

Ray and Jennifer Stewart

Ritmo A.J

- a memorial



Artwork by Shannon Ford, Shannon Ford Fine Art, BC, Canada

Our Story



The detailed story of Ritmo (Ritmo A.J.) is unknown to me and Jennifer. We can only speak to his short time with us.

Ritmo was a very gentle horse impressing all who lived and worked with him; us, veterinarians, visitors and wild and domestic animals. Here is his story.

In the brief time we had the joy of knowing Ritmo, he left an indelible mark on all of us –humans and animals alike. His gentle spirit was like a warm embrace, captivating everyone from the dedicated veterinarians who marveled at his calm demeanor, to visitors who couldn't help but smile at his endearing antics. "He didn't have a mean bone in his body," they would say, as Ritmo stood serenely during check-ups, allowing them to perform their tasks with ease, no matter what the procedure. "He stands quietly and let's you do what is necessary".

Jennifer would clean his sheath regularly with Ritmo standing patiently in place only stretching his head, curling his lips. When grazing, Jennifer mowed with a 60 HP

tractor/7-foot mower around him as he would simply lift his head, casting her a look as if to say, "I do not think so, go around me".

It was a sight to behold and melt your heart when our dogs and cats were let out and go immediately to Ritmo and greet with noses touching in a friendly greeting. Our two cats would curl up at his hooves and sleep. Our blind dog, Bear, would loyally follow in Ritmo's shadow, bumping into his legs, but Ritmo never once kicked, only turning ever so gently to see if Bear was ok. Even the wild creatures - the deer, bear and coyotes had an unusual relationship with Ritmo sensing his kindness and protective nature.

Does would bring their fawns, place them in the tall grass beside his runs and Ritmo would stand over them until the mothers returned. A small brown female bear visited Ritmo during his sick period.

The photo shows the bear waiting for me to leave so she can go in to visit Ritmo in the barn.





Ritmo was very sick the last few months with Cushing's Disease and arthritis. The latter prevented him from laying down until Dr. Posnikoff took X-rays and injected Proease IRAP. Medications eased his discomfort.

On his last day, he finished his 1:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. feeding. and medications but ignored his 10:00 a.m. feeding, a subtle hint that change was on the horizon. We checked on him a few hours later in his stall, drenched in sweat but determined to rise with assistance. Jennifer gently washed him and applied compresses to his injured eye, and Ray offered soothing massages along his spine. Ritmo seemed to recover, ate some alfalfa cubes and seemed to be himself except he spent time unusually close to us.

We visited and said goodnight to him at 10:30 p.m. By 12:30 a.m. Sunday he could not be found by Ray for his 1:00 a.m. feeding. Jennifer found him dead, close to the ranch house. He had chosen his resting place wisely, lying down in a manner that made him appear as if he were simply enjoying a peaceful slumber. He must have known as he picked his place with his back to one fence and his head held up by the E/S rails so it looked like he was just sleeping. His legs were relaxed with no signs of thrashing, his nose resting on his leg, his ears perked up and his eyes half closed. Very Peaceful!

Other Stories of Wonder about Ritmo



Santee

Ritmo's companion in life and in death was our black Quarter Horse Santee (San Tivios Jet) a Granddaughter of Pepi San.

When Shannon Ford first brought Ritmo over to our ranch, Santee would not go near Ritmo. When I got home I said to Santee "Let's go see what this stallion is all about." While we kept them separate, they would stand on each side of the fence quietly for hours and would lay down with their bums touching through the fence.

The photo Shannon took when Santee and I were walking to check out this new stallion. You can see she was soaking wet but eager to check him out. Shannon commented in one of her emails that every time she drove by our ranch, Ritmo and Santee would be hanging out together and he would be very relaxed.

When Santee died, Ritmo knew and I let him see where we buried her. For over a year he would stand over that spot. We buried Ritmo next to Santee.

The Deer and Wildlife

Ritmo had 10 areas for a total of 42 acres immediately available to him with another 130 acres with our supervision.



In the right lower corner of this picture, behind the hoses and the corner of the paddock they are standing in, is where Ritmo chose to pass. This Doe has kept her Fawn at this location since birth. This is one of the Does with Fawns who spend time in this paddock, altogether there are five with babies. As mentioned previously, Ritmo died just after midnight Saturday, on Sunday morning when we were preparing him for burial we noted the area around him was covered in deer hoof prints.

Update from the following year:

Two does birthed their fawns (the first twins!) in two of Ritmo's 9 grazing areas yesterday morning. Jennifer was out mowing when she came upon the first doe dropping her second fawn just beside Ritmo's area of the barn. The second doe had her fawn just south of the first. Later, both placed their babies in the grazing area where Ritmo died. They remain there this morning. Either they know something we do not or old habits die slowly.

Editor's note:

The sight of the deer nurturing their fawns near Ritmo's resting place invites us to ponder the profound bonds that exist between all creatures, suggesting an understanding that transcends our own. Celebrating the rhythms of life and death, I urge you to cherish and preserve the stories that connect us to the Mangalarga Marchador horses that we have loved and lost. Thank you Jennifer and Ray.





Ritmo A.J. - more of the story

REGISTRY: USMMA & ABCCMM

BREED: Mangalarga Marchador

GENDER: Stallion (Macho)

COLOR: Palomino MARKINGS: Blaze

BRAZIL REGISTER, ABCCMM, MANGALARGA MARCHADOR: 010452-5

U.S. REGISTER, U.S. Mangalarga Marchador AssociaBon: USM000000029

FOAL DATE: January 8, 1993, Brazil

DIED: September 11, 2022, 12:18 a.m., South Okanagan, British Columbia, Canada

OWNER HISTORY:

BREEDER: Antonio de Andrade Ribeiro Junqueira, A.J., Brazil

IMPORTER: Regal Legacy Farms, OH

OTHER OWNERS:

- Tony Orta, Regal Legacy, GA
- William and Sandy Kambic, Haras Lucero, TN
- Shannon Ford, Canadian Marchadores, BC Canada
- Ray & Jennifer Stewart, BC, Canada

VETERINARIANS: Brytann Youngberg, DVM & Janice Posnikoff, DVM

CHILDREN - 12

Joao Ricardo do Lucero, gelding

Jordao do Lucero, gelding

Igor do Lucero, gelding

Hilario do Lucero, gelding

Gil do Lucero, gelding

Graca do Lucero, mare

Precioso do Lucero, mare

Whispering Pines Lareina, mare

Hermosa do Lucero, mare

Verao de Ouro do Lucero, mare

Heliodoro do Lucero, gelding

Gabriela do Lucero, mare

GRANDCHILDREN - 8

Benevola do Saint Horse, mare

Ferveroso do Saint Horse, gelding

Bonita do High Country, mare

Magia de Canada, mare

Sage de Canada, mare

Joviana de Canada, mare

PSR Holy Smokes

PSR Regalo do Sorpresa

(Not all MM horses are reported or registered so the numbers may be higher than what is printed here.)