

Hey Neighbor

For The Love Of Horses

By Frank J. Buchman

Emporia Youth Rides To Top Quarter Horse Honors

From riding her gray pony Star to win the lead line class at the local show, Chandry Kraft now mounts her 16-1 hand bay Quarter Horse Chance to collect honors at the toughest competitions in the world.

"I've been showing all of my life. I really love working with horses," said Kraft, 17-year-old junior at Emporia High School.

Returning from the American Quarter Horse Youth Association World Championship Show in Fort Worth, Texas, a few weeks ago, Chandry placed 12th in the hunt seat equitation class out of over 120 youths.

Additionally, Kraft is the high point 2006 all-around 14-to-18-year old youth in the year-end standings of the Kansas Quarter Horse Association.

To rate such honors takes time and dedication. "We've competed in 40 shows since February," calculated Chandry, who is busy all of the time. "I'm a basketball cheerleader, and the season is just starting, so there's lots going on."

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her pony, Chandry got her first Quarter Horse. "Swenson was 10 years old when I started entering 4-H events, and then we also went to some Quarter Horse shows," Kraft remembered.

With the sorrel gelding registered as Sky Swindler, Chandry collected many awards, under both western and English tack. "He was really a great horse to start showing in all events," cred-

ited Kraft, who stopped exhibiting Swenson after he was injured.

However upon recovery, Swenson was loaned to other young people in the community who continued to show and learn from him. "He has helped a lot of kids in his life," the owner acknowledged.

Star and Swenson are still part of the family, living out their senior years in

Kraft pastures. "Those two horses are the best of friends now," Chandry recognized.

Her present horse, a 12-year-old gelded son of Investment Asset, is registered as Investalot and has been owned by Kraft for six years. "Chance is partially blind in his right eye, from an injury when he was two, but he is still a super horse," Chandry insisted. "He can see shadows out of his eye."

Other potential buyers were skeptical of the horse when they found out he had a disability. "Chance is such a big horse, and I was still little, just 11 when I got him, but he's taken care of me. When others who had passed up the opportunity to purchase Chance saw us at shows, they were really



Richard Browning, Emporia, right, assists his granddaughter Chandry Kraft with her Quarter Horse, Chance, in traveling to shows throughout the Midwest.

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grandparents Larry and Sandy Browning (all of Emporia) are a big help to me with my horse," she cited.

Her mother, Cindy, has claimed riding titles and coached national winning horse judging teams. "My little brother Heath also helps out and he did show horses some, but now he's more involved in sports," Chandry indicated.

Show guidance has been provided by trainers Jeff and Stacy Roberson of Lee's Summit, Mo. where Chance was purchased. Presently Jackie Krshka of Yukon, Okla., serves as trainer for Kraft and her horse.

"My trainers have been a big help for me, and I really appreciate them," related the exhibitor. "When I get busy with other things, Chance stays at the trainer's barn."

This was Kraft's fourth

appearance at the world show. "The first year was a learning experience, but it made me more determined to go back and do better," she recalled.

In her second and third years at the big show, Chandry placed 11th in hunt seat equitation both times. Her placing this year is solid verification of consistent ability in that stringent competition.

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To collect the year-end Kansas honors, Kraft has placed first in her divisions of showmanship, horsemanship and equitation and tied for first in aged geldings at halter. "We don't consider Chance a halter horse, but I do enter him occasionally, and he sometimes does quite well," Chandry evaluated.

While Chance competes successfully in western horsemanship, Kraft typically does not ride in western pleasure. "He's very good in the pattern classes, but has too-high knee movement for today's pleasure classes," explained the exhibitor, who sometimes rides in hunter under saddle, placing fifth for the state year-end.

Usually limiting herself to the youth events, Chandry professed, "I will enter the open division sometimes, if entries are needed to make more points in a certain class."

Friends and travel are a big part of horse showing, according to the enthusiastic young horse woman. "I

really have lots of friends from all over. We have such a good time at the shows, and we keep in contact throughout the year," Kraft noted.

Qualification for the world show runs from May to May, and Chandry has competed in at least nine states, as far away as Arizona and Kentucky, to earn the right to enter the world shows. "The Arizona circuit in January is my favorite show of all. It's just beautiful down there," she commented.

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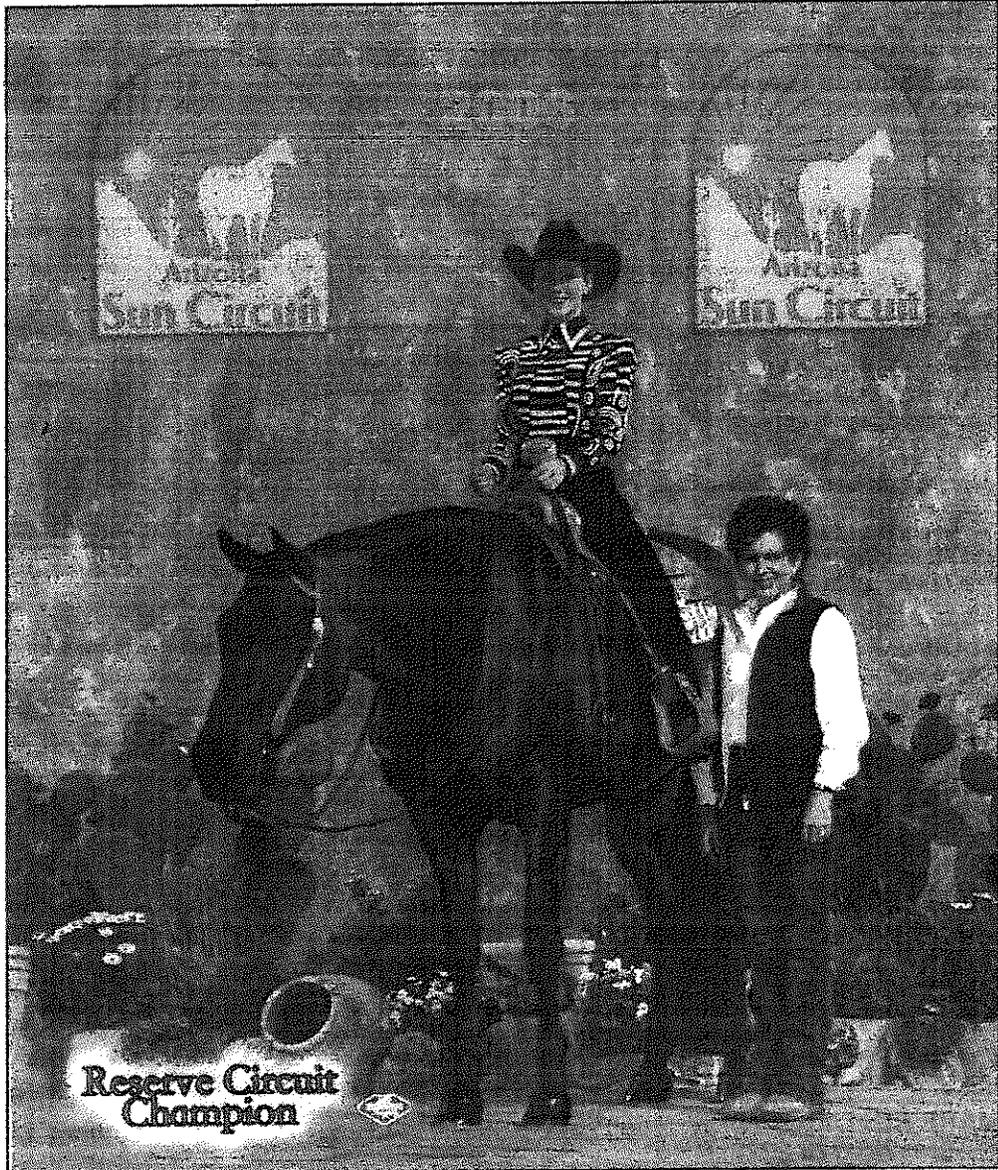
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for state year-end titles and looks forward to winning a world championship. "That is always my goal," she admitted.

After that, Chandry plans to sell her horse and head to college, but her horse showing probably won't be ended. "I'm not sure where I'll go, I'm thinking about K-State, and I've also considered OSU. Wherever I go, I hope to compete on a college equestrian team," insisted Kraft, who is considering dentistry as a profession.



Chandry Kraft and her mother, Cindy Kraft, of Emporia pose with Investalot after being named reserve champion of the 2006 Arizona Sun Circuit in January.

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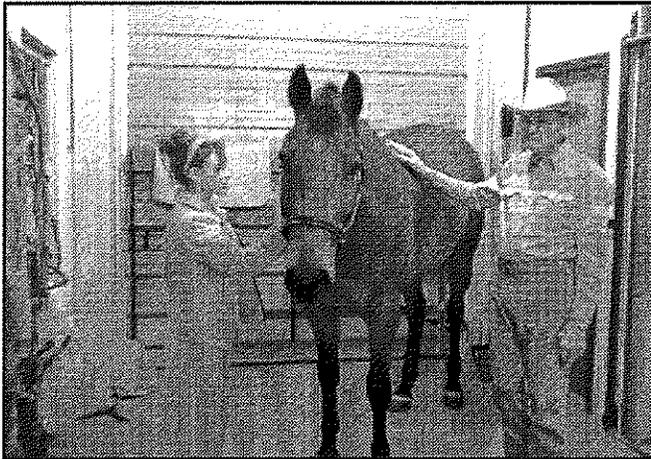
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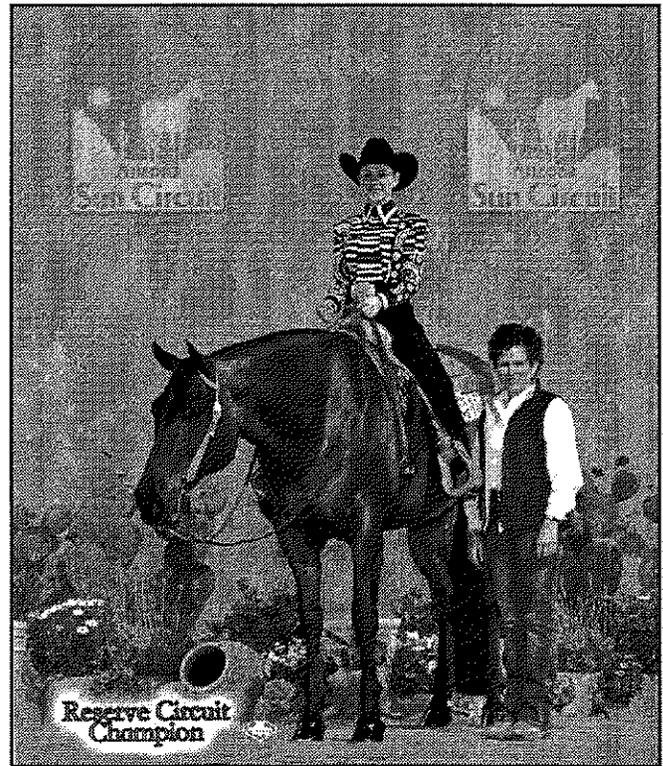
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