

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Steuart Pittman (dodonfarm@verizon.net or 410-507-3351)

Retired Racehorse Training Clinic Draws Crowd of 350 From Ten States

Clinician Steuart Pittman plans national tour in 2010.

Crownsville, Md. - October 4, 2009 - "The ticket sales to this event prove that people's fascination with the Thoroughbred horse remains strong," says Steuart Pittman, the Maryland horse trainer who conceived of and conducted the event. "The demand for knowledge about how to train these horses after a racing career surpassed our expectations. We look forward to taking this project on the road in 2010 with support from our friends in the racing industry. Requests for similar events have come in from all over America, and we are already working on expanding the format."

The Retired Racehorse Training Symposium at Maryland Therapeutic Riding in Crownsville, MD featured 13 horses at various stages of post-race training. Pittman focused the audience's attention both on the qualities and training of each horse and the skills demonstrated by their riders.

Retired jockey J.K. Adams wowed the crowd at the outset by demonstrating on a horse with just seven days of post-race training, that perfect balance and good hands, even in an exercise saddle, make a horse go in a round frame with balance and rhythm. When Steuart asked if he'd ever had a dressage lesson, J.K. replied, "A what?"

CANTER, Mid-Atlantic Horse Rescue, and Thoroughbred Placement and Rescue all brought quality horses that are up for adoption. Riders from each of these organizations shared their training methods and showed that young horses off the track are intelligent and eager to learn, even in an arena filled with a large crowd, video cameras, loudspeakers, and a course of colorful show jumps.

In the second part of the symposium, five riders worked with horses in their first year off the track. Two were young professionals: one from the hunter/ jumper discipline and the other a three day eventer, both of whom are making a business of retraining retired racehorses and selling them. Two others were amateurs who are doing the same work for their own pleasure. Another horse was ridden by Steuart for the owner. These three- to five-year-old horses were all further along in their training than most horses who are bred for non-racing careers. The reason for their quick progress, Steuart suggested, was the education that they received as racehorses.

The final segment of the day featured horses whose long careers after the track have changed the lives of their owners. Steuart Pittman's Salute The Truth, Alyssa Peterson's Lettingo, Fran and Alyssa Hayward's Cardinal Cross, and Julia and Barrett Wendell's R. Huey each performed while their stories were told.

Phoebe Hays, Director of Horsemen's Relations for the Maryland Jockey Club, attended the symposium and said afterward, "This event was exactly what the racing industry needs, not just to expand the market for our horses when they are done racing, but also to show the public that most of our horses come off the track happy and eager to get to work. It was fascinating that Steuart was able to explain the fundamentals of good riding by showing the balance and tact of a jockey."

The event raised \$2,400 for the host organization, Maryland Therapeutic Riding.

For more information about the future Retired Racehorse Training Project events or to purchase a DVD version of this first event, visit www.dodonfarm.com.

To set up an interview, please contact Steuart directly at dodonfarm@verizon.net or (410) 507-3351.