

# Holy Cow Performance Horses

– Preserving Ranching for a New Era



**Morgan Cromer campaigns the cutting horses. The reined cow horses are trained and shown by Jake Telford and Todd Bergen trains and competes the reining horses.**

By Stacie Campuzano

The legacy of Nancy Crawford-Hall's Holy Cow Performance Horses, LLC begins in Santa Ynez, California. Nestled in the coastal mountains outside of Santa Barbara, the working cattle ranch owned by Nancy has been the starting point to the careers of many a great horse.

"My grandmother bought the property that is now San Lucas Ranch, in 1924. I spent most of my life in Santa Ynez," says Nancy of the working cattle ranch that was originally part of an historic Spanish land grant. In 2007, a conservation easement was created between the ownership and the California Rangeland Trust to preserve the western heritage and valley oak habitat that is a prominent feature of the ranch and a disappearing part of what makes California

special.

The Holy Cow Performance Horses facility is located on a 900 acre parcel within the 10,000 acres of San Lucas Ranch. It features a 20 stall barn, stallion paddocks, numerous covered shelters, round pens and arenas. Where there is a working cattle ranch, there are also working horses. The horses of Holy Cow Performance horses, take ranch work to the elite level – a key role to further preserving the ranching lifestyle. From the Ranch to the Show Pen

"It's a regular working ranch with about 250 head of cows. We have a branding each January," Nancy explains of the day to day work that earns wet saddle pads without any big paychecks.

However, Holy Cow Performance Horses owns an incredible treasure trove of big time stars winning titles at the biggest events in the cutting and reined cow horse world. Nabisco Roan, a 2006 red roan by Boonlight Dancer recently claimed the 2014 NRCHA Celebration of Champions Open Bridle World Championship. At the same event, the 2007 red roan mare, One Time Rey Jay claimed Open Two Rein Reserve World Champion. Hes Shinettes CD was recently a finalist in the World's Greatest Horseman event, and took Reserve Champion in Holy Cow Bridle Spectacular in Las Vegas, Nevada. Once a Von a Time, a 2004 buckskin stallion took the Open Bridle Horse Champion at

the 2013 Snaffle Bit Futurity with just eight months of cow work after a career as a reining horse. The list of accolades goes on and on. But, Nancy is quick to spread the credit.

### Top Trainers Make the Difference

Three of the biggest names in the business work to take the Holy Cow horses to the top. Morgan Cromer campaigns the cutting horses. The reined cow horses are trained and shown by Jake Telford and Todd Bergen trains and competes the reining horses. Nancy applauds their contributions. "The three of them have made my business more successful than I ever dreamed possible. They have many other clients, but they give me so much. I'm so grateful to them." She goes on to say, "The three of

*Continued on page 30.....*

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# Holy Cow Performance Horses

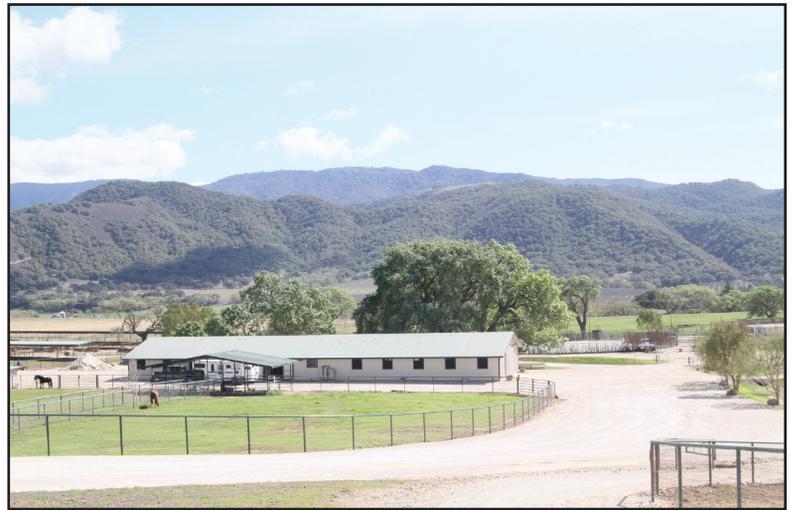
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them work very well together. They do a great job of helping to match up the horses with their talents." Some of the horses Nancy has bred show tremendous talent both on the cow and off.

## It's In The Genes

"It's pretty unusual to have careers as reiners and cow horses," says Nancy. But, she has more than one horse making successful transitions from reining to reined cow horse events. Like Once a Von a Time, who won last year's Open Bridle Horse Champion at the Snaffle Bit Futurity after a successful career as a reining horse, the bright palomino Heza Shiny Kodo is setting out to do the same. To what do they owe such versatility? Nancy attributes it in part to their dam, Sheza Shinette, a palomino mare by Shining Spark out of Chick and Chex. "She is a terrific mare," she says of the winner of the AQHA Leading Dam at the 2010 NRCHA Year End banquet.

The breeding operations are aimed at producing the next generation of champions while also preserving important bloodlines. "I originally wanted about ten foals a year," Nancy admits. "But, there are just too many nice stallions out there, and a lot that are getting old. I want to get those bloodlines before they are gone," she explains of the thirty foals they bred last season. Several are already on the ground this year, by stallions like Metallic Cat, Dual Rey and others. "I breed to my own stallions and outside stallions," says Nancy. "I want just



try to breed what I think is going to keep producing the best horse." A key feature of her program is that her mares are successful themselves in their disciplines, maintaining their own show careers. The farm utilizes embryo transfers and surrogate mares to put foals on the ground with such proven parents.

Three highly accomplished stallions are available to outside breeders. Shady Lil Starlight, a 2002 sorrel, has a lifetime earnings of over \$84,000 and numerous championship titles to his name. Nabisco Roan who along with the 2014 title listed above, was 2013 AQHA Reserve World Champion Senior Working Cow Horse and has a lifetime earnings of over \$54,000 as of March 2014. Once a Von a Time is a buckskin by Von Reminic whose lifetime earnings are over \$77,000.

For Nancy, each one of the offspring of her program is special. "I love watching them grow up. I just love the horses. When they turn two and the trainers come down and pick out the ones they want, it's kind of a sad time. They go away and I know I won't see them for a while. You really get to know them, and they are special," she says fondly. Nancy is very hands on in creating the perfect conditions to let each horse become a star.

## From the California Coast to The Lone Star State

Recently, Holy Cow Performance Horses expanded its operation. With a hefty show schedule increasingly centered on big events in Oklahoma and Texas, Nancy added a facility in Texas. "It's right in the heart of it all." Located in Weatherford, the property allows the horses and trainers to come in to the big events and have a home base from which to train and prepare. It takes an incredible team to make it all happen. Cody Consalves manages the California ranch, and Philip Rivas manages the facility in Texas. Lindsey Milner is the breeding manager and Lauren Christiansen is the equine assistant while Lynette Peavey is the office manager. "I couldn't do this without each and every person on our staff. I've been very blessed by great trainers and great horses. I wouldn't be where I am today without them."

## Keeping a Place for the Ranch Horse

In memory of her beloved late stallion CD Survivor, she established the \$50,000 added Open Bridle Spectacular at the NRCHA Derby. It is the NRCHA's richest event for bridle horses. Not only does Nancy commit to preserving the San Lucas Ranch, its lifestyle and history, and the bloodlines of ranch horses, but to the events that highlight everything they stand for. "Right now, I'm very content. I'm excited for the new horses coming along. I plan to keep on doing what's needed to keep it going while making improvements to keep doing it better."



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