

Horse folks around the South

photo : Freese Fram Photography



"Outside of the horses, I am pretty boring," laughs Gina Benson-Cook. Boring, she isn't!

As the owner of one the South's premier breeding facilities, Gina is too busy riding, training, foaling, showing and running the show at her equine utopia, Centaur Farms. Gina's farm is located in Silver Creek, GA just outside the bustling but quaint town of Rome. Though raised in Florida, Gina says she has always migrated back to Georgia, feeling more at home in the scenic countryside the northern portion of the state offers.

"My Mom always said I was a Georgia girl at heart," Gina explains.

As a dressage professional, Gina spends plenty of time in the sunshine state, she is a fixture at many Florida based dressage competitions. Her parents still make their home there. Gina grew up in the Cocoa Beach area. She enjoys time at the beach during her visits, although she did give up surfing a while back! Again, in a most "unboring" fashion, she tells us about a former job at the Kennedy Space Center. As part of the security team, she mingled with astronauts and even entered the "restricted areas" complete with the white "clean suit"!

Currently, Gina's calendar is full of shows all over the southeast, in hopes of making up for missing the championships in 2005 due to an accident.

Look for her aboard Bente D, a Friesian stallion that was popular with the judges last year. In fact, you'll almost always find Gina riding a stallion.

"I'll take a stallion over a mare, any day" Gina says. "They either give you everything, or they make a complete fool out of you," she tells us matter-o-factly.

"I have always just clicked with stallions. Some people do well with geldings or mares, for me ... its stallions." Gina says.

Her "way" with stallions made for a natural progression into standing and breeding them.

Going for the Gold

Gina Benson-Cook of Centaur Farms
Centaur Farms stands some of the finest Warmblood stallions in the Nation.

Ruben O the Dutch Warmblood, Svengali an incredible imported Elite Holsteiner, the Friesian, Bente D, and Go Walkabout Joe, a German Warmblood out of United States Dressage Federation National (USDF) award winning stallion "Guardian", now standing elsewhere.

Having earned her USDF bronze and silver medals on her long time companion "Caesar", Gina is eager to earn the Gold. She had solid chance in 2004 with the Dutch Warmblood Pinto stallion "Fine Art". Tragically, Fine Art died unexpectedly and suddenly. Gina was heart broken and left without a suitable mount to continue her goals. She lost her beloved Caesar the same year.

Watch for Gina this season, she will surely be on a mission! Not only is she working toward the USDF Gold Medal, but she has big plans for Bente D in the Grand Prix arena.

If you would like to learn more about Gina and Centaur Farms, visit Gina's website at www.centaurfarms.com or

photo: Applewood Photo



give her a call at 770-749-0274. In addition to the fine stallions offered, Gina is available for lessons, phantom training for outside stallions, various level of horse training beginning with foaling and imprinting of the foal all the way through training for USDF level testing. Centaur Farms is also a wonderful boarding facility and is one of the few facilities that does accept stallions and allows stallion turnout. Visit Gina's website for a full list of the many services that she provides.

Good Luck in 2006 Gina!