



JANE BESHEAR talks with Equine VIP

by Susan Ashbrook, owner Equine VIP

Equine VIP is honored to share our interview with Jane Beshear, First Lady of Kentucky. An accomplished equestrian, Mrs. Beshear competes with two horses, her thoroughbred mare Big Time Magic and a younger Connemara/Thoroughbred cross Quite a Lady. The First Lady serves on the board of directors of Equestrian Events Inc. which organizes the Kentucky Rolex 3-Day Event. She also supports the FEI World Equestrian Games Foundation Board, which will host the first ever World Games at the Kentucky Horse Park in September of 2010. Mrs. Beshear has served on the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation board for over 20 years, currently as the board's secretary.

Question: AS AN ACCOMPLISHED EQUESTRIAN, WHEN DO YOU FIND TIME TO TRAIN AND RIDE YOUR HORSE AND FULFILL YOUR GOALS AS KENTUCKY'S FIRST LADY?

Answer: Finding time to ride my horses is difficult with my busy schedule as First Lady. I try my best to dedicate weekends to my horses and squeeze in a couple of hours to ride during the week. I find that spending time at the farm with my animals helps me to better focus on my projects as First Lady. My staff understands this need and schedules my meetings and speaking engagements accordingly.

Question: CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR THOROUGHBRED MARE "BIG TIME MAGIC"? (HOW DID YOU FIND HER? HOW LONG HAVE YOU OWNED HER? ANY PERSONAL STORY YOU WISH TO SHARE)

Answer: My trainer found Magic for me about seven years ago when I was looking for a new

project. To be honest, a chestnut Thoroughbred mare was NOT what I had in mind! However, Magic had all of the qualities I was looking for in an event horse and I could not pass up the opportunity to own such a nice mare. We have our ups and downs, as most horse/rider combinations do, but with the help of fantastic instructors, we work our way through any difficult situations. I also have a younger Connemara/Thoroughbred cross mare, Quite a Lady, or Prissy, as she is known around the barn, that I compete. These two horses are very different from one another so they help me to strive for improvement each time I ride.

duration of the event.

Question: TELL US ABOUT A FEW PROGRAMS YOU ARE INVOLVED WITH THAT COMBINE YOUR PASSION FOR HORSES? (SADDLE UP FOR SAFETY AND HORSES & HOPE)

Answer: One of the great things about being First Lady is being able to combine my passion for horses with worthy causes. I had the idea for Horses and Hope, a breast cancer awareness, education, screening and treatment referral program at the beginning of my husband's administration. By working with the Kentucky Cancer Program we were able to reach out to the underinsured and uninsured women working in Kentucky's equine industry. We host breast cancer awareness race days at Kentucky's four thoroughbred racetracks each year and offer screening services through the Kentucky Cancer Program by sending their mobile mammography unit to the backside of the racetracks. More recently, we have partnered with the Saddlebred industry and will hold our first screening for that discipline at the World's Championship Horse Show at the Louisville Fairgrounds in August.

I became a spokesperson for the Saddle Up Safely program after representatives from the University of Kentucky approached me about the opportunity. Through this program, we encourage novice and experienced riders alike to keep safety in mind while dealing with horses. Simple things like wearing a safety helmet, paying attention to environment and your horses' reactions can go a long way in preventing accidents. Horses are huge, powerful animals and people tend to think of them as really big dogs. We try to encourage the love of the horse while letting people know that because of their size, horses can inadvertently hurt you. I've also served for years as a volunteer for the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation, the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day event and I now sit on the board of directors for the World Equestrian Games. As you can tell, I REALLY love horses!



Question: YOU ARE USED TO SPEAKING IN FRONT OF CROWDS OF PEOPLE IN YOUR ROLE AS FIRST LADY OF KENTUCKY. DOES COMPETING AT HORSE SHOWS MAKE YOU NERVOUS?

Answer: Yes, I still get nervous before a competition. I find that a healthy dose of nerves is part of the excitement of showing. Usually, my adrenaline kicks in before I go into the ring or the start box, which keeps me on my toes for the

huge, powerful animals and people tend to think of them as really big dogs. We try to encourage the love of the horse while letting people know that because of their size, horses can inadvertently hurt you. I've also served for years as a volunteer for the Kentucky Horse Park Foundation, the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day event and I now sit on the board of directors for the World Equestrian Games. As you can tell, I REALLY love horses!

Question: AS THE HORSE CAPITAL OF THE WORLD, KENTUCKY IS A FAVORITE TOURIST DESTINATION FOR HORSE LOVERS. WHAT ARE A FEW HIGHLIGHTS YOU RECOMMEND?

Answer: The Kentucky Horse Park is a must-see for any horse lover. With more than 1,100 acres of working farmland housing nearly 50 breeds of horses, the Park is truly an equine paradise. Activities and attractions on the Park grounds include a Smithsonian affiliated museum, The American Saddlebred Museum, The Hall of Champions, which is home to many world-class retired equine athletes, trail rides and hundreds of horse shows each year. Of course, being famous for our racehorses, visitors will want to see some of our renowned thoroughbred attractions. Churchill Downs in Louisville is home to the "fastest two minutes in sports," the Kentucky Derby, and houses a wonderful collection of Derby memorabilia in the on-site Kentucky Derby Museum. Keeneland Racecourse in Lexington is one of the most picturesque tracks in the country and offers live racing each spring and fall. Thoroughbred farm tours are available year round and provide visitors an up-close and personal view of our gorgeous working race farms. Driving maps are also available if you wish to take a scenic drive through the rolling hills surrounding Lexington and Versailles providing unparalleled views of some of our most acclaimed farms. If you prefer to see Kentucky on horseback, we have fantastic



trails all across the state. Carter Caves State Park, Shakertown and Pennyrile State Park, among many others, offer horse-friendly trails

and accommodations that truly show the beauty of our state. The Kentucky Horse Council website, www.kentuckyhorse.org, has a list of open trails and horse-rental facilities for those interested in seeing Kentucky the old-fashioned way!

Question: THE ALLTECH FEI WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES, THE LARGEST SPORTING EVENT IN KENTUCKY HISTORY, WILL BE HELD AT THE KENTUCKY HORSE PARK. YOU SERVED ON THE BOARD OF THE "PARK" FOR OVER 20 YEARS AND ARE CURRENTLY THE SECRETARY, SO IS THIS SHOWCASE A DREAM COME TRUE FOR KENTUCKY?

Answer: Without a doubt. Although the founders of the Park had great expectations, I don't think anyone could have imagined hosting an Olympic-caliber event when it opened in 1978. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity for Kentucky and the United States and I, for one, cannot wait until the opening ceremonies!

Equine VIP is written by Producer/Host Susan Ashbrook who is also developing a TV series based on her interviews with celebrities and top equestrians. For more information go to www.equineVIP.com

Equine VIP interviews celebrities and equestrian VIPs because "If It's About Horses, We Cover It".