



Photography by Jeanie - www.onetulsa.com

Tennessee to Texas Hillbilly to Rising Dressage Star An Appaloosa's Story

Jeanie Eaton of Photography by Jeanie graciously provided some of her photos from the Green Country Dressage Classic shows, held in Claremore, OK, June 13-14.

Jeanie Eaton is a local photographer who delights in equine photography.

To see more photos of Leo Leo, other horses at the show and other events, go to www.onetulsa.com and select "Events".



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Leo Leo



Gloria, Leo Leo, and Shannon at Glen Rose, TX after his first high score award

Article by Gloria Beduhn, Leo Leo's owner

This is the story of how Leo Leo went from being a Tennessee hillbilly to a show ring star.

In 2007, I retired and decided to look for a young horse to be my old age companion. All my other horses are 13 on up. I've been involved with dressage at a fairly low level since 1975 and wanted a horse that I could show a little if the urge struck. So I started searching the horse for sale internet sites for a young dressage prospect in my price range and found this really cute appy gelding in Tennessee. I already had an older leopard app gelding that was doing some Second Level work, so the color of the young horse on line appealed to me

Here's Leo's history as I understand it. His breeder was trying to re-create the Royal Bavarian Cream horses, which were apparently used for state affairs and parades in the 18th and 19th centuries in Germany. He had an odd mix of mares. One of the mares, Leo's dam, was described only as "roan mare." I can't find any information on the sire. Leo was left pretty much alone in a 200-acre pasture in the Tennessee foothills until he was 2. He obviously wasn't a Royal Cream candidate!

His owner eventually ran out of cash and had to sell everything. Leo was slated for an auction. At that point, Sharon Winkler, a local dressage rider who knew of this situation, bought Leo and another colt. The two colts went to a round pen trainer to learn some manners, and then Sharon and her daughter started them on flat work. Sharon says they "knew Leo was special." After about a year they put him up for sale on the internet, which is when I found him. I saw several videos and decided to buy him without a personal visit, which is something I don't recommend. However, this time everything worked out.

After I purchased him and had him shipped to Texas, I registered him with the ApHC under the hardship clause. I came up with "Leo Leo" for his name because the name he came with (Leonardo) was taken. Leo Leo fits him better because he is a real clown and "Leonardo" was too formal!



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Leo Leo is competing against warmbloods, thoroughbreds, and many other breeds that, as breeds, have a strong aptitude for dressage.

Leo is 36th out of 130+ horses nationwide in the USDF Horse of the Year Training Level standings. That doesn't sound fantastic, but that is out of the hundreds of Training Level horses showing across the U.S.

Be sure to check out Jeanie Eaton's website:

www.Onetulsa.com

Leo Leo



Since I'm in my 60s and out of shape, I asked my friend Shannon Napier to ride him for me while I coached her. After a year of work and schooling shows, we decided he was doing so well we should try showing him at some USDF/USEF shows in 2009. With help from local trainer Julie Madriguera, he has achieved a pretty spectacular show record. At the six recognized and three schooling shows he's been to this year, he's won all but two classes (placed second in those two) and won every high-score award he was eligible for except one, where he was reserve. He is currently in 4th place in the USDF Amateur Training Level standings and in 1st place in Dressage in the ApHC ACAAP program. He would be leading the USDF All-Breeds Award for the ApHC, but for some reason he hasn't been marked as "eligible" by the ApHC. I'm looking into that. Also, at his first USDF/USEF show, Leo qualified for the Region 9 dressage championships to be held in Katy, Texas, this October.

We are all very proud of Leo, and hope to show him at First Level this fall. Until then, my bank account and the Texas heat have put a hold on showing this summer.

Leo has proven that he's capable of competing with any breed. He has developed a small fan club at each of the shows he's been to -- he's hard to miss!

Again, thanks for your interest in Leo.

-- Gloria Beduhn



In Shawnee, Oklahoma, Leo Leo and Shannon were awarded the Bob Pape Memorial Trophy. This award goes to the highest scoring amateur horse at any level.



Gloria shared this picture of Leo relaxing at the Glen Rose, TX, show. Is he looking at those great looking blue ribbons? No, I think he's checking for treats!



Carol Johnson shares a few thoughts below, as well as a few You Tube Links where you can see Leo Leo in action:



Leo certainly caught our attention in Shawnee and Claremore since several of our Green Country Dressage members are riding Appaloosas. We were thrilled to see this talented young Appaloosa doing so well. In addition to the pictures shared in this article, you can see video of this talented young horse at the following links:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZVHO-3J-Ig>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYwhNBUIEKE>
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_Q-P9tYLUc

What a treat! Thanks, Gloria!

Carol

We like to showcase as many different disciplines in Sooner News as humanly possible. If you see an Appaloosa participating in an event that we haven't covered recently, or have yet to cover at all, we ask that you try and make contact with the owner, and ask if they'd like to write a short story about their Appaloosa, and what event their mount excels in. A Sooner connection is great too! Also ask if they will provide pictures. Great stories, like the one above, are best when shared with other members!