

INDIANA HORSEMEN'S HALL OF FAME

DIANA AND BILL WHITINGER

Editor's Note: The following speech was read by announcer Peter Fenton, Friday, September 9, 2022 at the All American Horse Classic. Photo by Osteen.

If "Teamwork makes the dream work," then Diana and Bill Whiting are the perfect exponents of that saying. Whether it's their marriage of 50 years, their successful businesses, their support of Indiana horse shows or the breeding of Saddlebred champions, Diana and Bill Whiting have indeed been a team that works hard to achieve their dreams.

Diana was born and raised in Goshen, Indiana. Like so many horse crazy young girls, Diana worked at a local stable cleaning stalls, feeding and grooming so she could be around horses. She met Bill while both were employed at R.R. Donnelley and Sons in Warsaw, Indiana, the largest commercial printing company in the United States.

Diana introduced Bill to horses and before long the newly married couple, along with Diana's young sons Redd and Brent Matthews, had moved to the country on a small farm. There was a pony, and an Arabian mare named Dina who was bred to a Polish stallion, producing a foal they named Premonition. Thus was born Foggy Bottom Arabians, and the Whiting family was on its way in the horse world.

The whole family showed; English, western, costume, driving, from 4-H shows to local open shows to Arabian regional shows. A friend introduced them to Half-Arabians, the other half being American Saddlebred.

Intrigued, the Whitings would eventually switch to Saddlebreds. One of their earliest acquisitions was I'm Courageous, a three-gaited show pleasure champion purchased from Darrell Wallen and trained by Randy and Denessa Harper, shown to great success by Diana.

When the Harpers moved to Kentucky, Diana and Bill transferred their horses to Mike McIntosh Stables, in Westfield, [Indiana] where they have remained for nearly 25 years.

Among the many winners they have campaigned with Mike are Our Liberator, CH Peerless, Kalarama's Flo Jo, Love Happens and the many times champion fine harness mare Callaway's Hang On To Your Heart.



Show manager Dawn Kendrick (l) and Michele Carvin presented their plaques to new Indiana Horsemen Hall Of Fame inductees Bill and Diana Whiting, who were joined by family and friends in center ring. (Photo by Rick Osteen)

The Whitings also maintain horses with Cam and Caroline Boyer's Roselane Farm in Sheridan, [Indiana]. Caroline instructs their granddaughter Nicole Mathews, who has accrued many championships with three-gaited country pleasure/pleasure driving gelding Callaway's Here Comes The Blue.

Bill and Diana have carefully developed a small but highly successful breeding program centered around two or three special broodmares. As responsible breeders, the Whitings always do their best by their homebreds; pointing their youngsters to a division in which they can excel, be it five-gaited or western pleasure.

Among the outstanding young performers they have raised at their farm in Thornton, [Indiana] are Radiant Destiny, Reserve World's Champion Three-Year-Old Fine Harness Mare and All American Horse Classic ASR Two-Year-Old Fine Harness Sweepstakes Reserve Champion; Miss Believin', ASR Four-Year-Old Three-Gaited Sweepstakes Champion and Ladies/Junior Exhibitor Three-Gaited Champion; Just One Kiss, ASR Three-Year-Old Three-Gaited Sweepstakes Champion; Simply Fortunate, Midwest Charity Three-Year-Old Three-Gaited Park Champion; and Radiant Desire, Shelby County Fair Junior Three-Gaited Champion.

This year at the Kentucky State Fair, the Whitings experienced the ultimate thrill for any breeder: They watched as their homebred colt Billy Flynn ESQ, captured the World's Championship title in the ASHBA Kentucky Futurity Three-Year-Old Fine Harness.

Behind the scenes, Bill and Diana have devoted countless hours volunteering for Indiana horse shows. They are among the founders of the IASHA Spring Warm Up show, where Diana is co-chairperson and Bill serves as assistant manager.

The couple serve on the show committees of the Indianapolis Charity Horse Show and the All American Horse Classic. Their company 2W Tech, developed MOS judging software for the All American Cup and UPHA.

Both are active in the Indiana American Saddlebred Horse Association where Bill serves on the board and Diana is president. Whiting Farms is a major sponsor at Indiana shows. Arrive at Indy Charity or Spring Warm Up early and you will likely find Bill building center ring and Diana setting up hospitality tables.

Bill and Diana are as generous with their friendships as they are with their time. Close friend Corey Covert, has shown several top Whiting entrants and had this to say, "I've had the honor to show Diana's Our Libertator and Callaway's Here Comes The Blue, and Bill's homebred babies Castle Keeper and Keep The Vision.

Bill and Diana have been beyond gracious, generous and just plain selfless. Diana has made my dreams come true on multiple occasions by offering me the opportunity to show across Indiana, Ohio and Kentucky with "bucket list" stops at Lexington Junior League and multiple trips to Louisville.

Truly I would not be the rider I am today without the magical moments and experiences they've provided me."

