April 2020 Darcy Bean Hollander (by Elayne Barclay)

During this unprecedented time of social distancing, event cancellations, and stay at home orders it is hard to stay positive. Someone that positively radiates positiveness is former (during the 90's) and current PNER Treasurer, Darcy Bean Hollander. Darcy is a pleasure to be around, always happy, always laughing. According to her Facebook page, Darcy's motto is : "GO OUTSIDE & PLAY!" Her story revolves around her love of outdoor adventure and horses.

Darcy was one of those fortunate individuals that has been immersed in horses her entire life. She remembers while growing up in the 1950's and 60's in Los Altos Hills, California that “almost every little girl on my street had a horse in their yard. We could ride for miles, 15 hours a day in the summer, into the Santa Cruz Mountains and all the way to the beach. We had so many beautiful trails and places to ride. So much fun!”

Like many of us, Darcy considers horses a lifesaver for her saying, “I spent most of my time on a horse or at the barn while growing up because I did not have a good home life. I would ride down to the grocery store, the Dairy Queen and even the dentist. Horses were my main transportation and we really did ride for miles and miles.”

Her love for speed started early. Her future husband, Jim Hollander, was part of an unorganized teen riding club. She recalls, “We would race the horses on this dirt freeway that was being built through our countryside (the 280 freeway in now Silicon Valley).” Darcy wasn't the only one that liked to ride fast. “Jim’s dad, Lew Hollander, had some crazy horses that Jim said he rode as far as we did, racing along the trails, but that seemed totally unbelievable as his horses were little and they were ARABIANS!” Darcy rode Appaloosas and Quarter Horses back then and she thought Arabians “looked weird and we all thought if they jumped an obstacle they would break their little legs!”

In the 1970's Darcy was living in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, “I rode barrels in the summer at the weekly rodeo held for the tourists, was a part of the guided hunting trips in the fall with my quarter horses, and a ski instructor in the winter.” During this time, even before AERC was formed, Darcy combined her love of long distance trail riding at speed by entering a local endurance ride in Victor, Idaho. She won the race twice on her Appaloosa.

Then something happened that changed her life. On the urging of a friend she made a trip to meet a famous CMK Arabian horse breeder in Idaho Falls, Katherine Linderman-Furgeson. Darcy said, “She had a sweet but untrained Arabian stallion named Abu Amah for me to ride. Thank goodness I knew how to stick on! She told me that I HAD to have this horse!” The team did several 50 mile rides in Idaho, Nevada and Utah and did very well. While Darcy continued to compete on Abby she remembers she “ran into Lew Hollander at the Drinkers of the Wind 50 in Sun Valley, ID in 1978 and he proceeded to beat me in the last half mile coming down the mountain. I had always remained friends with his son, Jim, but I was beaten by his dad! What a competitor!”

Eventually Darcy returned to California to finish college and figure out the rest of her life. “Jim and I started dating and figured we wanted to move up to Central Oregon where land was still affordable and to be near his parents and siblings. As soon as we moved up here his stepmother, Hanne, introduced me to the local endurance community, and I bought my first endurance horse with Marjorie Van Gilder’s breeding. Stanley (Glorys Khalil), as I called him, turned out to be a fantastic horse that completed 5-100 milers in one year.” In addition to regional rides, Darcy's endurance adventures even took her to international rides to crew for Hanne Hollander (1998) and Carol Giles (2004).

After Stanley, all her horses came from Robbi Pruitt’s Canyonside Ranch. Through Robbi, Darcy obtained Sami, a nicely bred CMK mare she bred to Gulastra’s Splash, producing her current mount, HB Aur Squirt. Darcy states, “I knew he would be my forever horse so no need to breed any more. I have been riding my gelding Squirt for 10 years and I’ve never done much mileage in a year but it adds up if one continues to ride as many years as I have.”

Darcy's favorite quote is a blessing for all of us that enjoy endurance riding and the beauty of the wild places we can hopefully all access again in the not too distant future.

Benedicto

May your trails be crooked, winding, lonesome, dangerous,

leading to the most amazing view.

May your rivers flow without end,

meandering through pastoral valleys tinkling with bells,

past temples and castles and poets' towers

into a dark primeval forest

where tigers belch and monkeys howl,

through miasmal and mysterious swamps

and down into a desert of red rock,

and down again into a deep vast ancient unknown chasm

where bars of sunlight blaze on profiled cliffs,

where deer walk across the white sand beaches,

where storms come and go

as lightning clangs upon the high crags,

where something strange and more beautiful

and more full of wonder than

your deepest dreams waits for you--

beyond that next turning of the canyon walls.

- Edward Abbey