

Dave Hanson to receive Excelsior Award from Monticello-Goshen USHWA

by Chris Tully, for Monticello-Goshen USHWA

Goshen, NY --- Few individuals in upstate New York have influenced so many New York bred harness horses. Yet Dave Hanson has put his stamp on nearly 500 trotters and pacers over his lengthy career.

In recognition of his dedication and selfless contributions of time, talent and energy to the improvement and integrity of harness racing in the State of New York, Dave Hanson will be honored with the 2017 Monticello-Goshen USHWA Excelsior Award as the chapter hosts its 59th annual awards banquet this Sunday (Dec. 3) at the Fountains at Walkill Golf Club.

In 1980, Dave Hanson started his Standardbred breeding career as a night watch/foaling attendant at Hempt Farms in New York. In 1981 he accepted a position as a farm hand and worked his way up the ladder to Farm Manager at Walnridge Farm in New Jersey, leaving in 1988. From 1988 to 1993, Dave worked at Pine Hollow Stud Farm in Pine Bush, N.Y., as the General Manager.

He returned to Morrisville State College in 1993, where he graduated with an AAS in Equine Management, to teach equine reproduction wet labs, manage the Standardbred breeding program, as well as manage the annual Standardbred yearling sale. While serving as Institute Manager at Morrisville, Hanson was an integral part of the success of the college's breeding program as well as mentoring the next generation of breeding managers, many of which can be found at such top Standardbred nurseries as Winbak Farm, Diamond Creek and Allerage.



Monticello/Goshen USHWA photo

Dave Hanson will be honored with the 2017 Monticello-Goshen USHWA Excelsior Award.

Under Hanson's guidance the Morrisville Yearling Sale grew and prospered. For well over a decade Morrisville was the only regional Standardbred auction held in New York State, featuring Empire State-bred consignments from Winbak Farm, Blue Chip, Cameo Hills and of course the Morrisville Foundation's own yearlings, which Dave had a large hand in cultivating. In fact the Morrisville College Foundation has bred more than 450 horses, many of which are a product of Hanson's two decades of expertise at the college, including the dam of two-time New York Sire Stakes champion Barn Bella 3,1:51.3 (\$688,725).

Hanson became a "go-to guy" in upstate New York for his knowledge of stallions and breeding. Hall of Famer Alan Leavitt often sends horses such as [Deweycheatumhowe](#) and [Conway Hall](#) to Hanson.

He is also responsible for RC Royalty, and cared for dozens of other stallions when they called a New York breeding shed home.

Dave joined Leatherstocking Veterinary Services in the fall of 2014. As the Leatherstocking General Manager, Dave manages the Standardbred breeding program. Always eager to lend a helping hand, Hanson can also be found pitching in wherever he is needed, such as moving hay, assisting with surgery recovery, sale prep of yearlings, equipment repair, etc.

Hanson still sells yearlings at the Morrisville sale under his own Lakeview Equine banner. A big proponent of the academic/horse sale environment, he noted, "It's a big thing for the (Morrisville) students."

"It's the same in that aspect as it was when I ran the sale. It is the one event that all the disciplines work together to pull off. The hunt seat students are here. The western riding students are here. The draft horse, the Thoroughbred and, obviously, the Standardbred students are here. They all get together and pull off what is really a pretty significant fundraiser here for the equine program."

When Dave isn't busy with horses and farm management, he is a scuba diving instructor, and enjoys hunting with his wirehair pointers.

Betty Holt, the long-time executive director of the Harness Horse Breeders of New York State, had this to say about the organization's past president: "Dave is one of the most knowledgeable people in our industry today. I have the utmost respect for him and value his advice. He says what he thinks and if you don't want his honest answer don't ask him a question!"

This year, in addition to the year-end awards for horses and horse people from the local tracks, the Monticello-Goshen chapter will also honor Ray Schnittker (Lifetime Achievement Award); Dr. Herbie Burns (John Gilmour Good Guy Award); Crevani Farms (Cradle of the Trotter Breeders Award); Tim Masters (Amy Bull Crist Distinguished Service Award); Joseph Lee (Amateur Driver); Brandon Parker (Rising Star); and Carole Macedonio (Award of Appreciation).

Tickets for the gala event are still available and can be reserved by contacting Shawn Wiles at 845.794.4100, ext. 458 or email swiles@empireresorts.com, or contact Chris Tully at 845.807.7538 or email tullytrot@yahoo.com.