



Eeny Meeny Miney

MINIATUR

A horse can be eeny and meeny and miney, but it won't be considered a miniature, under professional standards of the American Miniature Horse Association (AMHA), unless its height measured at its last mane hairs does not exceed 34 inches. And although height is one of the main "measures" of a mini horse, the other characteristics and desired traits are actually a bit of a tall order. Janet King, owner of Limestone Miniature Horses, is one of the undisputed experts in these Lilliputian horses, and her charges have earned the world championships to prove it.

Janet comes from a family of horse-lovers, with both her father and grandfather raising horses and teaching her along the way. "I'm all about rodeos. I love the Western flair," Janet says. "When I was a kid, I just loved Roy Rogers," as she points to her childhood Roy Rogers-replica hat that she still has hanging in her home today. In addition to breeding miniatures, Janet also currently owns a quarter horse and an APHA, or paint horse.

With that love of horses, Janet and her father discovered

miniature horses about 20 years ago and began breeding and raising them. When her farm in May's Lick, Kentucky, began earning top recognition at AMHA events located in Fort Worth, Janet began thinking about moving her farm closer to the epicenter of the competitions. Another reason she said she began looking for a new farm in East Texas was because of the milder winters here, as well as the friendly folks.

Her search led her to seek out advice from her good friend and owner of Los Arboles Miniature Horse Farm in Mineola, Polly Weisberg. Throughout the years, she'd visited Weisberg and her manager, Ann Dwyer, quite a bit. In her search for her own East Texas farm, Janet said she stayed with the Weisbergs, and then she and Ann drove all of the back roads of East Texas to find the exact property she was looking for. Ultimately, she found it in the Winnsboro ZIP code and the tight-knit community of Cartwright.

Upon her 2009 purchase, the then-vacant 50 acres of what was to be the new Limestone Miniature Horse Farm needed an enormous amount of work. Part of that included



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securing and lowering fences for minis, cross-fencing separate paddocks and building three-sided shelters in every paddock. Also, there was the matter of building a new barn. Because

Janet likes to deliver all of her foals herself, with help from her veterinarian technician Susan Shirley, the barn needed to be rather high-tech—and it is. There are cameras in every stall, which can be monitored 24/7 from the house. Additionally, there is a maternity alarm system to alert Janet when a mare is beginning to foal. The barn is even outfitted with an ultrasound machine.

All of these preparations seem to have paid off because Janet says, to date, she and Susan have been able to deliver every foal themselves without the aid of a veterinarian. Just this year, Janet has been rewarded with 24 newborns, and she is anticipating the delivery of three more. She says in a typical year, she will foal out about 45 to 50, but since mov-

ing here, she's been pretty busy with all of the building and repair plans. Also, it took quite a while and many trips before she had all of her breeding stock moved to the new location. In all, Janet brought about 60 horses from Kentucky, and she did not trust just anybody with the task, so she moved most of them herself with a few very-trusted friends, bringing in a handful at a time.

She says that she does not stereotype her own horses according to a certain breed, but she says the “look” that she is going for is that of a halter horse or an Arabian. “I like that look—the refinement, the pretty heads, the long, slender necks,” she says. But, she adds of the miniature horses, their small stature does not bespeak their true heartiness. Her horses have all of the spirit of their much bigger ancestors, and she says they are as hearty, too.

Minis, she says, came to the United States from England, where in the 1800s they were bred small but tough, to work in the coal mines. Once imported here, people started mixing Shetland ponies with them, and they began to take on a

TOP, FROM LEFT: Janet King, owner of Limestone Miniatures, enjoys time with her all-time favorite miniature horses Nighthawk, a world champion (Photo credit: SnappedbyShannon.com Photography). Foals at Limestone Miniatures initially get selective grooming to check for neck conformation and other qualities. Veterinarian technician Susan Shirley gives a little attention to B.J., which stands for Billy Junior. B.J. is an offspring of champion, First Knights Billy Idol.



First Knights Billy Idol is quite the spirited stallion, with many awards under his belt and highly sought-after offspring.

more appealing look.

Janet gives lots of credit to furthering the standards of miniature horses and building her farm's reputation to one of her all-time favorite horses, Champion Farms Night-hawk. Beyond his name and his personality, the only other things "big" about this horse, Janet says, are his brain and his list of titles. "He is very smart, one of the smartest horses I have ever owned. I bought him at 8 months old and he is 17 [years old] now. He is what made Limestone," she says. "Hawk has done a lot for the industry, and his daughters are very sought after. He is now known as a broodmares' sire." Hawk also has won two prestigious National Champion Get of Sire awards and was the first place AMHA Futurity Sire Winner, meaning he sired the most title-winners during the year he was named.

Another of her horses, First Knights Billy Idol, named after the singer, has won two reserve national champions and two Get of Sire. For the last two years, he was also named the Futurity Champion of the World. He is certainly adding to the growing reputation of Limestone, with the elite taking notice, too. Heiress and reality-show star Paris Hilton is the owner of one of Billy Idol's offspring, a pretty little filly. It is rumored that this filly will make her television debut in an upcoming new Hilton reality show.

Breeding miniature horses has become big business, and Limestone has two main components in the business. On

the one hand, many hours are spent in developing and training horses for competition, because champion bloodlines are always sought after. Janet hires some of the top trainers to ensure that her animals show well. And, as part of that business, top awards bring in nice purses. However, more important than the prize money itself is the title—that's what brings value to the foaling part of the business.

And the foaling business is what brings people from all over the world to Janet's door. Trainers, much like big-league sports headhunters, come from all over the nation to Limestone to "scout" for the next big winner.

Now that the ranch is up and running full throttle, Janet says of her and Susan's work, "We stay very busy and work pretty darn hard. Every single horse here is taken care of in the very same way. We have pet quality, and we have the very top show horses."

She also says, "I'm an animal lover and I appreciate any animal." That's probably why, in addition to all of the mini horses and her two regular-sized ones, she has four dogs (three of them mini breeds) and five cats. With that menagerie, it's clear that Janet and her right hand, Susan, do stay pretty busy—and NEVER bored.

Even for those not interested in showing or competing, Janet says the advantages of owning a miniature horse are numerous. She says they are perfect for 4-H projects and also great for retirees who have always owned horses but are looking for something very manageable. Also, the minis don't require such a large space, and they don't eat as much. But, she also laughingly warns, "Miniature horses are like Lays Potato Chips. You can't have just one!"

Janet is settling into her new home. "I love the local rodeos, and the people here are friendly and nice," she says. "I'm a country person, and I enjoy the small-town atmosphere. I love the area. I really do." Looking forward to continuing the work she started in Kentucky and brought to East Texas, Janet will continue to dedicate herself to "furthering the breed and helping it mature." But she also says, "It's lucky to be able to live your life like that... being able to laugh and enjoy life doing what you love."

At Limestone Miniature Horse Farms, there are many spirited and handsome horses to choose from. And like the children's poem.... Eeny, meeny, miny, moe, if your "mother told you to pick the very best one," chances are you can't go wrong with one of Janet's pint-sized examples.

Limestone Miniature Horse Farm is served by Wood County Electric Cooperative. To learn more about it, visit www.limestoneminatures.com or e-mail limestone@peoplescom.net, or call Janet King at (903) 629-3234.

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY! The employees of Wood County Electric Cooperative wish you a safe and happy holiday.

Energy Conservation and Energy Efficiency:

What's the Difference?



**MESSAGE
FROM CEO
AND GENERAL
MANAGER
DEBBIE
ROBINSON**

In the 1980s, President Reagan was quoted as saying that conservation meant being cold in the winter and warm in the summer. Conservation seemed to get a bad rap in the decades to follow. It implied having to make do with less. And sometimes, it meant going without altogether.

Today, the terms energy conservation and energy efficiency are often used synonymously, but they have distinct definitions. The U.S. Energy Information Administration differentiates the two.

That difference has to do with behavior and technology.

Energy conservation simply means using less energy. To achieve it, consumers have to change their behaviors—turning off lights, unplugging appliances or opting to use a clothesline instead of a clothes dryer. Conserving energy often means sacrificing something.

While there is merit in adopting conservative energy-consumption habits to avoid waste, there is the option to use less energy without giving up comfort or convenience.

That brings us to the definition of energy efficiency.

Energy efficiency involves applying technology to use less energy while getting the same result or service. Technological advances also allow us to automatically perform some actions that previously were manual. Because new electric products are able to do the same tasks with less energy,

energy efficiency does not necessarily come with the connotation of going without.

A compact fluorescent lightbulb (CFL) is considered energy efficient because it uses less electricity to produce the same amount of light as an incandescent lightbulb. The CFL still lights up the room just the same.

In the same way, Energy Star-rated products are intended to deliver the performance consumers expect while using less energy. Take today's Energy Star-rated refrigerators, for example. They keep food cool with about half as much energy as refrigerators made before 1993, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Ultimately, energy efficiency may result in energy conservation—or using less energy.

Applying the principles of energy efficiency and energy conservation have value to you as a member of Wood County Electric Cooperative. Perhaps most obviously, using less electricity saves you money on your electric bill simply because you consume less.

Also, wholesale power costs fluctuate depending on the time of use. The cost of power increases during peak hours—early mornings and evenings—and seasons—hot summers and cold winters. In the early mornings, demand increases because we all wake up and turn on lights and appliances as we start our days.

Similarly, demand for electricity increases in the evenings because we arrive home from work, fire up the stove, turn on the TV and perhaps start a load of laundry.

And during the extreme temperatures of summer and

winter, collectively our members demand electricity even more by blasting our air conditioners or heaters.

If we can diminish the use of power during those peak times, then the cooperative's total wholesale power cost decreases. That savings is passed along to you.

In addition, those in the electricity industry, including WCEC, are working to find ways to reduce consumption to combat a shortfall of electricity generation in the future. Creating energy-conserving and energy-efficient habits now will help us use electricity wisely years down the road.

We encourage you to use the principles of energy conservation and energy efficiency together. By combining energy-efficient technology with conservative behavior, you can save both electricity and money.

YIELDS of ENERGY EFFICIENCY

MORE OF THESE	LESS OF THESE
Quality/Performance	Money
Heating/Cooling	Pollution
Lighting	Energy
Productivity	Hassle
Control	Waste

Source: www.ase.org