

## Drove Truck Home Alone, Once

**FIVE-YEAR-OLD AT MID-AMERICA, AT MID-CENTURY**  
A rural Dakota farmer bought a small John Deere combine; Paid a bundle of cash for that early functional design. We ask you to think back to the mid-40s, not here and now. In those years, a combine didn't set you back three hundred thou! Adults could step up one step and look into the grain hopper. Our family gave it a nickname, the "Little Green Grasshopper." It mechanically combined the work of threshing crews to glean The standing grain. It was small, six-foot-wide, and John Deere green.

### LITTLE GRUNTING GRAY ANT

Two years before, Dad had purchased what tractor he could afford. It was the small, but famous, 4-cylinder 2N Ford. Some people were perturbed and questioned and said, "You really can't pull a combine, a pull-type combine, with a little gray ant!" That mini-tractor just pulled and grunted and groaned and snorted. Its little engine wasn't blueprinted, balanced or ported. It was man against his fields of amber grain in the sunshine, Between the dew and the rain, using an early days combine.

### EARLY COMBINE = FAREWELL TO THRESHING MACHINE AND CREW

Combining did simplify that complicated threshing scene Of five teams, a stationary machine and crew of thirteen. With every sunrise, he checked the clouds, the moisture and the wind; Needing to get his wheat, flax, barley and oats into the bin. He would "coach" the wind, or breeze, asking it to blow chaff away; As with every 180-degree turn, it would blow his way. He'd space the wagon and '28 I-H truck by design, At each end of the field, so he could fill with grain from the combine.

### HAULING PRODUCE/GRAIN TO ELEVATOR IN TOWN OR GRANARY

He could drive the truck home to the yard, then walk back to the field. His wife hauled that load of ag produce to town to sell the yield. The harvest was going fine (though hot and dry) and troubles were few. The truck was waiting in line for the drive-through and overdue. He's hoping for a sandwich. The sun had become burning hot. Some cold, wet lemonade, or cold well-water, would hit the spot. He's NOT at the mercy of threshing schedules, waiting in line. One performs what shockers and six-bundle pitchers did with his combine.

### CAN'T DRIVE TWO HARVEST VEHICLES/HATCHING A PLAN

He was grateful for the sun, rain, wheat fields, land, cattle and grain. Do consumers perceive the efforts at his end of the food chain? Running over the bill, he sees his son who comes to share his seat On the tractor (that's the safe place). He thought that event was neat. Dad finished harvesting that field and he knows he's out of luck. He can't drive the tractor and combine home and also drive the truck. To work the harvest by himself, he signed on the dotted line, Using ag production cash to buy that little green combine.

### WHAT DO I HEAR? A 1928 I-H TRUCK?

The harvest weather was very hot and dry, and it was late. Who's behind the truck steering wheel? Here's my version, I'll relate: We'd completed the barn chores. We'd hay'd and oats'd and milked the cows. Because other farm chores had to be accomplished anyhow. Mother had made the evening meal, then she put the stove on low. We're occupied and unaware, toiling in the evening flow. (That's the daily talent show.) Akin to an assembly line? Youths filled in where needed. Dad spent more hours, pulling the combine.

### POULTRY IN MOTION? SQUAWK TALK SOUNDS AN ALERT

Out in the barnyard, there was a loud and squawking commotion. That squawking was from thirty to forty poultry in motion. In my opinion, it was all of those birds of a feather. Those chickens hopped and flopped, and ran for cover altogether. I heard a deafening roar! That truck throttle was purposely stuck. It wasn't a bull roar. It was that old, faded, one-ton truck. Dad had put that old truck in gear so he could follow behind; With the little gray ant and a little green grasshopper combine.

### AND WHAT TO MY WONDER EYES, I BEHOLD

Dad had placed an illegal young driver behind the truck wheel, Guiding the truck over the hill (with a smile not concealed). With the old truck in super-low, he'd outrun him to the gate. The speeding little gray ant, (that can't), outran him, so he'd wait To take over the steering wheel and drive the truck through the gate. Piloting the truck, with a boyish grin, standing ramrod straight, Was an early day stand-up comic, with a smile so slick at nine Roaring at two miles per hour. He was outrun by a combine.

### RECORDING THE RECORD: FIVE YEARS OLD

Don't try this unless you are professional. They'll "click" their tongues, As "unsafe," in practice, letting a child drive, who was so young! At age 5, that may be a record or a shared record. It won't get an Academy Award with a youth on board. For this writer, you must be willing to "pardon my puns." My eyes observed a 5-year-old farm boy, drove home alone, once! Well, truthfully, he held the steering wheel and was on cloud nine. And doing his part, on the family farm, helping Dad combine.

© Orv Alvshere

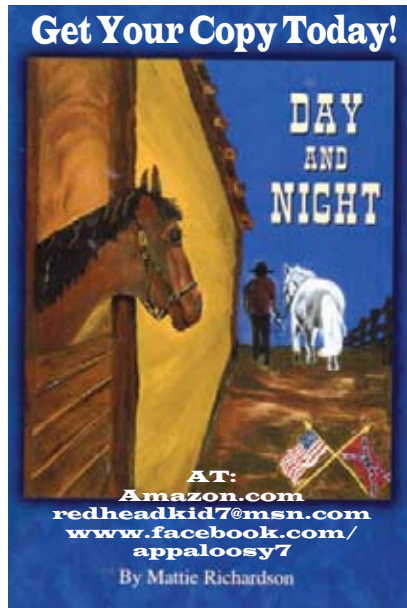
BOY POETRY WITH ORV ALVSHERE

# ND Young Author Releases Fifth Book

LISBON, N.D.--At 21 years old, Mattie Richardson has published her fifth children's historical fiction book, "Day and Night," about two horses in one of the most intriguing and heart-wrenching fights on American soil: the Civil War. Richardson aims to make history relevant and fun for kids, and "Day and Night" doesn't fail to accomplish this goal. The two horses, brothers named Tucker and Shiloh, are separated at the beginning of the Civil War and follow their owners into the fight. Tucker gets sold to the Union Army and Shiloh finds himself captured by a young soldier hoping to join the Confederate cavalry.

Along the way the two meet interesting new characters, learn about the the Civil War in the

border states, and find out just how personally conflicting the war really is. Many subjects about the Civil War are touched without being the same-old cliché Civil War novel--such as women in the Civil War, the border fights around Kansas and Missouri, and of course, the Union and Confederate Cavalry, as well



Gene Armistead, noted author of "Horses and Mules in the Civil War," has read Richardson's book and says, "North Dakota's Teen Author' has turned out a very entertaining juvenile novel about the Civil War's first year. As a long-time student of the Civil War and author of "Horses and Mules in the Civil War," I was very pleasantly surprised to find the book so historically accurate...Scenes of the Battle of Pea Ridge and Shiloh are correctly described, the confusion and divisions over the war along Missouri's western border is depicted with understanding, and the experience of two horses in the war is presented in a believable manner. The young lady admirably did her research well. The narrators of the novel are two horses, one Union and one Confederate, but the two principal human characters are also developed well. Throughout the characters are presented in a believ-

able manner and with feeling. Entertaining for an adult reader, this book will be a great read for young audiences!" Mattie Richardson has four other historical fiction novels, three of them told from the horse's point of view, about the Nez Perce Indian War, the Pony Express, and the Battle of the Alamo. She also has a young adult novel about a young musician during the Great Depression. Richardson wrote her first book at thirteen and published it at sixteen, and hasn't stopped writing since. She grew up in Sheldon, North Dakota where she spent her teenage years teaching herself to ride and care for horses, playing the fiddle, studying American history, and writing. Mattie Richardson's books can be purchased at Amazon.com or email her personally at: redheadkid7@msn.com. Check out her facebook page as well www.facebook.com/appaloosy7.

## Building a Future in Racing

Continued from page 9

more. In the beginning I kind of knew things here and there [about racing], but to get out there and having a chance to see first-hand what happens in the morning and seeing all the equipment and getting your hands dirty -- that helped." After winning the top scholarship at the National Racing Experience, Scheiding enrolled at Midwestern University in Arizona for her undergraduate degree. She currently works at Canterbury Park, and plans attend

vet school to become a large animal veterinarian. Youth Day at the Races doesn't just allow kids to spend a day at the race track. It builds a future for the horse racing industry by providing an immersive experience and opening doors for youth to be successful. They're not just learning about training, nutrition and how to read a race program. These youth are gaining an understanding and respect for our beautiful sport, and will hopefully go on to make it better than it already is.

The Minnesota Quarter Horse Racing Association would like to thank the following individuals for assisting with the 2015 Youth Day at the Races. Doug Steiskal – MQHRA Lori Locken – MQHRA Amber and Jason Olmstead – trainers Colleen Hurlbert – MRC Licensing Coordinator/Breeders' Fund Coordinator Tiffany Leggett – Horsemen's Bookkeeper Mark Anderson – Clerk of Scales David Hooper – Head Steward David Smith – Steward James Lages – Steward

Shawn Coady – Coady Photography Oscar Quirus – Swimming Pool Operator, Coady Photography Paul Allen – Track Announcer Jeff Maday – Media Relations Manager Michelle Benson – Media Relations Assistant Patrice Underwood – HBPA Executive Director Denny Hall – Starter Jim Murray – Owner This article was originally published in the August 2015 Minnesota Quarter Horse Racing Association newsletter and is used with permission.

# The Most Important Lesson I Ever Learned from a Horse

By Vincent Mancarella

"He's an aggressive horse," she said, "He attacked someone and ran them out of the round pen." This was my introduction to the horse that I was going to work with for a week.

dangerous, to train if you don't know what you are doing. Train a mustang like a domestic horse and you never know what you are going to get other than, most likely, injured at some point.

They began my mustang's training, as many horses do, in the round pen. But when they attempted to get him to move he attacked them. He charged his handler and ran him out of the pen. Already branded with a bad reputation as a mustang, that was all they needed to see. Clearly this horse was dangerous and aggressive. The decision was made that he would be left alone in a pasture until they could find help.

Turns out, this course and I were that help. My job...turn this guy around. Change his mind. Gentle an aggressive horse.

I joined him in our 24' by 12' run and he quickly moved as far away from me as he could, placing his head in the corner so I would not be able to approach him without entering his kick zone. If he didn't interact with me, perhaps I would leave him alone. When I presented him with food, he was bold enough to eat, even with me right next to him. But touch, connection, was out of the question. Initially he didn't seem particularly aggressive. We wanted to see if his reputation was accurate, Anna assessed him and looked for his triggers. She found them and in response he double barreled towards her.

That was all we needed to see to know that this guy was for real! He made it perfectly clear: "Mess with me, and there are consequences."

I decided that, of all the training I could do, the best thing I could

teach him, if anything, was that humans weren't all bad. I thought if I could convince him that I had value, that I could be trusted, perhaps he would be open to listening. That became my goal.

I worked slowly, giving him space, asking him to try a little bit at a time, consistently pushing the boundaries but never demanding more than I felt he could give. Days passed and I began to doubt if he would ever come



around. I wanted to push him, to "just get the job done" and get him gentled. But I knew that, not only was that dangerous, it wouldn't work. And that voice in my head that wanted to "fix" this horse was nothing but pride. That voice wanted to look good, accomplish something no one else could, WIN! That voice had my ego's best interest in mind, but certainly not the horse's.

I wondered how many horses, over eons of time, had to suffer at the hands of men and women with these exact same thoughts. I wondered how much abuse animals (and humans) had to endure due to ignorance, arrogance and

pride. That thought kept me focused on my goal: value and trust.

Finally, after four days, we touched for the first time. It was an exhilarating and emotional moment I'll never forget. For the first time, he was willing to see me, to give me a chance. I continued to work with him, slowly, showing him that his willingness to connect wasn't a mistake. He relaxed more and more with each day, and over the course of the next three days I had him haltered and leading. The final day of leading was magical. He wasn't spooky, he didn't try to get away, or pull against the rope. He walked with me; a true partner.

I only wished that I had another week with him, or even that I could take him home. I knew with more time, he would have come around. But I was happy with what we had accomplished, with what he had accomplished. He had come so far in a very short period of time.

I finished the week with a great feeling of personal satisfaction. After all, my goal was to show him I had value and to gain his trust; and I had done that. But as I reflected on my time with him, I realized that I had learned so much more than a powerful horsemanship methodology. In fact my most important lesson had nothing to do with horsemanship. I realized, in that moment, that he wasn't an aggressive horse at all.

Horses are thrown into the "aggressive" label any time they lash out, attack, or injure someone, especially if it appears to be for "no reason." Although the reason may not be apparent to the human, it is perfectly clear to the horse.

My horse wasn't aggressive, he was defensive. In his mind, he was put in a confined space by a human and chased, or even attacked by a human! He wasn't trying to kill anyone. He was defending himself. After all, if he was truly aggressive, then he would have attacked me at some point. But he didn't. Why? Because I gave him no reason to attack. I pushed him,

I asked him, I moved him out of his comfort zone. But he tried. He tried hard. He didn't want to hurt anyone, but he would defend himself if needed.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying all aggressive horses are secretly sweet little foals yearning to be understood. Sometimes that aggressive title fits. But if we callously label all troubled horses as aggressive, we not only give them a label that follows them for life, but we never give that horse the opportunity to be understood and possibly even find their way to a partnership with humans.

It wasn't an aggressive horse, but a lack of communication that was the real problem. I knew, in that moment, this dangerous horse gave me a gift I will always cherish. I taught him that I had value, that he could trust me. He taught me that every being has a reason to do what they do and simply categorizing any one, or any thing, as aggressive or dangerous tells more about me and my ignorance than it does about the being I am labeling. I taught him to be comfortable around humans, he taught me to truly see each individual for who they are, and not what I think they are. Finally, I taught him to accept the halter and to be led by the gentle and kind hand of a human. He taught me to keep my heart open and overcome prejudice, allowing me to help a troubled soul.

Who really taught who? Thank you, my friend.

*Vincent Mancarella is the husband of internationally-recognized horsewoman Anna Twinney, and co-owner of Reach Out to Horses® (ROTH). Based in Elizabeth, Colo., ROTH is the only program of its kind anywhere in the world. Combining the horse's language, animal communication and the work of energy manipulation, Twinney and Reach Out to Horses® have created a comprehensive and highly effective training program that teaches people to truly become fluent in the language of the horse and create a genuine trust-based partnership between horse and human.*