

## EQUINE DEATH

# Rifles And Roses

by Leeann Mione

The strikingly handsome black stallion Rifles And Roses was humanely euthanized Dec. 11, 2016 at the age of 26 with his beloved owner of more than 20 years Danette Musselman by his side.

Danette worked at David and Joni Nelson's Double Dove Farm in Versailles, Ky., when she was just beginning her career as a trainer, breeder and owner. One of the horses she managed and took care of was the stallion Carey's Night Of Love.

Night Of Love was a multi-world's champion producing sire for Double Dove Farm and in addition to siring Rifles And Roses with the mare Symbol Song, he also sired the full sister to Rifles And Roses world's champion of champions CH Love Them Roses and full brother world's champion Night Of Roses.

When Danette arrived at Double Dove Farm, Rifles And Roses was just a baby but his jet-black color and dynamic personality were already setting him apart. Night Of Love was 20 years old when he sired Rifles And Roses and coming to the end of his breeding career. Rifles And Roses was a perfect choice to be his replacement.

In fact, after Danette drove Rifles And Roses to win the Junior Fine Harness championship at the Illinois State Fair he went straight to the breeding shed to fill the breeding book of Night Of Love after he passed away.

The handsome black stallion was heavily booked almost immediately and thus ended his show ring career to begin a prolific career at stud.

Musselman became his owner when he was five and it would prove to be one of the most important relationships in her life. "He came into my life when I was just starting out," said Danette. "His big, beautiful eye and jet black color combined with the fact that he had multi-world's champions on his top and bottom made him very popular very quickly as a sire."

"He had an 'aura' about him and he was very welcoming to people who wanted to touch him and meet him up close. Even though he knew he was a breeding stallion, he was always very approachable and he was always just a delight to be around."

Rifles And Roses immense popularity led him to sire many, many offspring including world's champion Sophie Simpson, world's champion Pistolero and world's champion High-Powered Rifle among others.

While Rifles And Roses captured the hearts and minds of his many fans right from the start, it was Danette who loved him the most and it was under her management and direction that he achieved perhaps his greatest claim to fame. "He produced wonderful amateur and junior exhibitor horses. That really was his forte," said Danette. "His kind nature and beautiful expression were a big part of what made him so sought after in the breeding shed."

It could be said that Danette and Rifles And Roses came up through the ranks together. They put each other on the map, so to speak and both loved the other endlessly.



Rifles And Roses jet black color, beautiful eye and the aura he had about him made him an immensely popular sire from the very beginning of his career in the breeding shed.



After winning the Junior Fine Harness tricolor at the Illinois State Fair, he went straight to stud at Double Dove Farm in Versailles, Ky.