

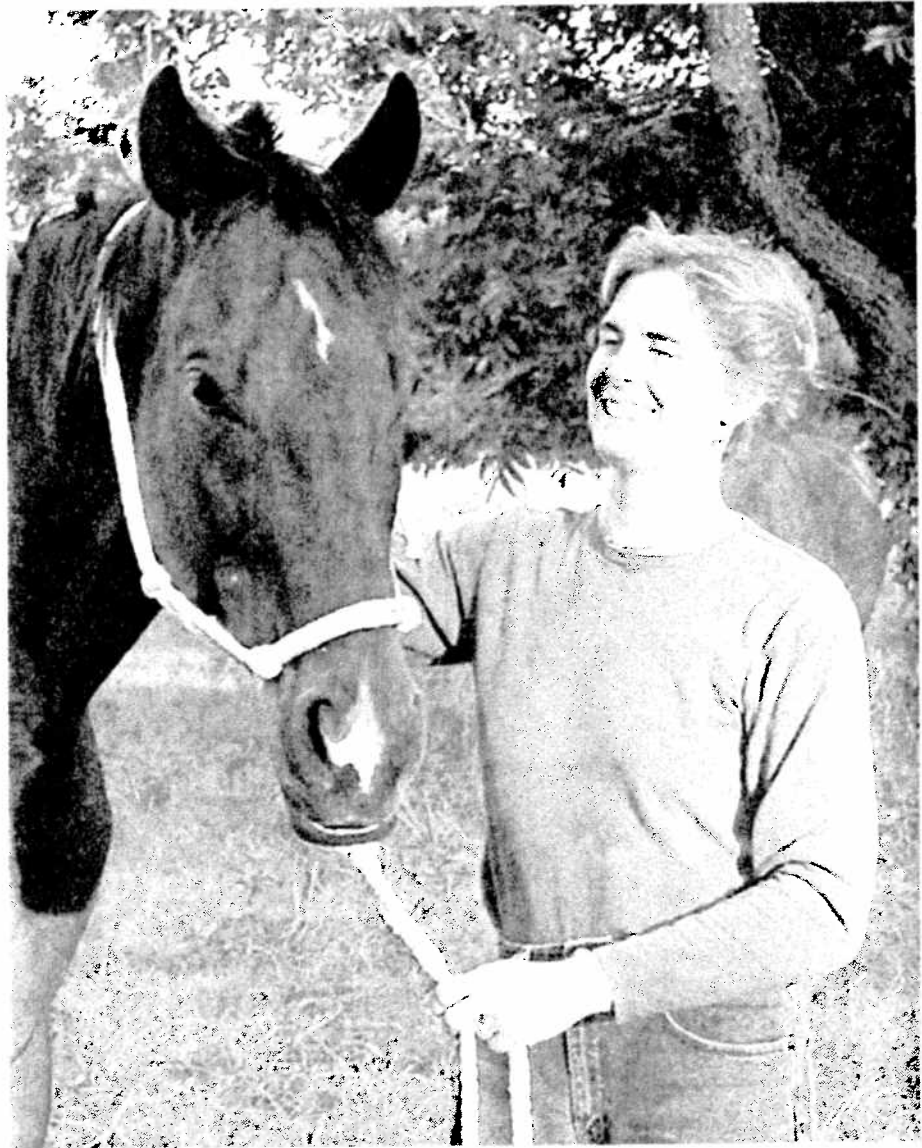
PROFILE

From Run to LOPE

On the Fourth of July four years ago, Larry Cooper drove from Garland to Austin to pick up his new hobby: a 16.2-hand race-trained Thoroughbred named Wise Indulgence.

Having grown up on a Dallas County farm, he had fond memories of riding horses. After his children were grown, an empty nest gave him the chance to get into it again.

Larry found that 25-mile endurance riding events provided excellent conditioning and socializing for "Wise," a son of the Valor Farm stallion Hadif, who earned \$400,000 in his 34 starts in the U.S. and the U.K. and has sired many winners. They also log a lot of miles just pleasure riding around Lake Ray Roberts and on the LBJ Grasslands. "We're both wiser now," he says.



Founder Lynn Reardon at the LOPE Ranch near Austin

Larry the across to Place nization for some founding

One l were ad in Cedar of Austin through I trainers c

"We're agency fo founder l interestin need a se to be pitie come to t injuries re

"Horse try to mat cal abilitie owner. Or example, ion for a h quiet and g

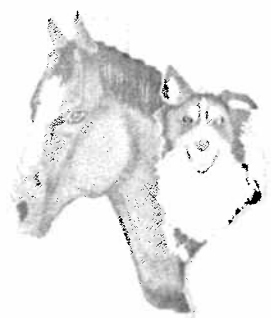
Lynn g riding as administra tus Center GeorgeMa west of Wa after-work ponies (ma the Potoma land. On v Thoroughb W. Va., and (Communic Thoroughb profit that g

Her hus tor at Merc coursework gressional s

In time, of the "Type mous egos determined

They vis Colorado b in Central T says, "we ar of 2000."

She foun paid more th started a list



**EQUINE • CANINE
CHIROPRACTIC**

Dr. Warren Wilson D.C.
Euless, TX

817-368-4400

equinecaninechiro.com
Web Site

equinechiro@sbcglobal.net
Email Address

**Ellis County Equine Association's
2008 Saddle & Buckle Series**

Navarro County Exposition Center, Corsicana, Texas
9 a.m. start time • 8 a.m. books open
Final Show • August 2
Featuring all currently carded APHA judges!

Saddles awarded to year-end high point in each age group!
Daily High-Point Awards / 9 & Under, 10-13, 14-18,
Adult, Green, Yearling

**FREESTYLE
REINING
MONEY-ADDED
SWEEPSTAKES!**

- Stalls available after Friday at 5 p.m. \$15 • 903-872-7600
- Electric & RV Hook-ups • Negative Coggins Required
- Member rates \$8 per class/\$60 all day

Events include: Halter, Reining, Western, English, Green Horse,
Leadline & Walk-and Whoa (9 a.m.), Yearling Longeline, Yearling Trail

For more information: Becky Hansen • (972) 977-2058

www.elliscountyequine.org

Aug. 9 • Youth Fundraiser Fun Show • (972) 483-7774

Larry adopted Wise from LOPE, the acronym for Lone Star Outreach to Place Ex-Racers, a nonprofit organization which has found new homes for some 600 retired runners since its founding in 2004.

One hundred forty of the horses were adopted from the LOPE Ranch in Cedar Creek, half an hour southeast of Austin. The rest found new owners through LOPE's free listing service for trainers on its Web site.

"We're essentially an employment agency for at-risk horses," explains founder Lynn Reardon. "These are interesting, valuable ex-athletes that need a second career, not basket cases to be pitied. Sixty-five percent of them come to the ranch sound, without any injuries requiring rehabilitation.

"Horses need to have jobs, and we try to match up the personal and physical abilities of each with the right new owner. One young Thoroughbred, for example, has made an ideal companion for a blind horse, because he's so quiet and gentle."

Lynn grew up in Virginia and began riding as an adult. She worked as administrative director of the Mercatus Center, a free-market think tank at George Mason University in Fairfax, just west of Washington, D.C. She found an after-work opportunity to exercise polo ponies (many of them ex-racehorses) at the Potomac Polo Club in nearby Maryland. On weekends, she enjoyed the Thoroughbred races at Charlestown, W. Va., and volunteered for CANTER (Communication Alliance to Network Thoroughbred Ex-Racehorses), a nonprofit that gave her the idea for LOPE.

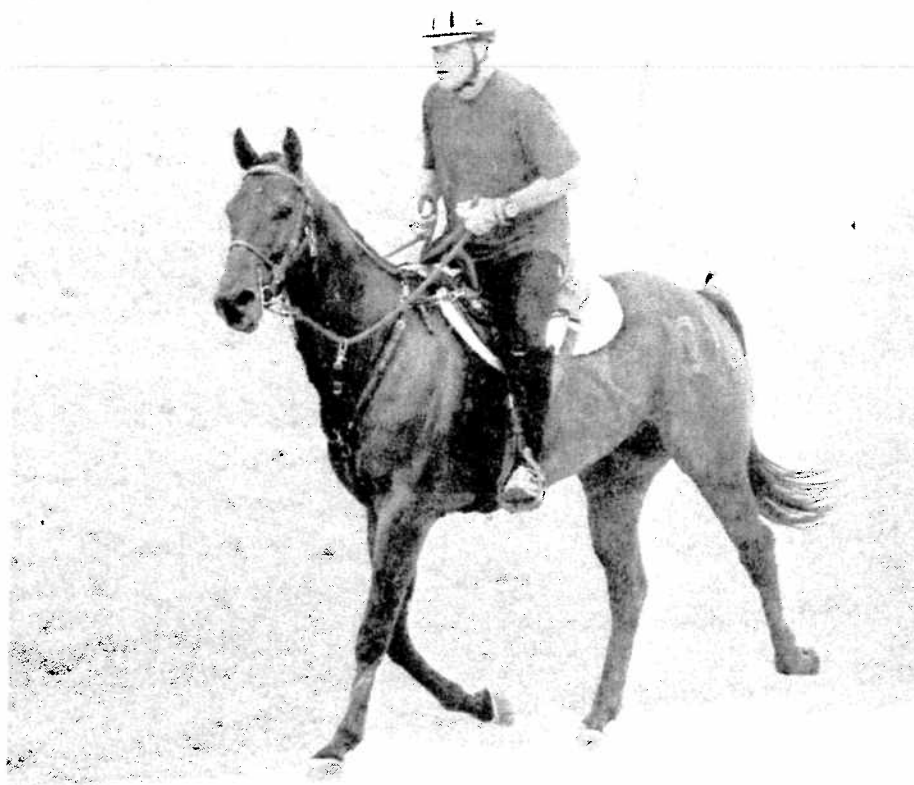
Her husband Tom, a program director at Mercatus, developed economics coursework for presentation to Congressional staffers.

In time, however, the couple tired of the "Type A" environment and enormous egos of the nation's capital and determined to move west.

They visited Washington State and Colorado before deciding to settle in Central Texas. "Unfortunately," she says, "we arrived just after the tech bust of 2000."

She found that giving riding lessons paid more than temping, and she soon started a listing service to place retired

(Continued on page 12)



Larry Cooper of Garland and Wise Indulgence on his first 25-mile endurance ride.

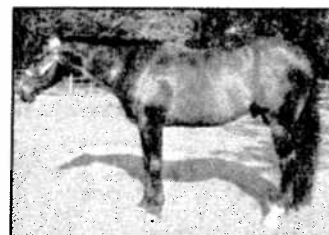
Offered for Your Pleasure

ZIPPOS GOLD ROLEX



by Zippos Old Gold x Shiloh Deluxe by Dynamic Deluxe. Producer of NSBA Reserve World Champion, multiple futurity money earner and point earners. Be the first to earn a Superior with one of his babies and win a Rolex Watch!! Stud Fee \$850

HOT FUDGE CHIP



by Blazing Hot out of Competent Chip by Zips Chocolate Chip. AQHA Superior Western Pleasure Stallion, Top 10 World Champion. Top 5 Congress Champion. Producer of point earners and futurity money earners. Stud Fee \$850



The Fudge Lady (Dharma)
Hot Fudge Chip x Image of My Lady
Currently under saddle and in training



An AQHA Leading Breeder
100 E. County Rd. 714
Burleson, Texas 76028

F
O
R
S
A
L
E



Fabulous Fudge (Zoe)
Hot Fudge Chip x Shiloh Deluxe
90 days under saddle
Videos at www.youtube.com

www.enchantedoaks.com
Dick and Charlene McBride
(817) 447-2371 • oakqh@aol.com

From Run to LOPE

(continued from page 11)

runners from Sam Houston Race Park, Retama Park in San Antonio and Lone Star Park in Grand Prairie quickly joined as partners.

"We got a lot of response from smaller breeders and trainers who cared about their animals and wanted to retire those at risk for permanent injury or burnout.

"Most of our horses are Texas-bred. Thoroughbreds here tend to be ranch-raised (and therefore healthier),

started in round pens with a stock saddle (so they remember leg cues), and from bloodlines that produce solid types with good bone and temperaments."

As support for LOPE grew, the Reardons purchased their 26-acre ranch. "I thought we'd have 10 horses the first year," says Lynn. "We wound up with 40. We keep them here as long as necessary until we find the right spot." There are 14 awaiting adoption now.

The resident celebrity is Wooden Phone, who defeated Horse of the Year

Tiznow to win the \$500,000 Grade II Strub Stakes in 2001.

Tom, who works as a Web and graphics designer for an Austin software company, has helped immensely in marketing LOPE to the public. "For someone who doesn't ride, he's the world's best sport," says Lynn.

Their Web site receives more than 4,000 visits a month, to date representing 234 Texas cities, all 50 states and 20 foreign countries. The long-term goal is to place 300 horses a year just from the ranch.

In May, the Texas Horse Enthusiasts, a group of "horse soccer moms," sponsored a benefit show in Seguin that drew 400 entries and raised over \$12,000 for LOPE. An annual year-end Thoroughbred stallion season auction will generate more funds. The Reardons have also established a Founders Circle of major donors to underwrite the nonprofit's \$80,000 annual operating budget.

LOPE is the chosen charity at this year's Equine Expo of Texas, scheduled September 13-14 at Will Rogers Memorial Center in Fort Worth. Lynn will bring three horses for adoption: Beau's Town, a big, flashy 10-year-old with career earnings of \$700,000 and an aptitude for dressage and jumping; Big Boy Slew, a 16-hand elegant-moving show prospect for a junior or lady rider, and a shorter, stockier third horse for trail riding or Western events.

Of course Lynn is an adopter, too. She currently has three of her own.

Lightning Ball, the 1997 Three-Year-Old Texas Champion, raced until he was nine and is now learning dressage. Tulsa Mambo, a mischievous gelding from "the minor leagues," won \$50,000 the hard way. Sally is "the biggest washout in the world. She raced three times. She finally passed one horse that stumbled. Then she strutted back to her stall like she'd won the Kentucky Derby. She's short, round, cute and sensible.

"She's the one I'm relying on to coax Tom into riding." ★

For more information, visit www.lopets.org, call (512) 565-1824, or visit their booth at the Equine Expo of Texas next month.

Dimmitt Farms
Quality Hay & Straw

"Dimmitt Farms delivers high quality horse hay to my ranch. The enclosed storage trailers keep the hay dry and rodent free, plus they can be parked where they are convenient for unloading."
Wayne Halvorson, President AQHA

- Our rolling barns will hold 300 bales. (enclosed semi-pup trailers eliminate any labor intensive stacking and unstacking also leaving more space at your storage facility)
- Quality Alfalfa, Bermuda, Prairie Hay and Straw
- Custom loaded trailers to fit your specific needs.
- We carry product liability insurance.
- Delivery available within 400 miles.
- We will always offer the most competitive pricing in the industry.

Dimmitt Farms
Quality Hay & Straw

DIMMITT FARMS, LLC PO BOX 1546 GUTHRIE, OKLA. 73044
405.368.4177 dimmittfarms@pdl.net