

# Morgan Dressage association

*Dedicated to promoting and supporting Morgan Horses in Dressage.*



## GRAND PRIX MORGANS— TEARS, SWEAT AND STUBBORNNESS

*By Sally Radtke-Anderson*

My Grand Prix quest started in 1993 when my Father bought an 11-year-old chestnut gelding named Mehrs Eloquence from our good friends Pruett and Sheri Helms. Quincy had already been through six owners and was rather rotten. First, we tried the show circuit where Quincy didn't behave in the line up. Next was jumping where he was scared of the jumps. After that, we tried moving cattle where he promptly went lame. Luckily, I found Jeanne Gaudreau a local trainer that introduced me to dressage. The following summer we graced the dressage arena at Training Level with a long mane and a tail that drug two feet on the ground. We had great success at our first show and that was the end of the long tail and mane. This season ended with a Training level Region 6 Championship ribbon and cooler—not bad for a ranch girl and naughty show horse.

That winter I made the commitment to start taking lessons on a weekly basis and clinic monthly. I could see how dressage helped with the training of a horse and fit well with our Morgans, and over the next few years we moved up a level each year. Quincy and dressage helped me through my trying times of adolescence and high school. They both taught me how to stay focused and kept me away from boys, much to my parents delight.

My Mother was a great supporter and enjoyed the horse activities just as much as I did. Together we decided that it was time to start training our young stallion, Iron Forge Starman. He was a 5-year-old and had only been turned out with mares on 640 acres. We hooked up the trailer and headed up to the mountains to round him up. Starman turned out to be very trainable and had a lot of talent for dressage. He became a star right along side of Quincy. People often commented that Starman looked like a small warmblood.

In 1997 and 1998, at the age of 20, I loaded both of these boys up, and along with a Thoroughbred gelding, and headed to Washington State for the show

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*Sally and Iron Forge Starman*

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### News and Reminders:

- Check out [Page 16](#) for **new Classified** listings—they are growing!
- Find us on Facebook 
- Did you know you can “like” your favorite Morgan in the USDF Awards standings? Try it! 
- It is time **to renew your MDA Membership** for 2012—be sure and fill out the application on [Page 17](#) and mail it in **TODAY!**
- Have a **picture** to share? Or a great **book** or **website**? A special event in your area? Let us know and we will pass it on in the next **MDA Extensions!**

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## Spotlight on the Members



Victoria Surr and FR Freedom First

*I like to say that “Fred”, **FR Freedom First**, (b. 2002, Townshend Top Hat x UC Rianna) was born in my lap. I showed his mother to multiple championships in carriage driving, including several USEF National Horse of the Year Championships. I bred her hoping for a Morgan sport horse, more specifically, a carriage driving horse.*

***Fred** started as a carriage horse; I showed him in New England at the New England Morgan shows. He was the first horse ever to win the USEF National Horse of the Year Champion in Driven Dressage (open to all breeds). He also won the USEF National Horse of the Year Champion in the Morgan Carriage division, as well as many regional and local championships in driven dressage and carriage pleasure.*

*When I moved to Florida to help my aging parents, I stopped showing **Fred**, and started riding him. Although I had ridden him some before the move (telling him, I am too young to not have a riding horse), we had really been focused on driving until then. Our first rides were trail rides through the Everglades, beautiful early morning rides, just me and my horse watching the sun rise over palms and pine trees, eagles soaring overhead.*

*After my mom passed away, my dad expressed an interest in seeing me compete with **Fred** at local shows. I decided to try ridden dressage. Our local dressage club (SWFDA) offers several shows during the winter months, and we started showing at them.*

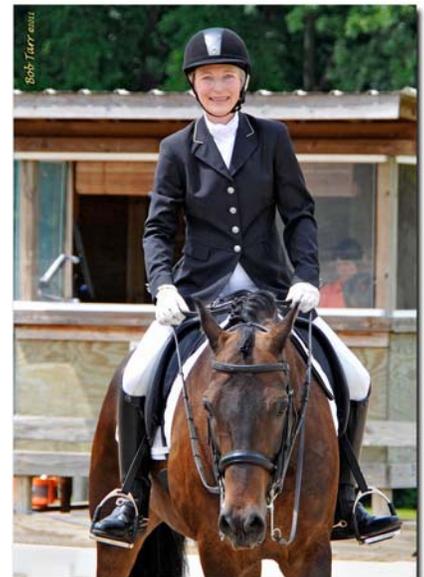
***Fred** has taken to ridden dressage with the same talents that made him such a fun driven dressage horse. We are showing in Training Level, earning scores in the low to mid-60s. He has earned several awards, including two high score championships and the Florida Morgan Horse Association year-end high-point dressage championship.*

*For more about Fred, visit his website:*

*<http://www.freedomrider.com/fred/index.html> **Victoria Surr***

*My husband and I currently own two Morgans: **Sunup Nightshade** “**Saumur**” and **FRM Flower of Remington** “**Rémy**”. **Saumur** and I have been working our way up the levels, from “un-trainable” to currently schooling at Fourth Level. We earned our USDF Bronze Medal last year and had a good season at Third Level this year. My long-term goal for **Saumur** is getting us classically correct to the FEI levels. **Rémy** is a lovely coming 4-year old, and I am targeting Training Level for the next season.*

*From Spring to Fall the horses are at home, and we enjoy lots of trail rides. In the winter they are stabled with my coach, Sandy Tull (a Grand Prix trainer and rider). For me, Morgans are ideal: athletic, beautiful, with good minds, and that “je ne sais quoi” (“I don’t know what”) that goes right to your heart. **Birgit Villeminey***



Birgit Villeminey and Sunup Nightshade

# Thyroid Hormones in Horses

By Karen Wolfsheimer, DVM, PhD., Dipl. (ACVIM-SAIM)

Hormones produced in the thyroid glands are vital for normal development and function in horses. The thyroid glands consist of 2 lobes situated on either side of the trachea just behind the larynx.<sup>1</sup> Normally, the thyroid glands cannot be palpated, but if a goiter (enlarged thyroid gland) develops, the gland(s) can be felt under the skin along the trachea behind the jaw.

Thyroid hormones are produced in the thyroid glands after iodide is taken into cells and oxidized to iodine.<sup>2</sup> The iodine is then added on to the amino acid tyrosine to ultimately form levothyroxine (T4) and to a lesser extent, levotriiodothyronine (T3). T4 is converted to T3, as well as an inactive form of the hormone, "Reverse T3", in the peripheral tissues. While T4 is the most predominant hormone made by the thyroid gland, T3 is the most biologically active at the level of the target tissues. Under the influence of Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (aka TSH or Thyrotropin) from the pituitary gland, T4/T3 is secreted into the bloodstream. TSH can be influenced by many factors including Thyrotropin Releasing Hormone (TRH) which is produced by the hypothalamus. Both TSH and TRH secretion are regulated by circulating levels of T4/T3 in a so-called "negative feedback loop" which maintains normal levels of thyroid hormones (Figure 1). Secretion of thyroid hormones is episodic with pulses throughout the day. This "Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Thyroid Axis" can be influenced by many physiological and pathological

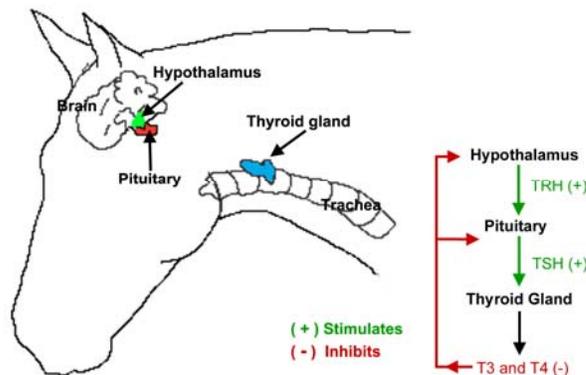


Figure 1. The Thyroid gland in the horse and its hormones.

conditions, as well as several drugs. Normal regulation of TSH and the actions of thyroid hormones can be influenced by other hormones including leptin, dopamine, cortisol and epinephrine. A balance between leptin and thyroid hormones normally help to regulate body fat and appetite. Caloric intake can influence thyroid hormone secretion with prolonged fasting or starvation resulting in a decrease in circulating thyroid hormones. Age can also affect levels of thyroid hormones. The highest concentrations occur in young horses with a decrease seen with age.

Thyroid hormones affect most of the body systems in the horse since they regulate metabolic rate, nutrition, development and reproduction. Increased breakdown of stored glucose (glycogen) in liver and muscle as well as a decreased uptake of glucose by muscle and fat cells via insulin resistance serve to increase the glucose concentrations in the blood. In addition, increased breakdown of stored fats contributes to increases in the supply of nutrient substrates necessary for energy production required to fuel the increase in metabolic rate. Increases in heart rate, cardiac output, respiratory rate and the number of red blood cells drive

the increase in basal metabolic rate and the resulting increase in heat production. Thyroid hormones are vital for brain development, mental alertness and proper peripheral nerve reflexes. In addition, they play a role in stimulating growth of bone and hair as well as enhanced skin quality and muscle function. Thyroid hormones play a role in reproduction by enhancing fertility in

both the mare and stallion although mechanisms are not clear.

## HYPOTHYROIDISM

**Hypothyroidism** is defined as low or non-existent production of thyroid hormones by the thyroid gland.<sup>3</sup> Primary hypothyroidism means the problem lies within the thyroid gland itself. Secondary hypothyroidism usually means the problem is at the level of the pituitary gland (low TSH production) or hypothalamus (low TRH production) Clinical signs of hypothyroidism can include lethargy, exercise intolerance, mental dullness, weight gain, poor hair coat, slow heart rate, cold intolerance and muscle weakness.<sup>3</sup> (Table 1) Abnormal lab findings seen in hypothyroidism can include anemia, elevations in the muscle enzyme creatine kinase (CK), and cholesterol. Hypothyroidism has been incriminated as a cause of laminitis. However, one study where the thyroid glands were surgically removed or thyroid gland function was inhibited by methimazole, hypothyroid horses did not develop laminitis.<sup>4</sup>

Hypothyroidism in foals can either be congenital or idiopathic. Congenital hypothyroidism is recognized to

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## The Story Behind EMR Morgans

*A family affair that is rich in the history of ranching and Morgans in Montana tells its stories*

*By Ed Radtke*

Ed Radtke was raised on a cattle ranch at Hall located in western Montana. The mountains there are very rugged and timbered. Each summer he and his family pasture their cows and calves in these mountains. The horses they use had to be strong both mentally and physically to handle treacherous terrain. Because of these demands, breeding a horse for this purpose has been a generational endeavor.

Both of Ed's grandfathers were horsemen. Grandpa Atwell was a noted teamster in Granite county where he ranched. Atwell's team was noted for their ability to pull heavy loads when other teams had given up. Ed's paternal grandfather, F.E. Radtke, raised registered Percherons in North Dakota. Grandfather Radtke had two stallions he took state-wide breeding mares every spring. He crossed these stallions on Morgan mares and raised many fine horses. These horses were used for farming, under saddle and light driving.

In 1936 Ed's father Marvin Radtke moved to Montana to find work during the depression. Marvin started working on local ranches in the summer and in mines in the winter. During this time he married the Alberta Atwell, a daughter of local rancher. Shortly after, they purchased a ranch from the infamous feuding Dooley clan, but that's another story. This same year they had their second child, Ed. Ed always



*Joe Daly and Marvin Radtke*

said it was the very best year they had.

A neighboring rancher of Marvin's was Hans Koefoed. Hans had emigrated from Denmark when he was nineteen and liked quality horses for both draft and saddle. Hans rode a part Morgan that weighed around thirteen hundred pounds called Brownie. This horse wore a size three shoe and Hans liked to say he never tied a rope on anything Brownie could not pull. Hans owned a very large ranch and needed quality cow horses. He wanted a horse that would go from early morning until dark and at times longer. These horses needed to be fifteen hands or more with short backs, a good mind and good cow sense. To fill these requirements, Hans purchased a Morgan colt from Bill Jackson who was a noted Montana Morgan breeder. This colt was a solid bay named Luzan. Luzan was by Juzan by Jubilee King and out a mare that went back to Revere and Chief Bugler. Bill Jackson had purchased Juzan from the JC Brunk ranch.

Luzan was an excellent ranch horse who could withstand the mountainous terrain, and move and sort cattle with ease. His easy temperament allowed him to be transported in a stock truck along side mares and geldings. Luzan was so quick cutting cattle he threw a local cowboy off with one of his turns.

Hans never raised any registered Morgans and his sole desire was to have good stock horses. Luzan fulfilled this purpose by producing wonderful stock horses from a wide variety of mares. Ed worked for Hans starting many of these horses for him; his favorite being the Morgan crosses to work with that were out of three albino mares. The crosses were a brilliant copper color, excellent in the mountains and had abundant cow sense.

Luzan was purchased by Marvin at Hans' estate sale. During this time period Marvin purchased a mare, Leota, by Red Racer from Ann Hays. Ed purchased her filly, Kootenie Madie's Girl who was by Madie Canfield by Mansfield. This was the foundation of Moana and EMR breeding programs and the start of a life long dream for both Marvin and Ed.

Madie's Girl was a very good mountain horse, tough as nails and one you could ride from early morning until dark. Ed says the only way he got Valerie to marry him was by

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# A Funny Thing Happened to Me on the Way to the USDF Medal Awards

By Debra McGonigle

We purchased Rapidan Imperial in August 1987 as a “failed” Park horse from a Morgan owner in California who had paid a trainer for five years to train and ride Rapidan park. Imperial never even placed in a class. When we went to California, we originally went to visit Ravenscroft Renown’s sire, Applevale Replica by Pecos. Replica had been recently purchased at 20 years of age by Imperial’s owners. They wanted all the info we had about Renown since we had owned him from the age of three months. After many hours spent pouring through Renown’s scrapbook of accomplishments, the owners decided to take us to meet their trainer and show us their horses. They owned something like sixty Morgans and at least thirty of them were in training, Imperial being one of them.

The owner pulled out horse after horse, discussing bloodlines and ages. So far none of these horses were bred by them and most were young and vague in future goals. The main program was park, with a second to western pleasure only if the horse lacked “pop” for park. The owner pulled Rapidan Imperial out for us to see and before she opened her mouth to even tell us his name, I knew “I was stuck”. She went on and on about issues they had with him and how he just wasn’t working out for them. After all this time western didn’t seem like an option and they were thinking about selling him. Imperial had really built up feet (something like 18 ounce shoes on all four hooves), was wearing a copper tail set and biting rig, and standing in his stall. I asked if we could take this stuff off him and turn him loose somewhere. While watching him run and trot in an outdoor arena, Doug



Debra McGonigle and Forsite Zephyr (Rapidan Imperial X Clonmel Goldn Trophy)

and I quietly looked at each other and it was decided it was doable. Rapidan Imperial was purchased for \$10,000 on a ten year payment plan, plus interest.

When we arrived home to Illinois, we had to make arrangements to ship Imperial from California to Illinois. The soonest any shipper could do was three months later in October. Time did not fly fast enough, but eventually October came and so did Imperial. About two days after he arrived we decided to pull his shoes and trim his hooves. A few days of turnout with his new feet and freedom from standing in a stall with all his restraining gear off, he was a happy camper. Within a short time I decided I would ride him briefly in just a plain snaffle and an old Stubben Tristan dressage saddle. Well, all went well for saddling, bridling and lunging, so I mounted up and added a wee bit of leg. Imperial shot out under me like a tube of toothpaste and I was on my butt. Ok! Good to know! I spent the entire winter just trail riding him in snow covered corn fields and bean fields, up and down hills and valleys at the walk, trot and canter.

Snow drifts were especially helpful with his rapid parky canter. He learned to accept my legs, but because he had been trained early on in a very harsh double bridle and frequently in a biting rig, his acceptance of my hand and connection to any snaffle bit was never good. He had learned to lean on the bit and pull— hard! I then decided I would need some additional instruction with him.

I had worked with Karen, a long time student of Karl Mikolka’s, from 1981 through 1984. She had helped me with three previous Morgans: Black Magic (Morgan mare), Moreeda Top Honor (Morgan gelding) and Ravenscroft Renown (our then 27 year old stallion). However, Karen had moved to the east coast and Karl Mikolka wasn’t available at Tempel Farms. So, I had to search, but found a wonderful instructor who was gifted with difficult horses--Klaus Biesenthal. Klaus had many years working with Holsteiner horses. Driving and jumping were also big interests of his along with dressage. Klaus, Imperial, Doug and I got along famously, and Imperial’s and my instruction improved dramatically for three years, but Klaus was only knowledgeable up to about Second Level, after that I needed to work with someone else.

After some more research I found Nancy Lewis Stanton. Nancy had much experience and knowledge through Grand Prix. She had raised and trained her own horse Issiah to the USDF Young Riders Championship. Nancy and I worked together for two years. She herself was working with George Williams at Tempel