

How A Simple Act of Kindness turned into a million-dollar story.

I'd like to share a story with you all about a very important person I had the privilege of meeting. His name is Wayne DeGough. If it wasn't for him, I would not have Tomcat Chex. Wayne DeGough was born May 12, 1932. He is 90 years old in these pictures taken August 4, 2022.

I love to listen to the old timers talk about their horse from the 1960's. If it wasn't for them, we wouldn't have the great horses we have today.

In 1981, Wayne DeGough received a phone call from a very good friend named Bob Deathridge. Bob's teenage daughter had recently been killed in a car accident. Bob would get depressed when he looked out the window and saw his daughters' favorite horse, Annie standing in the pasture. Bob called Wayne and asked him if he wanted to buy her. Wayne told him he didn't need any more horses, but that he would come take a look at her. Wayne remembers Annie being in a weed filled pasture and she wasn't much to look at. Wayne asked Bob how much he wanted for her, and Bob said just give me \$150.00 and she is yours. So, Wayne bought her and took her home. Wayne gave her much needed TLC, wormed, and vaccinated her and in about 3 months' time Annie blossomed into a beautiful shiny chestnut mare standing 15 hands tall weighing 1200 lbs. Wayne remembers the first time he put a saddle on Annie, he wasn't sure how she would be but to his surprise, Annie rode off like a dream. He recalls she did everything he asked her to do. One day Wayne took a ride down the road on Annie, and he happened to ride by his neighbor's house. His neighbor was outside and called out to Wayne to come over. Wayne rode over to his neighbor, and he asked, where did you get that beautiful animal and what are you going to do with her. Wayne told him, I'm going to use her for a riding horse and nothing more. The neighbor then said, you need to breed her to my stallion. Wayne told his neighbor, I can't afford to bred to your stallion for \$1,000.00, I only paid \$150.00 for this mare. It turns out Wayne's neighbor was Joe Nunes the owner of Bueno Chex. Joe Nunes was really impressed with Annie, so he asked Wayne how about trading me \$1000.00 worth of your Equine Booster grain supplement that Wayne was selling at the time, for a breeding. Wayne agreed and so Annie aka Anns Miss Reed (1966 Chestnut mare) was bred to Bueno Chex (1961 Buckskin stallion). Flying blind, Wayne had no idea who Bueno Chex was in our industry as the horses he owned at the time, were running quarter horses. The main reason he bought Annie was to help his friend Bob. The resulting foal born in 1978 was a dun mare that was named Miss Reed Chex.

As a yearling in 1979, Joe Nunes talked Wayne into entering Miss Reed Chex in the Reno Snaffle Bit Futurity sale. Ronald & Ann Newark of Santa Maria, CA. purchased Miss Reed Chex through the sale for \$5,000.00 which was a pot of gold in those days. The Newark's had her trained and she was shown in the 1981 Snaffle Bit Futurity by Rod Kelley. She finished 9th in the Open Division with over 300 entries. Wayne was told that she was unbeaten in the fence work. Unfortunately, all the NRCHA records from that time were destroyed in a fire, but Miss Reed Chex went on to be a Equi-Stat All Time Producing mare and her genetic live on thought her

sons, Tomcat Chex (2002S), Smart Charcoal Chex (2000S), Forrest Acre Chex (1996G), Playgun Chex (2001S) and her daughters, Lil Miss Smarty Chex (1987M), Smart Bunny Lena (1993M), Smart Little Teri (1998M), Real Pokey Lena Chex (1988M).

Miss Reed Chex (Offspring Earnings \$250,000.) Tomcat Chex, Lil Miss Smarty Chex, Smart Bunny Lena are phenomenal examples of how spectacular the genetics of Miss Reed Chex are! History calls her an Equi-stat all-time leading dam. She is a legend! 🎉🎉🎉 Miss Reed Chex's own offspring have produced earnings of more than a MILLION DOLLARS!!

In the 1986, Ron and Ann Newark bred Miss Reed Chex to Smart Little Lena, and the resulting foal was a filly they named Lil Miss Smarty Chex. She was shown at the Snaffle Bit Futurity in 1990 ridden by Les Vogt and ended up tenth overall. The mare won the NRCHA Open Hackamore class the following year at the Futurity, Ventura, and Salinas. She was Open Reserve Champion at the Stakes and at the Cow Palace Grand National Snaffle Bit Futurity.

Lil Miss Smarty Chex built a legacy and was Inducted into the NRCHA Hall Of Fame

The Newarks decided it was best to end the mares show career early and breed her to Nu Cash. With Nu Cash, she produced Smart Little Cash, NRCHA Snaffle Bit Futurity Open Champion, Annies Nu Lena, Smartcashinvestment and Annies Little Cash.

Lil Miss Smarty Chex caught the eye of Carol Rose, and she leased the mare. She had several very successful foals sired by Shining Spark including Smart N Shine, Shiners Smart Chex, Lil Miss Shiney Chex, and Shiney Lil Miss.

Lil Miss Smarty Chex was humanely put down at the age of 25 after problems with her stifles. She was the Equi-Stat number one producing mare in the NRCHA for many years and will always be remembered.

Here is a quote from Top Breeder; Carol Rose, "It's all about the blood. I believe that 90% of the great horses have great mothers. Those great mothers have the conformation (form to function), the mind, and the athletic ability, in that order, to produce outstanding, trainable athletes. It continues to be the maternal lineage or dam line that play the most crucial role in breeding quality horses. Our record books have proven how important the influence of the dam's line is on the offspring's performance in all events."

With that quote being said, Carol Roses #1 Top Dam in her breeding program was Lil Miss Smarty Chex (Offspring Earnings \$450,000.) and then her daughter Lil Miss Shiney Chex (Offspring Earnings \$800,000)

Miss Reed Chex was sold to Howard Erenberg of Santa Ynez, CA. in 1993. Howard bred Miss Reed Chex to High Brow Cat in 2001 and the resulting foal born May 11, 2002, was a gorgeous bay colt who they name Tomcat Chex.

In 2003, Howard Erenberg entered Tomcat Chex in the Pacific Coast Cutting Horse Association sale that was held in Burbank, CA. Little did he know that God had a plan for Tomcat Chex and his new owners Rick and Jalinda Covey.

THE PURCHASE OF TOMCAT CHEX

Tomcat Chex was a long yearling and the only High Brow Cat in the sale.”

Jalinda said that the sale took place just before all the High Brow Cats started winning and she just loved the way he looked – and especially loved the bottom side of his pedigree. “He had great bone, and everybody was looking at him,” said Jalinda. “Jeff Oswood was representing him and at the sale and he was out of the stall more than he was in the stall. They had people so serious that they had him x-rayed.”

However, even with the stallion receiving all that attention, Jalinda was able to buy him. “It was truly a God-send that we got this horse because we don’t have the kind of money that a lot of people have to spend,” said Jalinda.

As fate would have it, the owners of the stallion Playboy Perfecta were offering an \$100,000.00 incentive purse for his offspring at the PCCHA Futurity and Jalinda was showing one. “I had a horse that Russ Elrod trained and competed on in the Open and I rode in the Non-Pro,” said Jalinda. “We both kept advancing and we knew we had made the Finals, so we knew we had a shot at that money.”

Jalinda’s parents, David and Janell Whitt, as well as her daughter, Tiffany, were at the show and it was the first time that her father had ever seen her show – so Jalinda felt this was the ultimate show for them to attend. It was also a memorable event because her daughter had just found out she was pregnant with Rick and Jalinda’s first grandchild. “I told my Dad I would love to try and buy Tomcat Chex, but he will bring more money than we can afford, and his response was, ‘Well, let’s just pray about it. If it’s God’s will, it will happen.’

“The sale was held before the Finals but at that point, we knew that we had won the Incentive part of the Gelding purse, which was about \$25,000. I said, ‘OK, Dad, if we bid on this colt, the highest we can go is \$25,000. We know we have that much money.’

“When the auction of Tomcat Chex started, the bids were coming from all over the coliseum. It was happening so fast; we never had a chance to bid. The bid was already up to \$20,000 and then it stopped. They gave Phil Rapp the microphone and he was talking about how he was going to show a High Brow Cat that year at the NCHA Futurity. He was pumping up the High Brow Cats, saying, ‘I really think they’re going to be great horses.

“While Phil Rapp was talking, my husband got the attention of the ring man who was standing down below us. He told him that he wanted in on the bid. As soon as Phil handed the microphone back to the auctioneer, the ring man gave our bid to the auctioneer. There was about a 30-second lull – it wasn’t very long – and the auctioneer hit the gavel on the podium and said ‘sold.’ Then he pointed right at us. Our hearts jumped with joy...we couldn’t believe it happened so quick. I think the auctioneer could have gotten more money because people would have jumped right back in there. But our prayers were answered, it was totally “God’s will.”

Little did we know that 20 year later, High Brow Cat’s offspring would go on to win over 90 million dollars.