



In this 2017 "family" picture are (from left to right); Dreamy, Lenny, Jennifer, Loki, and Taffy. Not shown are their cats. Photo courtesy of Dancing Horse Farm.



photo by John Sappington

Jennifer Truett with Lafayette HQ at the September 2017 Dressage at Devon show in Pennsylvania. She bought this horse for \$1 when he was seven. His hind leg had been stuck in the tongue of a manure spreader when four years old. Her healing work saved Taffy – his nickname – from being put down and brought the crippled horse to a 2017 Grand Prix Special 6th place ribbon.

In addition to bringing Taffy back from an injury involving a manure spreader, Jennifer feels her work with Ricos and with Absolute Dream are two of her other biggest accomplishments.

Ricos, "a half Andalusian/half Appendix Quarter horse, was a perfect horse for my mother to learn Dressage," Jennifer said. An Appendix Quarter Horse is half-Thoroughbred and half-Quarter Horse.

When her mother got Ricos, he was a 3rd Level horse that needed to be completely retrained to carry himself properly.

"His previous riders had allowed him to use their arms as a 'fifth leg' rather than have him work over his back and carry himself in proper self-carriage," Jennifer said.

Ricos battled the serious neurologic disease called Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM). It occurs when horses are exposed to certain protozoal parasites, most commonly *Sarcocystis neurona* (secondarily, *Neospora hughesi*), that infect and invade the central nervous system. Ricos has had EPM a couple of times since Lynda has owned him, and it was severe for a while.

Jennifer began working on Ricos's recovery when her mother was recuperating from surgery. She found the horse to be supple and good at lateral work in particular.

"I just kept seeing what he might be able to do and wound up taking him two levels higher than he had been," she said.

On the chance that Ricos might earn scores toward her Silver Medal, Lynda let Jennifer show him. "He did get my first 60% at Prix St. Georges that counted toward my Silver Medal," Jennifer said. "Ricos finished up at Prix St. Georges, quite an accomplishment for a horse that had been severely neurologic from EPM."

Jennifer is excited about the future of her young horse, Absolute Dream. She imported the 2-1/2 year old Westfalen gelding, Dreamy, from Holland when she found him on a shopping trip there.

Absolute Dream is now four years old. Jennifer started showing him this year in the Materiale classes just to give him show experience. It's a simple walk, trot, canter class in a group. He got such high scores in his first class, he qualified for the Breeder's Championships, which he won this summer with another high score.

Absolute Dream also has competed in one Training level test 3 so far this year and won it with a 73.6%. He is her next Grand Prix partner, so she is not interested in rushing anything with him, which is why he is not doing the Young Horse classes.

Even though "it would be very easy to make him super fancy," Jennifer said, "I enjoy knowing there's a ton of untapped power under the hood."

Absolute Dream and the other horses keep Jennifer plenty busy, but she and her husband Lenny also share their home with a miniature Australian Shepherd named Loki, two antique cats named Wendy and Mystify, and a young cat named Pixie Pants that walks on a leash and goes to shows with Jennifer.

"I love to go places with my husband, but we rarely have time to do such things," she said. "I do make time to get pedicures with my mom whenever possible."

In the past, down time has been rare for Jennifer.

"Break? What's that? I rarely get any time off, and when I do, I have to catch up with office work," she said. However, she's made some changes this year to help herself enjoy a bit more free time.

"I've hired a wonderful assistant, Anna Perrin, this year to help me get better control of my schedule and office work," she said.

But, regardless, the hard work is always worth it to Jennifer, who summed up her professional equine philosophy this way:

"Ribbons and points are not the be-all and end-all of my 'Dare 2 Dream' training system," she said. "My goal is happy horses and happy riders. I am happy to say that most riders in my clinics see truly incredible differences both in their riding and in their horse's performance from the very first lesson. That definitely makes me happy."

To see Dancing Horse Farm horses and riders perform, attend one of Jennifer's upcoming shows: September 8-9 - MSEDAs at the Kentucky Horse Park; October 11-14 - USDF Region 2 Championships at the Kentucky Horse Park; and November 8-11 - USDF National Finals at the Kentucky Horse Park. You can contact Jennifer Truett, President, Dancing Horse Farm by mail: 4080 Weisenberger Road, Lebanon OH 45036 or by phone: (w) 937-532-3108 or via email: jen@myDHF.com.

You may contact Jane through her website: SimmonsBook.com. Learn about America's earlier show horse industry in her 328-page historical biography — *Arthur Simmons: American Icon Of The Horse Industry* — about his early life, and hers as the daughter of this internationally known horseman. Read her bio by clicking "About" the author. Jane's posts, and info on her *LifeLegacy* writing offerings, are on Facebook.