

HHAA Dec 07 newsletter, part 2

A Tribute to Margit Bessenyei

(This is excerpts from a speech given at the Daly mansion last summer by Ernest Szechenyi. See the entire text of the speech on our website, www.hungarianhorses.org)

...For my brother Otto and me, 1954 was a time of innocence. The Bitterroot Stock Farm seemed infinitely large to two young boys! Crossing the many clear, rapidly gushing creeks was remarkable. Seeing the noble, majestic Hungarian thoroughbreds [SIC] was truly and positively unforgettable! Margit was the daughter of COUNT ANTHONY SIGRAY and HARRIET DALY. Harriet, or Hattie, was the daughter of MARCUS DALY. Margit, a direct heir to the Daly mansion and to the Bitterroot Stock Farm, bought out her relatives and became the sole owner. Margit escaped from Hungary at the end of World War II. Because her mother was an American, Margit was allowed to enter the USA soon after her escape. Some time later, she learned that the U. S. Cavalry was going to disband its horses-including the Hungarian ones captured in Europe. Margit arranged to buy eight lovely mares and this is how the Hungarian Horses wound up in Hamilton, Montana. Margit became an active and supportive member of the Hamilton community. She gave land to the humane society and organized the Bitterroot Trail Ride on the Bitterroot Stock Farm.

Margit knew me before I knew her. I say this because Margit played an integral part in my family's successful escape from Communist Hungary shortly before I was born. Margit had been my mother's best friend in their youthful years in Hungary. Like my father, Margit had always loved horses. My father was the epitome of the equestrian, having grown up on horseback and

having served as a Hungarian Hussar Officer. He was a member of the HONOR GUARD of Hungary's Regent, Admiral Horthy. Margit employed my father not only because of her long-time friendship with my parents but also because of his expertise with horses. (I recall the day we drove up to one of the Hungarian horses on the hill in Chapman's Landing - Margit's farm on the Potomac--located in Maryland. To my greatest amazement, the horse stood at rigid attention until the Hungarian hymnus was finished being sung.) My father fought in the last cavalry charge on the Russian front, and was captured near the Don River in Ukraine, along with 10,000 other prisoners of whom only 100 were eventually released. They were transported back to a prison camp in Eastern Hungary. ,,,, [*He made it back home and the family escaped into Austria.*]... Our family sought refuge in a nunnery, only to be surrounded and captured by Russian soldiers. You see, after WW II, Austria was divided into the American, British, French, and Russian zones.

My mother was, understandably, desperate, when she found out that my father was scheduled to be returned to Communist Hungary, probably to face a death sentence by hanging. Fortunately, she was able to contact the Americans in Vienna. CLAIBORNE PELL, a Senator from Rhode Island, worked for the C.I.C. (Central Intelligence Corps) there. He personally knew Countess Gladys Vanderbilt Szechenyi from Newport, RI. When he heard about my family, he entered the Russian zone to meet them. He soon returned with a case of champagne for the Russian guards. While the guards were all in a drunken stupor, Claiborne Pell helped my family escape to the American zone. Margit was the distant financial sponsor of that campaign-she was the one who had bought the champagne! Our family found refuge in the house

of distant relatives in Salzburg where I was born on May 21, 1948. An American Army doctor had warned my mother that either she or the baby would probably not survive. A C-section saved both of our lives, but my mother later developed a systemic blood infection that affected her entire body. Word of this got to Margit here in Hamilton, and she immediately sent my mother some life-saving antibiotics. This was quite a feat, since antibiotics had just recently been introduced for medicinal use. After a brief stay in Belgium, our family immigrated to the US.

Margit eventually hired my father to help her take care of her horses. His expertise was very useful not only in handling the horses, but in training and riding them as well. He rode Margit's horses in competitions and won her a first prize in an obstacle course event in New Jersey. Later he was also in charge of several horses Margit kept on her estate in Maryland. I will always remember Margit with immense respect, love, and gratitude. She saved my family's lives and the lives of the Hungarian horses. She was a true American. She believed in the sanctity of life and in Jeffersonian democracy.

News from Members

From Karen Andraska and Brandi Miller:

H. Bartok Video Selected to Play at USDF National Convention

Karen's stallion H. Bartok (Szeplak XVIII x H. Mazurka) was chosen to be featured, via video, in the stallion booth at the USDF national convention in Florida this month. Brandi Miller is leasing H. Bartok this year, and they made a video that was one of only twenty chosen to be played at the USDF convention.

From Henrietta Morey of Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company:

Success in the Hunter Ring for H. Liberty Legend

The five-year-old Hungarian gelding H. Liberty Legend (Reggie) successfully completed his first show season in the hunter ring. He competed in the Baby Green Hunter Division under the professional guidance and training of Danalyn Rooks of Maple Meadows Equestrian Center (www.maplemeadowsequestrian.com) in British Columbia, Canada.

Reggie is owned by Henrietta Morey of Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company (www.libertysporthorses.com). He was foaled at Liberty Farms and is out of the formidable Hungarian broodmare, H. Monda (H. Hadur x H. Stardust) and by the international Grand Prix Jumper, Final Pool.

Impressed by Reggie after seeing him at a neighboring British Columbia farm while in training, Danalyn leased Reggie as a show mount for her fourteen year old daughter Jessica. Together they developed him into a serious competitor and experienced show hunter over the past spring and summer, competing in both the A and B rated shows. An excited Jessica called Henrietta to report on Reggie's July show successes after together they won three of their six classes and placed second in the other three! These important victories were accomplished in class sizes of 12-14 horses each!

Reggie is now being offered for sale. According to his trainer, Danalyn Rooks, Reggie is a beautiful, great jumper, has his auto changes nailed and has lovely ground manners. With his show experience and ability, he is destined to compete very successfully next season as a 3'6" hunter.

First Hungarian Riding Pony Born at Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company

The first Hungarian Riding Pony (in the world) has arrived! She was foaled on Sept 2 at 9:39 PM at Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company in Graham, Washington. H. Liberty Foka's (H. Laszlo – H. Foka 4) new little Hungarian Riding Pony daughter (Princess of Hearts) was on her feet in less than half an hour, bucking at her mom in 45 minutes, and cantering around the stall in an hour and a half.

She is delightful, bold, athletic, incredibly smart and extremely strong. At only 36 hours old she was giving her mom fits running away from her and around the pasture. She proceeded to go to the fence (electric tape), put her head under, lift the fence and walk out. Before we could get to her, she did the same thing in reverse and walked back in.

Princess of Hearts is sired by Supreme Champion - Alvesta Picasso. He is a 12.3 hand Section B Welsh Pony owned by and standing at Daventry Farms (www.daventryfarms.com) in Darwell, Alberta, Canada. Picasso was chosen for this important duty because of his lovely presence, movement, disposition and the stellar success of his foals in the hunter ring. Picasso's pedigree features many classic Welsh Pony bloodlines.

The concept of a developing a Hungarian Riding Pony was first born several years ago. Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company (www.libertysporthorses.com) partners - Henrietta Morey and Christopher Bredeson came up with the idea when developing marketing strategies for their Hungarian Warmblood horses and their farms in Graham and Olympia, Washington.

After researching the evolution of British and German Riding Ponies in Europe, Henrietta wrote a proposal to develop a

Hungarian Riding Pony section in the Hungarian Horse Association of America's Registry. This proposal was presented to the HHAA Breeder's Board at their annual meeting in October 2006. After analyzing and reviewing this proposal, the Breeder's Board voted to make it official at their 2007 February meeting. Thus a new pony breed was approved.

This Hungarian Riding Pony proposal and the current breed guidelines can be seen on the official website of the HHAA (www.hungarianhorses.org).

Having the honor and recognition as being the First Hungarian Riding Pony, Princess of Hearts will be retained by Liberty Farms Sport Horse Company. She will be shown on the line as a youngster and hopefully have a successful Hunter Pony career before retiring to the broodmare band.

From Val Sivertson:

Jessica Wisdom, who trains and rides Val's stallion H Randevu (HS So Rare x H. Aldas), had a stroke of bad luck at regional championships when a careless spectator pulled her car right up to the edge of the dressage arena during Randevu's second level test, opened her door, pulled out an umbrella, and vigorously opened and closed the umbrella twice to shake off the rain – all just as Randevu was approaching to do his halt and rein back at C. He still received an outstanding score for his test, but the bad mark on that one movement may well have cost him the championship.

From Charlene Summers:

At that same regional championship, which was cursed by torrential rains that left the arenas ankle-deep or worse in mud,

Jennifer Williams rode HS Warado (HS Wistar x HS Marado II) in for his Great American first level championship test, felt him slithering in the deep footing, and pulled him up, asking to be excused from the ring. In her blog, she explains that she didn't feel it was fair or safe to ask "Little Man" to work in those conditions, even though it meant giving up a shot at the championship.

HS Wistar was not competed this summer, partly because of a hoof abscess in the spring, and partly on the advice of a judge who suggested to Jennifer that she continue to progress without pushing him to do a lot of competitions as he is developing the strength for the Grand Prix work.

From Leah McGregor:

More Endurance and CTR Miles for HS Remel

I'm happy to say HS Remel and I just finished a tough, rocky, hilly ride in St. Louis, 50 miles, my first 50 this year after surgery, broken bone etc. We've done three rides in three weeks: 25 in OK barefoot, 30 mile CTR in KS barefoot, and 50 now in St. Louis with bare feet, Hoof Armor (in case we lost a boot) and Epics front/bares behind. Although our time was slow on this last ride he finished overall with an A- and our gut sound issue has been resolved with changing his electrolytes and alfalfa, all A's on gut. I had a happy horse at the end, which, after the six hour trailer ride home the next day, went out and rolled, went straight to eating and then trotted right up from the back of the meadow for his grain. He had an excellent CRI at the end: 48/44.

From Ellen Walker:

We've done a couple dressage clinics and lots of trail riding over the summer. I recently took H. Hala (H. Gyemant x H. Bajos 2) to our only show of the season, where she brought home blue ribbons her first time out at first level (test 2, 63% and test 3, 68%). My dressage teacher was unimpressed, as he says I should never score lower than 70% on Hala! I have been pleased with her progress this year, and it seems likely we will be ready to compete at second level next summer.



H. Zsofia and H. Hala at 9800 ft. at Yellowbrush Flat. Sept. 2007

H. Zsofia is getting solid with her flying changes and starting to school “fours” (flying changes at every fourth stride), as well as introductory work on piaffe and canter pirouettes. The collected work comes easier than the extended work for her. Both mares did a couple long trail rides in early September where we rode nearly to the tops of the nearby mountains. Zsofi “adopted” two teenage girls who have done quite a bit of trail riding and some jumping on her, as well.

My husband Don noticed an article in the October issue of Rocky Mountain Rider about Jack Eden, who worked for five years in the 1970's for Baroness Margit Besseney at her Bitterroot Stock Farm in Hamilton, Montana, training some of her Hungarian horses to ride and drive. Maybe we can look Jack up while we are in Hamilton! He is well known these days in that area for having popularized mules for driving.

Looking for a Breeder Interested in Event Mare

In the rescue a couple years ago, I ended up with the Thoroughbred mare Bally's Miracle, who is the last daughter of Tad Coffin's Olympic gold medal event mare BallyCor. Bally's Miracle (we call her Bally) evented herself up through Prelim and has had at least three foals in the past. When we got her, she was extremely thin and in need of lots of TLC. I have tried to get her in foal, but with no luck so far. She does still cycle regularly in the spring and summer, she is now in good health and weight, and I think a reproductive specialist could probably get her in foal, but in our area we don't have an equine repro vet. I would love to see her have a Hungarian foal, but certainly she should be passing on her genes, and I'm not sure my budget will permit me to try again next year. I would pass her along to an experienced breeder, or do some kind of lease if someone preferred. I'm not looking for any money out of the deal. If you might be interested in trying to breed this lovely mare, contact me (emwalker@yahoo.com).

from Pam Nelson:

HPB Coco Chanel (H. Szamosszeg Lord Cutglass#1145 x Edelfrau, Han xTB) was purchased about five years ago when I retired my QH hunter at 22 years of age. He had competed as a hunter until age 16, then began a new life as a dressage horse. We competed through first level. At that time my trainer and I decided I needed a newer, younger, sportier model. Someone should have told me to be careful what you wish for. There is a world of difference between a laid-back QH and Miss Coco Chanel. Let's just say it has been quite a learning experience. She is extremely athletic, and I am, well, OLD... All in all, she has been a

wonderful project for me. She has become quite a good trail horse also. She never tires out. We are hoping to do some limited showing this summer. Currently she is schooling third to fourth level. There are not many Hungarian horses in this area, so everywhere we go we get to do lots of explaining – people always ask, “What is she?” Once they get to know her, they get added to her fan club.

From Patti Huber, about her adopted Hungarian, H. Jambor: JAM'S STORY

Howdy! My name is Hungarian Jambor #1138 (H. Taltos #336 x H. Lola #347.)

When I was quite young, I went to live with Heidi and David Christensen at Family Ties Farm in Racine, WI. While I was in Racine, I was part of a 4-in-hand team driven by David. That was exciting!

When David quit driving, I was sold to a nice lady from Verona, WI, named Lynn Studebaker. She took me on trail rides; we even rode in The Black Hills. Lynn also took me to Indiana several times to take part in events sponsored by the Hoosier Ladies Aside. Lynn wore a pretty long dress and rode side saddle; and I got to wear a beautiful hand-braided bridle she bought in Hungary. Thanks to Lynn's interest in riding side saddle, I got to perform one year at Midwest Horse Fair in Madison, WI.

When Lynn decided that she needed a younger, more athletic horse for dressage events, she found a new home for me with another family. They wanted a horse they could take on trail rides. Unfortunately, I've never been fond of being straight tied. When they tied me to their trailer, I got scared. I didn't mean to break their trailer, but they decided they didn't want me anymore. They

gave me to Three Gaits Therapeutic Riding Stable in Stoughton, WI.

I liked all of the children and adults at Three Gaits. What I didn't like about being a school horse was working in the arena. Most of my friends at Three Gaits don't mind going around and around and around the ring, but I got bored. I also didn't like having so many different people telling me what to do. After about a year and a half, it was decided that I should "retire" from being a therapy horse.

In February, 2007, Missy Landphier, the Farm Manager at Three Gaits, encouraged Patti Huber to consider adopting me. Patti had been a volunteer at Three Gaits for quite a few years and in 2006 had bought an older Quarter Horse, Te Appeal. Te is stabled at Three Gaits. I like Te; he's a big, 16 hand bay just like me. (I bet we'd look good pulling a cutter across the snow together!) Patti filled out all of the paperwork, and on April 1, 2007, my adoption became final. Life isn't boring now. In May Patti and I traveled to Indiana with my former owner Lynn and her horse (Keebler) for a side saddle clinic. Then, on July 4, we entered Three Gaits' annual horse show in the English-type halter event. We're having fun together. I think she's going to keep me ... forever and ever. She knows I'm not a perfect horse, but she loves me anyway.

**From Jennifer Collman, about HPB Kadenzia
(Aerodynamic, Dutch x Trak, x H. Zsofia #1421)**

Kate is so playful and so much fun! She runs to me when I call her, and I've ridden her about 15 times now. I ride her bareback, and actually I've never ridden her with any tack at all, not even a string around her neck. She's so smart! She walks and trots, turns, stops, and backs up just from my seat aids and she

loves it. A few weeks ago I stood up on an upturned barrel in the arena while she was loose in there and when I called her, she came trotting up and stopped right next to me so I could hop on. She is so happy. I take her on "trail trots" I call them... I run, and she follows behind me. People think it's funny because most people go jogging with their dog. I go jogging around the neighborhood with my horse.

She is getting bigger for sure, but I don't think she's anywhere near what she'll finish at. I'm really going to take my time with her -- she's still pretty immature. She is very mature in her brain, she is a very confident learner and loves "going to school". She likes to play games so I do very provocative things with her, like jumping over barrels, side passing over tarps, and standing on stumps... She loves a challenge almost as much as she loves her curry comb.... I bought this big giant green ball (like 4 feet wide) at a Parelli seminar a month ago and introduced it to Kate. Most horses snorted and spooked at it. What does Kate do? Of course! She pounced on it and tried to bite it. She kicks that ball around all over the place. I rode her a few weeks ago and we spent about 15 minutes chasing that ball all over the arena. It was hilarious. I also got her to load in the trailer while I was sitting in a chair on the roof of the trailer!

From Erin McDermott and Linda Rudolphi, about H. Foka's Grey Ghost (Blue)

(*Linda*) "Blue" (*Budapest (Shagya) x H. Foka 2) was bred by the Cooksley Ranch. (*Budapest was at the Cooksley ranch vacationing with the mares 3 summers) Erin McDermott of NE owned and trained Blue - he has wonderful manners. After the

HHAA meeting at the ranch I picked Blue up and brought him to IL for [new owners] Libby Duffy and Beth Thorne.

(Erin) I had adopted Blue November 2004 from Breakheart Ranch in Minden Nebraska. I found him on their website, and fell in love with him. He's a large horse, standing at 17 hands. I have never owned a Hungarian; I just knew he was a big horse who needed a home. He came home with me to join my quarter horse mare. He needed some weight and lots of love. He had seen some physical abuse in his life, and was afraid of people. Initially I spent my days with him just sitting in the paddock waiting for him to get curious and see what I was. It took a little bit, but he came around. Once he found there were treats involved, he was there with the mare to see what I had.

I've spent the 3 years with him working on basic fundamentals. I'm a student of natural horsemanship (Pat Parelli and Clinton Anderson) and have worked him using these methods. He needed to learn to trust people and with this, will follow most anything I ask. I've not ridden him much, but know he is green broke. It was more important to me to get him solid on ground work before trying to ride. I didn't want to lose the trust we had in each other.

I've fallen in love with this horse, and have cherished the time to get to know the breed. ... It will be hard to watch him go, but I know it's the right thing for him. I take pride in knowing I was part of his life that made a difference, and gave him a chance to shine.

Please send information about 2007 year-end awards garnered by your Hungarian horses to Ellen Walker for the next newsletter!

A quick preview of a few awards – the USDF website shows HS Warado, H Randevu, and HS With Honors are well up in the standings for national dressage Horse of the Year

Steve Cooksley

Steve Cooksley is not a man who stands out in a crowd. Physically, he is of medium height and wiry; he looks the part of a real cowboy, not the Hollywood kind.



Steve Cooksley, a real cowboy.

Unassuming, practical, with a quiet, self-deprecating sense of humor, Steve seems an unlikely candidate for the stewardship of a rare breed of horses once treasured by royalty. Yet without Steve and Wanda Cooksley, it is likely that after the deaths of Margit Besseney and Judith Gyurky, the Hungarian horses

in the United States would have been hopelessly scattered and undocumented. Most of the gene pool would have diffused, irretrievably, into the general horse population.

Steve (whose given first name was actually Ivan) was born in 1922 in rural Nebraska, where his grandparents had arrived as pioneers in the 1860's to 1880's. The year he was born, his father bought the family's first car. He grew up on a farm, raising Herefords, hogs, hay and corn. They worked the farm exclusively with horses till they got their first tractor when Steve was fifteen. Steve's father took to the tractor with no regrets, but Steve still preferred working with the horses. He graduated from high school in Broken Bow, and thought about college or following his older brother, Leo, into the army, but a recruiter told him he would be more useful to the war effort if he stayed home to work the farm.

It is impossible to talk much about Steve without also including Wanda. Wanda Cole also came of pioneering stock. Her father had broken his back as a young man, and was sent hundreds of miles on a freight train to the nearest hospital. He not only survived, but came back to ranch, though he walked with a cane for the rest of his life. Wanda had grown up helping keep the registration and breeding records on her father's Hereford cattle. She had lived through appendicitis surgery on the family kitchen table as a child, and a strep infection (shortly before antibiotics became available) that nearly took her life when she was a junior in high school. She went off to college in Iowa with no intentions of becoming a rancher's wife, but came home to help her family when her father was dying. Appropriately enough, Steve and Wanda met because of registration papers for a horse – Wanda had learned of a registry for palomino horses, and remembered that she had seen Steve riding a palomino, so she took him the information.

Steve would be the first to tell you he prefers ranching to farming, and shortly after he married Wanda Cole in 1945, the newlyweds moved out to a drafty cabin that had served as

“summer camp” for the Cole cattle operation, and made it headquarters for what has become Cooksley Ranch. Steve and Leo were interested in raising Thoroughbred horses, and in 1946 they attended a remount bred-mares sale and came home with eight mares. By chance, three of those mares were in foal to Hungarian stallions. Steve also saw Fenek V, and thought immediately that he would make a good “sandhills” horse.

Cooksley Ranch, then as now, was a wide expanse of rolling, grass-covered sandhills. Steve needed to cover many miles a day in the routine ranch work, and it took sound, tough horses to do the job. Steve alone kept six saddle horses ridden, and he wanted horses with a long, fluid stride, who would not beat him to death with choppy gaits all day. When the three Hungarian youngsters out of the Thoroughbred remount mares were old enough to ride, Steve knew they were the kind of horse he wanted for ranch work. The Quarter horse foals he had been raising were selling as fast as he could breed them, but he preferred the Hungarian horses.

He could hardly have chosen a more scarce or less profitable horse breed. A less determined man would have soon given up. The remount service had been disbanded, and even with Leo’s access to remount sales records, locating the few, scattered Hungarian horses was difficult. Since the interstate highway system had not yet been built, and many roads we now know as state highways were gravel, it was impractical to haul horses very far in the lumbering, open stock trucks. The first two stallions Steve located died (one from locoweed poisoning, and one from foundering on turkey feed) before he was able to take possession of them. Leo still favored breeding Thoroughbreds, and never joined in Steve’s enthusiasm (obsession?) for the Hungarian horses.

In January of 1955, a partnership between Steve and Wanda, and Wanda's mother and brother, was dissolved, and the cattle were divided three ways. As Steve tells it, with a rueful chuckle, "We bought Wanda's mother's cattle for a reasonable price, and then a drought that summer dropped the price of cattle, so they were only worth a third of what we had paid." By then Steve had heard about Jim Edward's Hungarian stallion in Montana, Honpolgar 4, but Jim had already promised Margit Besseney the use of the stallion. Jim suggested Steve come meet him and Margit at her place in Montana.

It must have been a long drive for Steve and Wanda, with their then two young children, and at first Margit was suspicious of them. As a wealthy woman, she often had to deal with people who were interested mainly in her money. However, Steve's interest and enthusiasm for the horses won her over. By the end of that meeting, they had agreed to start a registry to keep records on the horses, and Margit had agreed to send one of Honpolgar's first sons to stand at Cooksley Ranch. This was the beginning of a nearly twenty-year friendship between Margit and the Cooksleys. They regularly traded or shared breeding stock, and Margit introduced them to Judith Gyurky. Because Judith lived much farther away, in Virginia, there was less exchange of bloodlines with her horses, though Margit did bring some horses of Judith's breeding out to Montana. When Judith visited the ranch, Steve remembers her being shocked that this American "peasant" could be the owner of a magnificent Hungarian stallion.

Although Steve never went to college, it would be a mistake to think of him as an uneducated man. He loves to read (biographies and other nonfiction), and took ranching seriously. He read farming magazines and kept up on current research about livestock. The local county agriculture agent told other ranchers that he often found out about the latest practices in ranching from Steve before hearing it from the university. Steve was active in the cattleman's association, working to improve his cattle as well as his horses. He told me that if he had a philosophy, it was to pass on both the land and the animals in better condition than when he had gotten them. Steve also served in many capacities in the local community, including a stint on the school board. He has kept an impromptu museum of local artifacts in what used to be a schoolhouse that he moved to the ranch.



Cattle and horses at Cooksley Ranch.



One of the Cooksley broodmares models their typical kind, soft expression

Steve Cooksley is 85 this year, and has long since turned over the management of the ranch to his younger son, George. He has had multiple strokes and heart trouble, but he is back to helping out with the ranch chores on a daily basis. His daughter-in-law Barbara shakes her head in amazement. “He just fights his way back.”

If you go visit the ranch, chances are it will be Steve who takes you out to visit the broodmares, and he will be carrying a heavy book that contains the handwritten records of the Cooksley Ranch Hungarian horses, starting more than a half-century ago.

He will consult the then to some of the memory isn't if you flip the mare of a mare or 60's, Steve will be able to tell you a story about that horse and her foals. His the horses still always kept as the cattle says.



Steve Cooksley, with the mare book under his arm, and Charlene Summers discuss breeding.

apologize for having to “mare book” now and confirm the identity of horses, as he says his what it used to be, but through the pages of book and read the name from back in the 1950's knowledge and love of shines through. “I about as many horses would support,” he

The front door of Steve and Wanda's house isn't used all that much. People mainly come and go through a sort of “mud room” lined with jackets, boots, and hats. I tried to tease Steve about all the old hats hanging on the wall – stained caps, straw and felt cowboy hats. He looked at them thoughtfully. “Well, they aren't all mine,” he said. Family friends have left hats on that wall. He points to one. “That one belonged to a fellow – a polo player – from back East. He used to come out every summer, and the last time, well, he knew he probably wouldn't be coming back... He had cancer. He asked if he could leave his hat here, so part of him would stay on the ranch.” *Of course*, I thought. Anyone who

loves horses would recognize Steve Cooksley as family, and Cooksley Ranch as home.

Lake Erie College to Spotlight Hungarian Horses

This April 18-20th, Lake Erie College's Prix de Villes dressage show will be spotlighting the Hungarian horse! Lake Erie College, in Painesville, Ohio, is a liberal arts college known for their equine studies program. They are inviting anyone with Hungarian horses to come to the show, either to compete or just to exhibit the horses and help educate people about our wonderful horses! Anyone who is interested in attending, or wants more information, is invited to contact Karen Andraska.

Note that Karen has moved – her new phone number is 865-233-0129, or email: Karenandraska@yahoo.com.

Excerpts from USDF Breeding Statistics 2001- 2006: Quality Wins!

For the six-year period from 2001 to 2006, our Charlene Summers ranked 2nd among breeders with most “Horse of the Year” placings in dressage. Her horses’ average score was 68.44%! That put her above such major breeders as Jean Brinkman (Valhalla Farms) and DG Bar Ranch, as well as many European breeders. Charlene’s HS Wistar (Wishes and Dreams x H. Marado) was also in second place among horses with most HOY placings in those six years. Wishes and Dreams

(Oldenburg), who was also bred by Charlene, was the sire with the eighth-most HOY offspring.

For those same years, the statistics about the Breeder's Cup finalists (in-hand classes – the sporthorse equivalent of “halter classes”) show that 21 Hungarian horses made it to finalist status, and four Hungarians became reserve or grand champions. Val Sivertson's Ohop Valley Hungarian Horse Farm was ranked seventh among the Breeder's Cup contenders, behind such enormous operations as Iron Spring Farm, who had seventeen finalists, compared to Val's fourteen, which must represent close to half her foal crops for those years! Her H. Aldas (*Shandor, Shagya,xH. Nagyaszony) was among the seventeen mares who have produced three or more reserve or grand champions. Chris Bredeson and Henrietta Morey's HS So Rare (*Rubin, Trak, x H. Marado) was among the 35 stallions who have sired seven or more finalists.

H. Marado (M. Brado x H. Soska), Charlene's foundation mare bred by Margit Besseney, and M. Brado (Brazado, TB x M. Dore), bred by Judith Gyurky, both also appeared on the lists of most successful dams and damsires.

Please send in any news or updates on you, your farm, and your Hungarian horses, along with pictures if you have them, to Ellen Walker, newsletter editor, at emnwalker@yahoo.com !

Remember to check our website, www.hungarianhorses.org , for information on horses for sale and breeders of Hungarian horses.

Breeders and owners, remember to post your horses for sale on the website, and send sales lists or information about horses for sale to the newsletter editor.

