

# Chambersburg Teen Captures National Pony Awards

CHAMBERSBURG (Franklin Co.) — Rodney Garling, 17, a senior at Chambersburg Senior High School and his 7-year-old palomino Pony of Americas, Bonanza's Gold, were recently awarded a Silver Royal trophy saddle for winning the hi-point pony-rider award at the 32nd Annual Pony of Americas International Breed Show in Des Moines, Iowa.

Registered Pony of Americas ponies are Appaloosa-type ponies that measure up to 14 hands tall. The breed offers classes for youth up to 18 years.

At the International POA Show, Rodney and his pony competed in 30 different classes to demonstrate the versatility of the pony and rider. Bonanza's Gold is one of those rare ponies, that has the temperament and athletic ability to excel in all types of classes. Most equines specialize in one area, such as western, English, or games. With more than 3,500 entries competing during the week-long competition, winning a trophy saddle at the largest POA show was quite an honor. Unlike other breed competitions, the Pony of Americas requires one youth rider to compete on the pony in all classes in order to win this national award.

The most demanding but exciting classes of the show were the jumping, reining, trail, and 12 game classes. The driving class was the most dangerous class of the show because a storm broke during the class. One of the other competitor's pony became frightened by the rain and trash which blew in the covered arena, striking the ponies. The pony ran out of control until spectators jumped into the arena and caught the pony.

Rodney's least enjoyable class was the Showmanship class. While attired in a heavy western suit, it was hard to maneuver a pony to stand perfectly and hold that position for 45 minutes during the judging in 95 degree humid heat. But winning that International Showmanship trophy made suffering the heat and tension worth the discomfort.

Indian Costume classes were favorites of the spectators. "My family made the hand-crafted items on my costume," Rodney said. "My mom helped me to research and create a Woodland Indian costume. We also created a concise but detailed story about my costume, which I give orally each time I compete. At large shows, we paint my pony with

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Rodney Garling, riding Bonanza's Gold, is pictured in one of the many jump classes they competed in this past summer. Although this was their first year to compete in jumping classes, they won regional and national awards in Hunter Over Fences, Open Jumping, and Equitation Over Fences at the POA International Show, three Regional Shows, and at the POA East Coast Championships.

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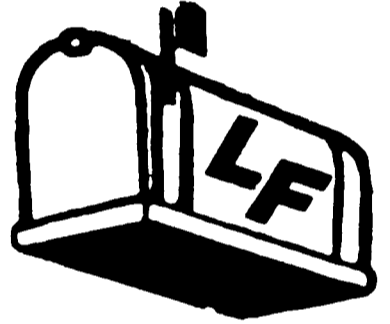
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