

Local woman wins at barrels

By Karen Krien

St. Francis rider, Deb Christy and her horse The Chocolate Dash also known as "Choc" have done well this summer barrel racing competitions including winning the 2004 Kansas Sunflower Barrel Futurity/Derby on Oct. 23 and 24. With her wins came cash, saddles and other items, and, while the season is still running, she is already very satisfied with her winnings.

She and The Chocolate Dash, a bay gelding, started the summer in Gillette, Wyo., at the Wyoming at the Fizz Bomb Classic where she finished eighth in the finals and also won the Wyoming All Breed Association division and the Non-Pro Futurity Rider. In Huron, S.D., she was the reserve champion in the Bold Heart Open Futurity and reserve champion in the Bold Heart Breeders Futurity. The pair also won the Champion Amateur Futurity Rider saddle.

At McCook, Neb., she was a finalist in the Nebraska Open Futurity; and finished fourth in the Sunrise Breeders Futurity. Futurities are barrel racing competitions for 5-year-old horses.

She also was a finalist in the 2004 Kansas Pro Rodeo Association held the end of August. She had made it to the finals in the Kansas Pro Rodeo Association with only seven rodeos, which is the required minimum number of rodeos that a rider has to make to qualify for the finals.

What makes this story even sweeter is the history behind the rider and horse.

Mrs. Christy had gone to Wyoming with her sister who was looking for a horse. She saw Choc standing in the pasture and asked if he was for sale.

The owner, who recently died of cancer, said "yes, he was" but the gelding had suffered an injury, possibly while running on the track.

"I asked if I could ride him," Mrs. Christy said. "I got on him and we just clicked." I knew he was the right horse.

She checked with the veterinarian and, even if he couldn't guaran-

tee him as "sound," Mrs. Christy bought him and brought him home.

Back in St. Francis, Dr. Ron Maifield checked him over and thought he would be sound and set them up with a conditioning program to get him back into shape.

After several months of constant training, Mrs. Christy's dad told her that it was time to start running him.

"We started out the competitions behind the other horses in training but we did okay," she said.

Since then, she has acquired four of Choc's siblings and is starting to train them.

"Money talks but Chocolate sings," is her slogan. At one of the competitions, she and her husband Steve gave a basket of chocolate away, courtesy of The Chocolate Dash.

Some might think that training a horse is a short ride in the evening but that's not true for Mrs. Christy. She rides in the morning, over her lunch hour and in the evenings after she gets off work at Jim Milliken's law office. Often her husband, Steve, will beat her home and have the horses (she is training three horses at the moment) saddled and ready for her to ride.

"It (riding) is a passion—I love it!" she said. "I also have a passion for chocolate (candy)."

She grew up with horses. Her father Bud Farrell of Phillipsburg was involved in rodeo competition. Mrs. Christy was born in June and the competition was already in full swing. Her crib was the manger in the horse trailer and she accompanied her parents everywhere. She said she learned to ride by "walking out" her dad's doggin' horse as soon as she could sit in the saddle. Before long, she was competing and, by the time she was an adult, she had won numerous state and national barrel racing awards.

Through a lifetime of being with horses, Mrs. Christy says she has learned exactly what she is looking for in a horse.

"I inherited from my father an eye for choosing a horse — looking for movement, balance and confirmation, a good mind and a kind eyes," she said.

"It is rare to get all of those qualities in one package.



DEB CHRISTY and her horse 'Choc' run the barrel at the Sunrise Breeders Futurity where they placed fourth.

ties in one package. "The Chocolate Dash has heart, speed, athleticism, has the ability, desire and mind to be a good barrel horse."

While the horse's and rider's ability to perform is about 85 percent of the game, Mrs. Christy says the rest is mental and "being positive."

"I read my horse well and he knows me," she said. "If I take care of him, he'll take care of me."

And, care isn't in the form of fancy feed. Her horses are fed oats, alfalfa and grass along with some extra vitamins.

Mr. Christy helps with the training aspect of the business and is in charge of the breeding operation and initial foal handling. He also helps in the production of barrel races and rodeos including the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association, Pro Rodeo Tour Finales and the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo held each year in Las Vegas.

He built the living quarters in the horse trailer and accompanies his wife when he can. When he is unable to attend, he makes sure that she has everything she needs and helps her load up.

Mrs. Christy and two women who are also barrel racers, started the competition, "Runnin' For Jesus." They have a speaker, generally a Christian county musician at the church service. This year, the entertainer was Scott Brown of Ringgold, Ga. To be eligible for awards such as saddles all participants must attend the service.

"We spend so much time away from home, it brings everyone together for a time of worship," she said. "It is much like "Cowboy Church."

Mrs. Christy just returned from another Christian barrel race in Penrose, Colo., where 107 riders participated in a Revival barrel race with Justin Todd Herod, another award winning Christian County singer. Families come along and there will be 200 to 300 people in attendance for the service.

The riding season for Mrs. Christy will not be over until December. Next week, she will be heading to Ardmore, Okla., for the Jud Little Bar Nothin' Barrel Futurity. The first week of December, she will head for Oklahoma City for the World Championship; Futurity with over \$200,000 in prize money.

For more information on the Christy's operation, check the web at www.trianglecross.com. There is also a complete pedigree for The Chocolate Dash as well as other horses they own and have for sale.

Program for the holidays

Four different programs will be held in St. Francis on Thursday, Nov. 18, at the Methodist Church starting at 7 p.m. The programs, Harvest of Holidays, will help those attending get into the holidays with meal planning ideas, making holiday baskets and centerpieces as well as games to play.

Karen Jones, Northwest Area Food and Nutrition Planning Specialist, will present "Colorful and Favorable Holiday Meals" which will be the centerpiece of holiday celebrations.

"Whether it be Thanksgiving, Christmas or New Year's, once the family has been invited, you will start thinking about what to serve," Mrs. Jones said.

She will be demonstrating the latest in nutrition information from K-State Research and Extension which will include "A Rainbow on a Plate." The pigments in food indicate nutrition and different antioxidant fighting elements while making the meal a visual feast as well.

Melinda Daily, Wallace County Family Consumer Science agent, will show people some gift-giving ideas which will save money, that are less stress, involve no gift boxes or wrapping paper.

"It is a unique idea all rolled into one holiday gift giving plan where you give "gift baskets," she said.

Agent Daily will go through, assembling the perfect holiday touches and thoughts into a meaningful assortment of items to fit every person on the giver's list.

Lori Sporer, Logan County Family Consumer Science agent will show people how to turn a regular artificial holiday wreath into a glorious holiday centerpiece.

Those attending will also see that some of the best holiday memories are of the laughter and antics during a gem shared by all.

"Bunko," "The Counting game," and "Dictionary" are just three ideas that require no expensive board game to have a ball.

People planning to attend will need to contact the Extension office in St. Francis (785-332-3171) by Nov. 16. There will be a small admission fee to cover the costs of the materials used.

-School Schedule-

Thursday: junior high boys basketball, St. Francis at Oakley, 4:30 p.m.

Friday: high school football, Sectionals, St. Francis at Smith Center, 7 p.m.

Monday: First day of winter sports practice; board of education meeting, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 18: junior high basketball, St. Francis at Atwood, 4:30 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 19: high school football, Sub-State



Technicians and director met Friday with commissioners

The Cheyenne County Commissioners' meeting on Nov. 5 was supposed to be a short meeting — just to canvass the ballots. However, Bird City emergency medical technicians along with the emergency medical service director and the sheriff also showed up for the meeting.

Rod Young, Wendy White, Wendy Richmeier, Gary Brubaker, Stacy Hazuka, emergency medical technicians, and Larry Gabel, director, were at the meeting. Commissioner Jane Brubaker said, since she had called Larry and Stacy to the meeting, she would start by asking Director Gabel why Mrs. Hazuka had been asked to turn in her radio?

At this point, the director asked for 15 minutes of executive session to discuss personnel. Commissioner Brubaker said it would be allowed but she wanted the director to understand she would ask the same question after the executive session because she felt the public had a right to know what was going on. The commissioners, director and Mrs. Hazuka went into the private session.

When they opened up the meeting, it was announced that no decisions had been made. Chairman

Tim Raile asked the director if he would like to make a statement.

Director Gabel said that the chain of command had been broken and proper procedure had not been followed. Mrs. Hazuka's discipline followed these actions and she would be suspended from emergency medical technician duty for three months with the suspension ending at the end of January. Director Gabel said he had tried to address Mrs. Hazuka's safety concerns by researching the matter of adding dual tires to Ambulance 11A (Bird City's ambulance). He was waiting on an estimate to repair the ambulance as well as the cost of a new ambulance.

Director Gabel said a new ambulance would cost between \$98,000 and \$102,000.

He said the main reason he was suspending Mrs. Hazuka was a legality issue since she had let her concerns be known to the public, if she were to go on an ambulance run on 11A and something would happen, she or her family could sue him.

Mrs. Hazuka was asked if she had any comments and she replied that she didn't.

The emergency medical techni-

cians in attendance were asked if they had any comments.

Mr. Brubaker said if Director Gabel was standing by his discipline of Mrs. Hazuka, he, too, would turn in his radio for the time she was suspended as he had the same safety concerns.

Mr. Young said he didn't feel the chain of command had been broken; that Mrs. Hazuka had gone to her peers (the technicians), and then went to Director Gabel by speaking out at an emergency medical technician meeting. He didn't feel the punishment fit the crime, also noting that he didn't think a crime had been committed. He also didn't think that removing Mrs. Hazuka from the service because of a legality issue was a proper reason.

Since Bird City has a small emergency medical technician force, Director Gabel said Mrs. Hazuka could respond to the scene in her own vehicle.

Director Gabel said that Mrs. Hazuka did not have a face-to-face meeting with him. Mr. Young said he felt everyone, whether a technician or not, should be able to talk to the commissioners with any concerns or problems they may have without the fear of a reprimand.

Commissioner Brubaker said she thought there had been no wrongdoing and that Mrs. Hazuka had followed proper procedure and chain of command.

Mrs. Hazuka said she would still respond to a scene saying she would never leave a patient or put herself above the safety of a patient. She said she was a volunteer and the director did not hire her. Commissioner Ron Krien pointed out that Director Gabel was still her boss.

Mrs. Richmeier said she was surprised that Mrs. Hazuka had received a suspension and also surprised herself when she received a letter of reprimand from the director. When asked why she was reprimanded, she said it was for leaving the meeting early. She said it was a voluntary meeting and she had other things to do. Director Gabel later said that there were other matters but he refrained from commenting what the matters were.

Director Gabel said he didn't get into the emergency medical service to control people but, rather to help people and provide the best care to the county.

The bottom line was that Mrs. Hazuka could respond but not ride on Ambulance 11A and the com-

missioners and director will try to get a new ambulance as soon as possible and then look at getting another ambulance using grant funding.

In other business:

Director Gabel and the commissioners talked about receipts and reimbursements.


Sheriff Eddie Dankenbring said that deputy Jeff Moser might be taking another job in law enforcement. Training reimbursement was discussed but no decision was made. He also talked about a letter he had received regarding ServiceMaster's cleaning bill. The commissioners will pursue the proper legal channels.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on Monday in the commissioners' room at the courthouse.

Editor's note: The above article was taken in part from the unapproved Nov. 5 commissioners' meeting minutes.

Thank you to all my supporters for your votes and words of encouragements.
I look forward to serving you as your Magistrate Judge.
Robert Van Allen
Pol. adv. pdf. for by the committee to elect Robert Van Allen, Albert Follett, treas.



Employee of the Month
Casey McCormick has worked at The Saint Francis Herald and Bird City Times for 2 years. His duties include Bird City Times Editor, Advertising Manager, sports coverage, photography, writing, paginating and typing.
Congratulations Casey!
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Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday and Christmas Opening
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DEADLINE for ads, news and pictures for the Nov. 25 issue are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 19.



Thanks for your support!

Your votes and support in the November 2 election were appreciated. — John Faber

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