

# Tuck-A-Way Farm: Hidden Haven For Horses

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— When speaking with Twila Pellman, wife of Greg and mother of eight-month-old Seth, it would be easy to mistake her for one of the girls she is instructing in horseback riding at TUCK-A-WAY Farm. She retains the youthful beauty that was hers when competing in 4-H riding on the local level and in the state competition in production some years ago.

When asked how she got started with horses, Twila replied, "Our parents had a couple of steers and some chickens. Although my sister, Teresa, and I had 22 rabbits, our real desire was to have horses. I was seven years old when we started asking for a pony," she continued, "but we had to agree to give up our 22 rabbits first."

"We got Clover, a little Shetland pony, and that is when we really got interested in horses. When I was eight years old, our grandfather bought us a quarter horse Morgan cross, which we named Thunder. He was about four years old. I joined a 4-H Club when I was nine and rode Thunder. Teresa still had Clover."

Thunder learned really well, and the first show season he and Twila went undefeated in trail class (in 4-H and open shows). Through the years they won many awards, but Thunder is now 25

and can no longer be ridden because he has ringbone, which is calcification of the bone around the upper part of the hoof and is very painful. He has been retired to another farm where he can be company for another older horse. After having had Thunder for 21 years, it is like losing one of the family, Twila said.

The girls had various horses through the years that did not work out. Then Twila got Casey, a horse for production competition which includes weanlings, yearlings, and two-year-olds. Weanlings and foals just weaned from their mothers. Yearlings are one-year-olds. They can be shown in 4-H and so can the two-year-olds. Casey was a yearling, and Twila won third with him in state competition in production. She continued to train him to age two when she broke him to ride and then sold him.

In 1982, Twila's sister Teresa won a Bob Evans quarter horse by filling out forms as to why she wanted one, etc. This horse was named Precious, and both girls enjoyed riding her. She has been excellent in competing in Western Classes, and the girls won numbers of times with her.

When Tila and her sister were growing up, they did not have the opportunity to get paid lessons, and so basically they were self-taught by watching shows, reading books and studying exper-



This is a typical winter scene at Tuck-A-Way Farm near Licking Creek.

enced riders. This is why it is a real thrill for Twila to have children and youth come to her now so that she may teach them for her many years of experience.

Twila started to teach while living at home on the farm of her parents, Larry and Linda Whistler, and continued teaching there for two years after her marriage, because the place that she and her husband Greg rented had no place to keep or train horses. Then they moved to their present farm as tenants, and it is ideally suited for raising, boarding, and training horses, as well as for Twila to teach young people to ride and get ready for 4-H and other competition.

Twil and Greg both expressed that their landlord, George, from Lancaster County is a real blessing and an answer to prayer. When Greg first met Twila, she told him that one of her prayers was to be able some day to be part of a program like she has now, where she can have horses, be in competition, and be with the 4-H kids and other youth whom she trains. Because of her hopes and prayers for this, it became a part of Greg's prayers and desire also as they married.

Then they met George who had the farm for rent, but someone else was to come the next week to see about renting it. However, since Pellmans made a definite decision first, they became the renters.

They mentioned to George that they wanted to clean out the barn

enough to place three horses, and Twila would give lessons in the pasture. George became interested and started buying horses and became excited and more involved. He had fences built, put up an outside riding/training arena, built nine stalls in the barn, and everything was go! (Eventually he even had a large indoor riding arena constructed, thus fulfilling Twila's dream in an even greater way than she had ever expected).

During their first year at TUCK-A-Way, Twila found that she was overextending herself in wanting to fulfill her dreams. She was giving 25 lessons each week and was riding and training eight horses a day with Teresa's help. She had to cut back on her schedule and now rides and trains five each day, in addition to riding her own game horse every day as he needs to remain in shape. The number will increase from five to seven this spring which means an increase in riding hours from the five she now spends each day. She also gives three lessons three evenings a week in winter and on rainy days, the indoor riding arena is very important to riding and giving lessons. Of course there is always the feeding, cleaning stalls, and other duties to be done, all of which shows that horseback riding is not all glamour by any means.

Twila readily admits that she could not have her fulfilled dream without the help of her husband Greg who gets up to help with the chores before leaving for work and after returning. He also helps

during the weekends and is supportive of Twila as she does much of her competing on weekends.

Twila stayed in 4-H for 10 years, winning many prizes in local and district 4-H and in open competition. She continues to win in open adult competition with her game horse named JJ. She also shows horses owned by George and others and has won ribbons for all-around championships as well as challenge trophies which are kept for three years.

In the barn at the time of the interview was a two-month-old foal named Reo. Twila advised that all new-borns are called foals until the first of the year following their birth. After the first of the year following a horse's birth, it becomes a yearling — a filly if female or a colt if male. The Pellmans try to have the mares bred to foal in January or February so they are much larger when they take them into the show ring than are the ones born in later months of the year but are classified as the same age as those born in earlier months.

The Pellmans are thankful for good neighbors and for their church family and physical family - parents, sister and brother - who have been of so much help. They are thankful that they have been able to use the farm for youth and other church activities.

The couple shared a dream and it has come true on TUCK-A-WAY farm located down a secluded lane from what is known locally as Licking Creek road, just a few miles from Mifflin.



Twila and Greg Pellman live in the farmhouse of Tuck-A-Way Farm.



Twila instructs two students while the horse trailer stands ready to transport horses to the next show.

## Patchwork Festival

INTERCOURSE (Lancaster Co.) — Kitchen Kettle Village will celebrate the rich heritage of quilting during the Special Patchwork Festival, April 1st through 9th. The event is part of the Lancaster County Quilt Festival and will feature an array of quilts, wall hangings, quilted pillows and other items. There will also be quilting demonstrations, exhibits

of art work featuring quilts, and music presented by a barbershop quartet.

Food-lovers will savor the quilt-inspired treats, including quilt-decorated cookies.

Admission is free and there is plenty of free parking. At Kitchen Kettle Village, Route 340, Intercourse.

## Baby Walker Dangers

Last year, over 27,000 baby walker injuries were treated in U.S. hospitals, most of which were caused by falling down stairs. Prevent baby walker accidents by blocking off access to

stairs, exit doorways, areas with uneven carpet or flooring, stoves, space heaters and fireplaces (Consumer Product Safety Commission).