



Sugar Hill Spotlight



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Hello Everyone!

Earlier this week I heard someone say that summer is almost over! Gosh, I hope not! Beside the fact that the calendar reads that there are almost 8 more weeks of summer, the weather is gorgeous, and the grass is growing! I know this because Tom spends hours on the zero-turn mower making the farm look fabulous! This is Rochester and we relish every nice day we have! So let's not sell ourselves short!

I wish I could confirm our five mares are in foal for 2011. But the rebreeding work with Tapestry and Miss B leaves us waiting for confirmation. We should know this week. I do have my doubts, so don't hold your breath. Maggie, Desire and Cassie are pregnant for sure and we are thrilled at the expectation of their 2011 foals!

Provence, the newest brood mare, a Triften daughter and half-sister to Desire, has arrived safely. Since she is only 3 years old, we will not breed her this year. She is settling in nicely and is very sweet. We work with her by putting tack on her for conditioning sessions just as we do with all the youngsters.

The three foals are loving life with their moms. They spend most of the daytime hours outside eating grass and sleeping in the deeper, cooler grassy spots in the pastures. When the hot afternoon sun is too warm you will find them napping inside in the shade of their stalls. The fillies are getting a bit more adventuresome too and the mares are tolerating this period. Often you will see the baby or the mom, but not too close together anymore.

The 3 three-year old horses in performance training away from the farm are progressing well. It is not uncommon for these youngsters to hit plateaus in their learning curve when getting broke to the saddle in performance disciplines. I am

grateful that the trainers chosen for these horses are willing to be patient as well as talented in their ability to find appropriate ways to get these horses educated to their specific disciplines. Now broke to the hunt seat saddle, Davis will compete in halter in Canada in a couple weeks. Grace and Bliss are both country English pleasure horses, finding just the right mix of go-forward and balance that makes them look light and bright in the bridle!

Jo and I attempted to compete at Region 16 in July. I say attempted because we had some troubles that needed attention! So after our first class, I elected not to show him the next day and instead had working sessions that proved to be very beneficial for both of us. We learned a lot about each other. So, now we are preparing for the Big Red Show in Canada. Please keep your fingers crossed for us. While there I will be able to watch Davis compete in his Futurity for 3-year olds and also see the stallion that we have chosen for Maggie be ridden in an English Pleasure Junior Horse class as well as an Open Park class.

The first week of summer day camp was a great success! Our lesson students took time out from their summer vacations to come for all 5 days and with staff direction, lent a hand with chores as well as rode together in lesson format. It was not all work because the craft projects showed wonderful art talent and great imagination. I like the painted horse shoes especially those with sparkles! Next time, can we hang those up in the aisle for all to enjoy?

Though she has not relocated yet, please welcome Desiree to the SHF staff. As the newest employee, she brings expertise in equine reproduction. We look forward to having her join the team.

Bye for now! Betsy



THE MIDDLE CHILDREN

As I read over my musings for this month, I realized that the mothers of our lesson students might relate to something I've just realized.

Each month I write about the foals and mares, the youngsters out with other trainers. But too often I forget to give you an update on the middle children. Those are the yearlings and two year old horses, most of whom were bred here and thus born here on the farm.

Thoroughbred horses begin their careers very early in life. And some are retired early too, as early as the age of three or four.

At Sugar Hill, we might show our yearlings if they are exceptionally conformed. They then spend their two year old year just being allowed to grow up and socialize with others in the herd. Fall of the 2-year-old year can be the start of conditioning and work sessions that leads to professional training when they are three years old.

And when was the last time I gave credit to the wonderful show veterans that are our lesson horses? A sure topic for next time!