

Crystal Creek Farm hosts the Southeastern Hackney Association

By Sallie Turner

On a clear, crisp Saturday morning in March, members and guests of the Southeastern Hackney Association were invited to Crystal Creek Farm in Winterville, GA for a presentation of some of their



home bred champions and a clinic on breeding. Carl and Kathryn Nichols welcomed all with coffee, juice and pastries. On a national level, AHHS President Randy Harper and Promotional and Communications Coordinator Robin Mingione were in attendance. The states of Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, South Carolina and North Carolina were all represented. After a bit of socializing, trainer Eduardo Lopez, assisted by Laurencio Lopez and Mario Valeazquez, presented several young ponies for everyone to enjoy.

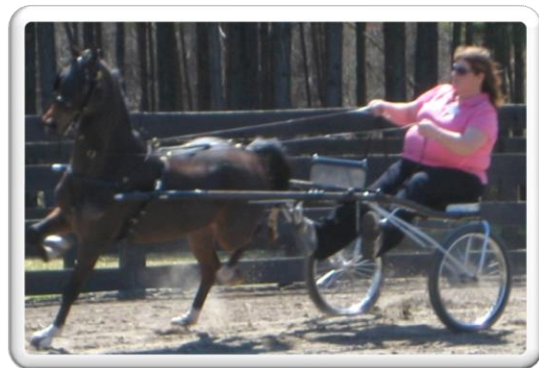
Some of the ponies that were presented were Crystal Creek's Springtime, a four year old road pony; Dun Haven Riverdance, a ten year old Harness Pony; Crystal Creek's Charm, a six year old Pleasure Driving pony; and Crystal Creek's Hallmark, a five year old Road Pony. Several members of the SEHA were allowed to drive the ponies, Jeanne Lassett drove Crystal Creek's Charm, and Lib McClelland got to try out Crystal Creek's Hallmark. Dr. Jennifer Baker, who later gave a presentation on foal care, also hopped in the buggy for her very first time behind Crystal Creek's Charm and had a chance to experience how much fun it can be to drive a Hackney.



The visitors also got the opportunity to tour the broodmare barn and admire the mares and the babies. The broodmare barn boasts a state of the art breeding chute that the Nichols had custom made in a hackney pony size. Breeding manager Sherry Abrams is well organized and knowledgeable, maintaining calendars and schedules for all of the broodmares. She began working for the Nichols when they only had three ponies to care for. As their herd and scope has grown, so has Sherry. Trained in Colorado at one of the nation's premiere equine reproductive schools, she keeps track of all of the broodmares and foaling at the farm.

Crystal Creek is the home of the very first Hackney pony born as a result of embryo transfer. Dr. Bill Baker of Hawkinsville, Ga., the veterinarian who performed the procedure, gave a talk and power point presentation of the process. It is of great interest that the process of embryo transfer has not worked for the Hackney breed. Dr. Baker has some theories about the reasons for that, and he was able to work around those problems to produce a pony born via embryo transfer. After that, Dr. Jennifer Baker spoke about the neonatal care of the foal.

Everyone so enjoyed seeing the ponies work that they agreed that even though we were a little behind schedule, they would rather see more ponies than go eat lunch. Eduardo and crew brought out a couple more ponies for us to enjoy. We saw Crystal Creek's Patriot, a four year old Road Pony; Crystal Creek's Ringleader, a three year old Harness Pony; Crystal Creek's Night Aire, a five year old Road Pony; and Crystal Creek's Aristocrat, a three year old Harness Pony.



A delicious barbecue lunch followed, and a general membership meeting was held, including the election of this year's officers. The new president of the SEHA is Bo Lucas. Charles Leonard was elected Vice President, and Jeanna Lassetts was elected Secretary/Treasurer.