VOLUME 22 2022

THE ICELANDIC HORSE

QUARTERLY

Official Publication of the United States Icelandic Horse Congress
Member Association of FEIF (International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations)

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2022

Susy Oliver

Mark Lawrence

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May 20-22, 2022

Sherry Hoover

All USIHC registered horses are welcome.
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For information registration forms go to
www.montaire.org
Or contact Curt Pierce at cepinwv@yahoo.com
Heidi Benson at saestadiricelandics@gmail.com

Registration deadline for all horses is May 1st, 2022

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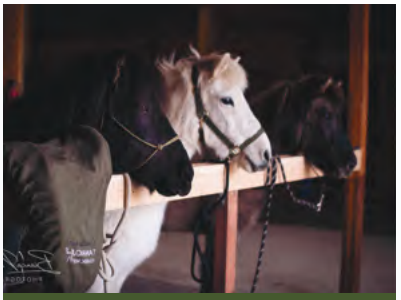

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ICELANDIC HORSE
QUARTERLY

THE ICELANDIC HORSE QUARTERLY

Issue One 2022

Official Publication of the United States Icelandic Horse Congress (USIHC), a member association of FEIF (International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations).

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The Icelandic Horse Quarterly is published in March, June, September, and December by the USIHC as a benefit of membership. Renew online at www.icelandics.org.

Deadlines are January 1 (for the March issue), April 1, July 1, and October 1. We reserve the right to edit submissions. All articles represent the opinions of their authors alone; publication in the *Quarterly* does not imply an endorsement of any kind by the USIHC. Ads are accepted with the understanding that the advertiser is authorized to publish their contents and agrees to indemnify the USIHC and the *Quarterly* against any loss or expense resulting from their publication. The USIHC reserves the right to reject any ad.

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Advertising: Jean Ervasti (917-648-8824 or jean.ervasti@gmail.com)

Graphic Design: James Collins

On the cover: "Girl Power" by Andrea Barber, featuring Alísa frá Miðengi (IS2008288712, in foreground), Sletta from Sand Meadow (US2020205640, pinto), and Embla from Sand Meadow (US2020205576, chestnut).

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USIHC CONTACTS

Committees

Affiliated_clubs@icelandics.org
Leslie Chambers (860-334-8259)

Breeding@icelandics.org
Virginia Lauridsen (515-556-3307)

Competition@icelandics.org
Martin Nielsen (859-490-9707)

Education@icelandics.org
Will Covert (805-688-1393)
Jeffrey Rose (608-438-9435)

Leisure@icelandics.org
Janet Mulder (907-351-4473)

Promotion@icelandics.org
Emily Potts (413-531-6336)

Quarterly@icelandics.org
Nancy Brown (802-626-4220)
Nicki Esdorn (914-826-5159)

Youth@icelandics.org
Lucy Nold (831-332-5328)

Directors

President@icelandics.org
Will Covert (805-688-1393)

Vice_president@icelandics.org
Jeffrey Rose (jeffsrose@gmail.com)

Secretary@icelandics.org
Martin Nielsen (859-490-9707)

Treasurer@icelandics.org
Lori Cretney (262-495-8745)

Leslie Chambers
(lchambers17@comcast.net)

Virginia Lauridsen
(515-556-3307)

Janet Mulder
(907-351-4473)

Lucy Nold
(831-332-5328)

Emily Potts
(413-531-6336)

Registry

c/o Ásta Covert
P.O. Box 1724
Santa Ynez, CA 93460
Toll free: 866-929-0009
registry@icelandics.org

Main Office

United States Icelandic Horse Congress
c/o Lori Cretney
N2746 Hardscrabble Road
Palmyra, WI 53156
Toll free: 866-929-0009
info@icelandics.org

Website

www.icelandics.org
webhelp@icelandics.org

THE USIHC MISSION

- To promote the knowledge of the Icelandic horse within the United States and its correct use as a competition and riding horse.
- To keep a registry of purebred Icelandic horses in the United States.
- To facilitate communication among all USIHC members.
- To represent the United States in FEIF.

The U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress is a member of FEIF (www.feif.org), the International Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations, representing the national Icelandic horse associations of 21 countries. FEIF governs competition activities and regulates the breeding and registration of Icelandic horses throughout the world outside of Iceland.

The USIHC was formed in 1987 by representatives of the U.S. Icelandic Horse Federation and the International Icelandic Horse Association to meet the FEIF rule that only one association from each country is allowed to represent the breed.

Taktur Icelandics

WHY JOIN THE USIHC?

As the owner or rider of an Icelandic horse, you chose a very special breed with its own culture and history. It is important to learn about the breed's unique traits, capabilities, and needs, so that you and your Icelandic horse will have a happy relationship and it will live a healthy and long life. By joining the USIHC, you connect to a worldwide network of experts to help you care for, ride, train, breed, and learn more about your horse.

The USIHC is the umbrella organization for 14 affiliated clubs: 13 regional clubs and an activity club for professional trainers. Our Registry links to WorldFengur, the worldwide database of all registered Icelandic horses (USIHC members have free access to WorldFengur), and we publish *The Icelandic Horse Quarterly*, maintaining an online archive of all issues since 2008.

The USIHC sponsors scientific research on the Icelandic horse, helps promote the Icelandic horse at expos and through social media, supports educational seminars and events like the American Youth Cup, organizes leisure activities like the Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride, creates teaching tools like the Riding Badge Program, and offers practical and monetary support to organizers of shows and clinics.

The Icelandic horse has international competition rules: You can compete in the same classes and receive comparable scores in any FEIF member country. Likewise, the Icelandic horse is one of few breeds with international evaluation standards, so that breeding horses from all over the world are judged on the same 10 points of conformation and 10 ridden abilities. The USIHC sanctions sport and breeding shows that conform to FEIF rules.

The USIHC is responsible for the U.S. teams at the FEIF Icelandic Horse World Championships, the FEIF Youth Cup, and the FEIF Youth Camp. Through FEIF, the USIHC votes on rules and policies that affect the welfare of the Icelandic horse worldwide.

As a member of the USIHC, your dues and registration fees make all this possible. Our board members and committee chairs are all volunteers. As a member-driven organization, the USIHC grows stronger the more active and involved our members become. Please join us so that the USIHC can, as FEIF's mission states, "bring people together in their passion for the Icelandic horse."

WANT TO BE A TRAINER?

The U.S. Trainer Certification System has become a reality! "This is a huge boon for our community," says USIHC board member Virginia Lauridsen. "One of the biggest hurdles hindering the presence of Icelandic horses in the U.S. is a lack of trainers. At this time, most of the certified trainers in the U.S. were educated either at Hólar University in Iceland or through the German IPZV system. Having our own certification system will allow trainers to be certified in the U.S., without having to spend months or years abroad."

Although we have many highly skilled riders and trainers of various disciplines in our country—and much of horse management and basic training is shared—there are elements of training Icelandic horses that make it a highly specialized skill. FEIF tasks each member country with developing a trainer certification system "based on national requirements, culture, and history." In the U.S., for example, we share the European traditions of dressage and show jumping, but also have an extensive history of Western riding and breed-specific disciplines, such as saddle seat. Our new training certification system takes into consideration our history and how Icelandic horses are used in the U.S.

The FEIF educational matrix defines the minimum requirements for certified instructors in four levels (see https://www.feif.or/education-dept/). Each country must follow this basic framework in order for trainers to be recognized as FEIF trainers. In developing our own training system, we wanted to flesh out the FEIF training matrix with the testing requirements that are most helpful in the U.S.

The judges' tents at the Ice Championships, a series of three one-day World Ranking Shows held at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY in October.

Our committee of FEIF-certified trainers (Laura Benson, Carrie Lyons Brandt, Caeli Cavanagh, Jana Meyer, and Alex Pregitzer) has been hard at work for almost two years. They received no compensation and yet gave freely of their knowledge and experience with the sole goal of making this a reality. Thank you!

Later this year, depending on the availability of judges and the location of applicants, we will launch our first examinations. These are designed for "Fast Track" applicants—people who already have extensive experience in teaching and training Icelandic horses. We have developed a testing rubric as well as a study guide to help applicants prepare for the exam.

The "Fast Track" requirements are: First, you must have completed a three-month internship (cumulative) with a FEIF level III trainer or above; the trainer must be willing to attest to this in writing.

Additionally, you should fulfill six of the following 10 requirements: 1. Earn 50% of your income as a trainer or work 20 hours per week as a trainer; 2. Be included in the national ranking or have a student who is included in the national ranking; 3. Have national Icelandic horse judging certification (FEIF Level "C" or above); 4. Have ridden or trained a horse judged over 7.80 for ride-ability in a breeding assessment; 5. Provide a letter of recommendation from a client who has had a horse in training for three months or more, plus a letter of recommendation from a student who has been taking

Molly Stotts riding Ljóska from Northstar in T6-Tölt at the Ice Championships in Kentucky. Photo by Léttleiki Icelandics.

lessons for three months or more; 6. Have experience hosting a clinic with at least six persons; 7. Have participated in a demonstration of the Icelandic horse at a public event such as a horse fair or expo (this demo should include a thorough verbal presentation by the applicant of the special qualities of the Icelandic horse); 8. Have completed Knapamerki levels 1-4; 9. Have completed Riding Badge competition level 2 and pleasure riding level 2; 10. Have certification in equine studies from a university or comparable educational entity.

To apply to be a "Fast Track" applicant for trainer certification, contact the Education Committee chair, Jeff Rose (education@icelandics.org).

Amelie Maranda (left), Arianna Deforge, and Isabelle Maranda in the (Root)Beer Tölt at the Montaire Icelandic Horse Show in Virginia. Photo by Valerie Durbon.

2022 SEA 2 SHINING SEA RIDE

Sea 2 Shining Sea is a year-long virtual ride for USIHC members on Icelandic horses. This year, the 4,000-mile "ride" follows the route taken by Annie Wilkins from Minot, ME to Hollywood, CA. Annie's story is shared by Elizabeth Letts in her book *The Ride of Her Life* (Ballantine Books, 2021). According to the publisher, *The Ride of Her Life* is "the triumphant true story of a woman who rode her horse across America in the 1950s, fulfilling her dying wish to see the Pacific Ocean."

The S2SS ride began on January 8 and will end on December 31. Riders can participate as individuals or as teams of up to six riders, each logging their riding hours online via the S2SS web pages. To reach each checkpoint requires 50 hours of leisure riding (hours for which you are paid to ride do not count); the hours are converted to distance at the rate of 4 miles per hour. Actual distances between checkpoint locations may be slightly more or less than 200 miles. For more information, or to sign up and log your hours, see https://icelandics.org/sea-2-shining-sea-ride.

Lucy Nold (left) and Emmy Stewart in the Pairs Class at the CIA Open Fall Show in California.

NATIONAL RANKING SHOWS

Eight National Ranking Shows (formerly known as USIHC-Sanctioned Shows) were held in 2021. Two were virtual, six were in-person, and three also qualified as World Ranking Shows. All results can be found at https://icelandics.org/national-ranking-show-results.

The 2021 shows were the USIHC Virtual Spring Show (July); the Toppur Annual Sport Horse Show, held at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA (September); the Ice Championships, a series of three one-day World Ranking Shows held at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY (October); the Montaire Icelandic Horse Show, held at Montaire Icelandics in Middleburg, VA (October); and the CIA Open Fall Show, held at Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez, CA (November).

Several National Ranking Shows are planned for 2022; as of mid-January, these included: the CIA Open Spring Show, to be held at Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez, CA (April 23-24); the first Oregon National Ranking Icelandic Horse Show, organized by Five-Gait Farm at the Oregon Horse Center in Eugene (May 28-29); the NEIHC National Ranking Show at Thor Icelandics in Claverack, NY (June 18-19); three shows to be held at Solheimar Icelandics in Tunbridge, VT (July 23-24, August 20-21, and October 15-16); the Toppur Annual Sport Horse Show at Harmony Icelandics in Truro, IA (September 3-4); and the Ice Championships Triple World Ranking Shows at Léttleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY (September 30-October 2). Check the Events calendar at https://icelandics.org for dates for the 2022 Montaire Show, the CIA Open Fall Show, and others.

BREEDING ASSESSMENTS

Breeding Assessments are planned for May in Virginia and August in Iowa. As Breeding Chair Virginia Lauridsen wrote in Issue Four 2020 of the Quarterly, "Breeding assessments are just that—assessments. They are not competitions or judgments on the value of a horse.

Isabella Sharpensteen of Colorado was Rider of the Month for December.

Rather, they are objective assessments of the horse in question compared to the general population of Icelandic horses. They can be fun! Certainly they are always educational and worth the effort. The goal is to help select the best Icelandic horses to use for breeding."

Breeding Assessments are made by internationally certified Breeding Judges, who submit the scores to the WorldFengur database and who ensure that all FEIF rules are followed. These rules (updated each April) can be found in the Breeding section of the FEIF General Rules and Regulations. (The latest rules are available here: https://www.feif.org/breeding-dept/documents/)

A Riding Horse Assessment is not scored, but provides qualitative feedback from the judges. Icelandic horse owners who have no intention of breeding their horses can benefit from having their horses assessed, Virginia notes. "There are fewer than 30 FEIF Breeding Judges in the world, so it's wonderful to spend time with one. They have a special eye." For more information, contact her at breeding@icelandics.org.

STALLION PROFILE

At the December Board Meeting, the Breeding Committee unveiled a prototype for an online Stallion Profile. Listings will be available to all stallions based in North America. For farms that currently purchase a Farm Listing (which appears both online and in the *Quarterly*), an online profile of one stallion will be included free; profiles of additional stallions will cost $50/year. For people without a Farm Listing, the cost of a profile is $110 per stallion per year.

Doreen Shoda of Washington was Rider of the Month for November. Photo by Emmy Smith.

Trainer Janet Mulder of AK Ice Farm in Alaska.

TRAINER OF THE YEAR

Each year the FEIF Education Committee runs an international contest for Icelandic Horse Trainer of the Year. For 2022, the USIHC is proud to nominate Janet Mulder (FEIF International Trainer Level 1) of AK Ice Farm in Anchorage, AK. Janet is also a member of the USIHC Board of Directors and leads the Leisure Committee.

RIDERS OF THE MONTH

Each month the USIHC Leisure Committee randomly chooses a rider in the Sea 2 Shining Sea Virtual Ride (S2SS) to be the Rider of the Month. This quarter's riders are Nancy Rohlfs, Doreen Shoda, and Isabella Sharpensteen.

Nancy Rohlfs of Ipswich, MA owns two Icelandic horses. She competes in one of two S2SS teams organized by Merrimack Valley Icelandics. She finds the S2SS ride provides friendly competition and a fun way to keep track of her trail riding hours. "I like to ride consistently, and now that I own two horses I have to ride more." She rides out in nature at all times of the year. "It was my go-to activity during Covid-19," she says, "to be able to have fun and see my friends." In addition to trail riding, she enjoys showing, clinics, liberty work,

dressage, hunter paces, and performing in drill teams—her Icelandics do it all.

Doreen Shoda of Redmond, WA owns four Icelandics, two from Iceland, one from Canada, and one from Idaho. She joined the S2SS ride at the invitation of her local club, Hestafolk, which put together three teams. "When my husband and I bought two Icelandics years ago," she writes, "people in the Seattle area could not even identify what breed they were. We formed Avondale Icelandics as local breed ambassadors, providing lessons, training, and educational experiences. I am so proud now when people say, 'Hey, are those Icelandics?'" About trail riding, she says, "All the training, conditioning, and partnership with the horse is really put to the test when you are out on the trail."

Isabella Sharpensteen of Cahone, CO owns three Icelandics. She joined S2SS for the sense of community. "I live pretty secluded and unless I am doing lessons, I am all by myself. While I share a lot of my horsey life on social media, there is still a bit of community sense missing. S2SS provides exactly what I was missing. I have had an amazing team this year (Frozen Tundra Tolters) and everyone was so supportive and cheering each other on." Her goal for the S2SS ride "was to get more confident, not only for me but also for my horses. And it has helped immensely."

Leisure Rider of the Month for October was Nancy Rohlfs of Massachusetts. Photo by Beth Rohlfs.

DRESSAGE AWARDS

The USIHC has renewed its membership in the U.S. Dressage Federation's All-Breeds Program for 2022. Designed to recognize the accomplishments of specific breeds in dressage, these awards are presented to horses declared for a participating registry/organization with the United States Dressage Federation. For more information, see https://icelandics.org/usdf-all-breeds-awards or email Janet Mulder at awards@icelandics.org.

BOARD ELECTION

Thank you to all USIHC members who cast their votes in the 2021 USIHC Election. Congratulations to the following three individuals, who were re-elected and will continue serving on the USIHC Board of Directors: Leslie Chambers, Janet Mulder, Emily Potts. Each will begin serving a three-year term on January 1, 2022.

BOARD STATEMENT

The USIHC Board received feedback from several members about the article "Alvar's Story of ECVM" printed in Issue Four 2021 of the *Quarterly*. We remind readers that all articles in the *Quarterly* represent the opinions of their authors alone; publication does not imply an endorsement of any kind by the USIHC.

The USIHC remains firmly committed to the health and well-being of horses. We continue to urge all our members to consult with qualified veterinarians for any issues concerning the medical treatment and care for their horses.

BOARD MEETINGS

The USIHC Board of Directors met by Zoom call on October 12, November 16, and December 7. Complete minutes, including the monthly Treasurer's and Secretary's reports, committee reports, and the annual budget, can be found online at https://icelandics.org/minutes. USIHC members are encouraged to listen in on board meetings. The agenda and information on how to connect are posted on the USIHC website the weekend before.

Among other topics, the Board agreed to turn the FEIF Youth Cup tryouts into a Virtual Youth Championship to make it a more fun and meaningful event, especially if the FYC is cancelled again in 2022. Results and team announcements will be made around March 15.

Suggestions for highlighting U.S.-bred horses in the National Ranking and for instituting an award for the highest ranked U.S.-bred horse in the Green Horse Four-Gait class were discussed and referred to the Sport Committee for implementation.

Understanding the value of keeping an up-to-date national sport calendar, the Sport Committee is working with the webmaster on developing the needed infrastructure. In the meantime, a Goggle calendar was initiated and all show organizers are being invited to pencil in their planned events for 2022.

The Education Committee reported that a study guide for applicants for trainer education is underway, and a sport judging seminar is being planned for Colorado for 2022.

ANNUAL MEETING

The annual USIHC Membership Meeting was held virtually on February 26, beginning at noon EST. Look for reports on the meeting in the next issue of the *Quarterly*.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

For the first time since early 2020, the Covid-19 situation made personal meetings possible and thus most FEIF committees met for a weekend of discussions in Malmö, Sweden from October 29-30. Also for the first time, all young committee members could join the event.

At these yearly meetings, committee members discuss the activities in their departments and prepare proposals for the FEIF Annual Meeting, to be held this year in February.

The Breeding Committee, Breeding Judges Committee, and FEIF Registration Group discussed a wide range of topics, including seminars (either online or in-person) for announcers, breeding judges, and breeding leaders, as well as WorldFengur registrars. The exam for new breeding judges to be held in Spring 2022 was also discussed, as countries have already pre-registered several candidates. The weekend was also used to prepare information on the guidelines for breeding shows and the BLUP calculation, as well as proposals for the Delegates' Assembly.

The FEIF Education Committee prepared the "Trainer of the Year 2021" award, discussed the different CPD seminars that were offered in the different countries, and reviewed and updated different documents. Several equipment-related questions were discussed with the Breeding and Sport committees in a joint meeting.

The Leisure Riding Committee analyzed the various activities that took place in 2021, including the photo competition (which received more than 500 entries), the Tour Rider Cup, and the Virtual Ride. The feedback on these activities was great, and therefore they will be offered again in 2022, with revised procedures to make participation easier. The group also discussed the importance of the World Championships and WorldFengur for leisure riders, the idea of seminars for leisure riders, and the possibilities for a FEIF Rider Camp.

The Sport Committee and Sport Judges Committee discussed a broad variety of topics, including equipment rules, the clarity of the description of certain rules, reasons for elimination and disqualification, the possibility of participating in more than one tölt test, solutions to prevent having too many horses in the finals, and adapting the judging of entry-level tests to make them more approachable and a better fit with the training scale. It was a constructive meeting and many of the topics will result in proposals for the annual department meeting in 2022.

The Youth Work Committee discussed the Young Leaders' Seminar on Digital Networking in the Equine Sector. This event was divided into two parts, the first being an online event, which took place on November 21. The second part takes place in Vienna on April 1-3.

TOUR RIDER CUP

The winners of the 2021 FEIF Tour Rider Cup are: First Place, with 167.5 points, Simone Freese (adult, DE) with the horse Tryggvi von Walsheim. Second Place, with 161 points, Jaime Jackson (adult, US) with the horse Holly (see the article in this issue). Third Place, with 159 points, Lilu (Young Rider, DE) with the horse Glampi von Arula; Lilu is also the winner in the Young Riders category. Fourth Place, with 75.5 points, Kylia (adult, DE) with the horse Stjarni. Fifth Place, with 73.5 points, Japhie (Young Rider, BE) with the horse Hending.

Congratulations to all other Tour Rider Cup participants. Each spent many hours in the saddle and achieved amazing results. We hope you enjoyed every single ride. In a year when Covid-19 often did not allow us to meet in person, it was wonderful to see that so many riders took the opportunity to take part in the Tour Rider Cup.

The 50 best participants received a limited-edition calendar with the winning pictures from the FEIF Photo Competition. The 2022 FEIF Tour Rider Cup will start on May 1, the Day of the Icelandic Horse.

PHOTO COMPETITION

On December 21, the photographers of the 13 best photos submitted to the FEIF Photo Competition were honored in an award ceremony. It was definitely a difficult task for the jury to choose the

best photos from more than 500 entries. The winning photo came from Chiara Schmid-Bielenberg: She enchanted the entire jury with her wonderful and emotional photo. For the remaining calendar pages, about 40 additional pictures were chosen via a public Facebook poll.

Congratulations to the winners and a big thanks to all participants and sponsors for supporting the project. You can see the 13 best photos on the FEIF website https://www.feif.org/2021/12/21/award-ceremony-of-the-photo-competition-2021/.

LANDSMÓT 2022

This year's Icelandic National Horseshow, Landsmót Hestamanna, will be held in the town of Hella from July 4-10.

Four years have passed since the last Landsmót, which was held in Reykjavík in 2018. Come and enjoy watching the world's best horses and riders compete. Iceland's leading musicians will perform at the event, and a variety of Icelandic food and products will be available in the market tents.

And if you are worried about the weather—don't bother. The manager of Landsmót 2022, Magnús Benediktsson, has made a binding contract with Iceland's weather gods. There will be good weather throughout the tournament!

Tickets and campsites are now on sale. Please check out the website www.landsmot.is or contact the organizers at landsmot@landsmot.is if you have questions. Tickets purchased for the cancelled 2020 Landsmót will be honored. See the website for details.

FEIF YOUTH CUP

The next FEIF Youth Cup is planned for July 23-31 at the Icelandic horse center Solfaxi in Switzerland. Solfaxi is a beautiful stable about 30 minutes by car from Berne, and it is well used to hosting big competitions. Details about costs, conditions of participation, Covid-19 requirements, and other relevant information were published on the FEIF website in February.

The FEIF Youth Cup is arranged every second year and consists of a week of intense training with respected instructors of international standing. The week ends with a competition featuring a range of youth classes both on and off the oval track. Riders aged 14 to 17 train and compete in international teams, with the aim of fostering friendship and an awareness of cultural differences. The language at all international FEIF events is English.

Each country has a fixed number of rider spots: DE, IS, SE, DK (7 participants); AT, CH, NL, NO (5 participants); BE, FR, FO, FI, US (3 participants); GB, IT, LU, SI, CA, HU, AU, NZ, LI (2 participants). The host country and the winner of the annual FEIF Youth Award each are allowed one extra participant.

Most participants have some experience in competition riding. Most riders also bring their own horses to the event, but for applicants from overseas, good rental horses are available. For more information see https://www.feif.org/youth-work-dept/youth-cup/.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tickets are available now for the next Icelandic Horse World Championships, to be held in Oirschot, the Netherlands, August 8-13, 2023. Icelandic horse enthusiasts from around the world look forward to this great Sport and Breeding event, where we as a community can meet for great horses, shopping, lectures, food, drink, and company. We hope the whole Icelandic community will join us! For more information and to enjoy the great early bird offer, see www.wc2023.nl.

NEW BLUP

New BLUP indices have been published in WorldFengur for 465,461 Icelandic horses. Of these, 34,499 horses had records from an international breeding assessment from the following countries: Iceland (21,416 horses), Sweden (4,266), Germany (3,534), Denmark (2,661), Norway (1,213), Austria (346), Finland (289), The Netherlands (292), USA (224), Canada (117), Switzerland (102), and Great Britain (39).

BLUP indices in the Virtual Mate Selection tool will be updated later. The current calculation took into account 915 horses genotyped for the DMRT3 gene. The genetic evaluations of all horses in the database are now published in WorldFengur, regardless of the accuracy of the estimate. Previously, the threshold for publication was an accuracy exceeding 30%. However, one should keep in mind that the accuracy of genetic evaluations below 60% are still insecure predictions. It is important that mares and stallions used for breeding are assessed in order to increase the accuracy of the genetic selection.

EQUIPMENT RULES

FEIF encourages a level playing field in the overall Icelandic horse sport, including breeding, competition, and leisure riding. Riding and training equipment should always be used correctly with regard to proper maintenance, sizing and fit, and with the education level of both the horse and rider in mind. FEIF's rules are built on the assumption of "correct use," with a few notable exceptions that are regarded as "prohibited equipment."

Chapter G8 of the FEIF Rules and Regulations clearly describes what equipment is allowed and what equipment is not allowed. These rules are applicable for sport and breeding shows, and also for youth events like the FEIF Youth Cup. For detailed information, an FAQ, and the list of prohibited equipment, see https://www.feif.org/sport-dept/faq-sport/.

BLOOD FARMS CONDEMNED

On November 24, 2021, FEIF published the following statement: "As the international Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations worldwide, FEIF condemns the practices and the mistreatment of mares on blood farms. We welcome a decision of the European Commission to stop the import and domestic production of PMSG and support any action taken by the Icelandic authorities to stop this procedure in Iceland completely." (See the story in this issue.)

CLUB UPDATES

There are 13 Regional Clubs and one Activity Club affiliated with the U.S. Icelandic Horse Congress. To find the Regional Club nearest you, see the USIHC website at www.icelandics.org. The following clubs filed updates on their activities this quarter.

CIA

by Helga Sveinsdottir Thordarson

On November 6-7, the California Icelandic Association celebrated our first in-person show in two years. The Fall CIA Open Show was hosted by Ásta and Will Covert at their beautiful Flying C Ranch in Santa Ynez. This national ranking show was intimate and wonderful, with sunny blue skies and a happy sense of camaraderie among our West Coast riders, trainers, and visitors.

Lucy Nold traveled 15 hours from Oregon with five horses and two young students. Six horses from Northern California were unable to attend at the last minute (due to a recent virus at their home stable and fall fires), but a great time was had by all despite small classes. Will Covert served as judge, and the attendees were entertained by Keith Houston's always engaging announcing and musical selections.

Our Youth riders were the shining stars of the show: their bright spirits, fabulous riding, and teamwork left us all feeling optimistic about the future of our breed in the U.S. Amazing Emelia Stewart (only eight years old!) rode beautifully in multiple classes, scoring 6.0 on Kani frá Feti in T8/Youth Tolt Finals, 5.75 on Leikur from Dalalif in V5/Novice Four Gait Finals, and an impressive 6.33 on Hrói frá Skardi in 3G/Three Gait Finals. (Emmy also placed first and second in her age group in the #nostirrupnovember competition.)

The audience was delighted by several fun events, including the Pairs Class, which is judged on harmony and creativity. Two teams (Bella Covert riding with her mom, Ásta, and Lucy Nold riding with her student, Emmy) danced around the oval track to great music as the crowd cheered. The Halloween Costume/Leadline class also left everyone smiling, with Bella Covert participating along with Emmy and Lulu Stewart.

Other highlights included Ásta Covert on Dynjandi frá Dalvík scoring 8.17 in T1-A Finals, Laurie Prestine scoring 6.17 in T3-Tolt Finals on Straumur frá Enni, and Lucy Nold with 6.30 on Stali from Fitjamyri in V1-Four Gait Finals. Additionally, Lucy and Ásta tied for first place in GHV-Green Horse Four Gait Finals, both scoring 6.13 (on Leikur from Dalalif and Hilmir frá Ketilsstöðum, respectively).

Emmy Stewart on Kani frá Feti at the CIA Show.

Youth riders are the future! Left to right, Emmy Stewart, Lulu Stewart, and Bella Covert in the CIA Fall Open's Costume Class, led by Lucy Nold and Ásta Covert.

Overheard from one trainer at the show: "We may have all forgotten how to compete after two years, but we're here to support each other and that's what matters!" The CIA Open was a lot of fun and the attendees were grateful to be together at long last.

In other club news, the CIA welcomes six new and returning members, including Sandie Mortenson Weaver, Sabrina Drake, Kimberly Hart, Alexandra Montan Gray, Heather Skopik, and Helga Thordarson. Virtual events and online webinars continue to fill the gaps during the pandemic. For example, Sandie participated in two schooling classes (Pleasure Three Gait and Pleasure Tölt) for the Fall Virtual Show on her 28-year-old mare, Birta.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the next CIA National Ranking Show, at Flying C Ranch, on April 23-24. For more information about the show, contact Ásta Covert (asta@tolt.net).

FLUGNIR

by Dave Loftness

Autumn was splendid in the upper Midwest, allowing Flugnir members ample camping opportunities and solid trail riding.

Ann-Sofie Kruger, Jackie Alschuler, and Eve and Dave Loftness participated in the third and final 2021 Long Lake Hounds Hunter Pace on the first weekend of October. The ride traversed fields and forests adorned in full fall splendor, bordered by groomed executive properties. The pace on the bright day was quick, with the four Icelandics placing second yet again, barely a minute off the master's time mark. Although the team's Icelandic horses had clipped coats they finished sweaty, hot but healthy, enjoying lush grasses as they cooled. Ann-Sofie impressed all by riding the entire six-plus miles without stirrups! Her muscles relived the feat over the next few days.

Katie Livingood competed in the Toppur Icelandic Sports Show at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. Katie and Undrun from Nordurstjarna won first in the beer tölt and trail competitions and third in F1-Five gait. The sport show was judged by Will Covert, and the competition was preceded by a breeding evaluation.

Flugnir board member Kydee Sheetz, owner of Aslan's Country Icelandics, trailered from northern Minnesota to Kentucky for Lettleiki's Triple World Ranking Ice Championships. Kydee rode four different horses and took top honors in V3-Four Gait, T5-Tölt, and Green Horse Tölt, repeating these placements all three days.

Kydee Sheetz and Álfasyrpa warm up before the Kentucky show. Photo by Deb Cook.

Flugnir member Kydee Sheetz rides Álfasyrpa from Aslan's Country (born 2016) in this lovely home-bred mare's first show, at the Ice Championships in Kentucky. Photo by Léttleiki Icelandics.

Eve Loftness hosted Carrie Lyons Brandt and Terral Hill of Taktur Icelandics for a two-day riding clinic on Thanksgiving weekend at River Brink Stables in River Falls, WI. On Day One, Carrie instructed 10 different riders, focusing on the specific needs and desires of each rider/horse combo. Hot soups, beverages, and snacks satiated all during the informative Q&A lunch break.

Day Two started with multiple group lessons in liberty instruction, leading to another hearty luncheon Q&A about liberty work and the Knapamerki riding system. The afternoon session had Carrie and Terral each instructing five riders in individual lessons. Warm and fuzzy entertainment was provided by Heike Schimmelpfenning, who brought a posse of Aussie puppies. Three of the nine furballs found loving homes: Carrie and Terral, with the enthusiastic assistance of their son Erik, picked out a blue-eyed female whom Erik promptly named Blue after the raptor in Jurassic World. Eve and Dave adopted a blue merle female and named her Sæla, the Icelandic word for bliss. River Brink owner Pat Johnson and family selected a red male and named him David after David Bowie. All puppies are healthy and happy and destined to become horse riding companions.

FRIDA

by Marilyn Tully & Mary Schwarz

Members of the Frida Icelandic Riding Club held an equine massage clinic at Montaire Icelandics in Middleburg, VA with Marjorie Lewis in September. Participants included Mary Schwarz, Julia Hutter, Julia's daughters Isabella and Sophie, Pat Carballo, Antje Freygang, Traci Bryant, Carrie Laurencot, and

Antje Freygang on Galdur frá Reykjavík at the Montaire Show in Virginia. Photo by Valerie Durbon.

Arianna Deforge shows Friða frá Akranesi in Pleasure Tölt at Montaire. Photo by Valerie Durbon.

Millie Angelo. Marjorie is well known in the Icelandic community as an expert on equine massage. She is said to have "magic hands" that help release tension and pain in horses.

But hiring a professional like Marjorie isn't always possible for individual horse owners. What we can do for our horses instead is to attend clinics like this to learn to read and understand where our horse is holding tension and how to release it. The more we place our educated hands on our horses, the easier it becomes to identify what is helpful and effective.

Marjorie began the clinic by explaining why it's important to massage our horses. She demonstrated various strokes and techniques that promote circulation, relaxation, and pain relief. She stressed the importance of observing the horse's reactions and responses as you work your way along its body. Licking and chewing tells you the horse is releasing tension. A soft eye indicates the horse is relaxed. A change in the rhythm of its breathing tells you something as well. Each horse is unique and each releases tension in its own ways.

Carrie Brandt shows Geysir frá Kvistum in T2-Loose Rein Tölt. Photo by Valerie Durbon.

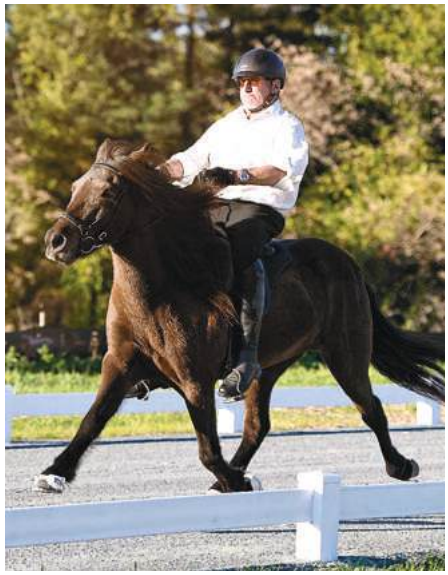
Marjorie also emphasized the importance of learning about the equine muscular system. She provided handouts of the different muscle groups. She then divided the participants into pairs, one doing the massage and one observing, asking each pair to make note of which areas elicited a reaction and would require further work. Paper bags filled with things that simulated lumps and bumps and grisly tissue were used as props to enable the participants to learn to distinguish between healthy and unhealthy tissue. The participants learned to use kneading, rolling, chopping, and rubbing to break up tight and unhealthy tissue.

As Mary Schwarz noted, "One of the biggest takeaways for me was how interconnected the muscles are in the horse's body. Seeing how tension in one area could manifest symptoms in an entirely different location helps me be more aware of subtle changes in my own horses."

In other news, Frida member Becky Supinger came in first place in the Icelandic Distance Riders North America competition on Katla from Windsong, with a grand total of 210 competitive miles. Local endurance competitions usually begin in March. To prepare, Becky says she and her endurance rider friends spend January walking up and down mountains. Becky advises, "Mountain walking is strength training for horses, since they learn to maintain a steady speed while climbing and also while traversing steep descents." The horses are then clipped in February for trotting, tölting, and cantering work. Congratulations, Becky!

On October 23-24, the Montaire Icelandic Show at Antje Freygang's beautiful venue in Middleburg, VA was attended by many club members. Riders from Frida, including Suzi McGraw, Charlotte Reilly, Lori Cretney, Mary Schwarz, Antje Freygang, and Julia Hutter, brought home several ribbons. The show could not have been as successful without the help of many volunteers and donors, including Virginia Lauridsen, Leslie Chambers, Amanda Malone, Kim Davis, Shelly Sheerer, Barbara Fielden, Joy Smith, Julia Hutter, Kelly Smith, Claire Wolfe, Sophia Koch, and Kathie Brockhouse. A sincere thank you to all.

Julia Hutter and Ófeigur, winners of the Beer Tölt at the Montaire Show.



Ron Hoover races Kvika from Four Winds Farm in P2-Pace. Photo by Valerie Durbon.

HESTAFOLK

by Lisa McKeen

Here in the Pacific Northwest, we are all looking forward to spring and the USIHC's new 2022 Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual competition. Last year our member Alys Culhane led the pack with the most S2SS miles. Hestafolk had three S2SS teams; two finished the 5,000-mile ride and the third team was very, very close, while being short two or three members. Way to go Hestafolk!

We have four members riding regularly with the Woodbrook Hunt Club out of Tacoma, WA. Lauren and Andi won the costume contest, with Lauren as a beekeeper and Andi as the bee! RJ West and her posse served up an Icelandic breakfast for the last December ride day. They chose the menu based on the Icelandic folktale of the Thirteen Yule Lads. It all began with RJ being the mischievous lad known as the *bjúgnakrækir* (sausage-swiper).

Our Hestafolk Youth Club has been very, very busy. We had massive flooding in Whatcom County this fall, and the Hestafolk Youth Club decided to sponsor two flood victim families this Christmas from the fundraiser money they had earned earlier. The group got two Christmas trees donated and were able to buy Christmas dinner for one family, along with presents for both families. The club was very thankful to be able to help these families out. The four girls in our club are Serenity, Lucy, Olivia, and Ashtyn, and the horses they ride are Bjarki from Extreme Farms, Systir from Silver Creek Icelandic, and Cowgirls Romeo (a Quarter Horse).

The Hestafolk Youth Club (left to right): Olivia and Systir from Silver Creek, Serenity Perigo and Bjarki from Extreme Farms, and Ashtyn McGuire and Lucy Greene with their Quarter Horse.

Andi from Evans Farms and Lauren Murphy tölting the hunt. Photo by Geoffrey Tyson.

Other members are busy sharing their horses in a variety of ways. My mares teach beginning students the sweetness of Icelandic horses. The Icelandic owners at two different barns are ambassadors to their stables. Our Youth Club meets at Ashley Perigo's place and gets time with her Icelandics there.

Natasha Chornesky Pearson shares Loki from Icelandic Meadows with her whole neighborhood in Issaquah, WA. Loki enjoys spending Fridays with the kids. While Natasha works remotely from home, her neighbor Krysta, who has ridden since she was a child, exercises Loki. Some days, Krysta practices sidepasses, circles, and serpentines in the arena; on other days, she brings her daughter and nieces, who all participate in grooming Loki and wait patiently for a turn to take Loki through an obstacle course of cones spread out through the yard.

We hope for everyone to find ways to share their love of horses. In a world where fewer and fewer people have the resources to own a horse, we must reach out to the next generations to share the healing that horses can bring.

We are all learners, and this community keeps us moving forward. There are also some new things in the works for our club. We plan to have monthly Q&A learning conversations through Zoom, to hold an extended trail riding clinic this summer, and to meet in small groups at the ocean, in the wine country of Yakima, and on local trails as well.

Loki from Icelandic Meadows, owned by Natasha C. Pearson of Issaquah, WA, enjoys spending Fridays with the kids in the neighborhood.

NEIHC

by Jennifer Bergantino & Phebe Kiryk

NEIHC was an active club this past quarter. At Merrimack Valley Icelandics (MVI) in Boxford, MA, Caeli Cavanagh conducted Liberty training sessions in October. In November, Ebba Meehan, Erika Tighe, Brynja Meehan, and Kate Kalan presented two breed demonstrations at Equine Affaire. Later that month, Guðmar Pétursson and Carrie Lyons Brandt held a valuable and informative clinic that gave several members an opportunity to be tested on the Knapamerki Levels. Congratulations to Andrea Smith, Ebba Meehan, and Nancy Rohlfs on completing Level Three and to Erika Tighe on completing Levels One and Two. Looking forward, MVI would love to hear from anyone interested in an Iceland trek scheduled for August.

At Pepper Hill Farm in Owls Head, ME, MaryJo Brink and Michael Salmon hosted a clinic with Jana Meyer.

NEIHC member Ona Kwiatkowski took part in the No-Stirrup November Challenge. She reports, "2021 for Kjarkur and me was all about lightness, teamwork, listening to each other, and learning that it is a give-and-take type situation. Sometimes on trails, I pick the route and speed, and other times he picks it. I feel he really enjoys our new way of riding. It all showed in our No-Stirrups performance. He was so light and responsive and did everything I asked of him effortlessly. He was perfect! We scored a 26 and received 7th out of 17 riders in the amateur division."

Ona Kwiatkowski and Kjarkur took part in the No-Stirrrups November challenge.

NEIHC members (left to right) Charity Simard, Sue Sundstrom, Anna Wallstrom, and Claudia Burnham took their horses on a riding vacation in Vermont.

Anat Stemmer happily reports that "Birta is back [from training in Kentucky] and I love having my after work ride at night routine back. We also have been doing liberty training and that is a lot of fun."

Charity Simard, Claudia Burnham, Anna Wallstrom, and Jennifer Bergantino brought their horses to Vermont for a week of riding "and realized that horses need some significant conditioning prior to tackling the large hills and mountains of the Green Mountain Horse Association trails." While in the area the group spent the afternoon with NEIHC member Sue Sundstrom.

Rachael Broadhurst and Deb Benanti purchased their first Icelandic horses. A friend found Óvart and Elska at a cowboy ranch called Tuff Enuff Ranch in Wisconsin, where the two horses were being ridden bareback and bitless. Said Rachael, "We rode them for three days and made a plan." Rachael is also writing a book about keeping senior horses, titled *The Senior Horse Life*.

Furthering the popularity of Icelandic horses in New England, our club had a highly successful showing at Equine

Amelie Maranda competing on Fjöður frá Alftanesi in Virginia. Photo by Damian Deforge.

NEIHC members Barb Shaer and Joann Hayssen are known as the "Pink Ladies": They dress to be seen by bikers, hikers, and the occasional hunter they meet on the trails.

Affaire in Massachusetts this year. Emily Potts reports: "This year's Equine Affaire was a success due to the hard work and volunteer time of Leah Greenberger, Margot Apple, Maren Prenosil, Grace Greenberger, and John Prenosil. Everyone answered questions, engaged with attendees, and made sure our brochures and materials were well stocked. Leah organized and brought our incredible team of booth horses, Skati and Vaka. Our equine superstars were friendly, personable, and unflappable throughout the whole weekend. I can't tell you how many times someone stopped at the booth to say, 'My friend has an Icelandic horse!' So thanks to Leah and all our volunteers for sharing the joy of your horses."

NEIHC signed up a slew of new members this quarter, and we welcome them all. In club administration news, 2022 is an election year; by the time this report is published, we will have a new Board of Directors. We look forward to hosting in-person events this year, especially our NEIHC Open Sport Show in June.

SIRIUS

by Janet Kuykendall

The members of the Sirius Ohio Kentucky Icelandic Horse Club are looking forward to some major upcoming events. Our first is a booth at Equine Affaire in Columbus, OH on April 7-10. If you're attending the expo, please stop by and say hello! Club members will be volunteering at the booth to enlighten all those who have questions about our wonderful horses.

It's not too late to sign up for the club-sponsored Liberty Clinic on April 30 and May 1 at Taktur Icelandics in Crestwood, KY. Clinician Carrie Lyons Brandt always presents a fun-filled and educational event that is overflowing with training help. Join us as we learn how to create a conversation with our horses at liberty. Since this training was originally developed for horses used in Hollywood movies, it could open all sorts of new career paths for our Icelandics! The clinic is also much more than the in-person training segment. It includes hands-on lessons, both online and offline, for all participants. Check out our Facebook page (Sirius Ohio Kentucky Icelandic Horse Club) for specifics about cost and availability.

In addition, mark your calendars for the August 26–28 fun show to be hosted by the club at Lettleiki Icelandics. There will be ribbons, prizes, and lots of fun! We'll have more details in the next issue about some of our fun classes and many of the traditional Icelandic classes as well. (Hint: Beer tölt!)

As a club, we are fortunate to claim geographic access to many world-class trainers, training facilities, and Icelandic horse herds. One of the recent highlights of the region were the Ice Championships World Ranking Triple Shows held at Lettleiki Icelandics in Shelbyville, KY on October 1-3. Each day at the Ice Championships is a separate show, and Sirius Club members Carly Conley, Jeny Feldner Schreiber, Julian Feldner, Paetra Henninger, and Ron Hoover competed in all three shows. Member Maggie Brandt, as usual, had everything organized and ready-to-go. She makes us all think that hosting a big show is easy and enjoyable! Maggie was assisted by many volunteers, who helped her keep things running smoothly. Even though high winds caused the show to be moved to the indoor arena, everything went on as planned.

Following the show on Saturday night, the Sirius Club show observers and competitors met to discuss ideas for our 2022 club activities. Author, archer, and distance rider Christine Stewart Marks joined the meeting to share information about the trails in Indiana. (Christine had previously

Sirius member Carley Conley competes at the Ice Championships in October.

Sirius members Shawn Jackson and Nancy Radebaugh on a trail ride in Hocking Hills, OH.

met many of our members at the 2021 Indy Run Endurance Ride in May, as well as at archery clinics at Léttleiki Club members completed surveys that will determine the club's activities in the future, and there was a great deal of discussion regarding future trail riding events.

On October 8-10, the Sirius Club completed the last group ride and camp-out of 2021 at Pine Creek Horseman's Camp at Hocking Hills in southeast Ohio. We had our largest turnout of 2021, with 11 members attending. All of our riders and our steady Icelandics rode 29 miles to destinations with such names as Conkle's Hollow, Red Rock, Indian Head, 21 Horse Cave, and Table Top Rock. A fun highlight of the weekend was when Debbie Faver's husband Ralph filmed all of the Icelandics and riders tölting out of camp. It was an impressive group, including Debbie, Shellie Grayhavens, Ron and Sherry Hoover, Jaime and Shawn Jackson, Patrick and Mary Neil, Nancy Radebaugh, and Constance and Rob Wilmoth. The Sirius Club again held a Saturday night 2022 planning meeting. All present were in favor of riding at Hocking Hills again in 2022 because there's still so much to explore!

Several Sirius Club members finished off October with a trip to the Frida Club show at Montaire Icelandics in Middleburg, VA. Members Ron Hoover on Kvika from Four Winds Farm and Carrie Lyons Brandt on Stjarna frá Stokkalæk, could not out-pace Heidi Benson on Strokkur frá Syðri-Gegnishólum. But what fun it was to see! Fast horses and fun competition ended the show season in the eastern U.S.

Congratulations to Jaime Jackson, who took second in the world in the FEIF Tour Rider Cup! (See the article in this issue.) Keep up the good work!

And finally, Nancy Radebaugh and Gunnar, her Rockstar horse, never cease to amaze! Nancy submitted a very impressive winter photo of Gunnar grazing beside a pond for a contest with Kauffman's Premium Equine Supplements. Gunnar won the coveted calendar cover slot, and Kauffmann's sent Nancy a 100-day supply of Integri-Hoof. Nancy and Gunnar also participated in two holiday parades, winning a trophy for Best Animal Group with Nancy and five mounted friends dressed as tin soldiers. Way to go, Nancy!

Members of the Sirius Club getting ready for another trail ride at Pine Creek Horseman's Camp in Hocking Hills, OH.

ST. SKUTLA

by Andrea Barber

Typically, we host one clinic for the St. Skutla Club each year at our Sand Meadow Farm in Mendon, NY. It's always a super fun event that our members really enjoy and look forward to. It's usually the only "big" learning experience we have all year, as having a clinician come regularly would just be too costly for our little club. Of course, 2020 was anything but typical, and we had to cancel due to Covid-19. This meant that many of our club members, in desperation (myself included) turned to online options to keep our equestrian education going during the pandemic.

The switch to online learning proved to be surprisingly beneficial. Several of us signed up as a group for Laura Benson and Carrie Lyons Brandt's Gæðinga Dressage online clinic. Though I was really skeptical at first, I really enjoyed it and got a lot out of it. Though it was certainly different than having an instructor present with you in-person, it had other benefits. Videoing myself (though cringeworthy at first) allowed me to actually see what I was doing when I was riding and to match that with what I was feeling. The program, done over several weeks, kept my training on track for a much longer period than the usual once-a-year weekend clinic format. It was a journey rather than "one and done." It also provided for more individualized instruction than a group in-person clinic.

So this year, although we planned to once again host the in-person clinic, I yearned to do something more. I wanted to provide a longer and more in-depth learning experience over the entire riding season. This made me think about ways we could combine the online and in-person experiences into a single clinic. I discussed my concept with Carrie Lyons Brandt of Taktur Icelandics (who thankfully is not often scared off by my crazy ideas!) and the Season of Learning was born.

What we did was plan an online learning experience that culminated with an in-person clinic at the end. Starting in June, participants submitted a 10-minute video every month. This video could be anything they wanted—riding, groundwork, etc. Or, if they didn't want to make a video, they could submit three written questions on any training topic. Carrie would then provide a video back, either providing feedback (mostly in the form of her voice-over on the original video) or answering the questions. This video usually included customized homework to work on over the next month. Carrie's videos were provided to the entire group so all could benefit.

Carrie Brandt coaching Steve Barber and his mare Alísa frá Miðengi in flying pace was a highlight of the in-person portion of the St. Skutla Club's clinic. Photo by Andrea Barber.

To say the online portion of the clinic blew away my expectations was an understatement. It was incredible. For the first time I could see video of myself riding (and working on the issues I needed help with) and the instructor voicing the critique in real time. And I could watch it over and over again! That way I could match what I was feeling when I was riding with how it looked—and had a firm plan for improvement. That meant the next month I could use the homework to keep working and improving—or if other issues cropped up, bring up those the following month. I could work at my own pace over the month and didn't feel pressured or stressed if things didn't go exactly as planned on a particular day or if life (weather, family obligations, etc.) got in the way of training on a certain day or time.

We had an amazing diversity of training questions and levels, which made for a varied and interesting learning experience. While Steve Barber was working toward riding competition-level flying pace with his new mare Alísa frá Miðengi, Deb Callaway was working on the proper sequence of steps to open a gate out on the trail with her gelding Káinn frá Keldum. The fact that the feedback videos were available to all meant you could gain something from each and every one. And what really got me excited was to see the amazing progress everyone made from month to month. Carrie's expert instruction was really doing the trick, everyone was working very hard, and it was paying off.

Deb Callaway riding her gelding Káinn frá Keldum in the clinic. Photo by Andrea Barber.

St. Skutla member Carrie Brindisi getting to know her new mare, Þoka from Sand Meadow. Photo by Andrea Barber.

This meant that when everyone arrived for the in-person part of the clinic, we were ready and eager for some really intensive in-person instruction. Carrie knew all of us and our horses, knew what we wanted to work on, and had her lessons set and ready to go. It was the best in-person clinic we've ever had. At the end everyone was exhausted (including Carrie!), but we were thrilled and proud of the progress we had all achieved. Everyone was also extremely thankful to Carrie for the amazing amount of effort she put into making this a success all season long, despite her grueling training and teaching schedule.

Of course, being that this was the first time we had attempted anything like this, there were some hiccups along the way—various computer issues, bending the arms of friends and family to do the videoing sometimes worked and sometimes didn't, dates and schedules that may not have made the best sense, etc. Also, some people weren't sure of the value, so only signed up for the in-person part of the clinic and others lived too far away to join the in-person portion. But now we have a lot of lessons learned and hope to come back next year with a new-and-improved format. I can't wait!

TOPPUR

by Cindy Niebuhr

Fall in the Midwest can be beautiful and challenging all at the same time, and this fall proved true to form. Amidst the cloudy, windy, and rainy days, we were blessed with sunshine and extremely mild temperatures. Many of our members took advantage of this and seized the moment to trail ride with friends, catch a fox hunt, participate in educational clinics, or pick up that final show of the season.

November brought a much awaited two-year visit from our coach and friend Guðmundur Skúlason. The pandemic may have kept him away from us, but Toppur members couldn't keep away from him! Time slots filled up quickly to participate in his private schooling sessions at Harmony Icelandics in Iowa. The Osbornes, a Toppur family, even hosted him for a day in Nebraska. This enabled other members and friends who couldn't make it to Harmony to benefit from his vast knowledge and experience in everything equestrian. We look forward to his return visit in the spring.

Toppur is also pleased to announce our 2022 team for the USIHC's Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride. Riding for Team Toppur will be: Lisa Blumhagen (Team Leader and Coordinator), Virginia Lauridsen, Cindy Niebuhr, Lisa Lambrakis, Ulrike Passe, and Melinda Studstill.

Through the winter, our board members along with our friends from Harmony Icelandics are creatively planning for 2022. In addition to our annual meeting (January 22) and the USIHC Annual Meeting (February 26), here are some of our planned events: a booth at the Iowa Horse Fair (March 25-27), a clinic at Harmony (March 29-30), a Breeding and Riding Horse Assessment at Harmony (August 30-31), and the Toppur Annual Sport Horse Show at Harmony (September 3-4). Please check out our website and Facebook page for trail rides, clinics, seminars, and fun shows that are currently in the works.

Toppur is also pleased to have added several new members this year. Each has brought unique assets to our club, and we can't wait to start highlighting them!

Lisa Blumhagen, team leader for the Toppur club's S2SS team, also loves to compete. Her mare's name, "Hetja," means hero—and she certainly is one, to put up with all those flapping ribbons by her eye!

WHO IS ALEX?

Interview by Alex Pregitzer

Alexandra Montan Gray recently moved to the U.S. from Sweden. A graduate of Hólar University in Iceland, where she earned degrees in training, instructing, and judging, Alex has judged Icelandic horse sport and gæðinga competitions since 1998. In 2020, she was elected to the board of FEIF. As the FEIF website announced, "With her background and experience …, she will bring to the table the ability to see the different sides of many topics and improve the communication within the Icelandic horse community."

Interviewer Alex Pregitzer has introduced *Quarterly* readers to the certified Icelandic horse teachers and trainers working in the U.S. since 2008. To read her other interviews, check the Topic Index of our online archive at https://icelandics.org/quarterly-topic-index.

Alexandra Montan Gray and Tónn frá Melkoti showing canter at the Swedish Championships in 2015. Photo by Zanna Hofvander.

Q. What is your background?

A. I was born in the south of Sweden, in Lund, and have spent most of my life in Sweden, although in different places. My family lived for a short time in Germany, when I was very little, and we also spent a few years in Liberia, West Africa. I started riding at the age of six and I rode in riding schools for most of my childhood years. I started out with ponies and went on to bigger horses, mostly Swedish warmbloods. My parents bought their first Icelandics in 1988, and we haven't looked back since. I worked with my parents at their farm Margaretehof in Sweden (see www.mhof.se) for around 20 years, and I go to our farm Margrétarhof in Iceland (see www.mhof.is) as often as I can.

Q. Why and when did you move to the U.S.?

A. I moved to San Diego with my husband Kristofer and our two children in August of 2021. Kris is American, from Alaska originally, and we wanted our children to experience how it is to live somewhere else besides Sweden. The reason we chose San Diego is that Kris's mother Kimberly Hart and her husband live there, and it's not too far to go visit Kris's father and stepmother in New Mexico.

Q. What is your Icelandic horse experience?

A. As I mentioned, I started in riding school on ponies and big horses, where I learned dressage, jumping, and basic things like handling, tack care, etc.

After finding the Icelandic horse, my education has been through practical work with different teachers in Iceland and at Hólar University, as well as with dressage teachers.

I have had the opportunity to learn from many fantastic teachers, such as Eyjólfur (Jolli) Ísolfsson, Jóhann (Jói Vakri) Þórsteinsson, Reynir Aðalsteinsson, Einar Öder Magnússon, and Júlio Borba.

I have competed at high level with several horses, but the best one was Bragi von Allenbach. He took me to three World Championships, resulting in three A finals and two bronze medals in T1. I am forever grateful that I had the honor of riding him! He has, sadly, been gone for many years, but he was truly a great teacher.

I am also an Icelandic horse judge, both for sport and gæðinga competitions. Gæðingakeppni has a special place in my heart, and I currently work on the educational committee of the Icelandic Gæðingakeppni Judges' Association.

The last few years I have been working as an announcer at several competitions, both big and small, and I find that to be a very fun way of being a part of the competition world.

Q. What is your training philosophy—do you follow a particular way of training?

A. There have been several throughout the years, but I feel that most of them are, at the core, very similar, and I find that I more and more end up working with just that: the core, the basics. Both physically and mentally. Keeping things simple and logical.

The horse (and the rider) must be in balance for the work to be enjoyable, both for himself and the rider. You need a good foundation to build on.

Q. What is your philosophy in teaching—do you follow a particular way of teaching?

A. My goal for my students has always been to give them enough knowledge that they can start training the horse themselves. I want my students to use the tools I give them to feel what needs to be done and to know how to do it.

Q. What are your hopes for the Icelandic horse in the United States?

A. I hope more people will discover the breed and that the community will grow. I hope there will be more opportunities for people to find education for both horse and rider. We all need guidance in our journey for more knowledge.

Contact Info:

Alexandra Montan Gray
850 Morning Sun Dr.
Encinitas, CA 92024
(858) 250-9290
alexmgray@live.com

#2 in the World

by Janet Kuykendall

Imagine an international competition geared toward Icelandic horses and trail riding. This is the Tour Rider Cup.

In this competition organized by FEIF's Leisure Committee, entrants track their hours in the saddle and compare their overall riding times to others around the world. The aim of the Tour Rider Cup "is to encourage small groups of people to ride Icelandic horses together in nature." The 2021 competition started on May 1 and ended on October 31. Competitors earned points for every 30 minutes they rode; however, rides had to be a minimum of 90 minutes. Rides longer than six hours only counted as six points. Riders could earn additional points for participating in FEIF rides and for posting pictures and write-ups on FEIF-related social media or magazines.

This competition calls to the "weekend warrior." And one particular weekend warrior answered that call: Jaime Jackson of Ohio, an Icelandic horse owner and member of the Sirius club. With a score of 161 points, Jaime ranked second in the world in the 2021 FEIF Tour Rider Cup competition.

Enjoying the view at Castle Gardens Scenic Area outside Tensleep, WY.

Crossing the O&W Bridge in Jamestown, TN. Photo by David Gregory.

DREAM HORSES

Jaime's "partner in crime" in these escapades is Irena from Klakahross (barn name Holly), a 15-year-old Icelandic mare. Jaime says, "I love riding this little horse. Whether it's picking through a field of rocks, winding through narrow trails, hopping over logs, or pacing on the flat, we always have so much fun. We've covered some pretty rough terrain in our adventures, and she does an incredible job of navigating through whatever we encounter. People we come across on the trail always comment on our 'cute little ponies.' They typically change their opinion a bit when they see what our 'four-wheel drive Ferraris' are actually capable of! Good things come in small packages!"

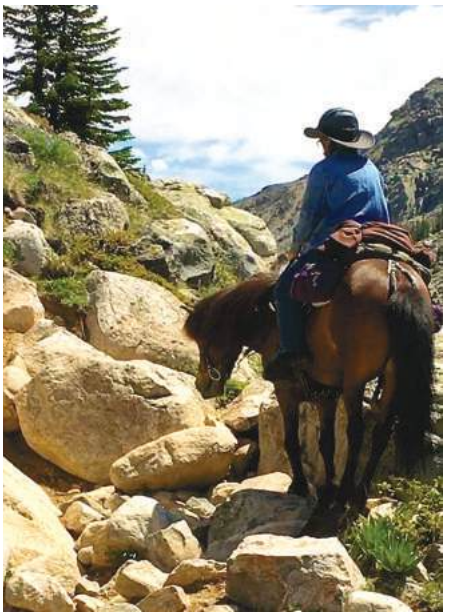
Holly came to Ohio after Jaime enjoyed an incredible vacation in Iceland, where she and her husband Shawn were lowered to the bottom of the inside of a dormant volcano, soaked in the Blue Lagoon, hiked to scenic waterfalls, and went scuba diving through the cold Icelandic waters. The trip ended at an Icelandic horse farm, where the pair took long rides on sturdy Icelandic horses.

Everyone, after all, wants to ride Icelandic horses in Iceland. That's exactly how Jaime planned her first trip to Iceland. And everything was perfect—especially the horse part!

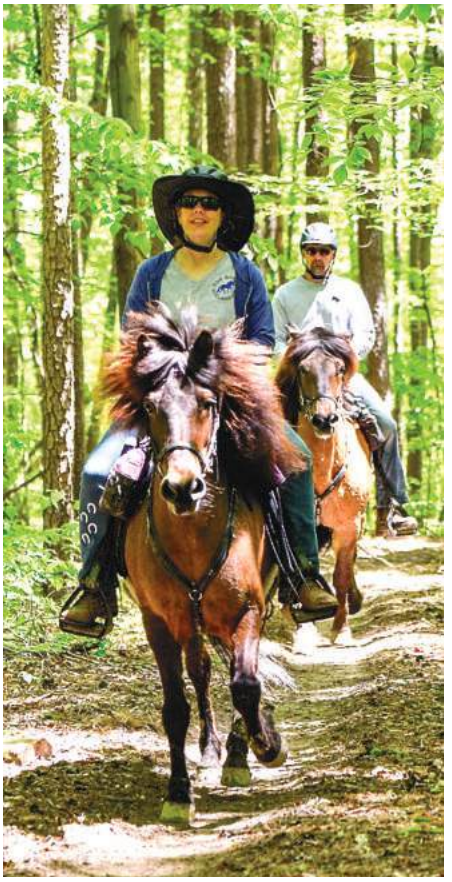
Jaime returned home from that trip knowing that she would soon have to replace her aging Rocky Mountain horse, and the Icelandic horse was now the only breed on her list for a replacement horse prospect. She found Holly for sale on the internet and talked her husband into a quick trip to Oklahoma for a test ride. The ride was a success, and the 12.2-hand five-gaited mare hopped on the trailer and joined the Jackson's Ohio herd. It soon became evident that Shawn's senior Rocky Mountain mare could not keep up with Holly. So, Shawn replaced her with Kolbeinn from Northstar. The Jackson herd grew to four, and the old horses retired. That's how the dream grew legs and tölted on.

NEW CHALLENGES

A few years later, Jaime said, she decided she needed a challenge. "I came across the Virtual Tevis ride in 2020 and decided to sign up to provide support, since the actual race was cancelled due to Covid-19. Plus, you got a T-shirt! The challenge was to ride 100 miles in 100 days—not really a huge challenge with our typical riding schedule. It was fun. I didn't even realize that these types of challenges existed, so I started to do some additional searching and found the Pony Express 1900 Mile



Navigating some rough terrain in the Bighorn National Forest, WY.



Jaime riding with Shawn in the Indy Run at Hoosier National Forest. Photo by Noelle Snyder.

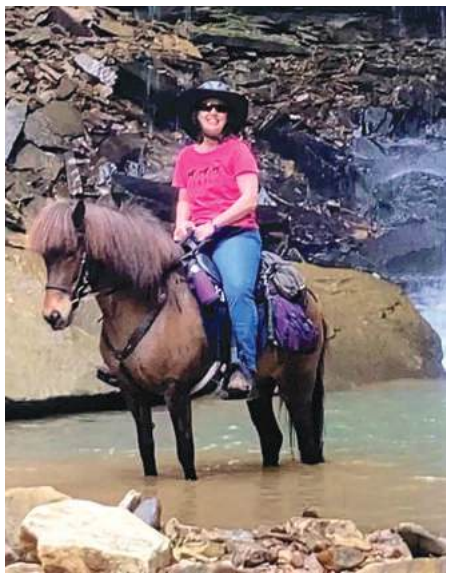
Challenge, which is a multi-year challenge with a portion of the proceeds going to support the Pony Express Museum. Holly and I are almost halfway through that one. We did the virtual Tevis again in 2021, as well as several other virtual mileage events to keep us motivated. When I saw the FEIF Tour Rider Cup information in the FEIF newsletter that our Sirius club forwards to our members, I decided to sign up. We were already keeping track of our time and actual mileage, so it was pretty easy to just log it into another system. I thought it would be fun to see how we stacked up."

Second in the world for the Tour Rider Cup is pretty high on that stack! Congratulations to Jaime, as well as to the first-place winner, Simone Freese of Denmark, who earned 167.5 points. Jaime was the only winner from the United States. Her prize is a limited-edition FEIF Photo Competition calendar.

"Our longest ride from a distance perspective," she explained in an interview for the FEIF website, "was about 19 miles, and it took seven hours. We were riding in the hills in Kentucky and did almost 3,900 feet of total elevation gain. It was a beautiful ride that not only took us up and down some pretty significant hills, but also through creeks and some fairly rocky terrain. We also found some stretches where we could tölt, which gave us the opportunity to prove that our Icelandic horses had no trouble keeping up with the other 'big' gaited breeds. We heard several people say, 'I need to get one of those!'"

In 2021, Jaime rode in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia. However, the majority of her rides began at the Jackson's camp in Marienville, PA, from which challenging trails weave through the Allegheny National Forest. The couple also owns property in Tennessee, where they plan to retire, and they spend a few weeks a year camping and trail riding at the Big South Fork, which is in their back yard. Even though Shawn's horse had some eye problems that prevented them from riding for the month of July, they were able to participate in the USIHC's Sea 2 Shining Sea virtual ride for most of the year. They're planning a trip to some of their favorite riding spots out West in the near future—and another trip to Iceland to see the national horseshow, Landsmót, is on their bucket list.

The FEIF Tour Rider Cup will start again on May 1, 2022, the Day of the Icelandic Horse. We look forward to seeing big things from Icelandic riders this year. Says Jaime, "Challenge accepted!"



Taking a break in the Hoosier National Forest, Indiana.

EVENTING ADVENTURES

by Alison Osborne

It happens every time we pull up to a horse trial. We see the other competitors and spectators looking at us with huge smiles, and I know what's coming next … "I love your pony!"

Out of the corner of my eye, I see my husband bristle. I smile and explain that Henna is an Icelandic horse and she loves to jump.

We did not purchase Henna or our other Icelandic, Ed, to do eventing. In fact, we knew as little about eventing as we did about the Icelandic breed when my husband and daughter, Kingzlee, watched a demonstration on the Icelandic horse at the International in Omaha in the spring of 2018. Virginia Lauridsen of Harmony Icelandics and Guðmundur (Mummi) Skúlason of the Icelandic farm Hallkelsstaðahlið did such a great demo that my husband decided we needed an Icelandic horse, stat.

A couple of weeks later, the same day that his mother passed away, he put down a deposit on a dun mare that Virginia had just brought in. So there was a special connection with that horse for us. But little did we know the immediate connection that would happen when our then-10-year-old daughter met Henna frá Eystra-Fróðholti for the first time in July 2018. Henna can be tough to catch, Virginia had warned us, but Kingzlee walked right into the pasture and caught her. It was love at first sight.

We learned so much through lessons from Virginia and Mummi that we all fell in love with the breed. So much so that we also bought a grey gelding named Eðall Ifill from Azur (we call him "Ed") on the same day that we took Henna home. The whole family kept taking lessons with Virginia as time allowed, and traveled to Iceland to ride with Mummi.

Eventing combines arena jumping, dressage, and a cross-country jumping course. Whatever the task, Henna frá Eystra-Fróðholti gives rider Kingzlee Osborne her best.

ON A MISSION

We were continuing to enjoy both Henna and Ed, when a crazy turn of fate struck again. While traveling in middle-of-nowhere-Wyoming on a mission to find an antique store, I saw cross country jumps in a field. I slammed on the brakes, skidded into the driveway, hopped out, marched into the barn, and asked if they taught lessons.

We had attended an event at Rebecca Farm in Montana and one at Blenheim Palace outside of Oxford, England, and I had participated in a couple of schooling shows on my off-the-track thoroughbreds, but I still didn't have a grasp of what eventing really was. Maddy Manley, from NDR Ranch agreed to take us on. So we brought Henna and my thoroughbred to Wyoming for the summer in 2020 and started in her program.

Being gaited and preferring to tölt, Henna struggled with dressage. The first time we took her to a cross-country course, it took many tries to get her over a tiny log jump. But Kingzlee and Henna kept plugging away at it all summer. As Kingzlee became a more confident and stronger rider, and Henna understood her job better, they quickly developed. We were ready for our first horse show two months after entering Maddy's program.

The water crossings on the cross-country courses are no problem for Henna frá Eystra-Fróðholti.

ABOUT EVENTING

What is eventing? Eventing has many times been called the triathlon of equestrian sports; its competitions are called trials. The horse-and-rider combination is first tested in dressage. In eventing dressage, the scoring system is different; here, the better

scores have lower numbers. The dressage score is carried forward to the jumping phases. The second test is cross-country riding. Cross country tests the endurance of the horse during an allotted time over a field with rough terrain and fixed jumps. Points are added for refusals and for going over or under time. Finally, the third phase brings the horse and rider back to the arena for show jumping, and points are added for rails down or for time faults. The pair with the lowest score after all three phases wins.

But, one must successfully complete each phase to go on to the next. Trials are designed to bring the horse up the levels safely, with the dressage tests, cross-country course length, and jump heights becoming more difficult and technical with each level. More in-depth information on eventing can be found at https://useventing.com.

HORSE TRIALS

In September 2018 Kingzlee and Henna, both 12 at the time, entered their first horse trial in Cheyenne, WY. They competed in the Starter Division, with a maximum jump height of 2 feet 3 inches. In addition to preferring the tölt, Henna also struggles with the left lead in canter. I suggested Kingzlee really use the corner to get the left lead during the test. Great advice—unless that corner is also headed home. Henna jumped out of the dressage ring, which resulted in the dreaded "E": elimination! This meant they could not continue on to the jumping phases, the phases that Kingzlee and Henna (and most eventers) love the most. Lots of tears, threats of never riding again and selling Henna ensued. But Kingzlee picked herself up by the boot straps and continued forward.

The next horse trial was four weeks away in Kansas City, and the pair finished 3rd! Had they not hit a rail in show jumping, they would have won. Winter was upon us by then, which meant not as much time to ride, but Kingzlee continued to work on jumping and dressage as the weather allowed.

The summer of 2021 was full of a lot of schooling with our coach Maddy, riding with upper level eventers, and working hard on the flat. Kingzlee and Henna competed in six shows and, though they normally started down the rankings after the dressage phase, they almost always jumped clean and finished on their dressage scores. They also almost always ended in the ribbons.

The beauty of eventing is that it isn't over until all three phases are over, and there is potential to move quickly up (or down) in the placings. Last December, Kingzlee and Henna jumped 3 feet 1 inch (with Henna wearing a Santa hat and Kingzlee in her Christmas pajamas). Henna now loves to jump, and she will do anything for her kid. Icelandics have such heart!

OLYMPIC HOPEFULS?

Meanwhile, our 10-year-old daughter Kruzann and her 10-year-old Icelandic, Ed, have been eyeing eventing as well. Ed is better at dressage, as his gaits are more clean and balanced, yet he doesn't have the passion (or energy) for jumping. Kruzann and Ed did their first combined test (dressage and show jumping) over ground poles this summer and had a ton of fun!

While visiting Virginia at Harmony Icelandics in November, I rode Stjarni from Hanging Valley, who wasn't yet trained in tölt. Virginia had taken him over some jumps, which he seemed to enjoy, and had put a good foundation on him in dressage. We discussed how he might make a good eventer, with his athletic ability and balanced trot and canter. In a weak moment, I purchased him! It will be fun to bring up an Icelandic who is maybe better suited for the sport and to see how he comes along. At the very least, we have another athletic and fun Icelandic in our collection that we can enjoy on the trails or in the show ring.

Are any of us going to the Olympics on our Icelandic eventers? No. Are we having tons of fun and challenging ourselves and our horses in the sport? Yes!

We look forward to another fun summer season and to continuing to bring our Icelandics up the eventing levels, to help them reach their maximum potential in the sport. We also enjoy talking about the breed and exposing people to the great demeanors and range of abilities of the Icelandic horse. Who knows, next summer might find us pulling three Icelandic horses off the trailer to compete, which means we will have three times the opportunity to share the talent of this breed at horse trials across the country.

I just hope my husband doesn't pull his hair out as everyone raves about our cute "ponies."

Dressage—the first test—is the hardest one of the three for Henna, who prefers to tölt, not trot.

Choosing Your First

by Andrea Barber

So you have finally decided to take the plunge and purchase your first Icelandic horse. Great! But before you run out and fall in love with the first fuzzy face you see, there is some homework for you to do. Owning a horse will be a big commitment for you in terms of money, time, and emotion. If you take the time first to do some self-reflection, educate yourself, and develop a plan, you will have the best chance of long-term success and a wonderful equine partnership.

BE HONEST

Before we even get to the horse, let's consider you. First, be honest about your physical abilities.

Yes, when you were in your 20s you may have ridden that fiery Arab on the beach bareback at a full gallop with your hair streaming behind you in the wind. But chances are since then you may have had a few children, had a few injuries, gained a few pounds, and lost a decent amount of muscle and agility.

I know this is a tough nut to swallow. None of us likes to face the fact that we are aging and that we are not as nimble and resilient as we once were. But it's important to be honest about your physical limitations now so you can find a horse that will make a suitable partner. Maybe one that is patient while you take a little extra time getting on using a mounting block or one that isn't too wide so that you can ride without overextending your hips. Remember the goal here: to ride safely and have fun. Choosing a horse that is above your physical abilities won't be safe or fun.

Sit down and honestly consider what your physical limitations are now and what they could be in the future. After all, a horse is a long-term commitment, often for 10 years or more. Consider if you can improve some of these issues by losing some weight, working with a skilled physical therapist or personal trainer, etc. If you can, by all means go for it! You'll improve not only your riding but your overall health. But realistically some of your physical limitations probably won't improve no matter what you do as time marches on.

Second, be honest about your riding skill. It never fails to amaze me the number of people that come to our farm who say they are skilled riders, have been riding for "years," have had horses before, etc., but do not even know the very basics of horsemanship: caring for the horse, tacking up the horse, the primary riding aids, etc.

Before you even consider getting a horse of your own, you should know the basics. If you don't, delay your purchase a bit and take some lessons. If you can find somebody nearby who is experienced with

Unique and beautiful colors are attractive, but may be budget busters. Youngsters are adorable and lower priced, but do you have the experience to raise and train one? Photos by Andrea Barber.

the Icelandic breed and even has Icelandic horses that you can take lessons on, super! But if you don't (and most likely you don't), ask around to find a good trainer of any breed who puts safety, care of the horse, and strong fundamentals first. A dressage trainer who teaches a classical foundation is often a good choice. (Even if you are a skilled rider, more lessons from a quality trainer can never hurt!)

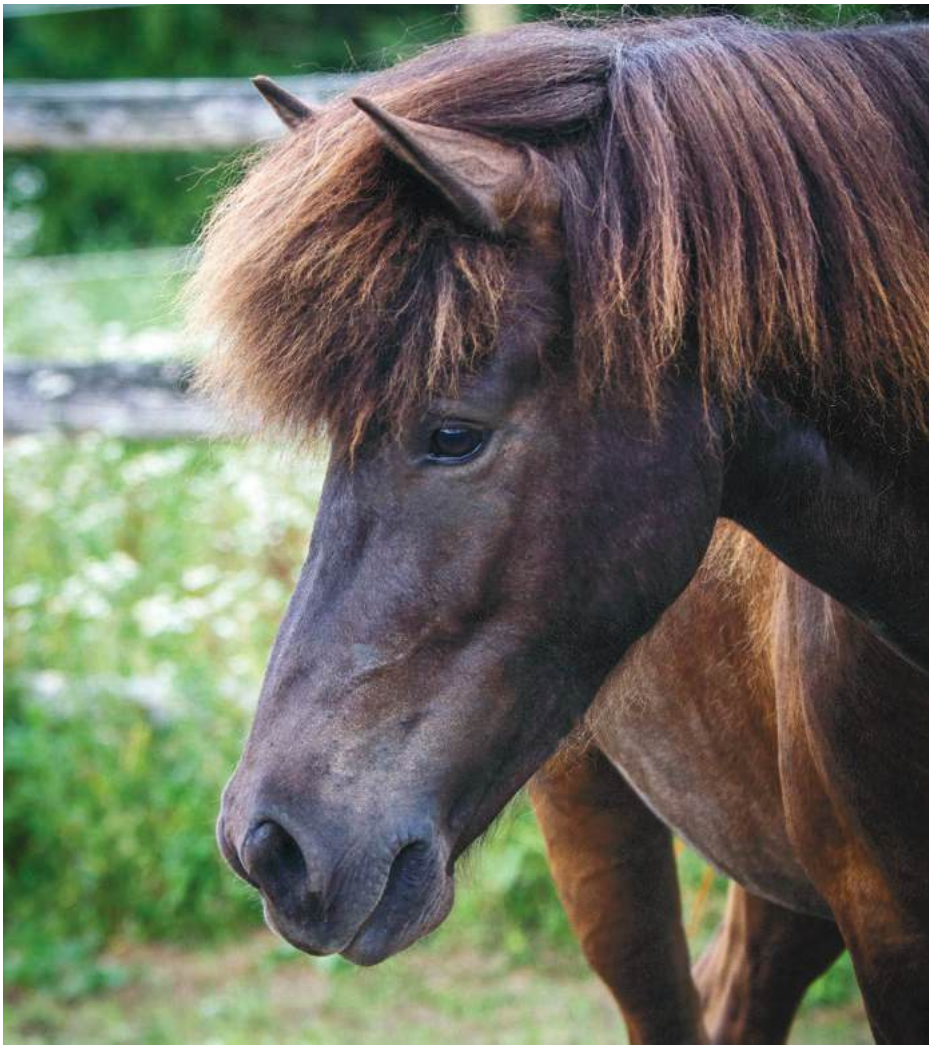
Beyond that, try to categorize yourself as either a beginner, intermediate, or advanced rider. To me a beginner has only very basic knowledge of riding and is still trying to master the basic aids and put them together when needed (e.g., steering and speed control). You may also be a beginner if you rode years ago, but are rusty now and getting your sea legs back; if you are a timid rider who lacks confidence; or if you have physical issues that significantly impact your riding abilities. A beginner will need a horse that is tolerant of rider mistakes, is quiet and non-reactive, defaults to slow down or stop, and also doesn't take undue advantage of a rider who is still working on becoming assertive and confident.

An intermediate rider has a good working knowledge of the aids and can use them in combination, does not rely on the reins for balance, is confident in most situations, and appreciates the horse offering some energy.

An advanced rider not only has a sophisticated use of the aids and excellent balance, but can actively improve the horse and deal with problems.

If you're not honest about your riding abilities, you risk getting a horse that is above your abilities. A bit of a challenge is good so that you have something to grow into. But too much challenge, and once again you are risking your safety, you won't be comfortable, and you certainly won't be having fun. Again—remember! This is about having fun! In addition, if you're over-mounted, it's likely that you will cause the horse to become unhappy and its training to deteriorate.

Third, be honest about what you want to do with the horse. Again, you may have a romantic fantasy of galloping your horse through a giant field at sunset, when the reality is that you are much more likely to mosey through the field and stop to admire the sunset. Figure out what you like to do and try to get a horse that likes to do the same thing. If you do indeed want to gallop regularly across that field, constantly urging on a horse with low energy is going to be a real drag for you both.


Resist the urge to fall in love with the first pretty face you meet! Photo by Andrea Barber.

Also be honest about what other activities you want to do with your horse. If you'd like to dabble in dressage and take lessons with a dressage trainer, then a horse with a stronger trot would probably be better than one that is very lateral. Conversely, if the thought of bouncing around at a trot is not your idea of a good time, maybe looking for a horse that prefers to tölt would be a better match as a smooth trail mount.

BE PRACTICAL

When it comes to practicalities, first consider where you will keep the horse.

A lot of people have a dream of getting a farm and having their horse right in their own backyard. However, if this is your first horse that may be too big a leap. Though most of the time the focus in lessons is to learn how to ride a horse, there is a huge amount to be learned in how to care for a horse.

Icelandic horses are hardy, but they are also horses, which tend to be surprisingly fragile animals. You're going to need to know quite a bit about equine nutrition, health, and general farm management to keep your new horse healthy and happy. There can be a steep learning curve. Because of this it may be wise to board your new horse, at least at first. At a boarding stable your horse will be cared for by people experienced in proper horse care, and you'll also likely have access to a trainer or other knowledgeable horse people should questions arise.

Icelandics are typically easy keepers, but in some surprising ways that can make them a little more complicated to keep. You'll need to have that fact in mind when deciding where to board your new horse. That lush pasture that barely kept weight on your old Thoroughbred will probably

have your new Icelandic quickly blowing up like a blimp. Boarding stable owners usually mean well, but they often feed too much and turn out too little for Icelandics. So just familiarize yourself in advance with the care a typical Icelandic needs and make sure you have the environment lined up to provide it. That may mean educating the boarding stable manager or paying for add-on services like additional turnout.

Second, find qualified professionals to help. In the best-case scenario, there will be a qualified Icelandic trainer near you who can provide you with the support you need to get started with your new horse. The USIHC website has a list of certified trainers that may help: https://icelandics.org/horse-trainers. Even if you have to travel to one of these trainers it will be worth the trip to get you and your new horse started out on the right hoof.

If no certified trainers are within reach, then you'll need to do some homework to find a suitable trainer. Usually looking at dressage trainers in your area is a good place to start. But you'll have to find one that is willing to work with a "fuzzy pony"! Even though a dressage trainer may not have knowledge of the gaits of an Icelandic horse, they know how to train both horse and rider to use their bodies correctly in good form, and to ride in a controlled, safe manner. The bonus is that working on dressage exercises will undoubtedly improve your new horse's tölt!

In addition to finding a good trainer, finding a quality farrier is also key. You don't need a farrier who has experience with Icelandics (though that's nice) or other gaited breeds, but one that is well-educated and experienced in doing proper trimming and shoeing. Unfortunately, these folks are often in short supply, and even when you find one they may be booked solid and not taking new clients. This is why it pays to ask around and line one up even before your new horse arrives.

A good veterinarian is also critical. As I mentioned before, Icelandics are usually very healthy and hardy, but even they have ailments from time to time. You don't want to wait until you have an emergency in progress to try to find a vet. So it's important to find an experienced vet who is willing to work with you to provide the best overall care for your horse. Preventive care is just as important as emergency care. A good vet can help you keep your horse happy and healthy throughout its lifetime.

Third, before shopping for a horse be realistic about your budget. In my experience a lot of people set their horse budget to what they would like to spend, not what they need to spend to get what they want.

As ideal as it would be to find a brand-new BMW at a Toyota price it's just not going to happen. Due to surging demand, prices for Icelandic horses (which were already typically higher than for most other breeds) have risen dramatically. This also means horses with the most sought-after "features"—easy clear tölt, calm temperament, prime age, quality training, unique color—will command high prices. In general, you get what you pay for. You're simply not going to find a new BMW as a free-for-the-taking rescue.

This means that if your budget is limited, you may have to compromise on your wish list. This is okay if you go in with your eyes open and understand what you are compromising on.

Remember the end goal is fun! Photo by Andrea Barber.

BE PREPARED

Purchasing a plain brown horse that fits all your other criteria, instead of the flashy pinto you dreamed of, is probably a good compromise. On the other hand, purchasing a green horse with limited training and experience, rather than a seasoned and well-trained horse may not be. If the compromises prove too severe, then you may have to delay your purchase and save up for what you really want. As I said, owning a horse is a huge multi-year commitment. Waiting to afford the right horse will be worth the wait in the long run.

Finally, ask yourself, do you have support?

One rather delicate aspect that is often overlooked by horse buyers is the importance of having the support of your friends and family in your horse purchase. Whether or not you keep your horse at home or at a boarding stable, a horse is a huge commitment in time and money.

Becoming a "horse person" is truly its own lifestyle. Are your friends and family on board with that? Will they understand the hours you are going to spend at the stable? The large vet bills that will sometimes arrive (usually at the worst possible time)? Do you have dreams of your whole family happily riding together, but they would rather be on the couch watching football? It's better to set expectations now on all sides, than to have potential ugly tug-of-war games later.

In my next article, I'll talk about "Starting Your Search." Purchasing a suitable Icelandic horse isn't as easy as ordering one shipped to your door via Amazon Prime, and there certainly are no "free" returns. So you'll need to do your research, consult experts, and make your selection wisely. Proper planning will be the key to your success.

The True Cost of a Foal

by Jessica Haynsworth

Jess Haynsworth's mare, Bína frá Efri-Rauðalæk, with newborn colt Bráinn. Bráinn was raised in Iceland until age three, at which point he was exported to the U.S. and trained at Jess's farm in Vermont. Photo by Tisa Šenekar.

When choosing to buy an Icelandic horse, the question of import vs. domestic bred is one of the biggest decisions buyers face—and cost is often a factor. Generally speaking, purchase prices tend to be lower in Iceland, and although import costs are high, many feel there are still good deals to be had importing quality horses to the U.S.

But how are these purchase prices determined? And how can we know when a deal might be too good to be true?

Over the past months, the Icelandic horse community has been disturbed to learn of harmful practices within the "blood mare" industry in Iceland (see the sidebar to this article). A video exposing these harmful practices caused international outrage and complaint, but it also led to a number of discussions about horse breeding in Iceland—some of which were constructive and helpful, most of which were not.

I want to be clear: This article is not about "blood mares." It is, however, inspired by one of the resulting discussions that I felt was potentially helpful and informative to U.S. buyers of Icelandic horses: What does it cost to raise a healthy, quality foal in Iceland?

The unfortunate reality is that not all horse breeders are ethical. That's true in Iceland, Europe, Canada, and the U.S. alike. Amid the revelation that cheap foals may be a byproduct of the "blood mare" industry, this reality felt more glaring to me than ever. Ethical breeders in Iceland have been raising their voices against the "blood business" for some time, out of concern that a few breeders involved in this industry have been appealing to international buyers specifically by using colorful stallions and selling the foals inexpensively en masse—and using social media as a tool to do so.

Any farm selling large numbers of discount foals on the internet should give international buyers a quick pause for thought. How are these breeding farms staying operational, pricing their foals at such a loss? Are they cutting corners when it comes to important things like mare and foal care? Are they saving money by using low quality stock that may have issues that buyers don't know about? Or is that money coming from somewhere else, like the "blood business"? We must also ask how farms that sell such young foals to buyers online are assessing their animals for temperament and matching buyers to foals. Is there any screening process to ensure a safe and productive match?

Of course there will always be exceptions, particularly where hobby breeders are concerned, and there may well be good reasons why a special deal on a young horse or foal may be offered here or there, but it is wise to look at overarching trends. If a breeder is consistently trying to unload large quantities of very cheap young stock, it could be a red flag that something isn't right.

The risk is that such operations may flood the horse market with bargain price horses that may not be bred to standard and may not possess the conformation, gait quality, and character we know and love. This lowers both the ability and the incentive for ethical, responsible breeders to sell their horses at fair prices. It also presents an ethical concern to buyers, who

Young mares and geldings sharing a fresh round bale at Efri-Rauðilækur farm in Iceland. Hay is provided free-choice year round to mares, foals, and young stock. Photo by Jess Haynsworth.

want to support breeders with good standards, husbandry, and welfare practices and may not realize that they are supporting something potentially negligent at best and downright unsavory at worst.

In order to spot these red flags when choosing a breeder, however, buyers need some baseline understanding of what it costs to raise a horse in Iceland.

I have seen Icelandic foals marketed on Instagram at prices so low that they made my jaw drop. That said, I am in a somewhat unusual position, because I was privileged to live and work at a top breeding farm in Iceland for several years. This gave me a firsthand knowledge of what kind of time, labor, and resources go into producing healthy, ethically raised Icelandic foals. I also own my own broodmare in Iceland and know what it costs me to keep her in comfort and good care, and to produce and raise her foals until they are old enough to export. That said, I'm boarding my mare and her foals, because I now live in the U.S., so I knew that my costs might differ from those of a full time breeder. I wanted a clearer understanding of how the actual numbers break down.

I reached out to my friend and mentor, Baldvin Ari Guðlaugsson (known to many as Baddi) of the Efri-Rauðilækur breeding farm in Iceland, and asked him to break down exactly what it costs to raise a foal. Breeding, for Baddi's family, is a labor of love. Founded in 1990, Efri-Rauðilækur has produced World Champions and Landsmót winners, and has twice been given Iceland's award for Breeding Farm of the Year for sport horses. Three generations work together to run the farm, which includes 150 horses on 1,112 acres (450 hectares). Each year, they produce between 12 and 22 top quality foals, many of which do grow up to be exported to Europe or the United States, both as top sport horses and as pleasure horses.

Efri-Rauðilækur is also the farm where I lived and worked, and where my mare, Bína, currently resides and has given birth to three beautiful foals for me so far—all three of which I have exported to the U.S. when they came of age. Even having some idea of what to expect for numbers, seeing Baddi's breakdown was still rather staggering.

THE MARE

Mares at Efri-Rauðilækur are provided with regular dentistry, hoofcare, and veterinary care. They are all ultrasounded to confirm healthy pregnancies (a step which is commonly skipped when breeders are trying to cut costs, which can be very risky—early detection of twin pregnancies, for example, can save a mare's life). They're dewormed on a schedule, fed hay free choice year round in addition to pasture grazing in the summer months, and have access to salt and minerals free choice as well. They're checked on regularly, more or less daily in the off season and often multiple times per day during foaling season. This good care runs about €1,500 (about $1,700) per year, as estimated by Baddi.

Keep in mind, each foal requires two years from the mare—one year to conceive and be pregnant, and another year to nurse and raise the foal. Foals at Efri-Rauðilækur are more or less allowed to self-wean, officially moved away from their mothers as yearlings in springtime just before the new crop of foals is born. Weaning sooner is common in the U.S., but there are health benefits to the foals when they are allowed to nurse for a longer period and be naturally weaned in their own time. This means that the mares have to receive excellent nutrition so as to stay healthy and in good weight while pregnant and nursing. So good care of the mare, while she produces one foal, comes to €3,000 ($3,400).

It is worth noting that many of Efri-Rauðilækur's breeding mares are judged first prize, which requires significant cost in terms of training and care to achieve. Baddi estimates that most of their mares will produce around 10 foals in their lifetimes, and says that the value of a first prize mare is generally around €30,000 ($34,000). Using lower-quality or less-proven stock is one way that breeders might cut costs, but most buyers hope that they are purchasing offspring from quality parents. Choosing (and matching) mares and stallions, officially judged at a breeding assessment or not, often involves training them to some degree to assess their quality and performance. There are many reasons why un-judged horses might be used in quality breeding programs, but when we start to see generations of untrained mares and stallions piling up, that might prompt some questions as to how the horses are being chosen and assessed.

THE STALLION

The average studfee Baddi pays (or charges, if the stallion is owned by Efri-Rauðilækur) is €1,000 ($1,130), with particularly famous stallions climbing to upwards of €2,500 ($2,823). Transporting the mare from Northern Iceland to Southern Iceland or vice versa, as many breeders do to send their mares to desired studs, costs about €300 ($340), and considering the vet costs to ultrasound the mare, Baddi estimates a minimum of €1,500 ($1,700) for the breeding and conception.

Stallions are also more expensive to raise and own, since they cannot free-range in the mountains as young stock, and since they generally spend more time stabled and in training to prove and earn their worth as breeding stock (more on

training and stabling costs later). The cost of keeping a stallion on pasture, says Baddi, is closer to €1,500 per year.

THE FOAL

Once born, the foals require their own hay, salt, hoof trims, and regular deworming. These are areas that breeders might skip if they're looking to cut costs, but Baddi feels they're very important. "Horses that (regularly) get worm medicine are less likely to get colic later in life, and hoof-trimming makes healthier legs for the future," says Baddi. Young mares and geldings at Efri-Rauðilækur have the benefit of grazing free-range in the mountains in summertime, to be rounded up again in Fall, so during that time they are not eating hay. Baddi therefore estimates €1000 per year for foals and young stock, bringing the total to €4000 ($4,520) per year by the time the young mare or gelding reaches training age. Stallions would, of course, cost more.

That brings our total—mare care, stud fee, breeding costs, and foal care—to a minimum of €4,500 ($5,100) the moment the foal hits the ground, €5,500 ($6,210) for a weaned yearling, and €8,500 ($9,600) to raise it to an age at which it can be trained.

But in order to export a foal, the foal must be trained and handled at least enough to be safely haltered, groomed, loaded, and shipped without causing undue stress. That means bringing the horse into the training stable and handling them daily, which—taking into account the resources used for the stall, feed, etc.—Baddi estimates running €500 ($565) per month per horse. When the young horses begin their training, these costs add up quickly—six months of training for a four-year-old adds €3,000 ($3,400) that the breeder needs to make back when the horse is sold, in order to break even, which would bring the total to €11,500 ($13,000)—and most Americans would consider that horse only "green broke."

Keep in mind, these are just the costs to break even so that the farm doesn't lose money producing a foal. Selling horses for less than these costs results in the farm taking a financial loss on each horse. These numbers also do not include compensation for the time and labor that Baddi and his family spend caring for their animals and for their farmland. "If we (included) all our time and charged for it, we would stop this immediately," Baddi says, only half joking.

A healthy Icelandic foal in which the mare has been treated well and ethically has already cost the breeder €4,500 ($5,100) by the time the foal is born.

So when we see foals for sale online for a fraction of that cost, further research may be merited to determine how exactly the breeder is able to offer such low prices.

For his part, Baddi says he very rarely sells foals, which he feels is "a lotto" for the buyer. "(The foals) don't always end as the right horses for them, and often they get stuck with the wrong horse after a lot of cost of training them," says Baddi. "We'd rather train them and try to find the right person for each horse so we have a happy customer."

A beautiful foal at Efri-Rauðalækur.

None of this is to suggest that there aren't exceptions, or to say that no one should ever buy a foal or jump at a good deal. Particularly where small hobby farms are involved, there may well be good reasons why young stock are offered to particular buyers at lower prices. It's simply important to look at overarching trends, and to know what questions to ask. As buyers, we have the opportunity to support good, ethical breeding with our dollar. My hope is that in providing this insight, buyers will be better able to educate themselves and choose breeders accordingly to fit their needs.

Mares and foals at Efri-Rauðilækur. A healthy, ethically bred foal has already cost its breeder over $5,000 at its birth. Photo by Jess Haynsworth.

ABOUT BLOOD FARMS by the Quarterly Committee

A disturbing video posted on Youtube November 19 by the German-based Animal Welfare Foundation (AWF) and Tierschutzbund Zürich (TSZ) of Switzerland revealed cruel practices involving mares on some of Iceland's farms, known as "blood farms." [1] On these farms, blood is taken from pregnant mares and sold to the Icelandic biotech firm, Ísteka, which extracts from it the hormone PMSG (pregnant mare serum gonadotrophin). [2]

The USIHC immediately responded to the video with this official statement: "The United States Icelandic Horse Congress believes in protecting the welfare and well-being of the Icelandic horse and we oppose all forms of animal cruelty. We are aligned with and support the statement from FEIF below:

'As the international Federation of Icelandic Horse Associations worldwide, FEIF condemns the practices and the mistreatment of mares on blood farms. We welcome the decision of the European Commission to stop the import and domestic production of PMSG and support any action taken by the Icelandic authorities to stop this procedure in Iceland completely.'"

Ísteka, which utilizes blood collected from over 5,000 mares at over 100 Icelandic farms, has responded that it will address the animal welfare concerns raised by the video, though the company says it is concerned about costs. [3] The company has been producing PMSG for export since the early 1990s. [2]

Other countries also have blood farms. There are no international guidelines for extracting blood from mares, but local animal welfare laws apply. The Icelandic Food and Veterinary Authority (MAST) began regulating the industry in 2014, "and we have gradually ramped up supervision," the agency noted on November 22. [4] In early January, MAST determined that the AWF/TSZ video did show violations that constitute a breach of Iceland's animal welfare laws; it turned its evidence, and the case, over to the police. [5]

Production of PMSG is profitable, and demand for the hormone is increasing: 100 grams currently sells for about $1,000,000. [9] Also known as equine chorionic gonadotropin (eCG), the hormone is concentrated from the extracted blood by pharmaceutical and biotech companies. It is then used by the dairy and meat industries throughout North America and Europe to stimulate estrus in sows, cows, goats, and other livestock.

PMSG is used in basic artificial insemination. In addition to the dairy and meat industries, zoos and wildlife preserves use PMSG to induce ovulation in captive animals, including bottlenose dolphins. PMSG can also induce superovulation, allowing for embryo transfer in cows and an increased litter number in sows. [2, 7]. Its primary use in North America is in the production of pork. [2]

Use of PMSG in the dairy and meat industries began in the 1930s and has increased since biotechnology made the hormone more available in the 1970s. [2] Synthetic alternatives to PMSG are being studied. [6, 8]. Hopefully, alternatives to extracting the hormone from the blood of pregnant mares will be developed soon and accepted by the meat and dairy industries.

According to anthropologist Anne Elyse Lally, who wrote a Ph.D. thesis on Iceland's blood farms in 2017, mares chosen for this industry were failed training prospects or had "physical characteristics rendering them unfit for training" as riding horses. [2] The horses lived essentially wild in large groups, were herded into a barn, then haltered and tied in small wooden stalls while blood was drawn by a veterinarian. Some mares were passive and accepted being restrained, Lally reports, while others became aggressive, "occasionally breaking the stalls." [2] The 2021 AWF/TSZ documents this type of violent reaction to restraint.

About five liters of blood per week are taken from each pregnant mare. This extraction continues for between 40 and 140 days, placing "an inordinate amount of strain on even the most robust and healthy Icelandic mares." [10] At 90 days, some farms abort the mare's fetus. [6] Without a foal, the mare can be re-bred that year, producing twice the amount of blood to sell. [7] In 2014, the blood of one mare was worth about $600 per year. [2] Blood levels of PMSG fall between the third and fifth pregnancy. [6] Mares that no longer become pregnant are usually slaughtered. If not aborted or slaughtered for meat, fillies will likely become blood mares, while colts will be sold cheaply, and to whom—to you?

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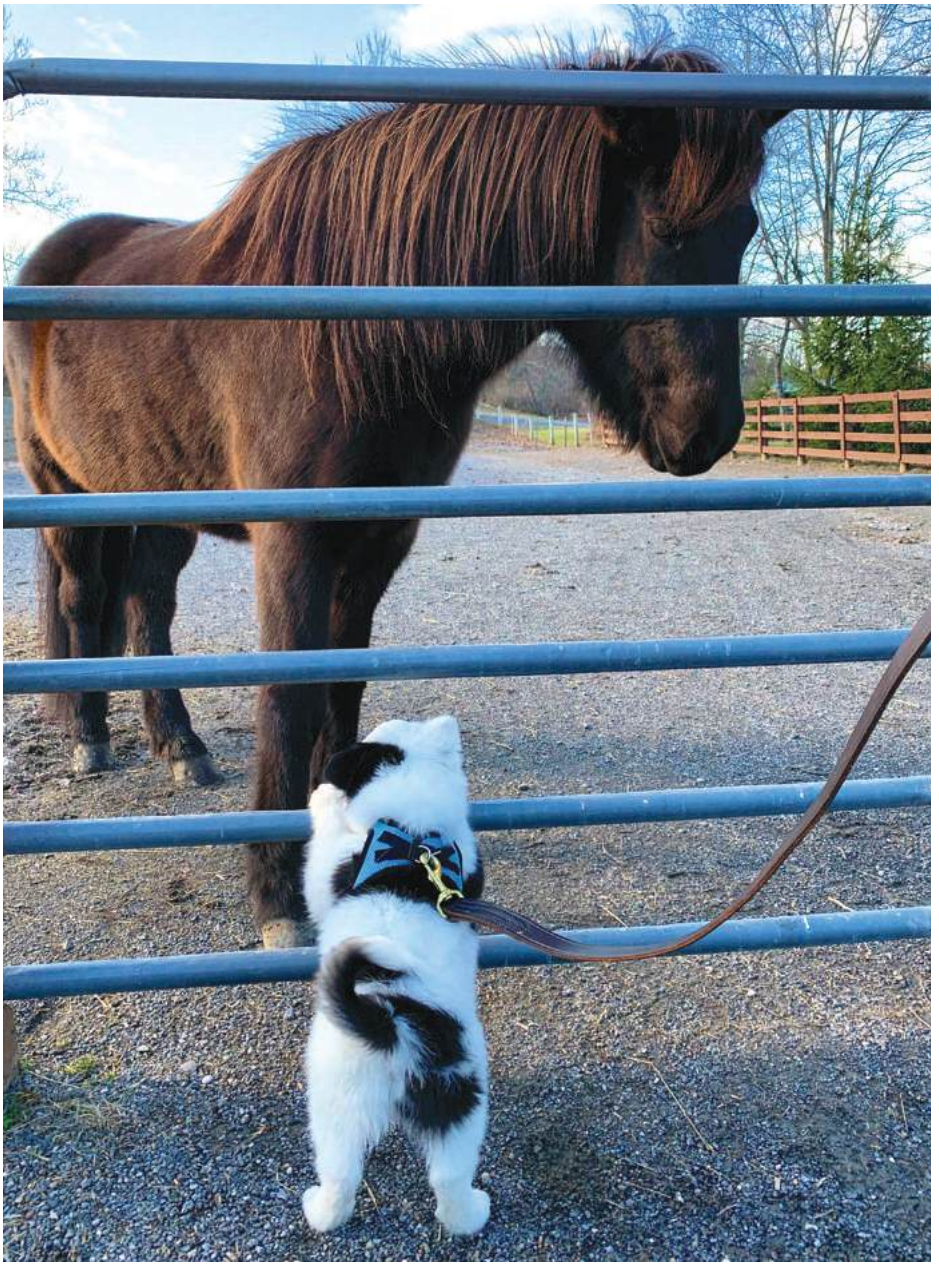
A DOG & PONY SHOW?

by Leslie Chambers

Last fall my husband, Frost, and I came to the conclusion that we needed to add another dog to our family. We had had miniature schnauzers since 2005, and our last one wasn't going to be with us much longer: She was over 14 years old, blind and diabetic. We knew there would be an immense hole in our hearts when she crossed the rainbow bridge.

One day, while having toast with Jóhanna Guðmundsdóttir at Thor Icelandics, the barn in New York where I board my horses, I saw a picture on Facebook of the most adorable puppies. It was posted by Lucy Nold, owner of Five-Gait Farm in Oregon, where she breeds both Icelandic horses and Icelandic sheepdogs. Johanna urged me to see if any of the pups were available. I did, but they were all spoken for. Just in case something changed, I let Lucy know I was interested.

Fate then intervened, and I got a call from Lucy in mid-November, Would I like to have the black-and-white male pup? Yes, of course! It also turned out that Jana Meyer and Tammy Kolbe, who are fellow NEI-HC members, were getting puppies from the same litter and had already arranged for them to be transported via van from Oregon to Vermont. What luck! New York was on the route, so the three siblings could make that cross-country journey together. The day before Thanksgiving 2020, Five-Gait Reykja Hringur joined our family.



Are Icelandic dogs as great as Icelandic horses? Owners of both say yes—so long as you like energy, personality, and lots of hair.

A PRICK-EAR'D CUR

We knew Icelandic horses were the best breed of horse, but was it a reasonable assumption that Icelandic dogs should also be exceptional?

Frost and I didn't really know much about the breed before Hringur arrived. So to learn what we should expect, we took a quick virtual trip to the American Kennel Club (AKC) website. There the Pros told us the Icelandic sheepdog was a very friendly, high-energy devoted family dog. The Cons said they can be very "barky" and prone to suffering "separation anxiety."

Continuing our research on the web, we learned that, like the Icelandic horse, the Icelandic sheepdog is native to Iceland, the breed dating back over a thousand years. According to the Arctic Adventures blog, "In the mid-16th century, Swedish scholar Olaus Magnus wrote about the dogs' popularity and their exporting to England. They became loved by the upper class, priests, and madams. So popular, that Shakespeare mentions these four-legged companions in his play Henry V"—though not very positively, we discovered when we looked it up. In the play, one character insults another by calling him a "prick-ear'd cur of Iceland."

ALMOST EXTINCT

We are fortunate that more dogs were exported from Iceland over the centuries, as the breed was near extinction in the 1950s. In the late 1800s, plague and canine distemper destroyed over 75% of the breed and led to a ban on dog importation to Iceland. The Icelandic sheepdog—and in fact all dogs—were banned in Reykjavik in 1924 in an effort to curb the high mortality rate from echinococcosis, a type of tapeworm found in dogs that can be transmitted to

Bogna's Icelandic sheepdog Cliff meets Icelandic horse Klerkur for the first time.

humans and lead to permanent blindness and death.

The breed's comeback is largely due to the efforts of Sir Mark Watson, a British diplomat who wrote a book, *The Icelandic Dog* (1956), detailing the pureness of the breed. In order to save the breed from extinction, Watson exported several males and females to his ranch in California. Only a few survived (many died of distemper), but the survivors were bred and the breed kept intact. Later, Watson and his dogs moved back to England and continued his breeding program. His birthday, July 18, is now celebrated in Iceland as the "Day of the Icelandic Sheepdog."

In Iceland, the Icelandic Dog Breeder Association (HRFI) was established to preserve the breed, among other aims. The Icelandic Kennel Club (Hundaræktarfélag Íslands), was founded on September 4, 1969 by a group of people concerned with the preservation of the breed and with the intention of keeping the breed pure. In 1979 a breed club, Deild Íslenska Fjárhundsins, was founded within the Icelandic Kennel Club and from that time on it has been responsible for the development and safeguarding of the breed.

The Icelandic Sheepdog Association of America (ISAA) was founded in 1997. The breed became eligible to compete in AKC Companion Events in 2006 and received AKC recognition (full acceptance) on June 30, 2010. It is placed in the AKC's Herding Group.

ABOUT THE BREED

Our Icelandic dogs and horses have much in common, besides being native to Iceland. They are both considered small-to-medium sized (as dogs and horses go). They are strong, hard working, and have high energy levels. They are very friendly and people oriented.

And there is a lot of hair, both in the barn and the home, so a good vacuum clearner is necessary.

Icelandic dogs and horses both come in a huge variety of colors. The breed standards for both dogs and horses require no interference with the natural state of the animal. That means for horses, we don't clip a bridle path in their manes, or shave their whiskers and ear hair, like some other horse breeds do. Icelandic dogs are expected to have their dew claws intact, and of course no docking of tails or ears is allowed.

DOGS & HORSES

Along with researching the breed on the web, I also reached out to Icelandic horse owners to see what they could tell me about Icelandic dogs. It turns out there are many, many USIHC and NEIHC members who own both Icelandic horses and Icelandic sheepdogs.

Andrea Barber of Sand Meadow Farm in New York told me that she and Steve came home with their first sheepdog following their honeymoon in Iceland. These dogs are so loving and devoted to their people, it's easy to understand.

Folks like the Barbers who are lucky enough to have their own farms are able to have their horses and dogs together for many activities. Since I've become aware of the breed, I've seen many a clinic or lesson picture—those taught by Caeli Cavanagh at Alfadans in Oregon and Janet Mulder at AK Ice Farm in Alaska come to mind—that includes a watchful Icelandic sheepdog.

Not everyone is able to have their dogs join them on the riding trails for various reasons. Some trails are public and don't allow unleashed dogs, some trails may not really be safe for the dogs (if there are coyotes in the area, for example), and some farms simply cannot allow it for insurance reasons.

I don't remember the exact date, but it was probably sometime in late 2020, that I saw a Facebook post asking if anyone knew where someone could both ride and bring along their dog. In April, on the NEIHC

Facebook page, Karleen Oosterwal reported that Bogna's dream of riding with her Icelandic sheepdog, Cliff, had come true. I reached out to Bogna, to learn more of her story and to invite her to join the NEIHC and the USIHC. Bogna is originally from Poland and has a lot of experience riding Icelandic horses, but does not currently own any. She lives in New York state and was thrilled when Karleen, the owner of four Icelandic horses, invited her and Cliff to Connecticut.

Karleen writes of the experience, "We now regularly get visited by Bogna and her 12-year-old daughter. Cliff comes out with us on trail rides, and enjoys managing my herd of some 30 goats. I am on the list for an offspring of his, as I cannot think of a better farm dog. He quickly understood the layout of the land, and understood where to put escaped goats. It is with the utmost tact and skill that he approaches the job. My own farm dog is a Bouvier (a Belgian herding dog) who can get way too aggressive in returning goats."

Leslie Chambers recovering from knee surgery with the help of Hringur (left) and Bella.

HRINGUR & BELLA

I have taken Hringur to Thor Icelandics a number of times to meet my horses. Hringur is one of the more "barky" Icelandic dogs, though, and he decided it was his job to discipline any horse brave enough to put its head over the stall door. This was good desensitization training for the horses, but not something we wanted to do every day.

Bogna, who doesn't own her own horses, often visits Karleen Osterwaal in Connecticut so she and Cliff can go for a ride.

We have a good fenced-in yard at home, and Hringur is an excellent frisbee-catching dog (Icelandic sheepdogs are also excellent agility competitors) and does a good job keeping the squirrels out of the yard, but we knew he was going to need a playmate. It so happened that we were in Oregon last July for a wedding, so we arranged a visit to Lucy Nold's Five-Gait Farm. Even luckier, Hringur's mom, Brynja, had just had another litter of pups. There were five females and one male (who was already spoken for).

We decided it would be best for Lucy to pick which of Hringur's half-sisters would join him in New York. Lucy knew Hringur's personality and carefully watched as the new pups' personalities emerged. She knew we would need a strong independent sort, as this pup would have to make the van journey from Oregon to New York without the companionship of any siblings. She chose Bella (her full name is Five-Gait Mid-Sommer Bella Stjarna) for us. Actually, we picked the name before we knew which pup we were getting.

Bella is perfect. She is also very different from Hringur, in that she is not at all "barky." When Bella is around the horses, she really doesn't do anything, she just leaves them alone. So after the horses' shoes were taken off and they went on their winter break last December, I decided to bring Hringur and Bella to Thor Icelandics on a daily basis and just walk the trails. We had the trails to ourselves, yet the dogs got to see horses in all the fields we passed. After just two weeks, Hringur learned he didn't need to bark at them. All things are trainable, you just have to take the time and be patient.

Although my horses and dogs don't live together, nothing gives me more joy than watching from my kitchen window as Hringur and Bella play in their yard. Life is good. So if you think you might like to have an Icelandic sheepdog as part of your Icelandic horse family, don't hesitate to contact a good breeder. Describe your family and your expectations, and let them match you with the right pup. They have experience in watching personalities develop. And remember, as Nancy Marie Brown says about our horses, "a good dog has no color."

FOR MORE INFO

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An exceptional first prize stallion
for the 2022 breeding season!

Galdur frá Reykjavík IS2009125291
F. Seiður frá Flugumýri II 8.69
M. Snerra frá Reykjavík 8.11

Galdur is a handsome black stallion with a regal presence. He is 14.2 at the withers with long but substantial legs and a strong elegant topline and excellent proportions. His conformation score is 8.33.

Galdur moves with a balanced and powerful yet light self carriage. He is a talented 5 gaited stallion with easy to access pace and excellent quality and speed variation in all the gaits. His Rideability score is 8.58

Galdur has a calm and easy character making him a joy to ride for anyone whether it be riding out on the trails or competing on the oval track. With his easy to ride, beautiful gaits and his kind and quiet character, Galdur is, like his name. Magical.

Stud fee:
$1350 LFG registered Icelandic mares
$1000 LFG first prize mares

For 2022 contract and breeding schedule, visit www.montaire.org
or contact Heidi Benson at saestadiricelandics@gmail.com

Valerie Durbon

Valerie Durbon

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Host Sirius Ohio Kentucky Icelandic Club

Look for more Information soon on Icelandics.org and Facebook

FARM LIST

The owners of the farms listed below have offered to have you visit in order to become acquainted with the Icelandic horse. Some are breeders, some importers, and some are interested in breed promotion alone. Their listing here does not constitute an endorsement of any kind by the USIHC.

ALASKA

True North Farm
Cindy Wallace-Bonine
46892 Lake St Kenai, AK 99611
Kenai, Alaska 99611
541-517-2878

CALIFORNIA

Flying C Ranch
Will & Asta Covert
3600 Roblar Ave.
Santa Ynez, California 93460
(805) 688-1393
asta@tolt.net
www.flyingctack.com

Valkyrie Icelandic
Laura Benson
1 Duane St. #33
Redwood City, California 94062
6502814108
invaderlala@gmail.com
www.valkyrieicelandic.com

Whidbey Stables Inc
8900 Summerhill Lane
Glen Ellen, California 95442

COLORADO

Granite Peaks Ranch
Melissa & David Lunsford
25080 CR 501
Bayfield, Colorado 81122
(970) 442-0256
melissa@granitepeaksranch.com
www.granitepeaksranch.com

Hestar Ranch
Monika Meier-Galliker
P.O. Box 1744 / 30420 C.r. 500
Arboles, Colorado 81121
(970) 883-2531
m.meier@hestar-ranch.us
www.hestar-ranch.com

Lough Arrow Icelandics
Andrea Brodie, D V M
22242 County Road 46.0
Aguilar, Colorado 81020
(719) 680-2845
fiddlinvet@gmail.com
www.coloradoicelandics.com

Tamangur Icelandic Horses
Coralie Denmeade
5775 Best Road
Larkspur, Colorado 80118
(719) 209-2312
coralie@tamangur-icelandics.com
www.tamangur-icelandics.com

Tolt Mountain Ranch
Thomas R Dowding
1200 Quanah Road
Westcliffe, Colorado 81252
(619) 977-4975
dowdingtom@gmail.com

IOWA

Harmony Icelandics
Virginia Lauridsen
1401 Casady Dr.
Des Moines, IA 50315
(515) 556-3307
virginia@harmonyicelandics.com
www.harmonyicelandics.com

KENTUCKY

Lettleiki Icelandics
Maggie Brandt
6105 Eminence Pike
Shelbyville, KY 40019
(502) 541-4590
maggie@lettleikiicelandics.com
www.lettleikiicelandics.com

Taktur Icelandic Horses
Terral Hill & Carrie Lyons Brandt
12501 W Hwy 42 Apt B
Prospect, KY 40059
(502) 409-1924
carrieandterral@gmail.com
taktur.horse

MAINE

Fire & Ice Icelandic Horses
Alicia Flanigan & Nikkisue Flanigan
32 Putnam Ridge
Limington, ME 04049-3643
(207) 615-8556 (phone)
icelandics17@gmail.com
www.fireandice.horse

MASSACHUSETTS

Four Winds Farm
Lori B. Leo
703 Hanover Street
Hanover, Massachusetts 02043
16178272001
loribleo@gmail.com
www.fourwindsicelandics.com

Merrimack Valley Icelandics
Neil and Ebba Meehan
282 Main Street
Boxford, MA 01921
(781) 521-0841 (phone)
ebbameehan@me.com
www.merrimackvalleyicelandics.com

MICHIGAN

Chippewa Acres
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Dewitt, Michigan 48820
(517) 7491-671
kristinahorses3@yahoo.com
www.chippewaacres.com

NEW MEXICO

Windsong Icelandic Horses
Ulla Hudson
733 State Road 344
Edgewood, NM 87015
(505) 615-5050
ullahudson@mac.com
https://windsongdressage.com

NEW YORK

EasyGait-Farm LLC
Bettina, Jana and Stephan Wagner
4694 Clark Road
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(607) 592-2372
bettina@easygaitfarm.com
https://easygaitfarm.com/

Sand Meadow Farm
Steven & Andrea Barber
300 Taylor Road
Honeoye Falls, NY 14472
(585) 624-4468 (phone)
toltstar@yahoo.com
www.sandmeadow.com

Thor Icelandics
Kristjan Kristjansson
76 Catskill View Road
Hudson, NY 12534
518-929-7476
kristjan@thoricelandics.com
www.thoricelandics.com

OHIO

Beat'n Branch Icelandics
Ron & Sherry Hoover
4709 Beat Rd
Litchfield, OH 44253
(330) 635-5623 (phone)
890hoover@gmail.com

OREGON

Alfadans Equestrian Arts
Caeli Cavanagh and Alexandra Venable
34260 NE Old Parrett Mountain Rd
Newberg, Oregon 97132
(802) 299-5468
www.alfadans.com

Five-Gait Farm Icelandics
Lucy Nold
86623 Central Road
Eugene, OR 97402
fivegaitfarmicelandics@gm
(831) 332-5328
fivegaitfarm.com

Mountain Icelandic Farm
Annette Coulon
19565 Tumalo Reservoir Rd
Bend, OR 97703
(831) 331-0442
mountainicelandics@gmail.com
www.mountainicelandics.com

Schwalbenhof
Karin Daum
10676 Nw Valley Vista Rd
Hillsboro, OR 97229
(503) 724-9537
daumkarin@gmail.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Black Creek Farm
Sarah C. Elkin-Marsh and Michael P. Marsh
449 Jewell Boone Rd.
Pelion, South Carolina 29123
(803)3078270
www.blackcreekfarm.us

VERMONT

Lunar Hill Icelandics
Jana Meyer
151 North Bridgewater Road
Bridgewater, Vermont 05034
(603) 856-6697
lunarhill70@gmail.com
www.lunarhillicelandics.com

Mad River Valley Icelandic Horses, LLC
Jess Haynsworth
1268 Fuller Hill Rd
Warren, Vermont 05674
(617) 962-0065
madrivervalleyicelandics@gmail.com
www.madrivervalleyicelandics.com

VIRGINIA

Montaire Icelandic Horses
Antje Freygang
36727 Leith Lane
Middleburg, Virginia 20117
(202) 372-5324
freygang999@gmail.com
www.montaire.org

WASHINGTON

Avondale Icelandics LLC
Doreen Shoda
Redmond, Washington 98053
avondaleicelandics@outlook.com
www.avondaleicelandics.com/

WEST VIRGINIA

Deep Creek Farm
Curtis Pierce and Marsha Korose
537 Fjord Rdige Dr
Mathias, West Virginia 26812
(304) 897-6627
www.deepcreekfarm.com

Icelandic Thunder
Denise & James Taylor
550 Hackers Creek Rd
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(304) 457-4238
www.icelandicthunder.com

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FM.: IS1994237335 **Hrísla frá Naustum**
M.:IS1998225081 **List frá Hrafnhólum**
MF.: IS1991158626 **Kormákur frá Flugumýri II, First Prize, Honor Stallion**
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Hríma from Beat N' Branch

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Beat'n Branch Icelandics is on Facebook

Ronald and Sherry Hoover 330-635-5623

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Strokkur frá Syðri-Gegnishólum

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Þröstur frá Hvammi

"Þröstur's uniquely kind and cooperative attitude combined with his fantastic gaits and conformation makes him a great breeding option for almost any mare. He has enormous speed capacity in his tolt and pace and his well set neck, withers and shoulders stand out as particularly good characteristics".
Carrie~Taktur

"Þröstur really is a truly complete package of talent, temperament & elegance. His gaits are well-separated & fluid. His temperament is that perfect mix of being forward but in control. These are attributes he has passed on to his offspring. No stallion in this country has a more impressive record with an Icelandic Champion & the highest evaluated four year old of 2015 counted among his offspring".
Caeli Cavanagh BSci Riding and Riding Instruction, Hólar University, Level 3 FEIF Trainer

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Contact: Kristina Behringer
Tel: 307-757-7915
Email: gyetorp2@gmail.com

Assessment Total: 8.59
F: Þorri frá Þúfu í Landeyjum (Honor Stallion)
M: Löpp frá Hvammi (Honor Mare)

Just a few of his talented offspring:
Trausti frá Þóroddsstöðum, Total: 8.66
Hátíð frá Hemlu II, Total w/o pace: 8.69
Gammur frá Hemlu II, Total: 8.37

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