

# Competitor In The Spotlight

Richard M. Butts



*Janette  
Minty*  
PHOTOGRAPHY

# ...Inspired by Friesians

by Richard Butts

**F**irst and foremost, I would like to thank FHANA for this great honor to be featured in THE FRIESIAN magazine. My history in horses began with a 'rescue' situation involving a grey Azteca gelding named Embajador's Fury. We knew so little of horses at the time that we did not even realize he was grey until his first bath! Through trial and error, we learned a lot from this horse about horsemanship and equine behavior. I became interested in dressage and riding better, and was able to find a schoolmaster Warmblood gelding, Pik Bube, who became a great friend and teacher. Pik was susceptible to colic in his old age and we spent many a long night together walking the indoor arena, in all temperatures, until his passing.

Before Friesians we became involved with the Norwegian Fjord due to their versatility as a riding and driving partner. I learned to drive horses, both singles and pairs, with the help of Larry Poulin and Holly Thompson, and enjoyed many a marathon with our pair of Grey Duns, Holivar and his son Bjorn. This year we sold the last three Fjords from that breeding program, but have retained our stallion, Holivar, and our Model mare, Frejya, who will live out their lives with us at our farm.

Lorie and I have been breeding and raising KFPS Dutch Friesians for almost twenty years with the purchase in 1998 of the Frans daughter, Diane D Star, from British Columbia. In 2002 we imported the beautiful Mentha fan Ferwalde from the Netherlands, in foal to Liekele. The resulting filly, Hendrica LSI, was one of our first IFSHA/USEF World Champions and Horse of the Year winners. Eventually, we also acquired the mare, Tomasina D Star (a full sister to Bonne and Tennis) and Oukje Elza Star by Oege.



For the next several years I learned as much as I could about Friesians and the very special care that is required to raise them. This ranged from breeding decisions, using KFPS breeding stallions and showing our young stock to championships at

**Left:** Richard M. Butts with Nelis LSI, USEF Driving Horse of the Year and RMB IFHSA World Champions.

**Above:** Competitor in the Spotlight, Richard M. Butts, and Kobus LSI, New York State Champion Show Pleasure Driving. Ken Siems Photography©

inspections, to building the best facility possible for their training and optimal living environment. We even designed our own trailer so they can travel as safely and comfortably as possible. Anyone that visits our “State of the Art” facility will tell you, we have done our homework. In 2011 we found ourselves at a crossroads and were in need of a trainer who shared our vision for the Friesian horse and could take us to the next level - the competition arena.

That is when lifetime horseman and USEF Equestrian of Honor, Gareth Selwood, joined our team. This mutually beneficial partnership came just at the right time and we have not looked back. At our IFSHA First World Championship in 2011, we competed with ten horses and all of them brought back National Titles after just four months of training. Our show horses have done so well in the USEF/IFSHA shows that in 2012, 2013 and 2014 Lorick Stables was named Leading Friesian Breeder in the USA, by the United States Equestrian Federation. I, myself, now show in all the Driving divisions, such as Country Pleasure, Show Pleasure, Sport Pleasure, Fine Harness and Carriage Pleasure Driving. In 2014, I competed for the first time in driven dressage in Lexington, Virginia, and was delighted to win the Inaugural “Dreams Come True” High Score Award with Nelis LSI and the Anita Mellott Trophy for High Point Driving Horse. In fact, no article about me, or Lorick Stables, could be published without special mention of our great horse Nelis LSI. He was the first foal born to our first foal, Vianke LSI and by Sibald 380.



**Clockwise from top left:** Tomas LSI and Richard M. Butts, 2015 USDF/FHANA Yearling Colt Dressage Sport Horse Breeding; Lorick Stables; Nelis LSI and Richard M. Butts, World Champion Country Driving, Osteen Photography©; Richard M. Butts enjoys volunteering at the FHANA educational booth; Richard M. Butts with Wilrik LSI, State Champion Fine Harness, Ken Siems Photography©





Champion  
Measure  
at  
York



Nelis and I have grown together as competitors over the last four years; every year I think we have improved our style and turn out. At the 2013 Buckeye Baroque Summer Jubilee in Springfield, he won the inaugural Michael Schaefer High Point Memorial Award and earned a total of five high points that year. In 2012 and 2014, Nelis LSI was the USEF and IFSHA Horse of the Year in Friesian Driving, and Reserve Champion Horse of the Year in 2013 and 2015 for USEF! If that was not enough, he proved his Versatility by being named USEF Friesian Dressage Horse of the Year in 2013. Nelis LSI, and all our other Friesian driving horses, contributed greatly to our resident trainer, Gareth Selwood, winning his second Equestrian of Honor Award from USEF and the Bill Robinson Trophy for Non FEI Driving in 2014.

We also compete at all the American Driving Society events on the east coast; I have learned a lot from competing and watching other exhibitors at Walnut Hill, East Aurora and Lorenzo. This year we won the Carriage Drive for the Gig Division at Walnut Hill. It made all our team's hard work well worth the time and resources we have dedicated to the sport.

After two hip replacements this last year, I am back showing horses in the Halter Division and was able to contribute to our young Sape 381 son, Tomas LSI's FHANA Championship for a Yearling Friesian in Dressage Sport Horse Breeding. Last year I accomplished one of my most important goals when FHANA awarded me the 2014 Performance Driving Award at the AGM in Baltimore, Maryland.

I enjoy my Friesians every day, either by talking about the breed while volunteering at a FHANA booth, performing Driving Demonstrations at Equifest, or discussing beneficial rule changes at meetings of the USEF/IFSHA Friesian Committee. My life is consumed and inspired by them, and for that I am forever grateful. I look forward to many more years of celebrating life with our Friesian horses and Friends.

In closing, my goal is to introduce and educate people about Friesian horses and inspire the youth to be involved more with horses and equestrian sports; retaining this country's equine heritage and as the saying goes "The outside of a Horse is good for the inside of Man".

