

A New Venture In The Lone Star State

by Bob Funkhouser

From the family farm in Virginia to a 25-acre operation in the center of Arlington, Texas, just two miles from the iconic stadium where the Dallas Cowboys suit up on eight-plus Sundays a season this time of year, Robert Gardiner is adding another chapter to an already storied career. That career has taken him to Illinois (MBA Equestrians and Landmark Farm) and Missouri (High Spirits Farm) enjoying success at every stop along the way. With a mother (Maggie Gardiner) and sister (Katherine Hansil) heavily involved in the sport, it's all the former UPHA Chapter 5 Chairperson has ever wanted to do.

Watching, listening and learning, Gardiner has proven adept at training the entire gamut, open champions, amateurs and junior exhibitors, young horses and futurity babies. There's no part of it he doesn't enjoy. With Jack Magill's retirement plan, the opportunity to do his own thing was inviting to Gardiner whose new residence is the former Colonial Wood Arabian Farm, a very big deal in that breed in the late '70s.



Robert has had 19 world's and national titleholders so far but he is particularly fond of VHF Belle Epoque, whom he owned, went through several heartaches and entertaining performances with, won world's titles and retired to now raise champion babies.

"I'm really happy here," said Gardiner. "I'm in a great location between Ft. Worth and Dallas. I've got 48 stalls in the main barn, two 50' round pens and a 100 x 225 arena, all under one roof. There's also a nice outdoor ring. It's a great place to work horses."

Gardiner's string of world's and national champions, as well as Sweepstakes and Classics titleholders, goes back to 2001 and his Virginia roots with reserve world's champion of champions CH Herculean who was driven to two world's titles in the junior exhibitor division by Shaye Coleman. To date, some 19 American Saddlebreds have won above-mentioned titles. Additionally, Gardiner has started and/or sold top of the liner performers such as CH With Style And Grace, Crazysexycool, CH A Dream Color, Romance In New York, Square Dance, Pucker Up, Harlem's Showman, Majestic's Jackie O, Tantalize Me LCC, and Callaway's Blue Waltz.

"I've currently got 24 training horses," said Gardiner. "I really enjoy what we're putting together and look forward to showing on our



In addition to directing CH Star Spangled Steel to an ASHA Youth Challenge Fine Harness World's Championship with Ashley Baird in 2003, Robert was reserve in the Junior Park Pleasure Championship and qualifier at the UPHA/American Royal.



While at MBA Equestrians the great CH Cary's Moonraker won world's titles for Margo and Brittany Baird. Robert showed her a few times himself.



With Beata Flatley-Lilja's Harlem's Showman, Robert won a UPHA Classic Grand Championship, an ASR Four-Year-Old Sweepstakes title and the 2008 Three-Gaited Over 15.2 World's Championship.



In partnership with his sister, Katherine Hansil, Robert won the 2008 UPHA Park Pleasure Classic Grand Championship aboard CH With Style And Grace before selling the great mare to the Grom family who won many world's titles.



Another of his favorites, CH Pucker Up was the American Royal Five-Gaited Mare Champion in 2006 and 2007 for Jonelle and Paul Chovanec.

circuit down here as well as the national level. Debbie Graves is heading the riding program and Juve Turrubiarres is here with me as a part of the training team. We've worked together for a while now."

Gardiner brings a lot of experience to an already good Texas circuit. In addition to his training successes and UPHA participation, he is also a USEF licensed judge having officiated at such venues as the World's Championship

Horse Show. With some experienced customers as part of the Robert Gardiner Stables team, he and fiancée Kristi Suderman are looking forward to all that awaits them as residents of the Lone Star State.



Magical Promises and Anna Marie Knipp took several top titles under Robert's direction, including a victory pass at Lexington Junior League.



Juve Turrubiarres has been Robert's right hand man for several years and he is part of the Texas training team. He is pictured here aboard Callaway's See The Ghost.



Carolyn Moore Miller's I'm A Blues Man was the Reserve World's Champion Five-Gaited Gelding. New owner Lisa Holt, under the direction of Steve and Tiffany Wheeler, just won the Amateur Five-Gaited National Championship with I'm A Blues Man.