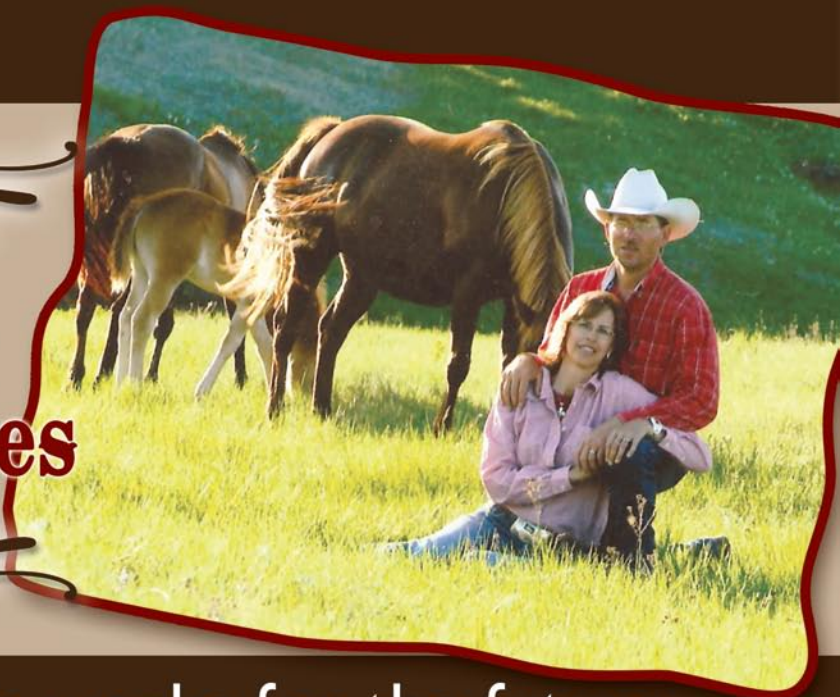


Better Horses, Stronger Families



Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch works for the future

By Maria E. Tussing

In the rolling breaks of the Missouri River, horses and cattle have always gone together. For the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch, and Denny and Doris Lauing, it only made sense to make a business out of both.

Stallions

In 1995, Lauings bought their first stallion, Play for Bill, as a yearling. They chose him as a foundation for their breeding program based on his disposition, conformation and bloodlines—the three things they use to determine any horse's suitability for their program. "Disposition is the first and utmost thing," Denny says. "What we want out of our bloodlines by crossing our mares to our stallions is cow sense and versatility. We want calm temperament, agility, and excellent conformation."

Lauings judge their success as breeders by their horses' success no matter what their job is. "We have horses that will cut, rope, rein, barrel race and be good all-around ranch horses. Besides making successful arena horses, our horses have been used for recreational activities, trail rides, cowboy mounted shooting, team penning, and about anything else a horse can be asked to do. And they

do it all well," the couple says.

An opportunity to diversify their breeding program to include cutting bloodlines came when they bought Comos Cottoneye, a double-bred Son Ofa Doc stallion and a finished cutting horse. "My youngest son, Daniel Pazour, wanted to participate in cutting in high school rodeo in 2001, so we killed two birds with one stone because he was a stallion and trained in cutting," Doris says. Daniel's success in the cutting pen gained him a spot to represent South Dakota at the National High School Rodeo Finals in Farmington, N.M., in 2002. Denny's son, Shean Lauing, followed in 2006 by also competing in cutting at Springfield, Ill., at the National High School Rodeo Finals. Comos Cottoneye was a subscribed stallion to the Dakota Classic Cutting Futurity, which allowed his offspring to be eligible to cut at the South Dakota Futurity as three-year-olds.

Frenchman's Hickory, another of their foundation stallions, was born at the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch. They bought his dam TR Hickory Sap Gay (a granddaughter of Mr Illuminator) bred to Frenchman's Tequila, a son of Frenchman's Guy. "We loved his conformation and disposition, so we kept him as a stallion to add to the breeding program," Denny says. They have always been

impressed with the Frenchman's Guy breeding and wanted to own one of his sons. The opportunity arose in 2007 when they purchased Colonel Frenchman as a yearling. He is sired by Frenchmans Guy with Docs Prescription and Colonel Freckles on the dam's side. We're optimistic about showing him at the futurity level next year, when he will be five," Doris says "His first colts are on the ground this year and we look forward to training his offspring. We are hoping he adds more speed to our program."

Lil Easy Feature, a 1993 grandson of Dash for Cash and Frosty Feature, joined the program in 2007 from the Bob Jordan estate. After producing just two foal crops, Lil Easy Feature died in the early spring of 2010. To keep his bloodlines in their program, Lauings kept Dash N Illuminator, a son of Lil Easy Feature and their senior dam, TR Hickory Sap Gay, for a future sire.

Mares

Even though Denny and Doris hold the stallions' contributions to the breeding program in high regard, they equally credit the bloodlines of the mares. Their first mares carry significant proven bloodlines of Freckles Playboy, Leo, Bold Ruler, Doc Bar, Colonel Freckles, Peppy San Badger and Poco Bueno. Over the years, the

Lauings have added bloodlines with more speed, such as Dash For Cash, Easy Jet, On the Money Red, Dr Kirk and Bugs Alive in 75. After careful consideration of the goals of each pairing of his mares and stallions, Denny is confident in the crosses that he's chosen and impressed with the offspring.

Color has not been an issue for their program. Their breeding program features all colors, including palominos, buckskins, blue and red roans, grays, bays and sorrels. Even though most of their colored horses have sold for more money, Denny and Doris both agree that color does not make a horse. "We are more interested in producing all-around prospects that are athletic, have correct conformation, nice dispositions and who carry foundation bloodlines."

The ultimate goal of their breeding program is to continue retaining home-raised mares and stallions, enhancing the ability and disciplines while seeking and maintaining legendary bloodlines. Sixteen of their forty-two broodmares have been born and raised on the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch. Their plan has been to breed the homeraised mares from Comos Cottoneye, Frenchmans Hickory and Lil Easy Feature with Colonel Frenchman and then retain mares from those crosses and breed back to Comos Cottoneye

and Frenchmans Hickory.

The hardest part of the business, Denny says, is selecting the offspring that he wants to retain for breeding and training. Once he chooses how many mares he wants to retain, he looks at the mares he uses in the broodmare band and has to decide which ones to offer for sale. "Age is the first thing I look at. Then I look at how I feel they are going to winter here in South Dakota since our weather is so harsh. I try to run my mares together with the same feed rations. Some of my older mares will never leave the place as they have earned the right to a comfortable pampered life for what they have produced and done for our operation."

Training

The horses that are born on the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch are destined for a variety of futures. No matter where they end up, though, they all start with the same background.

Denny believes that daily ranch work makes for better horses. He also dislikes using motorized vehicles around his livestock. Thanks to this ranching style, the Lauings' horses see a lot of variety and the Lauings' livestock sees a lot of horses.

Denny trains nearly all of the horses they produce. In the past, he recruited his and Doris' sons to help put the first few rides on the young horses. Last summer, they hired Clayton

Etzkorn (neighbor and former team roping partner of Shean who attends college in Miles City, Mont.) to help start and keep the horses in shape and prepare for the sale. "I don't think there is really a right or wrong way to break a horse; my system works for me," Denny says. "I halter-break the weanlings and then put them out to pasture to grow. When they are two-year-olds, I bring them in." Denny emphasizes the importance of groundwork for giving the horses the confidence and trust in people that makes the rest of the training successful. Once he and the horses are comfortable with each other and the basics he's taught through groundwork, he rides them for 30 days and then puts them back out to pasture to grow and mature for another year.

By the time the horses are three they usually have the basics down and get their own jobs. "Every horse I ride starts with ranch work - gathering and moving cattle, branding, pasture roping - anything that needs to be done around the place," Denny says.

While he's working them on the ranch, Denny is watching for any particular talent the horses display. "By the time they are three and a half or four, they usually display more talent in one area or another. That's when I start them tracking steers and then move to the roping box for rope horses," Denny says. The Lauings are working on introducing barrel racing to their horses' talents, so they hired someone to work



Haidas Doc Jay, 2002 bay gelding sired by Pep Sana out of Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch's senior dam, Little Merry Doc currently running and placing 1D. Owned and ridden by Sherri Cass, PRCA card holder and avid barrel racer.

them on that pattern. No matter what aptitude the horses display and what their training is preparing them for, they all continue to develop their diversity with ranch work.

Since the outdoor training season in central South Dakota is about five months long in a mild year, Denny and Doris built an indoor arena in 2004. The 100- by 150-foot arena

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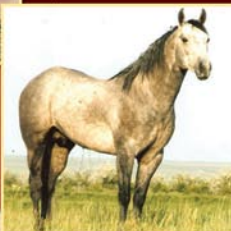


Sun Frost
Frenchmans Guy
Frenchman's Lady
Colonels King Adam
Colonels Miss Targo
Targo Gold

Doc's Jack Frost
Prissy Cline
Laughing Boy
Casey's Lady Love
Colonel Freckles
King's Gladys
Doc's Prescription
Miss Tango



Frenchmans Guy
Frenchmans Tequila
Lopez Tequila
Little Hickory Sap
TR Hickory Sap Gap
TR Guy Bar Badger



Colonel Frenchman
2006 Palomino Stallion
Currently in training for the 2011 Barrel Futurities

Frenchmans Hickory
2002 Gray Stallion
Outstanding Ranch and Rope Horse



Comos Cottoneye
1995 Sorrel Stallion
Finished Cutting Horse

Son Ofa Doc
Doctor Como
Baby Foot
Son Ofa Doc
Comos Delight
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Thank you to all our buyers and attendees of the 2010 Central SD Ranchers & Breeders Sale. It was a great success at our new location on the Central States Fairgrounds in Rapid City, SD. Watch for details on our 2011 Sale Labor Day Weekend at same location.

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Lauing

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allows Denny to ride and train all year long. They have also hosted cutting clinics by Kyle Krause, barrel racing clinics by Sherri (Donahay) Cass, and team roping clinics by world champion team roper Bobby Harris.

The couple realizes that success in any horse breeding program does not happen overnight and that it's a continual learning process. "From the time of breeding you can count on five years to have an idea of the true outcome," Doris says. "By that time it may be too late to change the sire with the dam, so you may end up with the one and only gem. At the same time, we know to not always assume that the same cross will result in the same outcome. Horses are like people, you may have five children born to the same parents and each one has their own personalities and talents. But just like families,

upbringing and care mold animals in the same direction."

Marketing

For a number of years Denny and Doris sold most of their horses by private treaty. As their broodmare band and stallion battery increased, they needed an outlet to sell more horses in one place at one time. In 2006, they hosted their first sale, the Central South Dakota Ranchers and Breeders Quarter Horse Sale. They invited other breeders from the area to consign horses to the sale. The sale became more successful every year as they developed a larger marketing area and attracted more clients. Doris admits hosting their own sale is a lot of work, but she thinks they are compensated for the extra time and energy with higher market prices. "People need good horses. They are more interested in a breeder that focuses on quality rather than quantity. That is evident as we have numerous repeat buyers."

Lauings have used a variety of methods to reach their buyers. They have developed an extensive



2003 Mare *Cottoneye San Lena* (Comos Cottoneye X Miz Holly San Lena). Purchased and used by Clayton Etzkorn calf roping. This mare is an athletic and versatile being used not only in calf roping, but breakaway roping, team roping and hazing at 4-H, High School, Little Britches, College and PRCA levels.

web site providing complete stallion and mare pedigrees with photos, online production sale catalog and information about their operation for existing clients, as well as new clients who would otherwise never hear of the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch. "The web site allows horse enthusiasts to research our program from all over the world," Doris says. "This summer a horse breeder from Italy visited our ranch because he liked our bloodlines, which he found online."

Doris, who is also a freelance writer, puts together the content for their promotional materials, including taking all the photographs. Though they utilize direct mailings of flyers and catalogs, Doris says word-of-mouth is still the most effective method of promoting their program. "Nothing beats a satisfied buyer for spreading the word about our horses," Doris says. They have satisfied buyers spreading the word in 19 states and Mexico.

In 2009, they modified their marketing plan when a family event fell on the weekend that was always designated as the horse sale weekend. Denny and Doris decided to explore some other options for marketing their horses. They were invited to sell their horses with Dr. Joe Armstrong and the Hashknife Ranch in La Mesa, N.M. Comos Watch Playboy (2005 gelding sired by Comos Cottoneye by Watch Playboy Girl) captured the top selling horse of the sale. Lauings

also claimed the top selling mare, 2002 Comos Playboys Lydia (Comos Cottoneye by Playboys Lydia) in foal for a 2010 colt by Lil Easy Feature. One of the clients from Chihuahua, Mexico was impressed with the good bone the Lauing horses carried. His ranch is in the mountains and he wanted good ranch horses that could handle a full day's work. "This was a great opportunity to get our horses in front of a new set of clients. We were pleased with the reception our horses had there. With happy clients, I know we must be doing something right," Denny says.

The horses that Denny and Doris raise are available for purchase at all ages, from weanlings to ranch-or arena-ready broke horses. They still sell a number of horses by private treaty, but work hard to produce a set of diverse, quality horses to offer on their sale.

In 2010, they once again changed the location of their sale. This time they chose the James Kjerstad Event Center on the Central States Fairgrounds in Rapid City, S.D. Jerry Simon and Lynda Neumiller partnered with them on the move. "I feel this was one of the best marketing decisions we have made," Doris says. "This time we didn't ask the western clients to come to us - we brought the horses to them. The facility and the staff were outstanding. There is no doubt in our minds that we will continue our sales there in the future."

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the same difficulties as most others in the horse industry with the closing of the United States slaughter plants. While they are in complete support of humane treatment of horses and exercise this belief in their own business, they recognize the importance of having that resource to turn to in certain situations. "When a horse is lame or blind, or even when it has become too old to survive the harsh weather, or is in pain, it should be the decision of the owner, not the government, to decide its fate. Yes, there are slaughter plants in Canada and Mexico, but transportation is an issue," Doris says.

"Good, useful broke ranch and arena horses are still in demand and still bring good money," Denny says. The couple noted that the market prices were higher at this year's production sale than they have been in the past few years.

Diversification

Doris has never been one to pass up an opportunity. When she came to the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch in 1995 she brought with her experience in writing and running a pheasant hunting business. She decided that there was no reason to let those experiences go to waste. She has continued writing, being published in many regional and national magazines as well as publishing her first book in 2008, *The Fort Pierre to Deadwood Trail, A Trail Rediscovered* and *He Walked With The Indians, The Life History of Royal Runge*, her first biography, was published in 2009. Doris also enjoys photography, mostly taking photos of their horses and hunting, but also of horse-related events and trail rides. One of her photos from the Fort Pierre to Deadwood Trail ride was published in the Weekly Reader Program through Reader's Digest.

Doris learned the pheasant hunting business working with her parents, Lenard and Lillian Powers, on a farm near Kimball, S.D. She used that expertise to start a similar hunting business on the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch. The natural abundance of pheasants has been increased by careful land management techniques for the improvement of forage for cattle and wildlife habitat, resulting in 3,500 acres of prime pheasant hunting habitat, which consists of food plots, corn, milo and sudan strips, sunflowers, shelterbelts, private grasslands, creek bottoms and draws. This land that serves as pheasant habitat also produces crops and provides pasture land for the cattle and horses the Lauings raise, essentially allowing them to

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harvest two crops from their land. Each year they entertain pheasant hunting clients from all over the United States - from 30 the first year to 130 in recent years. Their pheasant hunts last from three to five days.

Because of the increased clientele, they decided to change the operation to a preserve status. This allows their clients to take advantage of a longer hunting season - beginning in September and carrying through March - as well as longer hours and the opportunity to kill more birds than the standard three-bird limit. "Most of our new clients have found us by word-of-mouth from other hunters that have been here," Doris says. "One group of clients from St. Louis Missouri began hunting in the 1980s at my parents' farm and were the first ones to hunt here at Blunt. Over the last 15 years, they branched off creating four other groups."

Family

Denny represents the third generation of his family to farm and ranch near Blunt, S.D. His grandparents settled there in the early 1900s. Doris's agriculture experience was more with farming than ranching, but she says it didn't take her long to figure out the difference.

With the joining of two families, they feel blessed to have given their five children the opportunity to learn and compete on quality horses while they were growing up. The boys have all team roped or calf roped and competed in cutting, and the only daughter, Kaylie, had a passion for running barrels and poles in 4-H.

Scott Pazour, Doris' son, carries on the horse

tradition, using Lauing-raised horses for ranch work and rodeo. He and his son, Kaden, are active in the Kimball Rodeo Club. In 2008, at the age of six, Kaden won his first belt buckle for first place in the 10 and under age group. In 2009, he captured second place and in 2010 he regained his title of first place. Kaden is riding Comos Doc Leo (Comos Cottoneye by Lady Bar Horn), a gelding that Denny and Doris bred and raised. Kaden uses this horse for ranch work and started roping from him last summer.

Denny's son Shean and Doris' youngest son, Dan Pazour, have carried the competitive side the farthest from 4-H, through high school and on to the college arenas.

Shean continues to take pride in breaking and training his own horses from the program, like his father Denny.

Denny and Doris now have the pleasure of watching the next generation of horsemen and women grow. Keith Pazour is married to Erin (McCue) and they have one daughter, Trinity (3-1/2). He is business partners with his younger brother, Daniel Pazour, operating The Gutter Brothers in Pierre. Dan met his wife, Tessa (Stewart), while competing in high school rodeo. They have one son Tyrell (1-1/2). Scott Pazour ranches near Kimball with his son, Kaden (9), and is engaged to marry Sarah Faulstich in 2011. Sarah has a daughter Clara (11). Denny's daughter, Kaylie, will graduate in the spring of 2011 from South Dakota State University. His son, Shean, is attending Mitchell Technical Institute and will graduate



Lauing Family. Back row: Scott Pazour, Keith Pazour, Erin Pazour (Keith's wife); Middle row: Shean Lauing, Dan Pazour, Tessa Pazour (Dan's wife); Front row: Denny Lauing holding Trinity Pazour (Keith's daughter), Doris Lauing holding Tyrell Pazour (Dan's son), Kaylie Lauing.

in May from the Architectural Drafting and Building Construction field.

The 2011 Central South Dakota Ranchers and Breeders Quarter Horse Sale will be in September at the Central States Fairground in Rapid City. Watch Today's Horse for more information and dates. For more information about the Lauing Mill Iron L Ranch visit their web site www.lauingmillironl ranch.com. ☺☺



Maria E. Tussing grew up riding Quarter Horses on her family's ranch in western Nebraska. She studied journalism at Chadron State College. She is a freelance writer living near New Underwood, S.D., with her three kids.

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