

Mini horses are big celebrities

(Continued from Page C29) high price tags, Schadel, said, citing figures of \$1500 to \$2000 for a gelding, \$3000 to \$5000 for a mare, and \$5000 and up for colts. After that the costs are much lower than for a conventional horse.

She explained that a person can feed ten miniature horses for what it would take to feed one standard size. "They eat 1½ cups of mixed feed in the morning and evening, along with a slice of alfalfa-timothy hay. Sometimes a complete feed is added to the yearlings' rations to help them through that awkward growing stage."

The horses are allowed to run barefoot most of the time at the Gettysburg farm. But if they will be travelling on a surface that requires shoes, the farm has its own special farrier who hand forges the tiny shoes. Miniature halters, blankets, and tack are specially made, too.

Training the horses is easy, said Schadel who boasts their excellent temperaments. She related how even the new imports who were unaccustomed to the number of people that visit the farm every day, displayed their good dispositions. "They were a bit scared of the people at

first, but none of them kicked or bit."

Even the breeding stallions can be handled by any of the young workers at the horse farm, she added. The stallions themselves are stabled in adjacent stalls that show no evidence of fighting among the stablemates. Mares with foals are not vicious towards people or their babies, she said.

And, when the foals are finally ready for school work, Schadel said an uncooperative student is easy to handle. "We just pick up

the foals and carry them if they don't want to go where we want them."

The miniature horses earn their keep from Good Friday until Thanksgiving, putting on four shows daily during the peak summer months at 11 a.m., 1, 3, and 5 p.m. The farm's hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The horses perform in an arena that, on a small scale, rivals the Spanish arena where the Lippizaner stallions display their amazing feats. As a matter of fact, that is where Garula got his idea for the show

barn, built four years ago. The arena, with a capacity of about 800, is complete with real crystal chandeliers and a rubber flooring for sure-footing.

"The horses like the atmosphere — it makes it a class act. The horses know they look good even if they make a mistake," said Schadel.

For an admission charge of \$3.50 for adults and \$1.75 for children under 12, guests of the Miniature Horse Farm can watch as Christina

performs amazing mathematical feats, adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing numbers; reading numbers visitors call out or write down. She even knows how to find the square root of 169, tapping her left forefoot 13 times. For the romantics, one of the Arabian mares 'kisses' visitors who kneel along the rail, while still another talented miniature shows the crowd the latest in horse waltzes.

Schadel, who received her Bachelor of Arts degree in history from Millersville State College summed up her feelings for the small horses when she said, "Why would I want to get a job anywhere else, when I can

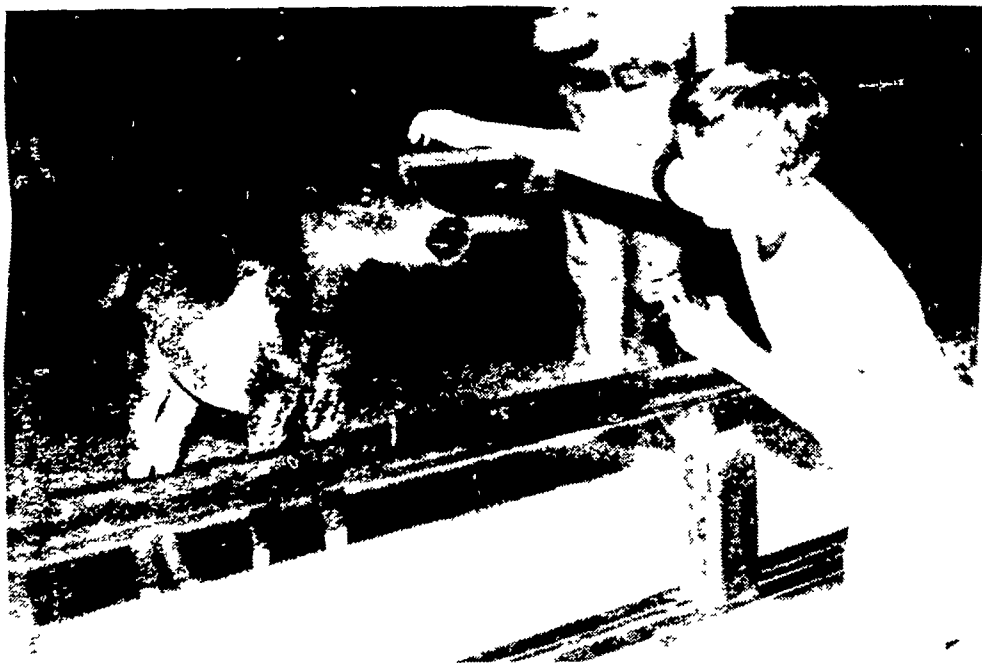
work with these horses and enjoy every minute of it."

So after 10 years, she and the horses are still going strong. She sure their stalls are cleaned three times every day, their hooves are oiled every other day, they're brushed and groomed every day, their stalls are bedded with sawdust, and their feed and water buckets are clean.

In return, the horses at the Gettysburg Miniature Horse Farm give a mini-whinny of thanks and put on a show that capture the hearts of thousands every year.



Eighteen-year-old Don Franco is the main sire of the farm foals. All colts born at the farm have a prefix name of Sea — a reflection of the owners' careers in the Merchant Marines.



'Irresistible' — that's how one of the children visiting the miniature horse farm felt about this youngster who, like his larger counterparts in the horse world, seems to be all legs at this stage of his normal 40-year lifespan.

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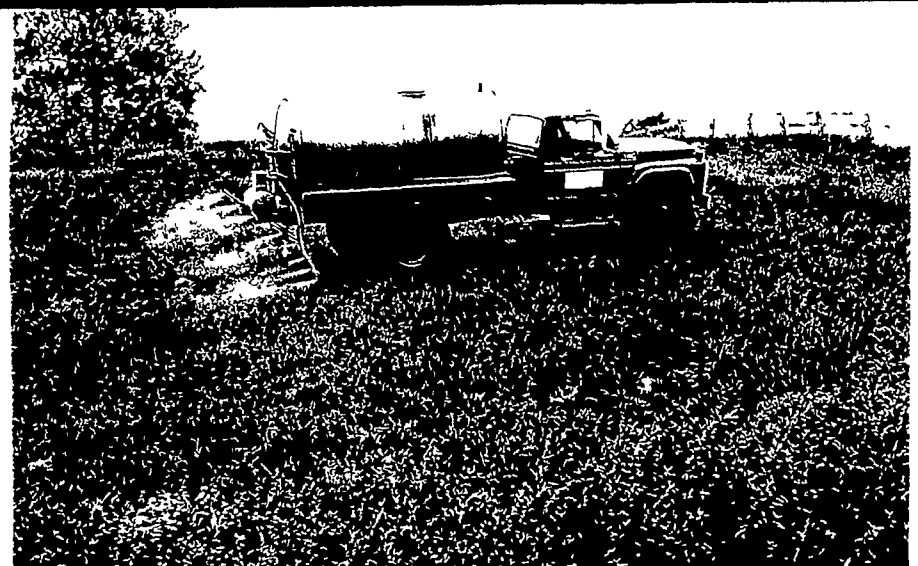
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