

The Second Annual “Women and Horses Expo 2009”

November 6-8, 2009

Lazy E Arena in Guthrie, OK

I must say that I have never been to Oklahoma, but I was looking forward to attending the second annual Women and Horses Exposition held in Guthrie, OK.

Walking in downtown Guthrie is like stepping into the Victorian era. The truly magnificently designed architecture of Oklahoma’s first capital now is a hot spot for tourism. This quaint town’s historic district is now a designated National Historic Landmark. Its unique, late nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings are beautifully restored and many serve as antique shops, feed shops, and bed and breakfasts.

The sea of Victorian buildings provide a perfect backdrop for Guthrie’s territorial- style entertainment, trolley cars, carriage tours, art galleries and specialty shops. One of Guthrie’s claims to fame includes being the largest urban Historic district in the United States. Several museums, including the Oklahoma Territorial Museum and the National 4-String Banjo Hall of Fame, are located in the heart of the town as well as the Scottish Rite Masonic Temple. For those tourists who enjoy spending a few nights in the town, Guthrie is noted to be the Bed and Breakfast capital of Oklahoma! Oklahoma’s oldest year round professional theatre company, the Pollard Theatre Company, is located in Guthrie. The company’s emphasis is on creative story telling on human experiences and an annual holiday favorite “A Territorial Christmas” draws quite a few visitors each year.

This year, the Women and Horses Expo held its second annual event at the Lazy E Arena in Guthrie, OK. Activities included an Opening Ceremony, a Versatility Challenge, an All Breeds Horse Show, breed demonstrations, training clinics, vendors, drill team competitions and for evening entertainment, the “Dancing in the Dark” event was held Friday and Saturday night.

Mint Jacob and I were invited to entertain the audiences of “Dancing in the Dark” on both days.

We performed classical dressage to the music entitled “Spirit in the Sky” performed by Norman Greenbaum.

Classical dressage evolved from the Calvary movements and the training for the battlefield and now has been developed into an art performed for the pleasure of audiences globally.

The rider must have a correct seat, a well-balanced body position that moves with the horse's motion and have the ability to "give" and cue the horse with a variety of aids.

The original Morgan horse has great courage, strength, a powerfully compact stature combined with a well-muscled, close coupled, clean-limbed conformation which in essence means that Jacob is perfectly suited to the collection required for high school dressage.

Much of the high schooling, which includes the "airs above the ground", was so important to survival on the battlefield that it developed into an artistic form of equitation that culminated in the classical dressage of the finest academies.

Our second performance involved the use of the garrocha (ga-roch-cha) pole. Our music was "Un Amor" performed by the Gipsy Kings.

When you carry the garrocha you are using a bull-working pole/spear or lance to work stock and to test bulls. This is a strong Spanish tradition and is a very important, established practice in the Spanish stockman's world. The pole is wooden, has a metal point at one end, and is generally 12-14 feet long. Not only does this wooden tool get the job of working the bulls done, but the garrocha pole can also be used in artistic displays at equine demonstrations.

Jacob and I use the garrocha as an art form when performing. Most of this work is done freestyle; which means we can present any movements we so choose to show off our skill with the garrocha. Movements include lateral work, changes in leads, turns on the haunches, pirouettes as well as changes in tempo at any of the three gaits.

At the end of our Saturday night's performance, the announcer invited us back in to take a bow! His comment was: "I had hoped to highlight you and your horse because I was impressed and the crowd was as well."

Deborah Siegrist
Peppercorn Morgans, Home of Mint Jacob
www.peppercornmorgans.com