

People & Community

EQUESTRIAN

The dream horse that made history

Pringle Farms Arabian puts Canada on the map

BY PATRICIA LOCKIE
SPECIAL TO THE DRIFTWOOD

For horse lovers, and especially for the Arab horse lover, this story is the stuff of dreams.

It's about an equine beauty queen who went from Canadian obscurity and took home the crown, not to mention the admiration of horse breeders, handlers and judges across a continent.

This gorgeous grey Arabian mare is aptly named Island Elegance, Ellie for short. Ellie's path to stardom was paved on Salt Spring at the training farm of John and Andrea Pringle.

In the tough world of top-level Arabian halter competition — where the horse is shown on a line by a handler and judged by a panel of experts on confirmation and presentation — Canadian-bred horses for decades have left the show ring unrecognized in competition against American and other international horses.

The International Arabian Horse Association, based in Colorado, runs the competitions.

Last year in Regina at the Canadian national championships, Ellie became the first Canadian-bred Canadian national champion mare ever. It was an historic moment, the first such win in the 52-year history of the Canadian Nationals.

An Olympic-sized moment for proud Canadian breeders of Arabian horses, especially for those whose horses were a distinguished part of the champion's bloodlines, and for Ellie's many fans watching in the stands.

Proudest of all were John, Andrea and Jody Pringle, who had readied the horse for this pinnacle of competition.

Working as a team, the family had amply rewarded the faith placed in them by Ellie's owner, Don James of North Saanich, a businessman who for many years had nursed a dream of



Island Elegance and John Pringle (right) in the judging ring in Scottsdale, Arizona.

breeding a national calibre champion.

Getting Ellie to that championship win took two years of dedicated time, skill and attention to detail by the Pringles.

John worked with the horse month after month, and took her to the prestigious Scottsdale show in the winter of 2009 where Ellie's extraordinary presence made her the talk of the show. The outsider from north of 49 was suddenly hot.

"We have never handled a horse that has generated so much excitement and attracted so much positive attention at shows," said John.

Ellie came back to Salt Spring with a reserve championship, after facing off against stiff competition from some well-known national champions.

More competition came in Monroe, Washington where John showed her to a regional championship win. This was no small victory since Ellie was up against leading halter horses from across the U.S.

shown by the best halter trainers in the business.

As the end of July approached, tension mounted.

Ellie was about to compete in her own backyard at the Region 17 (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia) Championships in Langley.

Jody showed her to a championship win in the amateur to handle class, whilst her father took the reserve championship place competing against other professional handlers.

So, now the stage was set for Regina and Canadian nationals. American trainer Jeff Schall came on board to add his considerable expertise in the show ring to Ellie's prep work.

Team strength paid off. Ellie did what no other Canadian bred mare in the history of Canadian nationals had ever done before: she took the gold with her championship win. Her victory meant that at long last Canadian bloodlines had been recognized as the best in her class.

Ellie's amazing story did not end there. Last fall in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the U.S. National Championships, Ellie won the reserve championship in the senior mare category, a glorious end to a magical year.

In recognition of her outstanding achievements, Ellie has been recently named Horse of the Year, winner of the World Arabian Horse Organization Trophy.

In its remarks, the Canadian Arabian Horse Registry, the trophy's awarding body, said the selection committee felt that Island Elegance "is a shining example of superior Canadian breeding and represented the high level of quality that the Canadian industry can accomplish."

John sums up his family's journey with this very special horse by saying, "We felt honoured that the owner had the confidence in us to take Ellie to her full potential. This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity because there are very few horses in the world as special as she is."

RECYCLING

New plastics depot runs today in Ganges

A depot/drop-off service for soft plastics and styrofoam recycling holds its first collection day in Ganges today (March 31).

Islander Marnie Slinn has arranged for Pacific Mobile Depots to pick up those items for a per-bag charge at the Country Grocer parking lot north of the liquor store from 9 a.m. to noon.

See www.pacificmobiledepots.com for details on the types of plastics and styrofoam collected.

(All soft plastics except "crinkly" kinds are accepted and styrofoam and soft plastics need to be in separate bags, for example.)

Future depot dates will be publicized.



The Healing Place

Counselling Centre

The Healing Place is a service for those dealing with terminal illness, prolonged chronic illness, have senior's concerns, and to all who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Individual, group & family counselling.

Haja Hannah, M.A., CCC, Clinical Counsellor is a specialist in this field.

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About to list your house for sale? 1%

Times have changed and so have the real estate companies and their business models.

Most of today's buyers use the internet to search for their new homes. Most buyers see all the listings online before they even get to Salt Spring. That is why a virtual tour hyperlinked off the MLS® with stunning photos of a staged home is so vitally important in today's real estate market.

One Percent Realty is a company that has a very simple business model: low overhead and low fees charged to their agents. The low overhead is passed on to consumers in the way of low commissions. The sellers still get full MLS® listings, signs, Driftwood real estate advertising, lock boxes, etc.

Compare commissions charged. One Percent charges a commission of \$6,000 plus a \$900 disbursement fee + GST for houses up to \$600,000. For houses over \$600,000 it is 1% plus the \$900 disbursement fee + GST. The commission is shared between the buying and or selling REALTOR®. This is an example. There are no standard commissions. All real estate companies are free to set their own rate. If an agent charges 7% on the first \$100,000 and 3% on the balance for selling a \$600,000 home the commission would be \$22,000 + GST = \$23,100. (Plus 12% HST this summer). If you listed with One Percent Realty the commission would be \$6,900 + GST = \$7,245. The savings would be \$15,855.

Real Estate fees come out of your after-tax home equity. If the 600k home used in the example above had a 500k mortgage on it the 7% 3% real estate fees would be approx 23% of the after-tax home equity. Why do the rich get richer? They save money. Don't give away your after-tax home equity. How long would it take you to save up the after-tax \$15,855?

The big myth "If I list with One Percent the other agents won't show my house." The reality is other REALTOR® on Salt Spring do show my listings. Over 70% of One Percent listings are sold by other agents. The buyers see what they want to see these days. Buyers have access to all the MLS® listings.

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SALT SPRING ISLAND

RECYCLING DEPOT
349 RAINBOW ROAD

WILL BE CLOSED

FRIDAY, APRIL 2nd & SATURDAY, APRIL 3rd

FOR EASTER WEEKEND

OPEN AGAIN TUESDAY, APRIL 6th

Regular hours:
Tuesday to Saturday 10 am - 5 pm