Oregon

Ages: 74.5 & 25.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Freestyle

In 2014 I bought my Norwegian Fjord, Hannah, from Maggie McLaughlin, who also completed her Century Club ride last year on Hannah. I needed a companion horse and a safe horse for my grandkids to ride. Hannah fits the bill!

Since then, she has truly been the “all-around versatile” horse I wanted. Hannah is a companion horse, a lesson horse, a lease horse for those in need of a safe mount, a fun horse for my five grandchildren to learn to ride, a great trail horse, and sometimes a dressage horse! Occasionally she even does a little jumping. Hannah is also a wonderful driving horse. Maggie competed with her in her younger days.

Since I learned about the Century Club in the early 2000s, I made it a goal to become a member. Hannah has allowed me to check off two bucket list goals. The first, completing a Century Club ride, and the second was learning to drive a horse and cart. I drive Hannah and hope to do the Century Drive next year.

I have been riding since I was seven years old and never stopped. When it came to riding, I always set goals. Over the years, some of my goals have been met but there are others I would still like to accomplish.



I'd like to thank The Dressage Foundation for creating this opportunity to meet this goal. Thank you to Alliance Equestrian Center boarders and friends for supporting and watching our ride, and for the Central Oregon Chapter of Oregon Dressage Society for putting on the League Show venue. Thank you to Natalie Perry, my trainer, coach, and instructor for helping us get ready to ride our First Level Freestyle. It was so fun and I'm grateful for the elder horse and rider moment in the spotlight.

Team #697: Jerry Linton and Morris

From: Harrisville, Michigan

Ages: 73 & 27

Combined Age: 100

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 2

Although I was always fascinated by horses when I was young, I did not purchase my first horse until I was in my 40s. Over the years I have been fortunate to own four horses that each taught me to be a better rider and horseman.

My main interest was always riding for pleasure and going on trail rides. About nine years ago my wife and I became interested in Western dressage, and we have hosted several small Western Dressage Association of America recognized schooling shows at our farm in Northeast Michigan. It has been a privilege to work with some amazing instructors like Sue Hughes, Suzanne Morisse, and Beth Schaub who have brought their expertise to help me understand the basics and finer points of riding a dressage test.

After losing his pasture mate, Morris joined our family in 2010 and quickly became our go-to horse for anyone who wanted a safe, quiet ride. He has provided many hours of enjoyment for people from preschool age all the way up to senior citizens. Bred by his original owners to be a halter horse, he quickly demonstrated that he did not enjoy the show ring and would be better suited to the life of an all-round riding horse. Although his favorite gait is whoa, he is willing to move out at a trot or lope in the arena and on the trails. Now, at age 27, he is content to be ridden lightly and is an enthusiastic partner in low-level Western dressage tests.



After two hip replacements, I find that riding my horses is the best therapy for me, both physically and mentally. I learned about the Century Club this year and successfully completed my ride with Morris on September 16th with a score of 70.55%. It was an honor to share this milestone with Morris surrounded by family and friends.

Thank you to The Dressage Foundation for offering this opportunity and encouragement to older riders and their partners.

Team #698: Nancy Weis and Sassafrass

From: Castleton, Vermont

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 2

When I turned 50, I gave myself riding lessons for my birthday. I was badly out of shape and struggling with COPD. I have longed to ride since I was eight years old, so I thought it would be the perfect exercise program. I had a few lessons and trail rides as a kid, so I could stay on and more or less steer at walk, trot, and canter. I thought I pretty much knew all I needed to know.

I was amazingly fortunate that the nearest stable was Horse Amour, a beautiful, kind, low-key barn owned by Sue Cook, whose focus was low-level eventing. There I was quickly introduced to dressage as the underpinning of all English riding and began the hard work of learning to post properly and steer with legs and body as well as reins. It saved my life.

Two years later (and against the advice of my trainers and all common sense) I bought my first and only horse, Sassafrass. Sassy was a high-strung, reactive, and panic-prone four-year-old; a completely unsuitable horse for me and dressage, but she had a wonderful forward walk and trot, responded to leg aids well, was the most actively intercommunicative horse I had met, and was just the right size for a short person like me. Sassy was anxious to please and a swift learner, but always high-headed and ready to flee. I was still pretty much a beginner without the skills or knowledge to educate her well. I fell off a lot.

We did a lot of slow, basic dressage practice and a huge amount of groundwork. She loved close attention and loved working. I read everything I could and enjoyed trying new things



with her. When we started learning to jump, she thought that was what she was meant to do, and we were only limited by my fears and her excess of enthusiasm. I continued to fall off regularly. We continued to work on dressage.

A few times a year my trainers suggested other horses who might be easier, safer, and more successful in competition, but competition was not my personal interest. I had the luxury of keeping Sassafrass more as a working pet and friend than a competitive partner. Gradually I developed a more secure seat, and she developed the ability to round out her body and relax. We will never be a well-polished competitive team, but we have reached a point where we can move together harmoniously.

In the last three years, I have had a bunch of physical problems, including back surgery, a minor heart attack, breast cancer, and worsening respiratory problems. I have wanted to join the Century Club since I first heard of it, and I set this ride as my goal for building back my strength. Thanks to a beautiful, low-humidity fall day and the support and help of my trainers, friends, and husband, we were able to do it. I am deeply grateful.

Team #699: Jeanne Woodward-Poor and Miacomet

From: Plainfield, New Hampshire

Ages: 73 & 28

Combined Age: 101

Test: Training Level Test 2

Many of the wonderful biographies in the Century Club News are stories of long relationships between people and horses. It is heartwarming and touches anyone who has owned or loved a horse. This story is no different.

Comet (Miacomet, sire: Moreno, Hanoverian X, dam: Speedy Tour, Thoroughbred) was born in my barn in 1995. Her mother, Speedy, was a lovely mare but started to have health problems. My vet and I thought breeding was a good option. I had never bred before, but I plunged right in. I was able to raise, train, and show Comet until she was 17. She was retired to a loving family farm with four people to spoil her.

I am lucky to live in an area where there are wonderful trainers, and we took advantage of many of them. They know who they are, and I silently thank them whenever I think of the lessons they provided. We focused on dressage but did some cross-training, both trail riding and with very small jumps. My goal was always to get my USDF bronze medal, which we did in 2012. Just for fun we developed a freestyle and performed that at many shows.

Comet was always a willing partner, and our Century Club ride was no exception. After years of



Photo credit: Live n Lope Photography

trail riding and having fun with her retired family, I started schooling her again to prepare for our ride. I could tell she was completely into it. The day of our ride, she backed off the trailer, took one look around, and I could see her say, “Oh, yeah, I got this!” And she did. What a good mare!

No journey like this is ever accomplished alone. In a 28-year relationship, there are so many people to thank: my family, who always supported me in my riding; my horse buddies; the many trainers and barn owners over the years; and, of course, Comet’s new retirement family whose dutiful care of her for the last nine years made this day possible.

Team #700: **Henrietta Ellzey and Zorrado**

From: Nicholasville, Kentucky

Ages: 78 & 24

Combined Age: 102

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 4

In 2001, my husband, Bill, and I moved to Lexington, Kentucky, for my new job. Lexington is horse country. I have never been around horses and knew nothing about them. A few years later after we settled in Lexington, my husband bought me a horse, and this in part made his dream come true—a long-time dream to have an Arabian horse.

That was the beginning and since then, as an amateur, I have shown our horses in sport horse in-hand, sport horse under saddle, dressage, and trail. These experiences were brought about through an excellent horse trainer and riding coach, Martha Rattner.

As I improved with my riding, Martha introduced me to Zorrado, a gray gelding and Western horse. We acquired Zorrado and I began riding him late in 2018. I started learning to ride in the Western discipline (Western pleasure and Western dressage). I am still learning and continuing to improve.

It is indeed an achievement to be able to ride, especially when Zorrado and I are both up there in years. Zorrado has really made me learn how to ride and not get nervous when I get on a horse. I enjoy every ride; it is our dance together.

I wish to thank Martha Rattner who has had the patience to get me to where I am right now; my husband, Bill, for his support; and of course The Dressage Foundation's Century Club for this honor.



Photo credit: Wendy Peterson Photography

Team #701: Thomas Koehler and Cleo

From: Winterset, Iowa

Ages: 75 & 27

Combined Age: 102

Test: Introductory Level Test B

Unlike many, I did not start riding as a kid. I was out of college and had always liked horses, so I thought it would be fun to learn to ride. I started on a wonderfully patient one-eyed lesson horse named Twenty Grand and eventually purchased my first horse, Rough Road aka Buck. I learned to ride Western and English and competed in the International Buckskin Horse Association and Midstate Buckskin Horse Association shows, winning a national championship with Buck over fences. For several years, I rode Quarter Horses in Missouri until moving to Iowa. In Iowa, I competed on my Quarter Horse, Silverboom aka Red, in the “D” series hunter shows until Red retired from jumping and then started to learn dressage.

My rescue horse, Rowdy Yates, whom I competed on at the 2017 Western Dressage Association of America (WDAA) World Show, placing 10th in Introductory Level Test 3, and 13th overall in a 31-horse Adult Amateur Introductory Level division, came down with Trigeminal Mediated Headshaking and had to retire. We were just finishing up a year of showing at WDAA First Level and schooling at Second Level. I wanted to ride so I thought I’d see if Cleo, our then 26-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare would like to go back to work after years of being retired and making four beautiful babies. Cleo is very talented but expects her rider to be correct. This could have been a problem since I am not a perfect rider. But she likes me and, for the most part, puts up with me, and she lets me know when I’m wrong. Her expectation of what I should be has made me a better rider.



Along the way, I met many interesting people. A good man named Kraft Vohsen taught me to ride the basics and his son, Jerry, sold me my first horse. Bobby Drier and Liz Van taught me to ride hunters. My dressage trainers (in alphabetical order) are Lori Emery, Barry Fript, Dolly Hannon, Marina Parris Woodhead, Wendy Rigby, and of course, my wife, PJ, whom I would not have met if she had not gone to the same horse shows I did. In other ways, many have helped and encouraged. Robin Sprafka and Richard Hildreth at Middle River Ranch, and Mike and Diane Hagerman of Diaman H Stables have always been there with their indoor arenas when I needed them.

There are many more I’m sure should be here. Not the least would be Tammy Lisi, the show chair at the show, and the members of the Iowa Dressage and Combined Training Association who went to a lot of trouble to make our Century Club ride special for me and Cleo with cake and champagne and lots of well wishes. A special thank you to Derith Vogt for the photos here and all the nice ones over the years.

Team #702: Carol Lasnier and Daens Velvet Hope

From: Ravenel, South Carolina

Ages: 76.5 & 23.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Freestyle

Growing up on a busy street in Indianapolis, Indiana, gave me very little opportunity to be around real horses, so I surrounded myself with pictures and China horses. A yearly trip to the state fair to watch horse shows kept my dream of owning a horse alive.

Forty-five years later I found myself taking my first riding lesson. It was at a hunter/jumper barn in Connecticut and although I fell off during my third lesson, I got back on. Two years later and after many lessons I bought my first horse. My husband (now Century Club member Team #567) also wanted to ride so we bought a big Appaloosa/Quarter Horse named Dakota Gold. The three of us were as green as could be in the hunter/jumper world so it was a real challenge. We went to shows with our trainer. One of us would show and the other would groom.

When Dakota's navicular started to affect his soundness, I started to look for a dressage barn. Luckily, I was able to find a wonderful local dressage trainer with a horse I could ride and eventually lease. Holly was a seasoned dressage horse, and she gladly showed me what it meant to ride a dressage horse.

After retirement, we moved to South Carolina. Unfortunately, Dakota had developed Cushing's, and our vet advised us that the move and heat might be too much for him, so Dakota remained at home with his pasture buddies of 20 years. For the next four years, I was fortunate to find several "horse people" friends who gladly shared their horses. I continued learning dressage in backyards,



Photo credit: Lynn Cobb Studios

paddocks, and in a variety of dressage rings.

Then in 2020, I was introduced to dressage trainers Sarah Sharpe and her lesson horse, Luna. Luna's breeding and training made her a perfect fit for my passion for learning dressage. She is a naturally beautiful mover, and with careful dressage training, she developed into a show horse winning many local, regional, and national honors. I took lessons on Luna for about a year, decided to lease her, and then decided to show her. We had a great time completing Training Level and moving up to First Level.

On Saturday, September 9, 2023, Daens Velvet Hope (aka Luna) and I trotted down the centerline to the music of "When You're Smiling" riding our Musical Freestyle! What a day. It poured all morning but at 12:40 p.m., our ride time, the sun came out just for us!

I wish to thank my many friends along the way who graciously shared their friendship and horses, especially my South Carolina trainer Sarah Sharpe, and Luna's owner Elizabeth Sharpe.

Team #703: **Renie Freedman and Good Lookin'**

From: Oak Hill, Virginia

Ages: 73 & 27

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

From Renie's daughter, Erin:

My mom completed her Century Club ride on May 27, 2023, with her partner Good Lookin' (aka Teddy). The ride took place the day my mom turned 73. This was also my mom's first time ever down the centerline and they scored 70%! After years of my mom and dad being my biggest fans and supporters, it was exciting to see my mom get to be the one in the irons.

We bought Teddy in 1997 with the money I received for my Bat Mitzvah when I was 13. Together we did Pony Club through the B level and evented through Prelim until we decided Teddy would flourish in the dressage ring. Together we did Young Riders and the small tour, and he helped me earn my USDF silver medal. He went on to do the same for Mary Callan and Young Riders with Claire Hodges. He also helped Claire receive her silver medal under the tutelage of Jaralyn Gibson.

Claire and Jaralyn called me when Teddy was ready to step down from the FEI level at the age of 24. We were able to retire Teddy with us, and for my mom's 70th birthday, he became her dressage horse. You would have no idea he is 27 and you would have no idea my mom is 73! They suit each other perfectly and it is special to see them both enjoying each other so much. I was very proud of my mom and "Professor" Teddy for nailing their first time down the centerline for their Century Club ride!



Team #704: **Adrian Burgess and Hylander MV**

From: Norwood, Colorado

Ages: 75 & 25

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Test 3

I did not sit on a horse until I was 31. I was in Kathmandu, Nepal, when I met my wife, Lorna. I was a professional climber there to make the first winter ascent of the West Ridge of Everest. She climbed a bit and scoffed at the idea because it would probably have been the hardest climb in the world.

We were married nine months later, and I began to ride with the Arapahoe Hunt of Denver. I was hooked. The adrenaline rush suited my personality. A few years later I began to event at the lower levels. Then Hylander MV (Hyli) came on the scene. He was born at Meadow View Farms in northern Alberta. A Trakehner of four years old, he had already placed in two events at Novice. I was pretty green at this kind of stuff, but through the years we learned together.

For 10 years we competed, and he taught me a lot. He is a very gentle horse until he gets to cross country. Then he would eat up the ground. When he reached his mid-teens, I decided to save his legs and ride pure dressage. His father was a fancy German dressage horse, so it was pretty easy for him, but a bit of a struggle for me. Now Hyli is 25 years young and he still gallops around the field like a youngster.



Team #705: Marsha Collins and Abbey

From: Gunnison, Colorado

Ages: 68 & 32

Combined Age: 100

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 1

I always wanted a horse, but I knew there was no point in asking my parents if I could have one. They were frugal types and not inclined to encourage expensive and dangerous activities.

Many years later, when I was living in Colorado, I went on a long trail ride with a friend. We rode through the mountains for miles and made it back just as a September storm began pummeling us with snow. A few weeks later I casually mentioned to my father-in-law, an old cowboy, that I wanted a horse. Sure enough, it wasn't long before he emailed photos of a mare he had found for me in Arizona.

A plan took shape and my husband and father-in-law met up in Tucson to trailer Abbey back to Colorado. (I asked my father-in-law if she had an official name and he said, "Hell, you can call her Abigail Von Buren if you want.") Money changed hands and tack was loaded but Abbey had different ideas. She refused to load. The woman selling her then began having second thoughts about selling her beloved mare who was determined to stay put, so the money changed hands again and Abbey stayed in Tucson.

For the next few weeks, I half-heartedly looked at horses for sale but couldn't get Abbey out of my mind. My husband had made the mistake of coming home and telling me she was beautiful. You can imagine my joy when I got an email from Abbey's owners a month later asking if I still wanted her. I had her professionally shipped to Colorado and our 20-year journey began.



It didn't take long to realize that I wasn't going to be riding off into the sunset on Abbey anytime soon. Half Arabian and half Quarter Horse, she was high-spirited with a mind of her own. She quickly learned I was lacking in horsemanship skills and took control. She started charging me on the ground, taking hours to load on the trailer, and ready to race up every hill, but she never bucked. By the grace of God and a lot of patience, persistence, precautions, lessons, clinics, videos, books, and coaching, we made it to where we are today relatively unscathed. Thank you to all the people who helped me along the way!

Abbey is 32 now and the sweetest mare you could ask for. She's still raring to go, but not very far! Becoming a Century Club member was the culmination of a long and challenging journey—one of the most enriching and rewarding experiences of my life!

Team #706: Judy Burdge and Duchess of Daence

From: Campobello, South Carolina

Ages: 76 & 24

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 3

I grew up riding a Shetland Pony named Bonnie that was purchased by my grandfather. She taught me not to fear being thrown. As a child, I read every Walter Farley *Black Stallion* book. When I grew up, I naturally wanted an Arabian. I purchased a six-year-old mare named Fahlea. We did competitive trail rides. She passed away at the age of 28.

I did not have a horse for several years. My husband and I were having brunch one day in Charleston, South Carolina. I commented that I could not imagine NOT having a horse for the rest of my life—I was 51 years old. That statement changed our lives forever! We drove around looking at property and found a tract of land, sold our house, and proceeded to build a farm. That's when I started the search for my horse. I fell in love at first sight with Duchess. As we drove home, I told my husband, "I want that mare." She was two and a half years old, and I was 53. Not the best way to start your dressage dreams—green and green.

It has been an amazing journey. I still remember my first ride on Duchess on July 4. My goal was to ride freestyle. We started showing freestyle at the Second and Third Levels. When Duchess was six years old, we added a one-and-a-half-year-old colt named Brego. Brego and I rode up to Prix St.



Georges. Unfortunately, in 2018, Brego passed away from a lung aneurysm. I lost my desire to compete for several years. We decided to sell our farm in the low country and move to the foothills in Campobello, South Carolina. This is a wonderful horse community with a lot of local horse shows.

I was encouraged by friends to do the Century Club ride with Duchess. All the wonderful memories of our 20-year journey together were overwhelming. I could not stop smiling during our ride. I feel grateful to have this beautiful horse in my life for over 20 years.

I want to acknowledge a special "thank you" to my wonderful husband, Myron. This journey would not have been possible without his support.

One of my favorite quotes: "You don't stop riding when you get old. You get old when you stop riding."

Team #707: Kate Adams and Gem

From: Perkinsville, Vermont
Ages: 73 & 31
Combined Age: 104
Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 1

Team #708: Kate Adams and Leo

From: Perkinsville, Vermont
Ages: 73 & 31
Combined Age: 104
Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 1

As a teenager, I had a yearning that not only did I want a horse, I *needed* a horse. After earning the money, I bought a half-Morgan Pinto mare that became my soulmate. She taught me much and helped me heal from childhood abuse. I learned from 4-H, clinics, books, and observation as I couldn't afford lessons. She was the first horse I finished the Vermont 100-mile competitive trail ride with. I then bought a yearling stud colt named Equinox Royalty. He carried me further on my healing and learning journey to becoming a partner who won many championships.

His last daughter, Gem, has been with me for over 30 years. She is the queen mare of the barn and a teacher for many people with PTSD, addictions, autism, and ADHD. Our Century Club ride was our first dressage class. Gem won the blue ribbon! I appreciate the opportunity and recognition for us elders, two-legged and four, for our skill, interest, and value.

And now a word from Kate's horse, Leo.

"Leo, the Lion-Hearted," is what Kate renamed me when I came to her barn. She said that I was a green 10-year-old with an attitude. Because



Photo credit: Denlore Photography

my sire was her Lippitt Morgan stallion, Equinox Royalty, she believed that there was a smart brain atop my athletic body.

In 2005, we completed the Vermont three-day, 100-mile trail ride and for years following, we explored trails. I love helping youngsters learn new life skills through Kate's horse-assisted therapy program.

When Kate learned about the Century Club and that Western dressage was offered at the Lippitt County Show, we both entered our very first dressage test. Now I am taking care of 10-year-old Ava. Kate still smiles and calls me Leo, the Lion-Hearted.

Team #709: Kristin Miller and Bergen Sandra

From: Chehalis, Washington

Ages: 75 & 25

Combined Age: 100

Test: Second Level Test 3

My first three and a half years of life were spent living in Oslo, Norway. As a city kid who was drawn to animals, I especially liked drives into the countryside where many of the fields had huge animals, which I was told were cattle and horses. I still remember the day I could see the difference and was forever hooked on horses.

Soon after that, my family emigrated to southwest Washington state, where I grew up on a few acres. My love of all animals continued, with horses being at the top of the list. As post-World War II immigrants, finances did not allow me to have a horse, so I raised sheep, then a couple of calves, and picked strawberries for money. I saved every cent I earned or was gifted until I was 15 when I bought Mecca. She was a three-year-old grade mare who was very green. She taught me a lot, the most memorable being that if you have very little actual experience, a green horse, and no saddle, it's a really bad idea to race said horse. That lesson brought me new respect, as well as a couple of months in a support collar. Three years, and a lot of fun and life lessons later, I had to sell Mecca to go to college.

Nineteen years ago, my husband Rory and I built our retirement home on a few acres close to where I grew up. He had always wanted to learn how to ride, and I wanted a horse again. At 59, he took his first lessons. Then the search began for a couple of horses. Ultimately, we decided to look at Norwegian Fjord horses and finally settled on two six-year-old pregnant mares, Bergen Sandra and Monarch Lana.



Sandra was standoffish and distrustful of humans, especially men, but she had curiosity, kind eyes, and loved to be groomed. It took a full year to develop a bond with her. We competed in Western, English, trail, and gaming, with barrel racing being Sandra's favorite. She could also sail over 3' jumps. Later, she was trained to drive both single and pairs by our late friend, Brian Jensen. In 2008, we rode the 15-day, 215-mile John Wayne Trail across eastern Washington. In 2014, we rode with a group of 13 Fjords in the Tournament of Roses parade, which was an amazing experience.

Eleven years ago, I had the good fortune to begin training with Kari McClain, which started our dressage journey. We continue to improve with Kari's expert guidance and patience, and have earned points through Second Level toward the USDF bronze medal.

No matter what I have asked her to do, Sandra has always done her best. As much as I've always loved all my horses, she will forever be my heart horse.

Team #710: **Kathy Weiss and Setske**

From: Erie, Pennsylvania

Ages: 73.5 & 26.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test C

I started riding when I was about six years old on Chincoteague ponies. I rode off and on through my teen years, but not again until around 1980. At that time, I started to event on various horses. Up until two years ago, I had a great Irish Sport Horse for 20 years who was the best horse ever.

I evented at local competitions on and off until about six years ago until had to have my knees and hips replaced. I started riding again a year ago on Setske, a kind and gentle Friesian.



*Do you know a rider
interested in joining
The Dressage
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Visit www.dressagefoundation.org
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Team #711: Valerie Smith and Chica

*From: Willis, Texas
Ages: 80 & 21
Combined Age: 101
Test: First Level Test 1*

I started riding in England at about the age of 10. There was a riding school opposite our house, and I mucked out stalls for a half-hour lesson. It was hard work, but I was around horses and that was all I wanted.

I came to America in my 20s and the horse world was just a distant dream until my 60s. My husband and I bought a small farm, and I started taking lessons again at a local riding barn on their school horses where I was finally introduced to dressage.

At the same time, I was volunteering at a horse rescue in our neighborhood and a young Spanish Mustang mare came in from another rescue in New Mexico. Her owners were taking her to a sale barn when they passed the rescue and decided to drop her off there. They said she kept falling down and was unsafe for their daughter to ride.

When I saw Chica on the day she arrived in Texas, I knew instantly that I would adopt her. I brought her to our farm where she joined our small herd of somewhat older adopted horses. She was four years old and for two years we did very little with her. I had already been fortunate to find Gina Collier, a mobile dressage trainer, who was working with me and our other horses. Gina saw the potential in Chica and so our journey together began.



Photo credit: K. McChesney Photography and Fine Art

We have progressed slowly as I am not an ambitious rider, whereas Chica is an alpha mare who believes she knows exactly what to do and how it should be done! However, with Gina's encouragement, expert teaching, and many years of very hard work, I have, in Chica, the most wonderful, talented riding companion.

I want to thank my husband, Bill, for supporting me and doing so much barn work; Gina, who has never wavered in her belief of what we could accomplish; dear friends Debora and Elaine who have encouraged and cheered us on regardless; our farrier, Craig McDonald, who has kept everyone sound; and our veterinarian, Dr. Mark Haugland, who has kept everyone healthy.

But most of all, I must thank Chica and all our horses. The journey we have traveled together has taught me more than horsemanship, but about life and friendship. Our Century Club ride is dedicated to all the adopted and would-be-adopted horses who are just waiting for their chance to shine!

Team #712: Jane Holman and On A Lark

From: The Woodlands, Texas

Ages: 73 & 27

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

It was a dark and stormy night (actually a dark and stormy morning) and the first day of the GAIG/USDF Regional Championships 2023 was off to a rocky start. The Houston Dressage Society (HDS) has hosted the Regionals and a concurrent open show at the Great Southwest Equestrian Center for several years and, as a long-time board member, it seemed like a swell idea to schedule my Century Club ride for this year's event. I am currently serving as President and Sponsorship Chair of HDS and I was going to be there anyway...so why not ride? After a three-hour weather delay, On A Lark and I went down centerline at 7:50 p.m. on October 5.

I've been riding for more than 45 years but I haven't shown in at least 10 years. Time takes a toll on bodies and clothing. A few weeks before the show, I pulled out my old show clothes and managed to squeeze into my white breeches. Thankfully, I had a spare pair of white cotton gloves because my leather gloves literally dissolved. But I couldn't quite get my jacket buttoned. No worries—this has been the hottest summer on record in Houston. I thought, "I'll be riding at 4 p.m.—jackets will be waived!" And then the storms came, and the evening cooled



down. My barn mates came to my rescue with braiding bands and if you look closely at the photo, you'll see that my jacket is open ever so slightly.

On A Lark is owned by my friend and barn mate, Brenda Anderson. On A Lark is as willing and steady as they come but, like me, hadn't been in the show ring in many years. Nevertheless, when the bell rang, she gave me that "we got this" shake of her head and burned through the test like a champion. We ended up with the high score for the class! Go figure! Maybe Lark and I will go for it again next year—but I think I might buy a new jacket...

Team #713: Marsha Murray and Chinook

From: Benton, Louisiana

Ages: 69 & 32

Combined Age: 101

Test: Introductory Level Test B

I was one of those individuals who was born loving horses. My Christmas and birthday dream was to find a horse tied to the tree outside our home! Alas, I was not able to have a horse growing up. My father had ridden in the Corps at Texas A&M as a student in the late 1930s-40s. I hope he was pleased that one of his six children grew up to ride and wear the tall boots!

After college and marriage, I began riding as an adult at Audubon Park in New Orleans in the late 1970s. Most of the horses were Saddlebreds, but one or two were Thoroughbreds and I was able to take a few jumping lessons. Later, I moved to Piaffe Academy in Algiers, Louisiana, where I learned to jump under the instruction of Ola Striegel. I competed in my first show at the New Orleans racetrack infield. Upon my return home to Bossier City, Louisiana, in 1979, I continued to compete in local hunter shows and fox hunted with the Caddo Hounds with Claude McCormick.

I lived in Memphis, Tennessee, for a short time in the early 1980s and stabled my horses at Melanie Smith Taylor's parents' barn (Melanie rode in the Olympics on Calypso) and with Ann Lee in Germantown, Tennessee. I returned home again and rode with Jennifer Welsh at Welsh Farms for several years. While there, I began my dressage journey learning the basics and competing in local and regional shows. Jeurgan Mainzer came frequently for clinics and shows. In 2001, I established my farm in Benton, Louisiana. I purchased Chinook, a Swedish Warmblood mare in 2007 from a student of Bobbie Paulk, trainer



and R judge. Chinook had been trained to the Intermediate Level by Wolfgang May (formerly of Tempel Farms). I rode Chinook (barn name Snookie) in many dressage clinics and shows. I won my Dover Adult Amateur Medal at Second Level with Chinook in 2008. One of our showing highlights was receiving a score of 9 for a canter depart at a recognized show in Houston.

The gracious efforts of Kathy Calhoun, Marylyn Cahn, Marty Taylor-Harper, and Debra Davis added immeasurable joy to the occasion. Their lovely reception with snacks, dressage cake, "champagne," and a beautiful bouquet was thoughtful and touching.

Last but certainly not least, a special thanks goes out to every one of my family: son, Paul St. Claire and my grandchildren, Conner, Harper, and Liam, and my supportive friends, especially Tammy Glenn, Caroline Sibley, Barbara Newtown, and Alma Perkins, who took the time to join me in this celebration. Their presence was a source of strength and motivation, and I am grateful beyond words for their support.

Team #714: Marian Rabe and Danny

From: Bridgton, Maine

Ages: 74.5 & 25.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: Third Level Test 2

Our journey to the Century Club ride began at supertime on May 25, 1998, at Ring Farm in Bridgton, Maine. Danny's mother waited for privacy to bring her foal into the world. It was her third foal; she knew the drill. Dan was standing by her side nursing when I saw his big white blaze for the first time, an hour later. Mom and colt welcomed human attention, and they got plenty of it. Danny learned about wearing a halter, walking beside his person, picking up his feet, and loading and riding in a trailer.

At two, he left home as a gelding for a couple of months to go to "kindergarten" at Terry McClare's Footloose Farm. He enjoyed lots of groundwork, tacking up, basics under saddle, and riding trails with friends. Back at home, we practiced, and Terry visited to keep us going forward. Later, Dan returned to Terry's for another month of natural horsemanship schooling, as an always willing learner. Terry brought Dan as "her ride" to a Buck Brannaman clinic; Buck labeled Dan the "gentlest and best broke horse" there.

Dan is my constant friend and sympathetic listener through heartbreak and disaster. His life at Ring Farm includes always open stall doors to paddock and field, hacking with his barn mates, and occasional visits to natural horsemanship clinics. In 2004, his Western saddle retired, and dressage school began. My friend and instructor, Beth Brainerd (and her two lovely, talented daughters), helped us practice and develop our love of classical dressage. It was a family belief that



if they could clone Dan, all adult amateurs would ride a "DanMan."

When he was 16, he "went to camp" at the Brainerd's farm, learning flying changes with Beth's daughter, Amanda. Occasionally Dan and I entered local dressage schooling shows. My joy in life was caring for the horses, taking regular lessons, sometimes twice a week from Beth, and haying in the summertime. A schooling day was followed by a hacking day, preferably with a friend. Danny went off to Puckerbrush Farm with Amanda riding him Prix St. Georges in a recognized show. He was always up for a challenge, and Amanda had fun wearing a new fancy coat.

I learned of the Century Club ride and kept that as our goal. The years passed for Dan; dressage training, trail riding, and therapy horse in "Walking with Horses," a PATH-certified program. Dan is a star therapy horse, light to lead, calm, safe, and considerate of his human's space. He made me proud on October 15, 2023, putting in his ultimate best effort on each step of our test. I am so grateful we had the opportunity to become members of the Century Club.

Team #715: Robin Carnes and Maestoso II Gabriola

From: Olympia, Washington

Ages: 80 & 23

Combined Age: 103

Test: Training Level Test 1

I was a horse-crazy kid, galloping and jumping hurdles on all fours around the house. I longed for a horse of my own but as the oldest of 10 children, there was very little opportunity. After settling in Olympia, Washington, in 1973, with husband and two kids, we finally purchased that promised horse, a three-year-old half Arabian to keep free of charge at a friend's barn. I got hooked on eventing and wanted a more capable mount. We found Toby, a Tennessee Walker/draft horse, ex-Pony Club mount, and a good jumper.

My husband and son had no horse interest but supported my fascination and my daughter's interest. She and I did lots of Pony Clubbing and eventing together, sharing Toby at one point. We switched our focus to dressage after experiencing an improvement in the rideability of our horses. I owned a variety of horses before finding Blue Cheers, a small but talented Thoroughbred. He was a lovely kind horse that took me through the levels to Intermediate I, earning my USDF bronze and silver medals (plus one score towards a gold medal). I wanted to see how far we could go, even to the "top hat" level and we did it! After losing Cheers to colic, I had a warmblood with wonderful gaits but just too lazy and too much work for me. I then purchased Ciro, a young Swedish Warmblood/Thoroughbred bred at Miari Stables in Olympia where I've been riding with my trainer, Kari McClain, for over 40 years. Ciro and I competed through Intermediate I, and Kari showed him at Grand Prix. He became a super FEI schoolmaster and was so much fun to ride! He



retired due to injury but lived to age 30.

I'd heard of the Century Club but was unable to accomplish this with Ciro. Fortunately, for the last six years, I have had the opportunity to ride Leopold (owned by Deena McClain) who is an unflappable 23-year-old Lipizzaner school horse and tolerates my miscues and inabilities. Aging is not for the faint of heart. What used to come so easily is more and more difficult and frustrating. I work hard at keeping as fit and flexible as I can, not just to fight usual age-related problems, but to minimize developing neurologic issues. In fact, riding has acted as physical therapy, helping with balance, coordination, strength, and stamina. I am still at the barn five days per week and have no plans to stop!

Kari McClain and Rachel Marie of Miari Stables hosted a mini show, judged by Anne Appleby, a USDF "S" level judge, to allow two Century Club riders to qualify. It was an incredibly generous offer of time and effort to organize, for which we're deeply grateful. Many thanks to all my friends and family for the years of support and encouragement, especially my husband, Roger.

Team #716: **Susan Connors and WP Amir Rasheek**

From: Medaryville, Indiana

Ages: 72.5 & 27.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: WDAA Introductory Level Test 2

We have been together for almost 20 years and “Sheek” has done everything from trail riding, to letting the grandkids ride, to being a show horse. Four generations of women/girls in my family have ridden him; the latest being my great-granddaughter.

As a black purebred Egyptian Arabian, Sheek was a stallion most of his life. He has 17 foals registered with the Arabian Horse Association. He was gelded late in life due to medical problems. Sheek always had the sweetest and gentlest disposition, even as a stallion. As an old man now, his cataracts and arthritis are starting to get worse. He is now permanently retired to enjoy the rest of his life here with me and his friends in the pasture. He has been shown both traditional dressage and Western dressage, but we chose Western dressage for our Century Club ride.

I am a retired college professor and Marine Corp veteran. I have been riding since I was five years old. After teaching college students for over 30 years, I continue to ride and show dressage and Western dressage. I have had Arabian horses all my life, but currently my main dressage mount is a Paint gelding. I have a younger Arabian gelding that I am starting in dressage now that Sheek is retired.



Team #717: **Sharon Eckert and Jack**

From: Anchor, Illinois

Ages: 80 & 25

Combined Age: 105

Test: Training Level Test 3

I think my story is being repeated all over the country...

At age 69, my friend Paula Liefel took me to a local boarding barn, Timber Creek Stables in Shirley, Illinois. Timber Creek, in addition to being a boarding barn, also had horses for lease and riding lessons.

I fell in love with a handsome bay Quarter Horse named Jack who was a lesson horse in jumping and Western riding for nearly eight years. I leased Jack for seven years and now have had the pleasure of owning him for four years. I can't begin to express my gratitude to Carrie Bangert for giving him to me.

An instructor at a schooling show told me that Jack was no dressage horse and that I was asking him to do something he couldn't do. Well, he proved her wrong!

A special thank you to Maureen White, my coach and trainer. She took us on at our advanced ages, taught me how to ride, and taught Jack the correct dressage basics.



Team #718:

Nancy Mangum and Canequin's Local Hero

From: South Burlington, Vermont

Ages: 71.5 & 28.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: Training Level Test 1

A rocking horse for Christmas made me horse crazy! I was not from a horsey family and my family was of limited financial means. I was limited to pony rides at the fair and Frontier Town. At age 10, I hit the jackpot after a family move ended up being near Starr Farm Stables in Burlington, Vermont. Off I went begging to ride! Carl and Marion Klandl owned a few Morgans and Saddlebreds. Over the next 10 years, I was a “barn rat” who learned all aspects of horse care, worked in hay fields, rode, drove, jumped, did competitive trail riding, was in 4-H, and showed UVM Kingsman successfully on the Vermont circuit and in Morgan shows. I was also able to take lessons (hunt seat) from Carl Bessette. Later, I had Thoroughbreds, showed hunters, and did a little eventing.

In the 1970s, I had two knee surgeries and developed hip problems due to rheumatoid arthritis I had since age two. I returned to the breed I trusted most—the Morgan horse. I found a great two-year-old and trained him before my hips were replaced at age 29. After my doctor said I had to stop riding, I made it clear I would not do that, so I decided to go into dressage. He made it clear I needed to change careers. Back at college, I went to get a master's in social work. Over the next several years I would own a few nice Morgans.

Fast forward to 1999 when I bought a coming four-year-old big, black, handsome gelding named Canequin's Local Hero. I was an adult amateur who was very motivated to train Hero myself and go as far as I could up the dressage levels. I took



weekly lessons and rode in many clinics. Hero's charming personality and eager beaver attitude made him a fun partner on our amazing journey.

We earned many USEF, AMHA, MDA, and USDF All-Breed Awards at multiple levels. We earned our USDF bronze and silver medals and a Performance Certificate at Intermediate. Hero has truly been my hero and the best partner I could ask for. We were progressing well with piaffe and passage with the hope of going further. Then, one of my hips dislocated and I developed nerve pain in my neck, so it was time to stop some movements and change goals. While I still ride Hero some, I have shifted my goals to training my young Morgan.

Hero and I performed our Century Club ride at Destiny Morgan Farm on October 29, 2023. My Destiny family and many friends from the community were present to help us celebrate. A party, with show photos iced on cakes, and 100 lit candles was enjoyed by all. It was a memorable occasion!

Team #719: Nancy Gannon and Madoc Medallion

*From: Crystal Lake, Illinois
Ages: 87 & 22
Combined Age: 109
Test: Training Level Test 3*

Animals have always been close to my heart, whether horses, dogs, or exotic animals. My sister and I received the gift of ponies when we were six and seven. This started us on a long journey, enjoying Pony Club activities, riding in local horse shows, and joining a Hunt Club. At this time, in this part of the country in the 1970s and 1980s here in the Midwest, there wasn't anyone local who could teach about dressage, so I was enjoying an education centered around hunters and jumpers. I was offered a young mare to ride, "Going My Way," and later competed with her at Madison Square Garden in a Ladies' Jumping class. After college, I married my husband Mike, and we focused on building our careers and starting a family.

When the time was right to get back into horses, my daughter Shauna and I decided to take a trip to Wellington to look at horses. I knew I liked a horse with a stocky build, and we found a very nice gelding who had unfortunately already been sold. But his rider assured us that he had a young full brother who was available. That horse was Gem (Madoc Medallion). Gem was learning to walk, trot, and canter with a rider, and I was thrilled that he hadn't been sold. The young woman at Madoc Farm who was working with Gem let me know she would soon be coming up to Northern Illinois for a competition, and if I'd like to keep Gem, she would bring him along. If I didn't want him, she would take him home. Of course, I loved everything about Gem. He had a quiet demeanor and was very affectionate with



people he knew. I bought Gem and brought him home to Sheboygan, Wisconsin. He was only four when I brought him home, and I thought he needed more time to grow up, so he lived outside and did light riding. We rode him mainly around the property and sometimes ended up on the shores of Lake Michigan!

In May 2018, my husband became ill, so we decided to move back to Crystal Lake, Illinois, to be closer to family. I started looking for a home for us and a home for Gem. We found both! I began taking regular lessons at Wild Rose Farm once we were settled. At the same time, I was Mike's caretaker until the day I fell in August 2021 and broke my hip. I had surgery and three weeks of inpatient rehab. My goal during that time was to heal enough to get back on my horse and to be able to care for my husband again. I was determined to do both!

I started taking lessons with Katie Hiller in the spring of 2022, and it's been wonderful to feel the changes in how Gem now carries his rider. One day, Katie asked me what I thought about doing a Century Club ride. I was thrilled to think about it, and it was very exciting. None of this would have been possible without the help I received from Katie and everyone at Wild Rose Farm. I am forever grateful!

Team #720: Catherine Jacob and Ayrus

*From: Okeana, Ohio
Ages: 76 & 24
Combined Age: 100
Test: First Level Test 1*

Ever since I was close to having a horse and my age equal 100 or more, I have wanted to ride my horses that have taken me up the dressage ladder in a Century Club ride. Ayrus is the first of three.

Ayrus and I met in March of 2015 when I purchased her from Kathy Hogue. Sue Kolstad was our trainer who coached us to many Regional and National Silver Stirrup Awards, as well as many USDF Group Membership Organization year-end awards. Ayrus was able to get my last score for the bronze freestyle bar and Fourth level musical freestyles scores. The best part is Ayrus and I preformed Prix St. Georges at the U.S. Dressage Finals in Lexington, Kentucky. She prepared me for further training to Intermediate 1.

Ayrus was able to help others achieve their goals of either bronze or silver medals or scores required for the status of “r” judge. This wonderful, sweet, kind, and talented dressage Hanoverian mare has brought so much unmeasurable joy to whoever has ridden her.

Now at 24, Ayrus has a beautiful, forever home retired to my farm, babysitting newly weaned Thoroughbreds. I will be forever grateful to Ayrus for showing me I could eventually achieve my USDF gold medal.

Thank you for this special opportunity from The Dressage Foundation to highlight wonderful, gifted horses like Ayrus and seniors like me. It was wonderful to, at 76, share one more First Level Test 1 at Old Stone Schooling Show with a winning score of 69.05%.



Team #721: **Deborah Wittes and Tri Wishes**

From: Milford, Connecticut

Ages: 74 & 26

Combined Age: 100

Test: First Level Test 1

Comet and I have been together for 11 years. Comet (Tri Wishes) is an off-the-track Thoroughbred. We have very similar personalities in that we both spook at unexpected loud noises and items, and snow falling off roofs! Although, I must say we have both mellowed in the last few years.

I've learned so much since our partnership began. He's taught me that if I'm nervous about something, he will also be nervous. He's taught me not to hang on the reins because he doesn't understand what I'm asking of him. He's taught me that he understands when I turn my shoulders and look where I want to go. He's taught me so much more that I can't even list it all here.

I have loved our partnership and anticipate riding as long as we both can. I was very lucky to be supported in my desire to do my Century Club ride by family, friends, and my judge, Matthew Beasley.



Team #722: Angela Canellos and Athena

*From: Dousman, Wisconsin
Ages: 74 & 26
Combined Age: 100
Test: Introductory Level Test A*

I started riding at age 38. At the time, I was taking care of my mother who had Parkinson's disease. A friend of mine was taking riding lessons and asked me if I wanted to join her. I started doing it once a week and it was a wonderful escape from the caretaking.

After my mother passed, I got more serious about riding and bought a horse. I started out doing hunters and rode the horse that was Athena's mother, a Thoroughbred named Guenevere, for several years. I bought another Thoroughbred show horse and competed until my mid-50s on the "A" circuit in the Midwest. I retired him to my home property at 17 because he was no longer sound. He was my soul mate and died at 29. In the interim, I bred Guenevere, who was a very healthy horse, to an Oldenburg stallion.

I had a childhood accident that had nothing to do with horses, and at age 54 needed a hip replacement. My surgeon said I could ride but no more jumping, so I switched to dressage. I thought dressage would be boring after jumping, but was delighted to find that it is fun, interesting, and challenging.

Athena has always been a safe horse and we also enjoy trail riding. In our older years, we both



have arthritis but hope to keep going as long as we can!

I wanted to do my Century Club ride when we qualified this year, but I did not want to take Athena to a show over the summer because of the stress it would have been on her with the heat. I am grateful to The Dressage Foundation for protecting older horses from the stress of shows and allowing judges to come to your stable and judge a Century Club ride. I am thankful that Caryn Vesperman was available and willing to come to our stable.

I want to thank my trainer, Katie Joyce, and all my supportive friends at Rosebury Farm and my supportive "non-horse" friends. It is a great experience to be in the Century Club. Thanks again to TDF for this wonderful Club.

Team #723: Sherry DeVries Pawlenko and Playtime

From: Durham, North Carolina

Ages: 67.5 & 32.5

Combined Age: 100

Test: Introductory Level Test B

Twenty-six years ago, I was taking dressage lessons with Natalie P. Lamping, a fantastic trainer, teacher, and judge. I had finally paid off all my college school loans and thought I could get my own horse at last, after riding a variety of share-boards over the years. I didn't have a lot of money but could stay on a horse fairly well, so I thought I would get an off-the-track Thoroughbred.

Natalie said her brother, Mykola, had a horse he was selling—a pretty, dark bay, seven-year-old Thoroughbred gelding with good gaits, and on the HOT side! Natalie arranged for me to try him for a month. Playtime and I clicked. I could feel the anxiety he must have gained from his years on the track. He had 19 starts, which I learned of later when I got his Jockey Club papers, under the registered name “Jurassic Genes.” Mykola had given him a great training restart when he rescued him from an off-track dealer at age five, and with care and patience, he was a fun ride.

I decided to go all in and buy Playtime! Well... what started as long phone calls with Mykola before we got together to sign the purchase papers, then turned into him asking me out for a date! (I don't know who was more handsome, Mykola or Playtime LOL). Long story short, I fell in love head over heels with horse and man! I continued lessons and training with both Natalie and Mykola and had fun showing Playtime. A couple of years later, we married and moved to North Carolina for new jobs.



Over the last 26 years, Playtime has had his ups and downs with injuries and some health challenges in his golden years, but he has always been the sweetest horse with a heart of gold. At 32.5 years old, he still loves to go for walk-trot hacks every week, can still pop a “wheelie” on a windy day, and loved building back up for his Century Club ride. His cute ears were forward the whole way.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to Natalie who flew in special to judge our ride, and Mykola, my dear husband who has also been Playtime's farrier and kept him sound all these years. Many thanks also to the Suffern and Larsen families of Hope Farm at Cedar Fork Creek for their wonderful boarding care of Playtime these past 21 years. Thanks also to Neuse River Equine and vets Drs. Bob and Jim Meyer for all their great care, and to SmartPak and Equioxx that have helped keep Playtime going as he grew older.

Playtime and I are so honored and over the moon to have accomplished our Century Club ride! Thank you to The Dressage Foundation for recognizing the special gifts that older horses bring to our lives.



Thank you, *Century Club* Donors!

We appreciate the individuals and businesses who donated to the Century Club in 2023. Thanks to their generosity, a ribbon and plaque were presented to each new Team, and this newsletter has been made available to you. Our deepest gratitude to all!

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