

CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal

Hackney Pony Sire of the Year

By Jenny Grey



CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal, Carl and Kathryn Nichols' 'once in a lifetime' pony, not only excelled in the show ring, he is passing along his athleticism, beauty and bright personality to his offspring. Pictured at Lexington with Maureen Campbell at whip in his first show season, he had an almost undefeated show record leading up to his victory as the undefeated 2009 Harness Pony World's Grand Champion.

Carl and Kathryn Nichols of Crystal Creek Farm in Winterville, GA, continue to produce some of the best Hackney ponies in the country, many of them sired by one of the best pony sires in the country, the aptly named CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal (Dun-Haven Center of Attraction x Dun-Haven So Lovely), the People's Choice Hackney Sire of the Year for 2015. Carl and Kathryn's 'once in a lifetime' pony not only excelled in the show ring, he is passing along his athleticism, beauty and bright personality to his offspring.

Bred by Lee Dunn, Phenomenal enjoyed an outstanding show career before standing at stud full time at Crystal Creek Farm. He was the World's Champion Stallion/Gelding Harness Pony in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2011; the 2009 UPHA Hackney Harness Pony of the Year and the 2009 World's Grand Champion Harness Pony with Maureen Campbell at whip. The pride of Crystal Creek Farm, Phenomenal has his own paddock right behind Carl and Kathryn's house where he can romp, play and generally show off.

A YouTube video of this beautiful pony with Kathryn at whip shows all of his best qualities. With a perfect driving profile and big, flowing motion he marches around the ring with ears that never drop. His charisma shines through as if daring you not to watch him. It is no wonder he is producing such quality offspring. "He's just coming into his own," Carl Nichols reflected, justifiably proud of the success of Phenomenal's get.



Kathryn and Carl Nichols own Crystal Creek Farm in Winterville, GA where they breed, raise and train top quality Hackney ponies. There are 48 ponies on the farm including their world champion stallion, CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal.

Crystal Creek's Dr. Hill (out of Twin Oak Rufiann) provides an excellent example of the success of their breeding program. When Dr. Hill was born, Carl and Kathryn knew he was a special pony so they needed to give him as special name. Kathryn decided they should name him after their great friend, Dr. Hill, 98 years old and a legend in the Walking Horse world. "He's the epitome of a Southern gentleman and one of the nicest people you will ever meet," Carl told us.

Already making his mark in the show ring, Dr. Hill won the 2014 AHHS Limited Breeders' Three-Year-Old Stake and the Four-Year-Old Hackney Pony Reserve World's Championship with Eduardo Lopez at whip. In recognition of his achievements and future potential, Crystal Creek's Dr. Hill was named the 2015 People's Choice Reserve Four-Year-Old Hackney Pony. A beautiful pony like his sire, he will be bred to four mares this year as well as continuing to build on an outstanding show career.

Other of CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal's show ring stars are Crystal Creek's Hot to Trot (out of Late Nite's Magic Moment), the 2012 Three-Year-Old Harness Pony Reserve World's Champion; Crystal Creek's Foxnomenal, the UPHA National Champion Pleasure Driving Pony and Crystal Creek's Night Aire (out of Pine View's Night Aire), the National Champion ASPR Road Pony. These are just highlights of what these young ponies have accomplished with results consistently at the top of the ribbons.

"I'm excited about all of his babies!" Carl said with pride, referring to other CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal get making their mark in the ring. "We're just seeing the tip of what Palisades Mr. Big Stuff can do. We have Crystal Creek's Jazz Dancer (out of Dun-Haven Riverdance) who won the Hoosier Weanling Fillies Futurity and there are several other young ones doing great... I'm tickled to death!"

Well-known for producing world caliber offspring with the Crystal Creek prefix, Carl and Kathryn Nichols are very proud of their record but Carl admits it is very hard work. Growing his herd to more than 70 ponies a little over a year ago, he said to himself, "You're crazy as June bug!" He has since reduced the size of his operation to 'only' 48.

Very proud of the development of his staff, he relies completely on Eduardo Lopez who came to Crystal Creek ten years ago. In that time, Eduardo has grown into a skilled trainer who shows most of the Crystal Creek ponies, enjoying a well-deserved Reserve World's Championship with Crystal Creek's Dr. Hill last year. Eduardo leads a team who ensure their set up and turn out is immaculate at every show they attend. Crystal Creek Farm is recognizable by all who pass by as a top quality operation.

The success of CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal's offspring is a source of great pride, along with the continued respect the Crystal Creek name commands. "We are honored to receive these People's Choice awards," Carl told us with gratitude. In an earlier interview he told us, "It's like raising children in terms of seeing what they will become. Each one is different in terms of ability and personality." They are breeding ponies who not only excel when shown by Crystal Creek Farm, they are doing very well when they move on to new owners.

CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal's legacy is moving to a second generation with Crystal Creek's Dr. Hill as a fresh, new face in the breeding ranks but Phenomenal himself will still be producing world class offspring for many years to come. Through years of experience at Crystal Creek Farm, Carl and Kathryn Nichols have found a formula that works, producing exciting new get who will be our future show ring stars. With a name that proves his considerable worth, CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal is crowned the People's Choice 2015 Hackney Sire of the Year.

Carl Nichols is 'tickled to death' with the quality of CH Dun-Haven Phenomenal's offspring making their mark in the show ring including (Top to Bottom) Crystal Creek's Jazz Dancer, the 2015 All American HHF Weanling Fillies Champion, presented by Eduardo Lopez; Crystal Creek's Dixie Chick, undefeated at the Dallas Fall Classic in the UPHA Harness Pony Classic and the Harness Pony Stake, also presented by Eduardo Lopez and Crystal Creek's Legacy, the All American HHF 4/5 Year-Old Pleasure Driving Champion and the UPHA Hackney Pleasure Driving Pony Classic Reserve Champion with Carl Nichols at whip.

