

Nancy Reed surprised with special honor from San Diego hunter/jumper association.

by James Waldman

It's my privilege to announce that we are naming the Greater San Diego Hunter Derby after a long-time supporter of the county circuit, Nancy Reed



She was born, like many of us, crazy about horses. And like most of us, she can probably recall the first time she ever sat on a horse. It might have even been at her Grandpa Reed's farm on a blind pony. She shared her love of horses with then-actor Ronald Reagan when he stopped by for a visit at her family home. Her grandparents' neighbor, Billy Winkleman, provided ponies for Sears-Roebuck, who back in those days sold ponies out of its catalog.

Years later Nancy's dad bought a five-acre farm in upstate New York; improved the barn, and graded the arena to support Nancy's passion.

Nancy showed competitively all over the East, competing at Madison Square Garden and riding with top trainer and judge Victor Hugo-Vidal. Later, married to a fellow horse trainer and living in St Louis, she showed and trained horses for the likes of the Anheuser Busch family and brought home top prizes. In the 70s Nancy beat the then-young Will Simpson in a speed class. The future 2008 Olympic gold medal winner told Nancy that she must have been really fast to beat his horse.

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In the 80s, Nancy settled in San Diego and taught and trained out of Blackland Farm. She was a fixture in the Greater San Diego Hunter Jumper circuit from the beginning.

Back then the county circuit was fairly rudimentary and the quality and caliber of the hunters and equitation was nowhere near what it is today. Nancy was one of the main driving forces in upgrading the quality of hunters on our county circuit. She had many good horses and clients, but the Hazard family – Jo, Paige and Leslie, under Nancy’s tutelage – showed us what talent the county circuit could have. Since then the quality of our hunters and equitation has followed that example.

Nancy is also a founding member of our organization, being on the original board of Greater San Diego Hunter Jumper Association. Today, the Hunter Derby at the Championship show has become a premier event and I am proud to have been able to present my friend and colleague with the trophy honoring her accomplishments.

Author James Waldman is GSDHJA vice president and owner/trainer at Quail Haven Farm in Bonsall. Cheryl Erpelding and Jonathan Reed contributed to this speech.

And from Nancy...

To all the Greater San Diego Hunter and Jumper members, and especially the board:

I am truly humbled by the recognition bestowed on me at the year-end banquet. To say I was surprised would be a massive understatement. I am thrilled that you chose the Hunter Derby as a class to honor me as that is my favorite class of the horse show—and I’ve enjoyed a few over the years.

This recognition would not be possible without the support of former customers and fellow

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trainers. I want to thank my good friend Cheryl Erpelding, my student (and also good friend) Leslie Hazard, as well as the entire Hazard family for their support over the years.

Thank you also to friends who took the time to send congratulations on social media. Many I haven't seen in years, but I am so thankful you took the time to acknowledge me from afar.