



(L-R) Brittany Logan and Jeremy Granier presented the UPHA Tony Ray Young Professional of the Year Award to Erin and Reese Richey who were joined by their daughter, Reagan.

Cape Cod Farm:

A New Adventure

BY JENNY GREY



Aleia Brown not only made her dreams come true by winning the 2014 Saddle Seat Medal Finals with a unanimous vote of the judges, she made Erin's dreams as an instructor come true as well. Aleia was also the 2014 NHS Good Hands Finals winner and the People's Choice Saddle Seat Equitation Rider of the Year.

Perfecting their skills in the art and science of horsemanship from almost the time they could walk, Erin and Reese Richey, of Cape Cod Farm in Spring Valley, Ohio, have become highly successful trainers and instructors at a very young age. As children of well-known families in the American Saddlebred and Morgan horse circles, they have trained a new generation of show ring champions. Taking over Cape Cod Farm after Kathy Boggs' retirement in 2012, they were quickly recognized by their peers as the 2013 UPHA Tony Ray Young Professionals of the Year.

With flourishing lesson, Academy and class A show programs, Erin and Reese quickly ran out of space, prompting a move after Louisville last year to a larger facility originally built for Chris Reiser, just a mile away from Erin's parents, Kathy and Gene Boggs, at the original Cape Cod Farm. During Kathy's long and distinguished career, she was one of the most sought after instructors in the country. Gene, a blacksmith by trade, travels all over the Midwestern states to shoe horses at top show barns. Now parents to six-year old Reagan, Erin and Reese are pleased to live close enough to Kathy and Gene so that Reagan is able to spend each Saturday at her grandparents' farm where she rides her favorite pony.

With 45 Saddlebreds and 4 Morgan horses in their care, it is fortunate that Erin and Reese live at the new Cape Cod Farm. "I always go down to the barn and feed before 7 a.m. before cleaning stalls," said Reese. "The guys and I try to be finished with stalls by 9 a.m. so we can start working horses in order to be done with the arena in time for lessons to start at 3 p.m. I typically start with the horses that are seasoned and easy-going before moving onto the tougher ones. Erin and I will each work a few at a time in order to have time in between to return phone calls or finish up loose ends around the barn. In our new facility we are able to ride in the aisle way as well as the arena, so that's helpful for saving time and the horses love it! Once all of the horses are worked, lessons start. I'm typically in the barn until 8 p.m. though, making sure everything is in working order and keeping up with maintenance."

Erin, a world-class rider, began showing at seven years old in both performance and equitation. Winner of multiple titles, she won the Ladies Three-Gaited 15.2 and Under World Championship in 2002 with CH To Die For. Gaining early teaching experience at the original Cape Cod Farm, she became the captain of the gold-medal winning 1996 World Cup team. Erin has since grown from strength to strength as both an instructor and trainer, with students who have won multiple regional, national and world championship titles. In 2013, three of Erin's riders were invited to try out for the World Cup team, one being selected for a place on the team.

Reese Richey still holds the record as the first boy to have won an equitation Triple Crown and the only male who has ever won a Morgan Triple Crown. The son of Lowell and Lana Richey of Sardinia, Ohio, he is a third generation horseman who learned his skills at the family's Wind Blu farm. Their home-bred Wind Blu Supreme Fantasy, Reese's long time equitation partner, was trained by Reese's grandfather. Kathy Boggs, who knew the Richey family well, took Reese under her wing as a personal project when he was 10 years old. Little did either of them know at the time that Reese would be Kathy's future son-in-law. This talented young man won the Morgan Saddle Seat Classic Equitation World Championship in 1999 and the Morgan Saddle Seat Equitation Triple Crown in 2001. He was recognized with the Pegasus award as the 2001 USEF Junior Exhibitor of the Year.

The collective Boggs/Richey family has the distinction of having trained two out of the five Morgan Triple Crown winners. Reese had first-hand knowledge to pass along to Sarah Taylor (now Sarah Russell). Erin, Reese and Kathy trained Sarah for her big Triple Crown win in 2004, riding Erin's Wind Blu Roadmaster, who was only five years old at the time. Not only was Sarah's win a significant and rare accomplishment, the sale of Roadmaster at the Grand National show that year to a new equitation rider helped to finance their 2005 wedding.

Sarah, now a trainer at Avalon Stables, in Tampa, FL, still keeps her three-gaited horse, Starmaker's Hakuna Matati, at Cape Cod farm. Beginning riding

with Reese and Erin at 13 years old, she has remained close friends with them ever since. They stood up at each other's weddings and talk to each other regularly on the phone. "There is a great sense of camaraderie at the barn," observed Sarah. "They are a very close knit group." One of the secrets of Erin and Reese's success is their highly complementary skills. "Reese has a great affinity for the young and tougher horses while Erin is brilliant at the finishing touches," said Sarah. She remembers their infinite patience while preparing the young Wind Blu Roadmaster for her Triple Crown year in 2004. "Sometimes we just had to wait him out and take our time. They were always on the same page."

Patti Dozier, of Houston, Texas, sent her horses to Cape Cod for training about ten years ago in order to accommodate her daughter, Jana Sansbury and her granddaughter, Hallie, who live in Cincinnati. Patti fell in love with horses many years ago when her grandmother took her to the Pin Oak Charity horse show. With over 40 years of experience, she has worked with many great trainers including Dorothy Dukes and Carter Cox. She echoed Sarah Russell's opinion that Reese has a special gift with young horses while Erin, also an excellent trainer, has a passion for putting the finishing touches on a more experienced horse. Patti also made special mention of Erin's extraordinary skills in teaching and developing young people as well as her ability to drive creative marketing programs that fuel Cape Cod's growth.

Aleia Brown, in training with Erin since she was five years old, was the first young child taught by Erin, the first member of the Academy team and a flower girl at her wedding. Aleia and Erin have built both a wonderful friendship and a highly effective working relationship over the years. In 2014 the results of their efforts came to fruition in a spectacular fashion when Aleia won the 2014 NHS Good Hand Finals and the 2014 Saddle Seat Medals Finals, the latter



Reese Richey was the first boy ever to have won a saddle seat equitation Triple Crown and the only male to have ever won a Morgan saddle seat equitation Triple Crown riding Wind Blu Supreme Fantasy. For this achievement, he earned the 2001 Pegasus award as the USEF Junior Exhibitor of the Year.



Sarah Taylor was the second Morgan Triple Crown winner from Cape Cod Farm in 2004. She rode Erin Boggs Richey's Wind Blu Roadmaster under the direction of Erin, Reese Richey and Kathy Boggs.

with a unanimous vote of the judges. For her achievements in 2014, she was voted the People's Choice Saddle Seat Equitation Rider of the Year. Looking back at the excitement Erin felt about Aleia's success she exclaimed "She not only made her dreams come true by winning the finals, she made my dreams as an instructor come true as well!" Sophia Stillings, also a great example of Erin and Reese's ability to develop young people, made them extremely proud by winning Walk-Jog Western Pleasure with Artful Image at the Morgan Grand National in Oklahoma City for four years in a row.

Reminiscing about the early days, Aleia's Brown's mom, Beth, remembers, "When we first met Reese and Erin they were not much older than Aleia is today. They have become part of our family and I'm 'Aunt Beth' to Reagan. I have seen them grow and mature over the years. When I first met them they were training and instructing but now they are completely responsible for their own business; that's a big difference!" On a more personal note she added, "I think Erin always believed that Aleia would do big things. She has made her what she is today. The more Erin expects, the more Aleia digs deep and is at her best."

Reagan Richey was introduced to her parents' world right after she was born. "One of our proudest moments was bringing our little girl to the Dayton horse show two days after she was born so she and I could be there when daddy hit the ring with The

Belleheiress,” Erin told us. “I was released from the hospital across the street and I came straight to the horse show. Another proud moment was when our little girl showed in her first walk and trot Academy class at Dayton horse show exactly five years after she was born across the street.” Reagan loves to show but she also loves being at home on the farm, playing with the other girls and riding the four-wheeler. “My favorite horse is Willow,” Reagan stated. “I take my weekly lesson on her. My ponies’ names are Elmo and Snickers. They are both so sweet!”

Growing up in a similar environment, both Erin and Reese have happy childhood memories. “For me it was the countless hours I spent as a kid riding my pony, Strawberry Shortcake; braiding her mane and tail and riding her for hours on our farm,” Erin remembered. “She passed away when I was a senior in high school.” Reese’s best memories are of the many years spent with his grandfather at WindBlu Farm, breaking the young horses and developing his love for training.

A common thread surfaced with everyone we interviewed. Angie Boyle, instructor, office manager and close personal friend, met the Richeys five years ago when her daughter, Maison, began taking lessons before moving into the Academy program and ultimately, the show program. “Erin and Reese both have an eye for seeing the potential in a horse and rider. They can see steps down the line and six months down the road.” One of the best examples of their uncanny ability to see potential is when the Brown family purchased Madeira’s Fame (Thomas). Erin was looking at a video of a different horse when she accidentally

came across Thomas. Her trainer’s intuition told her that he was something special but when she and Aleia went to Missouri to see him, their first meeting was pretty disastrous. Aleia was already unsure because he was an un-equitated, gaited horse. Erin, however, was very persistent and the Brown family brought Thomas back to Cape Cod. An exceptional horse that ‘fires up’ on the rail and settles down to work through an intricate equitation pattern, Thomas was the perfect partner for Aleia.

Patti Dozier and her family were also the beneficiaries of Erin’s ability to recognize potential in a horse. Erin called Patti to see if she would consider buying a mare that had talent but had not been given the opportunity to develop her abilities. Patti agreed and ‘Bubbles’ came home to Cape Cod. In the same show season that year, Patti’s daughter, Jana, had the thrill of riding at her first Louisville show where she earned a top ten ribbon with Bubbles in Amateur Three-Gaited Park Mares. Bubbles was later sold to a new owner who loves and appreciates her.

Cape Cod’s thriving Academy program serves as both an avenue to joining the show program and as a means for a person to show who may not be ready or able to own a show horse. They rightfully describe it as a ‘select’ program for which one has to compete for a place in order to join the team. Three judges assess their performance before a team is selected and some are asked to try again next year. Six year old Reagan Richey, who rode with the Academy team in the walk-trot division last year, is not exempt from the rules. “We cut her no slack!” Erin declared. “She has to compete along with everyone else.”

Proud to be a part of what may be a unique and highly effective Academy program, Angie Boyle sang its praises. “We pick judges who don’t know the kids. Tryouts are just like a horse show; they dress up in their best jodhs and we do hair and makeup. We even assess how ready they are to handle the pressure. Afterwards, we meet with each child individually to discuss what went well and what needs work. We want the kids who are passionate about the sport with parents who are ready to make the commitment to watch and support them.” Acceptance into the team is not about who has the financial means. Cape Cod offers two scholarships every year to deserving students who would not otherwise be able to show.

Understanding the importance of mentorship and its positive effect on personal development, Erin, Reese and the team pair up each Academy member with an experienced junior exhibitor from the Class A show string. In observing, encouraging and giving advice, the mentor looks at competition with a different and more discerning

eye. Having an opportunity to gain a greater insight on why people either succeed or struggle, this experience will no doubt have a positive effect both on their own performance and in later life.

Cece Bolka is an excellent example of a person who progressed from the lesson program to the Academy team and eventually to horse ownership and the show team. When she first started taking lessons, her mom, Lisa Ulliman, was not sure what kind of commitment the family was going to make. Their involvement gradually led to acceptance into the Academy program. Now Cece is riding Aussie, Cinderella Blues and Call of the West in the Cape Cod show string. Lisa, who took lessons in order to have a greater appreciation for her daughter’s sport, purchased CH Mojo, making her debut in five-gaited show pleasure last year.

Lisa, who did not grow up with horses, found the Academy program to be an ideal means of becoming involved in competition before buying a show horse. Cece was not only developing as a rider, but learning to be part of a team where a dedicated work ethic is of utmost importance. “Erin is the glue that holds everything together,” Lisa stated. “She sets personal and professional standards. When you walk through the doors she makes it clear what she expects you to bring to the table. She has learned to win and to lose gracefully. When you lose, you can succumb to the loss or fight back. The Academy team is always there for each other and there is a great sense of camaraderie. It is a great opportunity for kids and families. Not every kid can be a show rider but they can be a part of everything. It makes them feel special.” Last year, three of the Academy riders graduated to the class A show program.

As an adult who learned to ride later in life, Lisa has been so appreciative that Erin and Reese have encouraged and embraced her aspirations, cheering her on to ‘go for it’. “It has been an amazingly positive experience and I have the greatest respect for what they do. My admiration for Erin and Reese knows no boundaries. This is way harder than it looks! I don’t judge success by the ribbon. It’s about coming out of the ring knowing that I did my best.”

Given their daunting workload, it is fortunate that Cape Cod has a first-rate team providing backup. Oscar Espinoza, who has been with them for several years, is both the farm manager and part of the extended family. Erin, with Reese’s help, is teaching 75 lessons a week along with instructors Angie Boyle and Katy Granby.

When there is precious time off, Erin and Reese enjoy spending time with family, doing new things with Reagan and taking an annual vacation in Florida, home of Reese’s brother. While time away is necessary for recharging the batteries and relaxation, Cape Cod is never far from their minds. Having proved their effectiveness in finding and keeping new customers, their plan is to expand the lesson and Academy programs even more.

In an industry needing talented young leaders, we are lucky to have trainers like Erin and Reese Richey inspiring a new generation of horse lovers. Acquiring early skills from well-respected parents and grandparents, they have applied their inborn gifts and deep work ethic to become fast rising stars in a highly competitive profession. We wish them every success for a future bright with endless possibilities.



Erin Richey, a world-class rider, began showing at seven years old in both performance and equitation. Winner of multiple titles, she won the Ladies Three-Gaited 15.2 and Under World Championship in 2002 with CH To Die For.