



The Tales

Morgan Horse Club of WA State, Inc. Monthly Newsletter

NEWS FROM OUR YOUTH

Family Matters—by Maxi Gumprecht

The USEF Annual Meeting was a giant family reunion. There were a few immediate family members around me from Morganland, such as Cindy Mugnier, and members of the AMHA Youth Council Christine Harb, Kate Foy, and Lauren Foy. Others came from distant branches, such as dressage or Arabians or combined driving. These were the relatives you rarely see, but embrace anyway just because you're joined by the same name. Which in this case would be the USEF name and a sturdy love of horses.

Unlike a typical reunion, where names are inevitably forgotten, there was no need to tiptoe around that for some well-known members, like David O'Connor and Steffen Peters. The room was filled with men and women famous for their horsemanship. But when it came to meeting the person under the helmet, I was never disappointed.

The awards night passed like a red carpet event; glitzy gowns everywhere, and camera flashes that for once did not come from just my mom. Clearly I should have watched more Grammy Awards shows beforehand to know that an acceptance speech is a given, not something they notify you about. Nevertheless I managed to pull out a thank you to Breyer, for sponsoring the award, and to USEF, all the members of which should take great pride in knowing that, through awards like the Youth Sportsman, they are taking care of the future of the sport.

The whole time though, I was looking around at all these incredible horsemen and women, wondering how in the world I was included to sit with them that night. The Morgan community has given me so much. To think that in the three short years I have ridden with this equine family, it has been able to make this fantasy happen! That cannot be coincidence; Morgan supporters are so passionate and earnest to look out for this breed that they can move mountains practically overnight. I never feel like I can repay them enough. The fact that this award seeks out and recognizes sportsmanship, however, gives me hope that perhaps even something so simple as good sportsmanlike conduct can be its own contribution. I have faith that Morgans will survive because no person is too small to make a difference here.

To an outsider, horse riding might seem segregated; we differentiate between breeds, trainers, park saddle, western, 14-17, Youth, Amateur, etc. However the USEF Annual Meeting was clear proof of the opposite. Despite the differences between them, all the members of the clan came together to celebrate each others' accomplishments.

Sports can bring out the best in people and the worst in people. I'm happy to be part of a family that has shown me an overwhelming amount of the best.

Maxi Gumprecht receiving the USEF Sportsmanship award



Proud Mom Bonnie Witrak