

Wishing you all a wonderful New Year!

2013 was full of adventures and some challenges. We also had some wonderful additions to our life: A 10 year old boy named Aiden, a 9 year old palomino named Trigger and Charlie the cat.

In January, Joel went to China to coach the US Polo Team in their snow polo tournament. China is hosting several International tournaments during the year and they invite the US every time. It is so much fun for Joel to be involved in the top of the sport he loves. After playing all his life, he knows the sport inside out. Coaching is a natural progression for him.

While he was there, I went to Wellington, Florida to go to two major dressage events: The Masters and The Global Forum. A great opportunity to work on my judging skills and gain more education and inspiration.

In February, Joel had an accident while playing polo at home. He got a concussion and had to be airlifted to the hospital. Two days later he was scheduled to have knee surgery. I begged the doctor to go ahead with it. This way the knee would keep him from riding too soon and give his head a chance to heal from the concussion. It is hard to keep him off a horse. It worked out well and his head and knee healed up well at the same time.



For my birthday in April, I bought myself a beautiful palomino. I wanted a horse I could learn reining on, as well as a horse I could teach lessons on. The same week I started to mentor a 9 year old boy named Aiden. Joel and I have raised two foster kids and I have mentored three other kids for the past 13 years, through a local mentoring program. Aiden is the first one who really loves horses and riding, so I am having so much fun teaching him. Trigger is perfect for him.

Late April we rescued a cat in our hay barn. There was a phone number on his collar, but no one ever returned our calls, so Charlie stayed. He was skin and bones and all cut up, so Joel took him to the vet. \$1,000 later he was doing much better :). When he came to us he weighed 8 pounds, now he weighs 12 pounds.





I also went to Sydney in April and judged at a big International show. It is a great show held at the Olympic facility. In May I flew to Nice, France to judge another International show in Vidauban. We were 13 judges from 10 countries. One of the best things about judging is the friendships we make with people from all parts of the world who have the same passion for horses and dressage.

All year I have had about 7 horses in training so I am riding a lot. Great for staying fit. This year, I showed Strauss at Grand Prix and my mare Chanel at 3rd and 4th level. They both did very well. It was a lot of fun for me to be back showing at Grand Prix level. I still teach lessons and clinics on a regular basis. In May, Monty Roberts and I did a joint clinic at his farm "Flag is Up Farms".



In June, Cowgirl Hall of Famer Sandy Collier and I performed in a charity event for our local Therapeutic Riding Program. We did several acts in both dressage and reining. In July, Joel and I hosted a Polo fundraiser for our local charity PHP which takes care of people in need. It was a very successful event and Joel had a great time playing with polo legends, Memo and Carlos Gracida, as well as other top players. During the summer, Joel got to play a lot of polo as it is High Goal season in Santa Barbara and so many of the top

players are here. In August I went to Denmark to watch the European Championship in Dressage as well as visiting my family. I am so thankful to have a huge and wonderful family. I love seeing them all.

Early October, Joel went back to China to coach polo. The US team did quite well and this time it was on grass rather than snow.

Late October I went back to Denmark to judge at an International show in Odense. It is held at a great facility and always has some of the best riders in the world participating. This time I was also co-commentator with Hans Jørgen Nørgaard. He is a well known trainer and a good friend. It was a bit challenging to do commentary in Danish, since I have never really used the dressage lingo.





I went directly from Denmark to Japan to judge another International show there. The morning I was leaving Denmark, I got an e-mail from the show manager in Japan. She said " there are two super typhoons on their way to Japan. I hope your flight will be ok, but here is my emergency number". I called my friend Jo Graham who was going to be judging with me in Japan. She said "I know you don't drink, but perhaps you should start now". I have to say, I was nervous about that trip. As it turned out, my flight was fine, but we did have a 7 point

earthquake off the coast the first night I was there! I slept right through it, but the other judges were talking about it. The typhoon turned out to be mostly rain with a very small tsunami. I was with a great team of judges and we had a wonderful experience.

In November, I judged at the National Dressage Championship in Lexington, Kentucky. It was a great show held at the facility that hosted the World Equestrian Games in 2010.

The day before Thanksgiving, Joel had another riding accident and we had another trip to the ER in Santa Barbara. His nose was totally mangled and it took a plastic surgeon to put it back together again. On Thanksgiving, we were meeting some of our closest friends for dinner and they had taped up their noses in sympathy for Joel. They were no match for Joel who was taped up like Phantom of the Opera :). At the end of the evening Joel decided to take off his mask (just in time for the group picture). I did get his permission to use the picture. Our son Zach came home for Thanksgiving and it was wonderful to see him. We all played tennis while he was home and had a great time. I try to play twice a week, when I am in town. Joel plays whenever he is in one piece :). We have a great group of tennis friends at the Alisal tennis Club. Aiden is also playing a lot and I am sure he will surpass us all very soon.



Joel's stallion Morning Star was the proud father of the best playing polo pony "Chocolate" at The Argentine Open this year. This was a huge honor for Joel. It is very unusual for a non-Argentine horse to win that title. Joel has raised many of Chocolate's siblings on the ranch. In fact, he is playing most of them.



My Olympic horse Monsieur turned 32 this year. He is still spunky as ever. I visit him in his pasture every afternoon and bring him his favorite treat, Platinum Bars for horses. He has very few teeth left so he loves how soft they are. In fact he gets quite excited at times:). His 32 year old girlfriend Tara lives with him. I am so blessed to still have him. Thanks to Platinum Performance he still looks great.

In December, I went to our annual Dressage Convention in Kentucky to help celebrate my friend Anne Gribbons being inducted into the Dressage Hall of Fame as well as going to committee meetings. I also went to an International Judges Forum in London conducted by the amazing Stephen Clarke. There were about 85 judges from 29 countries. It was held during a fantastic show in Olympia and we all witnessed the Gold Medal winner from the 2012 Olympics, Valegro, set a new World Record. A very magical end to 2013 (as far as Dressage goes).

Joel and I are home for the Holidays and really enjoy our friends and all the animals in our life. We are so thankful for all of your friendships. At the end of the day the only thing that really matters are the relationships you develop over the years. We are so proud of the kids who have been in our life over the past 15 years. Most of them are not kids any more, but productive members of society. Aiden is out of school for the Holidays, so he is with us every day and riding his beloved Trigger as well as playing tennis.

Wishing you all a Happy and Healthy New Year,



Joel & Charlotte