

THE SECOND ANNUAL

# Santa Ynez FOAL FESTIVAL



OCTOBER 4-5, 2014 —  
SANTA YNEZ VALLEY EQUESTRIAN CENTER  
STORY AND PHOTOS BY EMMA MAXWELL

**T**he second Foal Festival dawned on a bright and sunny October day, with unseasonal temperatures of over 100 degrees greeting the attendees. Entries were at the same total as last year, 72, which was no mean achievement given that some locals attended the Scottsdale Arabian Breeders Finals, whose date clashed this year. In fact the Arabian horse show calendar the world over is full of championship shows directed at the global and highly professionalized end of the market, but overall entry numbers for show Arabians are still in a general decline. These lofty peaks are resting on some crumbling foothills, and the Santa Ynez show is designed to try and address the problem at the level of the foothills, providing an attractive entry-level show that people can enjoy as a fun day out with a young Arabian horse.

Last year's innovations, the amateurs-only status of the handlers, no whips, no chains and no drag queen makeup (on the horses), were attempts to address some of the most common complaints about Arabian horse shows. This year the Santa Ynez Valley Arabian group came up with two more original initiatives, again both with a particular purpose in mind. The Santa Ynez Gelding Futurity paid out its first bonuses to some very happy gelding owners at this show, while Saturday night saw the inaugural Breeders Challenge, a wife-swapping concept for horse breeders!

The show had some beautiful entries, hardly surprising given the wealth of breeding in the area, and most breeders brought quality examples of their young breeding stock. Showing horses in nice condition and in a relaxed way allows other breeders and newcomers to make their own minds up about what features they like best about the Arabian breed, and which breeder in the area provides it. There are many different types of Arabian and the Santa Ynez Valley has a breeder for all of them — from the beautifully set up necks of Varian Arabians, to the floating movement of the Om El Arab International

Facing page center: Show judges from left are Lori Conway, George Z, Janene Boggs, and Cynthia Richardson.

Top left: Filly Foal Performance Type Gold Champion **KIKI LEE JCA** (A Jakarta x GH Athyla), owned by Jade Creek Arabians, Santa Ynez, California.

Top center: Colt/Gelding Foal Performance Type Gold Champion **MISSBAH AJF** (Monther Al Nasser x RP Miss Surprise), owned by Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, California.

Top right: Filly Foal Show Type Gold Champion **MONTAHA ALJASSIMYA** (Monther Al Nasser x Ultimate Monisah), owned by Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, California.

Bottom left: Colt Foal Show Type Gold Champion **JALAL ALJASSIMYA** (WH Justice x Annais), owned by Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, California.

Bottom right: Junior Filly (Yearling/2 yr) Performance Type Gold Champion **KHATARINA JULLYEN V** (\*Jullyen El Jamaal x Khantina Girl V), owned by Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, California.

entries, from the bodies of the Jade Creek Arabians to the huge round eyes from Silver Maple Farm, everyone can find something for their taste at this show. Each judge gives a quick positive critique on what they liked about winner and second of each class and why it won, for both performance and show halter types, and while you might think this is for newcomers only, it is actually interesting for everyone to have a sense of what goes on in the mind of the judges. It is only too easy to ascribe malevolent intentions to judges, and endlessly grumbling about them is just one of the off-putting negative features of our horse shows. This year the judges were George Z and Janene Boggs for the show type, with Lori Conway and Cynthia Richardson for the performance type section.

The prize for winning breeder went once again to newcomers Aljassimya Farm, who as major supporters of these new initiatives also had the largest number of entries. It would be fair to say that they also fielded some of the least experienced horse handlers; proof that judges don't need to see a horse fully trained in yoga to work out what it looks like. This year, in fact, the rules on standing up were tightened once again for the youngest group at the show. Handlers were only allowed to stand to one side of the weanlings/foals, a rule designed to combat negativity about the pointless pressure that can be put upon young horses just to assess their conformation. It is, of course, almost impossible to please everyone when it comes to handling the horses in front of the judges and there were still some quibbles over what is and what is not a "relaxed"

#### RESULTS:

##### FILLY FOAL PERFORMANCE TYPE

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Kiki Lee JCA (A Jakarta x GH Athyla), Jade Creek Arabians, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Mayflower V (Audacious PS x Maya V), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA

##### COLT/GELDING FOAL PERFORMANCE

**TYPE GOLD CHAMPION:** Missbah AJF (Monther Al Nasser x RP Miss Surprise), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Besson AJF (Besson Carol x Alia Jamaal), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Brio V (Audacious PS x Breathless V), Sherry Conrads, San Francisco, CA

##### FILLY FOAL SHOW TYPE

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Montaha Aljassimya (Monther Al Nasser x Ultimate Monisah), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Monyat Aljassimya (Monther Al Nasser x RP Miss Surprise), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Prima Alluriana M (Shanghai EA x Show Blessed), Miller & Padilla, Red Bluff, CA

##### COLT FOAL SHOW TYPE

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Jalal Aljassimya (WH Justice x Annais), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Ali Aljassimya (Monther Al Nasser x Bint Alia Aljassimya), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** The Seeker V (Audacious PS x Satine IA), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA



Top left: Junior Colt/Gelding Performance Type Gold Champion **SHAHEEN C** (Stival x Silken Sable), owned by Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, California.



Junior Filly Show Type Gold Champion **SERENDIPITY V** (Audacious PS x Satine IA), owned by Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, California.



Gold Champion Produce of Dam **BINT BINT SAYO** (Ali Saroukh x Samura), pictured with owners Christy and Henry Metz of Silver Maple Farms, Santa Ynez, California. At left is Foal Festival Board Member Bart Van Buggenhout



Trail A Gold Champion **JAMR AJF** (WH Justice x Bruma Bahamas), owned by Ali Brady, Solvang, California.



Trail B Gold Champion **MON AMIEE** (Eden C x WCA Mon Cherie), owned by Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, California.

**JUNIOR FILLY (YEARLING/2 YR) PERFORMANCE TYPE**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Khatarina Jullyen V (\*Jullyen El Jamaal x Khantina Girl V), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Sasha DDA (Hi Hello Boy x Dream On DDA), Carol Steppe, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Ameena Aljassimya (Besson Carol x Athina El Jamaal), Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA

**JUNIOR COLT/GELDING PERFORMANCE TYPE**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Shaheen C (Stival x Silken Sable), Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Ome El Epoque (WH Justice x O El Bint Shaina), Om El Arab International, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Chadwick M (Pstrategy x PGN Charizma), Miller Arabians, Red Bluff, CA

**JUNIOR FILLY SHOW TYPE**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Serendipity V (Audacious PS x Satine IA), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Ludjina (Ludjin El Jamaal x Eva C), Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Lavender Rose JG (WH Justice x Rose of Versace JG), Jerry Garcia, Newcastle, CA

stand, but listening to what the public says and not dismissing it is pretty much a whole new venture for an Arabian show.

For unanimous enthusiasm I would look to the In-Hand Trail classes. For an entry-level class that requires dedication and horsemanship, but no expensive conditioning, equipment or vast investment in anything except time with your horse, I cannot think of a better way to introduce the gentle side of Arabians to the public. I think we sometimes put too much emphasis on the flamboyant side of the breed, and all that snorting, sweating, and stretching to ever convince people of our horses' essential sanity and kindness. The trail class is perfectly constructed to show the other side, and congratulations to handlers Austin Gallún and Kristy Gillot for their almost fault-free demonstrations of how to handle a young horse with quietness and conviction through the competition obstacles. The highlight of these classes, though, was youngest entry Sofia Merz, determinedly piloting her WH Justice yearling through the trail. You could have heard a pin drop for her entire round, and every member of the crowd was smiling when she completed the course. Horse shows need to provide moments of happiness for everyone, not just the winners, and this class genuinely seems to be able to do that. As returning judge and AHA President Cynthia Richardson said, "The Foal Festival is one of the best ideas to come along in a long time. It has brought the breeders together to enjoy each others' horses in a very friendly atmosphere. With the amateurs showing, it has taken pressure off our young horses."

For the new classes, the Gelding Futurity provides a route to use the geldings breeders produce as an attractive entry level to the breed. Breeders from the Santa Ynez

Valley and the surrounding 50 miles are allowed to nominate their geldings, for a tidy sum of money, to the Futurity where they will be sold in an Addis Online Auction in July of their yearling year. It's not a get-rich-quick scheme for the breeder but a long-term investment in the breed because the money from both the sales and the nominations goes into the prize pot for the new owner to compete for. The total pot for each age group can be won as a first/second/third prize jackpot over the following three Santa Ynez Foal Festival shows. This was the first year of the competition and the geldings, sold just over two months ago, came back with their new owners to compete in a class judged as an in-hand show class, with all the amateur rules of the show applying. The winner, Jafar AJF by WH Justice, bagged \$4,502 for his new owner Kris Johnston, while the second and third took home \$2,701 and \$1,800 respectively. The new gelding owners brought both some familiar and some new faces to the table and perhaps most interestingly also brought some previously disillusioned owners back into the fold.

Next year, both a new set of yearlings will compete for a new prize pot and this year's entries will return for more of their pot, but the money will be won for their performance in an in-hand trail class, making it a whole new competition based on practice making perfect. In their third year, this group will compete again, in an as yet undecided competition format based on the horse's suitability as a riding horse, but taking into consideration the amateur level of the handlers. I have heard the valid point lately that in fact the endless round of Futurities, sweepstakes, and signatures one can subscribe to in an effort to keep breeding numbers up have the unintended

**YEARLING COLT/GELDING SHOW TYPE**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Jeryan Aljassimya (WH Justice x Psierra) Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Mahir Aljassimya (Monther Al Nasser x Daimonds and Pearls PGA) Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** MM santiago (Audacious PS x MM Sabine) Mary Sypolt, Fair Oaks, CA

**SANTA YNEZ FUTURITY YEARLING GELDING**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Jafar AJF (WH Justice x Psierra), Kris Johnston, Solvang, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Miqdad AJF (Monther Al Nasser x Toscana PGA), Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Jamr AJF (WH Justice x Bruma Bahamas), Ali Brady, Solvang, CA

**GET OF SIRE**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** WH Justice (Magnum Psyche x Vona Sher Renea), Equid System Ltd, Breux Sur Avre, France  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Audacious PS (Fame VF x Hal Flirtatious), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Majestic Noble SMF (Marquis I x Nagda), Silver Maple Farms, Santa Ynez, CA

**PRODUCE OF DAM**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Bint Bint Sayo (Ali Saroukh x Samura), Silver Maple Farms, Santa Ynez, CA

**TRAIL A**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Jamr AJF (WH Justice x Bruma Bahamas), Ali Brady, Solvang, CA

**TRAIL B**

**GOLD CHAMPION:** Mon Aimee (Eden C x WCA Mon Cheriee), Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Hello I Love You (Hi Hello Boy x KO Unforgettable), Laughing Dog Ranch, Ojai, CA  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Om El Bahiya (WH Justice x Om El Bint Bint Estopa), Om El Arab International, Santa Ynez, CA



Yearling Colt/Gelding Show Type Gold Champion **JERYAN ALJASSIMYA** (WH Justice x Psierra) owned by Aljassimya Farm, Santa Ynez, California.



Santa Ynez Futurity Yearling Gelding Gold Champion **JAFAR AJF** (WH Justice x Psierra), owned by Kris Johnston, Solvang, California.



Get Of Sire Gold Champion: **WH JUSTICE** (Magnum Psyche x Vona Sher-Renea), owned by Equid System Ltd, Breux Sur Avre, France, and on lease to Aljassimya Farm.



Trail C Gold Champion Yearling **LETISHA** (FA El Shawan x BHF Shaks Lullaby), owned by Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, California.



Trail B Bronze Champion **OM EL BAHIYA** (WH Justice x Om El Bint Bint Estopa), owned by Om El Arab International, Santa Ynez, California, was shown by the youngest entrant Sofia Merz who was a highlight of the show.



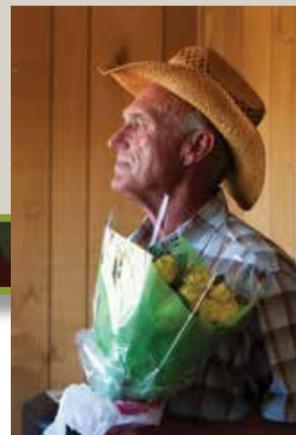
The stallion **OM EL AL AZEEM** (\*Al Lahab GASB x Om El Beneera), bred and owned by Om El Arab International, was presented to guests after Saturday's classes.



Manny Lawrence of Jade Creek Arabians presented a special mare, 29-year-old **FOREVER ROSE** (Khemosabi x Chantilly Rose by Gamaar). He said it was love at first sight when he saw her as a two-year-old, but was advised against purchasing her by a well-known trainer because "Khemo is out of style." Love won him over and Manny bought her, showing her to a Canadian National Championship and Region 3 Championship in 1997. She then went home to be a broodmare and has been the "Queen of Jade Creek" for the past 27 years.



Show organizer **MICHELLE KELLY**.



Doug Dahmen, one of the board members of the foal festival.

consequence of making the Arabian a throwaway breed. Once your yearling has passed the point of being able to win any money, he has passed his maximum value point and it's all downhill from there to adulthood. Once again, this futurity is trying to learn from previous experience in the breed by encouraging a responsible way of training your young horse to make him more worthwhile in his adult role as a riding horse.

And so to the Saturday night shenanigans. As with many things in the newly invigorated Santa Ynez Valley Group this idea was originally floated by Bart Van Buggenhout who arrived in the Valley three years ago as manager of Aljassimya Farm. Again it is designed to create a new and more positive angle for Arabian breeding than repeating what we did last year and the year before, ad infinitum. Now one of the negative things Arabian breeders do fall into the habit of sometimes — and I include all of us in this, big, small, old, new, northern, southern, eastern, and western — is bitching about our neighbor's horses. As buyers have gotten harder to find the problem gets worse as everyone competes over a smaller and smaller group of buyers, but being negative about your neighbor's horse is not just being negative about your neighbor. It creates a negative image for the whole Arabian breed; it puts people off owning an Arabian at all; finally provoking an entire death spiral of bad feeling. New owners of horses do not want to participate in a fiercely competitive environment where everything they learn from one person is rubbished comprehensively by the next person. They want an enjoyable community to join where they can have fun experiences and learn more about horses. The best thing you can give them is the space and opportunity to make up their own minds about what they like and then they will stay.

As previously noted the breeders in this valley all breed good Arabians and have each developed their own type of horse, but in doing so have not necessarily bred to each other's horses. The Santa Ynez Breeders Challenge puts an end to all that! Each of twelve breeders put the name of one of their own breeding stallions in the basket on Saturday night and each of those twelve breeders drew one name back out. If you pulled your own stallion, you had to put it back. Each of these breeders then has to nominate one of their own mares to breed to the stallion they pulled out of the hat by December 31. The resulting foal will be shown at the 2016 Foal Show and the winning foal wins the Breeders Challenge Perpetual Trophy. Furthermore, everyone can participate in the fun, as all those breeding decisions will be available to everyone on the SYVAHA website to take part in a Calcutta on which foal they think is going to win. Calcutta entries close before the foal is born so each person taking part is trusting their own breeding experience and predictive powers! The money will be divided between the winning foal breeder and those



Top left: The SYVAHA Club honored and thanked Rose and Dorothy Mari from **FRISCO MARI ARABIANS** for the significant and lasting influence their family has made on the Arabian breed. Their father, the late Frisco Mari, owned Fersey and bred Amerigo (Fersey x \*Szarza), best known for siring Khemosabi (x Jurneeka). Last year's honorees were Paul and Carol Hemming who owned Raffon (Gazon x Vadraff).

Top right: **ALJASSIMYA** was honored with Best Large Breeder. Representing the farm was Robin Hopkinson, second from left, and Bart Van Buggenhout, manager of Aljassimya Farm. Also pictured is Michelle Kelly, left, and Jennifer Trickey, right. Bart is the "brainchild" behind the foal festival.



Middle left: Bronze Champion Best Large Breeder was **OM EL ARAB INTERNATIONAL**. Pictured are owners Janina Merz with her son Luca, and Sigi Siller.

Middle center: Best Small Breeder **GALLÚN FARMS**. Pictured from left to right are Austin, Nancy, and Greg Gallún.

Middle right: **BEST HANDLER** Kristy Gillot, who showed the Varian horses.

Bottom right: **SHEILA VARIAN** of Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, California, won Silver Champion Large Breeder.



**TRAIL C GOLD CHAMPION:** Letisha (FA El Shawan x BHF Shahs Lullaby), Gallún Farms, Santa Ynez, CA  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Khatarina Jullyen (Jullyen El Jamaal x Khantina Girl V), Varian Arabians, Arroyo Grande, CA

**BEST LARGE BREEDER**  
**GOLD CHAMPION:** Aljassimya Farm.  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Varian Arabians  
**BRONZE CHAMPION:** Om El Arab International

**BEST SMALL BREEDER (UNDER 5 FOALS)**  
**GOLD CHAMPION:** Gallún Farms  
**SILVER CHAMPION:** Jade Creek Arabians & Silver Maple farm

**BEST HANDLER**  
1. Kristy Gillot  
2. Makenzie Landeros  
3. Jim McKibbin

participants who correctly predicted the winner. The Challenge encourages everyone to visit with and learn about everyone else's type of Arabian horses, not just their own. A simple fun idea but one that has many positive repercussions. Again as noted by Cynthia Richardson, "The breeders challenge is going to create a great deal of interest. I was there for the drawing and got to hear several of the breeders discussing their mares that very night. It will be fun for the rest of us around the world to buy a ticket and follow 'our' foal."

The most interesting feature of the Santa Ynez Foal Show is that it could be franchised to cover other Arabian horse rich areas. It may not be perfect and some aspects might work better than others, but the foal show is creating a new idea to take Arabians forward into the future and for that it has to be commended. I will let visiting judge George Z have the final word:

"I was curious. How can you make a show just for foals and yearlings fun? I found out that you can make it even more fun than some 'big' shows. I am amazed with the concept, its execution, with the horses, and the entire atmosphere at this show. I called it 'a boutique show' because this is exactly what the word 'boutique' means. Small, quality, and fun. It created a sense of fair competition and it was pure fun for everyone. I think many areas in the U.S. could duplicate this concept. It brings people together and this is what shows should be all about."