

THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE

David Rand

The People's Choice Trainer of the Year

By Kendra Peebles

David Rand has earned your vote as the People's Choice Trainer Of The Year for 2016. His success in the show ring and the show records of the horses he trains speak for themselves. David has earned the title of People's Choice Trainer of the Year on many occasions, as well as earning Trainer of the Decade from 2000 to 2010 and AMHA Man of the Year in 2011. There is a quote attributed to Will Durant that says, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." This may be the quote that best fits David's experiences in the 2016 show year.

"It was such a strong year for the entire crew and stable. It was just really consistent," says David. "Starting with the great weather early in the season, we could just get a head start and we didn't look back." RAND went to nine different horse shows last year, and some were on back-to-back weekends. To say that the team at RAND needed stamina during last year's season would be an understatement. In response to those back-to-back shows, David says that everyone just stepped up and the fact that everyone worked together is why we were able to do so well. "It was just a fun, good, consistent year for us. Everyone in the Morgan world

really put on some great shows. I believe that everyone in this industry has been pushing forward to improve all aspects of the horse show experience. From the officials and the managers at the shows to the trainers and the exhibitors, I just think that last year's shows really stood out as being better than ever."

Like many other trainers, David's involvement in the Morgan industry has become a family affair. He and his spouse Jason Douglass, are raising their young sons Parker and Presley. Parker, who will be four in May, began showing in the academy lead-line division in 2016 under the direction of Kristen Cater. Presley, now 2 ½ years old, also enjoys time at the barn and was a hit in the New England Regional Stick Horse class.

Longtime client Amy Gatewood Gendjar also knows a thing or two about bringing her own kids into the Morgan world. Amy



David Rand enjoyed a memorable 2016 both professionally and personally, centered around family and horses. Rand along with spouse Jason Douglass and sons Parker and Presley spend much of their time with the many four-legged creatures on their Falmouth, Maine farm.

has been riding with David for the past 12 years, and now her oldest daughter, Kira, is 14 and has multiple Grand National and World Championship titles under her belt. Kira recently topped the Hunter Pleasure 13 & Under World Championship aboard her new mount, Gradell's Ring My Bell. Of course, it is not just Amy and her kids that caught the Morgan bug in this family; her father, Jack Gatewood, has also been showing with David for many years. At this past Grand National and World Championship, Jack and his young pleasure driving horse What's Up CH trotted away with the Reserve World Champion Pleasure Driving Amateur title. This pair was also the winners in the Grand National Pleasure Driving Amateur class. It would be remiss to not include Amy's slew of titles with her beloved western gelding, MLB Power Play GCH. They added another world champion-

ship title to their collection, the 2016 Western Pleasure Ladies Amateur honors. Collectively, the Dantree Farm horses are quite the force to be reckoned with.

However, when Amy talks about her experiences with David, she talks about much more than just how her horses perform. "Horse shows are family events for us. We all work a lot and we lead busy lives, and with six kids of my own, it's kind of crazy! So for us, horse shows are our time to spend with our horses and family," Amy said. They are based in Michigan, so when the school year is going on, they make it out to the farm about once a month. As soon as summer hits, they spend a week to a week and a half at RAND before each horse show. "The last time we went to the barn, Ashlyn got to ride her hunter, Hylee's The Devil I M GCH, bareback for the first time, and she just lit up. We are so blessed to have these amazing and high-powered show horses that we can also just take off the saddle and watch these kids beam because they're just getting to be with their horse. A million people want David's time, but he knows how to say 'No, we need to take time to let these kids just love on their horses and let them make these

memories.' I know he always has my kids' best interests at heart, and that's so important to me."

Another RAND kid that everyone knows is Hannah Kelley. Hannah is now a freshman in college, and when she reflects on her time with David from the walk-trot days to her youth years, she said, "David has been a part of my life for over ten years now. He has taught me not only how to ride but other life lessons, as well, and I cannot thank him enough for that." Hannah's mother, Leslie, echoes her praises. "David is an incredibly talented horseman and an intense competitor. But for us, his barn family, it is so much more than that. He has brought together a diverse group of people with a common passion: the Morgan horse. This is a family that cares deeply for one another, and that is a direct reflection of his love, support, and leadership. I am proud to call him my friend," Leslie said.



Family and horses are an enduring theme as three generations of the Gatewood/Gendjar family celebrated world championship honors in 2016 under the direction of David Rand. From their home base in Michigan, the Dantree Farm family spends much of their free time in Maine in what has become their home away from home.

SLB Andiamo and Kathleen Kabel's 2016 Amateur English Pleasure World Championship is one of the standout memories of an amazing season for David Rand as he shared the joyous run to the winner's circle.

Julie Rohrer also spoke at length about David's love of the horse and his dedication to each customer and horse team. "It doesn't matter whether you have one horse or twenty with him, he makes each of us feel special. His enthusiasm is contagious and encourages us to do our very best. David totally gets it; it's supposed to be fun!" Julie explained. Julie and her classic pleasure driving horse CFF Personal Advantage made history at this past Grand National and World Championships by claiming the Classic Pleasure Driving World Championship for the third consecutive year. Julie also teamed up for a world title with Acorn Ridge Dutch Design CH and said, "He is so different from CFF Personal Advantage that it took some getting used to. I would drive some seven hours to RAND from my house in upstate New York, and David would work with me and 'Nacho' until it clicked. Often the two of us would be in the cart together. We had so much fun while he showed me how to drive him, and I really learned a lot. It was worth every bloody mile to get to Maine!"

The 2016 RAND team that David continually references was made up of Bernie Flores, Leo Cordero, Leigh Drummey, Kara Wilson and several other members of the all-important crew. Bernardino "Bernie" Flores has been a key part of RAND for more than a decade. Bernie is the farm manager, and David says that if Bernie leaves, he's just going to follow where Bernie goes. "Bernie deserves so much credit. He keeps up doing all of this work and helps us achieve everything we do. With the high number of show horses that we have, Bernie has just become that much more of an integral and important part of what we do. He cares about this as much as I do. He shares everyone's dreams. Their victories are his, their losses are his, and he shares all of the ups and downs as his, too," David said.

Some of those victories this past year have included VL Zaia GCH, Ledgefield's Sovereign Son, Zanetti GCH, Queen's Soul Mate, Queen's Jim Dandy, Queen's Yankee Spirit, Merriehill Home Stretch, SLB Andiamo GCH, Dantree Debutante, SLLC Patent Pending, Honore De Balzac GCH, Most Wanted CH, Cherrydale Acapella GCH, Invitation Only, CFF Better Than Money, HBF Bentley, and Cedar Creek Flambeau GCH.



Julie Rohrer made history at the 2016 Grand National and World Championship Horse Show with her third consecutive Classic Pleasure Driving World Championship on the lines of CFF Personal Advantage. It was a memorable moment shared by Julie Rohrer and David Rand.

When asked the difficult question of if there were any wins that stood out in 2016, David said that Kathleen Hanna Kabel and SLB Andiamo GCH's World Championship win in the English Pleasure Amateur at Oklahoma City was a standout. "Andiamo's win was a really great moment. He's an older horse and he is still such a hard worker. Kathleen really wanted to win this title, and she worked so hard leading up to it. There is a lot of behind the scenes work that goes into making sure Andiamo is ready to go, so it was a phenomenal feeling when his name was called in the championship. I can remember running to the winner's circle and holding him by his bridle path the whole way," David recalled.

Kathleen shared his enthusiasm and said, "As a client, I have never been pushed so hard, both physically and mentally, to learn how to get the most out of my horse. There is a science to how David trains our horses and once you understand it, you can ride any one of them to their peak performance. Every time I leave that barn, I feel like I learned something new. I have a true feeling of accomplishment and a big smile on my face!"

David continues to lead by example in the Morgan world, and his relationships with each of his clients will go on to be his lasting legacy. Each year, David Rand seems to set some new kind of precedent in the show world, and there will surely be more firsts and records set and broken by David, but if his clients' love of their trainer and friend are any indication, it is David's enthusiasm and hard working attitude that will be best known throughout the Morgan world for years to come.



People's Choice Trainer of the Year David Rand



By Jenny Grey



David Rand was honored to again be named People's Choice Trainer Of The Year. He enjoyed a memorable year both professionally and personally with sons Parker and Presley and partner Jason Douglass.



It's all about teamwork as David Rand gives much credit to assistant Leigh Drummey and farm manager Bernardino Flores for helping to keep the ship sailing smoothly.

A gifted horseman enjoying a long and distinguished career, David Rand had a personal best show season in 2015 with an unprecedented number of national and world championship titles. Trainer of the Decade from 2000 to 2010, AMHA Man of the Year in 2011 and the recipient of the People's Choice Trainer of the Year award multiple times, he has received this prestigious award again for his success in 2015. Not only was this David's most successful year ever, it was also a time in which we find him at his happiest in both his professional and personal life.

Having molded and influenced the many young people who have gone on to ride with David as adults, his own children have added a new dimension to the joy with which he approaches life. David and his partner, Jason Douglass, are parents to Presley, born in August 2014 and Parker who is nearly three and is following in his father's footsteps and already learning to ride. David and Jason load the boys into the car each Sunday for a family outing, driving Parker to his lessons with Kristen Cater in New Hampshire. When Parker comes home, he runs out to the barn to tell his pony, Silver, about his day.

"It was an unexpected year", said David, reflecting on a show season which added an unprecedented total of 21 Grand National titles to the Rand banner in 2015, plus an impressive array of world championships. It was a year in which every single client had a personal best event, not just in Oklahoma but throughout the year. "We had momentum and positive energy", David told us, still energized and excited by his clients' achievements. "We kept it fresh; things clicked...The amateurs worked so hard; they all had a show where they did better than you ever imagined they could have done."

One of the secrets to David's success is that of having a large group of clients who have been with him for many years and through multiple generations. With long term relationships comes an additional level of communication and trust in which the envelope can be pushed further and the bar set higher. The Ramseys are a great example of one of the multi-generational families who David has trained and inspired over the years. Ray Ramsey sent his daughters Caitlynn and Erika to David for lessons over 20 years ago. They joined their cousins Kelsey, Christin and Megan Ramsey, who all rode with David as junior exhibitors. David takes pride in knowing he mentored Kelsey, now assistant trainer to Merin Maggi at Maggi Stables in California, bringing a bright, new talent into the professional ranks. Erika, who took time out from showing to have a baby, is now bringing a third generation, her two-year old son Connor, to the farm to join in the fun. "He's fearless", said Caitlynn Ramsey, of this aspiring young horseman. "David took him for a ride in the cart and he loved it! It's so great to have seen the junior exhibitors grow up to be amateurs and now there is a whole new generation of lead line and walk trot riders coming along."

Caitlynn began training with David when she was 10. Now 30, she won the Classic Pleasure Saddle Reserve World Championship with MCS Bandini last year. Also in 2015, Ray Ramsey's VL Tiny Dancer won the Western Pleasure Three-Year-Old Mare Grand National Championship with David in the saddle. "David cares so much about everything", Caitlynn observed. "He will take a trained horse and make it exponentially better. I call it the 'Rand magic'...You know when you show he will put you in the best possible position to do well. Your horse is ready and the rest is up to you."



Nearly three-years-old, Parker is following in his dad's footsteps. His love of animals and riding horses is apparent having just won his first ribbons in academy.



Cindy Mugnier enjoys working with David and is quick to credit his devotion to his craft, attention to detail, strong bond with the horses, clients and team he works with as examples of his professionalism and his secret to success.

The Gatewood family is proud to have three generations of their family earning world championship victory passes in 2015. Now in their eleventh year at Rand Stables, Jack Gatewood won the Amateur Park Harness World Championship with Merriehill Home Stretch; his daughter, Amy Gatewood-Gendjar, won the Western Pleasure Amateur World Championship with MLB Power Play; Jack's granddaughter, Kira, was the Junior Hunt Seat Equitation Reserve World Champion and Kira's sister, Ashlyn, was the Walk-Trot English Pleasure 11 and Under World Champion with Cherrydale Acappella. In a year when Kira moved up to the 13 and under division and Ashlyn moved up to walk-trot from lead line, David prepared them as carefully as if he were working with an open world championship contender, ensuring they had safe, but competitive horses for the job.

"David is the ultimate professional," Jack Gatewood told us. "He is so passionate; so 'dialed in' and driven to succeed. He puts in so much thought, time and effort. He's totally focused and does everything to make things come true. He's a phenomenal person both in and out of the ring. He just wants the best for everyone." Admiring David's work ethic Jack added, "I don't know how he does it. He's up working horses until 3 a.m. in Oklahoma but he's always joyful; then so sad when a show ends."

It is always a thrill to see David Rand bring out the brilliance of a new show ring star. David Rand and four-year-old VL Zaia made history in Oklahoma City as the youngest horse to have won the Open English Pleasure World Championship, bringing home the roses for Angela Conner Bulmer with a unanimous vote of the judges. David also won the Park Harness Three-Year-Old World Championship with What's Up, owned by the Dantree Farm; the Futurity Three-Year-Old Pleasure Driving World Championship with Invitation Only for Galeforce Partnership, and the Junior Stallion Reserve World Championships with Ledgefield's Intrigue for Steve and Jill Tassinari.

Other wonderful performers in the Rand lineup winning world and reserve world championship titles were CFF Personal Advantage and Julie Rohrer, the unanimous Classic Pleasure Driving world champions for the second year in a row; Ledgefield's Sovereign Son and Cindy Mugnier, the Four-Year-Old English Pleasure World Champions; Queen's Soul Mate and Sandy Hendrick (a Rand client since 2000), the Park Saddle Amateur Masters Reserve World Champions; RCV Patent Pending and Nicholas Roberts, the Classic Pleasure Saddle Junior Exhibitor 14-17 Reserve World Champions in the finale of their junior exhibitor career; SLB Andiamo and Kathleen Kabel, the English Pleasure Amateur Reserve World Champions; TRE Someday and

Casey McDonald Douglass, the Park Saddle Amateur Reserve World Champions and Unbreakable Bond and Erin Kelley, the Pleasure Driving Amateur Masters Reserve World Champions.

Cindy Mugnier, a well-respected professional horsewoman as well as a Rand client, is eminently qualified to speak about David's gifts saying, "David Rand is a terrific pick for the People's Choice Trainer of the Year. His devotion to his craft, his attention to detail, his strong bond with the horses, clients and team he works with are all examples of his professionalism and his secret to success. Every horse and client in David's barn is made to feel as though they are the most important horse or client ever. When he is working with them, 100% of his attention is on them. What I most appreciate is his willingness to listen, problem solve and fairly evaluate a situation. David is not one to candy coat an issue. He always does his best to find solutions but if a problem cannot be turned around, he says so straight out. You are never left wondering what he thinks; and he never makes excuses or accepts them. David wins an award like this and has an international reputation for good reason. His expertise is obvious and the lasting relationships he has formed with the horses and people with whom he works is a testament to his character."

Cindy emphasized that David is always quick to give credit and thanks, noting that the people who work for David know they are part of a team and their opinions and effort are valued. With 70 horses on the farm and 45 in training, he is very grateful to be able to delegate to a team led by his assistant trainer, Leigh Drummey and his farm manager, Bernardino Flores. "Everybody works together", said David. "There is give and take. It's important to the staff that we do well ... it's more than just me." While this statement is undoubtedly true, David is the inspirational leader who holds it all together

A superb trainer and devoted family man, David Rand enjoyed unprecedented success in 2015. Sharing his gifts with both the horses and people in his care, he has created an enviable family-friendly environment where satisfied clients have remained at Rand Stables since its inception over 20 years ago and are bringing second and third generations into the fold. In spite of his stellar record, David remains modest about his achievements saying, "It's such an honor to receive this award. I'm grateful and humbled to have the approval of my peers in this incredible industry." Finding great joy in both his chosen profession and his personal life, David summed it up perfectly by saying "This is what I wanted my whole life!" His People's Choice Award is a great achievement but experiencing the happiest time in his life is priceless.