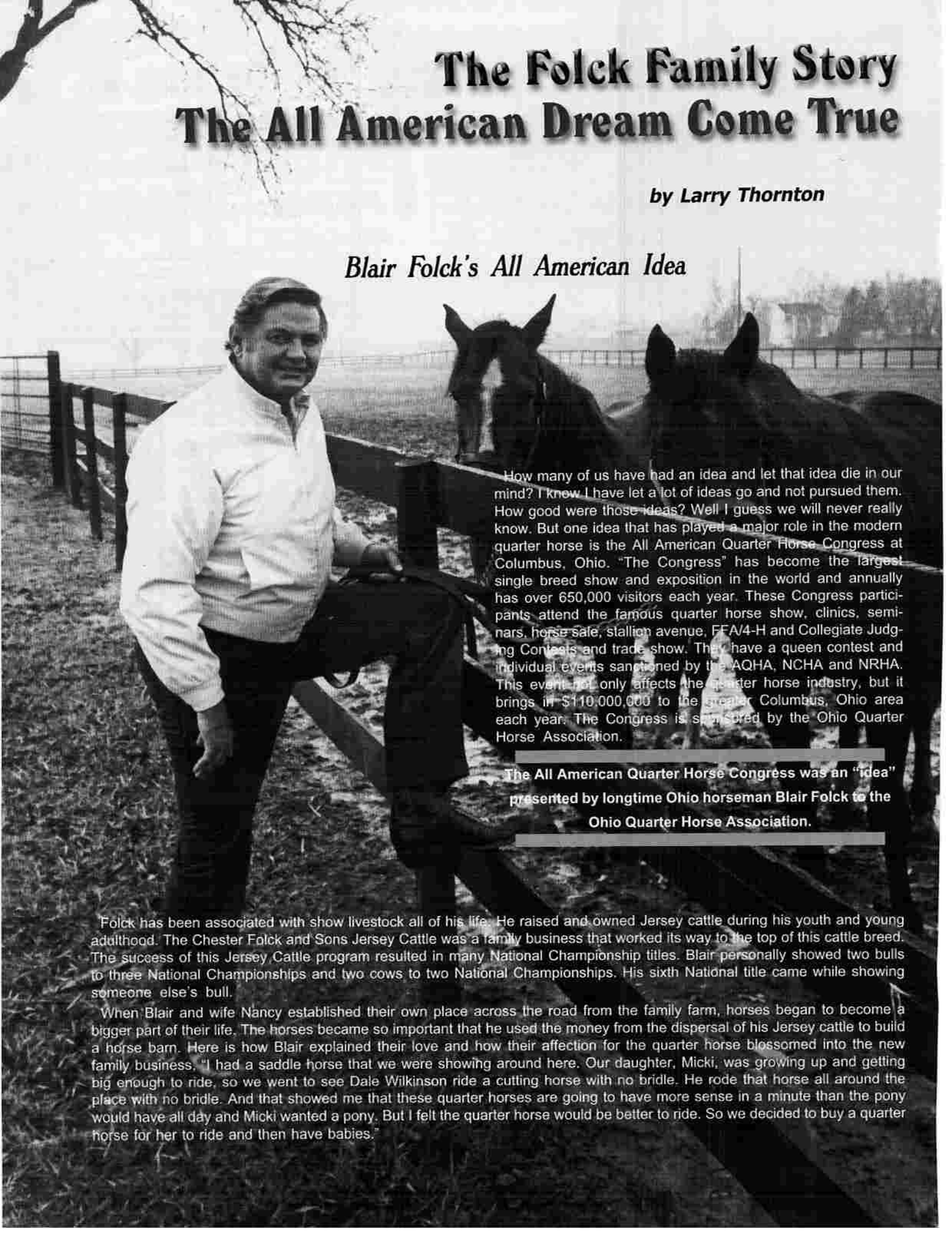


# The Folck Family Story

## The All American Dream Come True

by Larry Thornton

### *Blair Folck's All American Idea*

A black and white photograph of Blair Folck, a man in a light-colored sweater and dark pants, standing in a paddock. He is leaning on a wooden fence. Two horses are visible behind him, one dark and one lighter. The background shows a fence and some trees under a bright sky.

How many of us have had an idea and let that idea die in our mind? I know I have let a lot of ideas go and not pursued them. How good were those ideas? Well I guess we will never really know. But one idea that has played a major role in the modern quarter horse is the All American Quarter Horse Congress at Columbus, Ohio. "The Congress" has become the largest single breed show and exposition in the world and annually has over 650,000 visitors each year. These Congress participants attend the famous quarter horse show, clinics, seminars, horse sale, stallion avenue, FFA/4-H and Collegiate Judging Contests and trade show. They have a queen contest and individual events sanctioned by the AQHA, NCHA and NRHA. This event not only affects the quarter horse industry, but it brings in \$110,000,000 to the greater Columbus, Ohio area each year. The Congress is sponsored by the Ohio Quarter Horse Association.

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The All American Quarter Horse Congress was an "idea" presented by longtime Ohio horseman Blair Folck to the Ohio Quarter Horse Association.

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Folck has been associated with show livestock all of his life. He raised and owned Jersey cattle during his youth and young adulthood. The Chester Folck and Sons Jersey Cattle was a family business that worked its way to the top of this cattle breed. The success of this Jersey Cattle program resulted in many National Championship titles. Blair personally showed two bulls to three National Championships and two cows to two National Championships. His sixth National title came while showing someone else's bull.

When Blair and wife Nancy established their own place across the road from the family farm, horses began to become a bigger part of their life. The horses became so important that he used the money from the dispersal of his Jersey cattle to build a horse barn. Here is how Blair explained their love and how their affection for the quarter horse blossomed into the new family business. "I had a saddle horse that we were showing around here. Our daughter, Micki, was growing up and getting big enough to ride, so we went to see Dale Wilkinson ride a cutting horse with no bridle. He rode that horse all around the place with no bridle. And that showed me that these quarter horses are going to have more sense in a minute than the pony would have all day and Micki wanted a pony. But I felt the quarter horse would be better to ride. So we decided to buy a quarter horse for her to ride and then have babies."

# The Folck Family Story

## Tim Folck And The All American Idea—

The All American Quarter Horse Congress has been a Folck family affair for many years. Blair and Nancy's son Tim has been involved with the Congress since the beginning. Tim recently recalled that he and his college buddies were called for some of that volunteer help, "My Fraternity Brothers and I helped set up the Trade Show part of the Congress. The Fall Roundup was a show that took place just prior to the Congress each year. It was run by Earl Lambert and it was one of the best shows in the country. It later merged with the Congress. But those first few years when the Fall Roundup was over, we would have just two or three days to clean up in order to have the Trade Show for the Congress. We would tear down all the stalls from the Fall Roundup and clean the place up and set up for the Trade Show. We would take off from school two or three days and work our butts off to get it set up. We were volunteers, but they would pay us a little bit."

Tim graduated with his Bachelor of Science Degree from Ohio State University in 1968. He was working toward entering Vet School, but found that he was not interested in pursuing a Veterinary Degree. He was then asked by Blair to come into the family business. He did and then in 1969, Tim had his own idea. He started The Folck Agency providing insurance services to go along with the sales company.

When Blair retired almost twenty years ago, Tim picked up the reins and today Tim and Denise are carrying on with the support of Blair and Nancy. They will be managing the 37th Annual Super Sale at the Congress in 2004. Tim recently recalled how the cattle business played a role in his involvement with the livestock industry, just as it had with his father years before, "I'm like my Dad, I grew up on the dairy farm, Chester Folck and Sons Jersey Cattle. My grandfather, Chester, was a pioneer as a Jersey Cattle breeder and he was active as a showman and he won many National Awards. I showed four Jersey National Champions myself and Dad was a top showman."

"We got into the horses when I was about 10. My parents had their own band of horses that they were building, but their occupation was the Jersey cattle. I didn't get involved with the horses in a major way until I was in college and they sold the dairy farm."

He continued, "It was my upbringing in the cattle business, that getting up at 4:30 in the morning and milking cows, then going to school, playing sports, then you came home did your homework and then went to bed. I think this taught me to work hard. And then I always knew that when things weren't done right, I had to go back and do it right. It was this type of work ethic that gave me my obsession with order and things done right."

Tim didn't sit back and take things easy when he took over management of National Equine Sales. He has added two

Blair continued his story talking about the mare they bought, "We bought Brownie R Clegg and she was a good mare. She was just green broke and so I left her for them to ride her a little more. When she came up here, she was still green broke. Oh, I could ride her, but she never did get so our daughter could ride her, but she had some good colts. Her first foal was an ROM show horse sired by Ike Rude. Her next foal was by Poco Man and this horse earned an AQHA Superior in halter. This was a dun colt that we sold to Doc Wade and he went to Houston." Brownie R Clegg was the dam of one AQHA Champion as well. This mare was Tobano Nancy by Tabano King.

"Brownie R Clegg was the first one and then we started adding mares. Then we added a Poco Pine stallion, Poco Tinto. He was a good breeding horse and I selected a group of mares to breed to him." Poco Tinto was a proven show horse in his own right with 31 halter points and 8 Grand Championships. He was bred several times to Brownie R Clegg and produced the arena ROM Tinto's Stu and Tinto's Nancy.

Blair's dad, Chester, was not only active with a Jersey cattle business, he had a sales company. So Blair had his own "idea" for a sale. He took his idea to several prominent sale companies. "I went to Kentucky to see about having a sale down there. I went to Keenland and they thought I was crazy for being there because that was Standardbred and Thoroughbred country and they didn't know a quarter horse around there. Then I went to Fasig-Tipton and to the same response. Then I went to Tattersalls and a grand ole man named Walter Gibbons was manager. I told him what I was trying to do and he said,

**'Let's just try it.' That was 48 years ago. We have four sales a year now. The first one was 48 years ago.**

*Continued on page 52*



**Go With The Wind - bred & raised by Blair & Nancy & sire of Real Wind, winner of All-American Futurity in 1976**

*Continued on page 58*



# PRINCE FARM

Offers For Sale



**GQHA Reserve Futurity Champion**  
2004 Colt N/N

Sire: Playgirls Conclusion out of producing daughter of Go Lucky Maiden.  
Fit and ready to show.

AQHA Yearling colt  
2003 Congress Winner. Very balanced.  
Top quality colt.

AQHA Yearling Filly - Full sister to "Blink Blink", 2003 World Champion.  
Currently going grand. Ready to win for you.

The news is out!! Our futurity prospects are ready for your inspection!

#### 2004 Listing:

- Jan. filly by Playgirls Conclusion out of producing Sonny's Securitte mare.
- Jan. colt by Im Kiddin out of Mr Conclusion mare.
- Jan. filly by Mr Yella Fella out of daughter of Obvious.
- Feb. colt by Playgirls Conclusion out of Ima Cool Skip daughter.
- Feb. colt by Sculptured out of a World Champion Producer



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## The Folck Family Story

### Impressive and What Luck

Not only has Blair Folck had a successful sale business and a great idea for a Quarter Horse Congress, but he has been associated with some special stallions. One of those is the legendary Impressive. "I bought him as a yearling. I had a fella here that was in the Gravel business and he wanted me to buy



a good yearling. I was down to the horse races at Blue Ribbon Downs. I was looking around for a good yearling and I asked Nick McNair, 'I hear you have a good yearling colt. Are you interested in selling him.' He said, 'Yes.' I told him I have to drive home and be home by morning and I can't get to your place until 11 or 12 o'clock. Would it be alright to stop and see him? He said, 'Sure, I'd love to have you.'

He continued, "So we stopped and my son-in-law Don Alsphaugh was with me. They lead this little ole fuzzy colt out and he had a beautiful head and neck and real muscled up in front. I thought, 'Oh man,' I was half afraid to walk around him to see what he looked like behind because you usually find they're good in front and screwed up in back. But I thought this is a good son-of-a-gun. He was asking \$3500 for him and I left offering \$3,000. The next morning I called him and told him I would pay the \$3500. Sent my son-in-law to get him."

He added, "Nancy raised cane with me because we had a whole pen of colts and she said what are you doing with another yearling? I told her to wait till you see this son of a gun and you won't make a statement like that and when she saw him she just loved him."

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#### She named him Impressive."

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They would later sell Impressive and he would go on to be the first AQHA World Champion Aged Halter Stallion. He then proceeded to build his own family of great halter horses that still dominates the halter industry today.

The next stallion of note is What Luck. What Luck came into the picture while Blair was looking for a good thoroughbred for Jake Bunn, of the Bunn Coffee makers. Bunn and Blair would travel to see Dr. Lockridge at Wal-Mac International to see the stallion Master Hand, a son of Bold Ruler. It was recommended by Dr. Lockridge that the quarter horse people would be wise to use the blood of Bold Ruler to infuse some of the fast thoroughbred blood of this great stallion. We see another idea presented here but this time it wasn't necessarily Blair's original idea, but he certainly picked it up and ran with it.

As time went on Bunn would buy the thoroughbred Fleet Kirsch and Blair would work a deal to buy What Luck from Dr. Ray Murphy and Milton Pollinger. Blair's partner was Tom Fuller of Willow Brook Farms in Pennsylvania, the home of Joe Cody. Fuller and Blair would syndicate What Luck and they each retained 10 shares.

Blair sees that "everybody that touched What Luck made money." He was a successful sire of thoroughbred and quarter horse runners. He is still the only stallion to sire champions in both the thoroughbred and quarter horse racing segments. His thoroughbred champions are Ambassador Of Luck, the 1984 Champion Aged Mare and What A Summer, 1977 Sprint Champion. His quarter horse champion is Lucks Gay Chic, the 1982 AQHA Champion Aged Stallion. Lucks Gay Chic is the sire of Lucks Easyfanta Boy, one of the newest AQHA Supreme Champions.

# The Folck Family Story

## Blair Folck's All American Idea

Continued from page 15

And I think it has made Kentucky a quarter horse state."

Blair explains the statement about Kentucky being a quarter horse state this way, "We had our 45th anniversary and a man came and sat down beside me and he said, 'I want to tell you something. When you came down here and started that sale, I thought you was crazy as could be with all the thoroughbred and Standardbreds around here. Everybody was riding English saddles and these sales have changed as everybody is riding western saddles now.'" The Tattersall's sale became a part of Blair and Nancy Folck's National Quarter Horse Sales Company.

With a sales company and quarter horse breeding program as his new business interests, Blair Folck became active in the Ohio Quarter Horse Association. He served four terms as President in 1963-64 and 1970-71. He served continually on the Board of Directors from the 1960's. The Ohio Quarter Horse Association got its start in 1949 when a group of horsemen at the Frontier Riding Arena got together. They didn't formally organize until 1951 when H. A. Renner was elected President and they formally chartered as a Corporation.

It was through a client that Blair Folck found his idea for a Quarter Horse Congress, "Bob Evans, as in Bob Evans Sausage and Bob Evans Restaurants, was in this part of the country. He was in the Charolais business and we had a couple of horse sales for him. He wanted me to handle the Charolais sale for the Charolais District Association in Lexington, Kentucky. We handled that sale for him for a couple of years. Then Bob and his wife and Nancy and I went to the Charolais Congress in Kansas City, Missouri. We went and came away after having such a good time. It was a good promotion for the Charolais and Jerry Litton was head of it at that time. Jerry was a great young man and a great promoter. He put on a sale that would



ring your ears. He had the Playboy Bunnies there for the Banquet and for the sale they were passing out drinks. Everybody loved it and so when we came away, I told them if they could get that done with a cow, just think what we can do with a horse that's got some glamour to him. They thought it was a great idea and I proposed it to the Ohio Quarter Horse."

He continued, "They (Ohio Quarter Horse) didn't know what to think about that deal. We had figured that it would cost \$100,000 to get it started and all they could think about was if it went wrong, who was going to pay for it. So finally we had Jerry Litton come in and talk to our board of directors and still some of them didn't want to take the chance. We decided to have a meeting and that meeting would be conducted by Dr. Drake, who was the President of the Association and this meeting would decide whether to go ahead with the Congress."

"In the meantime, my son-in-law and I traveled out west and we visited every trailer manufacturer and big stud farm we could find to tell them about what we were trying to do. We got mixed emotions, but we got a lot of people that said they were going to come." Blair added, "Before we left, the board of directors told us that if we got \$10,000 before we got started,

they would go ahead with it. We didn't have \$10,000 in our pocket but we had commitments for a heck of a lot more."

"The stallion avenue, which I drummed up, was a big drawing card. They had their studs and they went with the idea of a stallion avenue to showcase their horse. We would sell them two stalls, one for the stud and the other for promotion of their stud and their farm," related Blair about how the horsemen accepted the idea of the stallion avenue at the Congress.

"The day before Dr. Drake was to have the meeting, some of the members got together and decided it was too much risk for the rewards to be received. They brought that into the meeting and it really disturbed me. I had put a lot of time and effort into trying to get it off the ground and they turned around and pulled something like that and it upset me," explains Blair about the tactics to stop the Congress.

He responded, "So at the last minute, after waiting around for about two hours, I just told them, 'If you don't want to do it, I'm going to do it and I don't want to hear a word from anybody about what takes place. But if you want to do it and you lose any money, I would pick up the loss, as I think this is an association type of deal and I mean an association like the Ohio Quarter Horse, because it is going to take a lot of volunteer help. Well this determined their vote to go ahead and do it.'"

Blair added, "The first year it made money, the second it didn't. We realized we were in the food business and when we got out of the food business, we have made money ever since."

**Blair is quick to tell you that his idea was a good one, but he is even quicker to add that the success came not from him but the volunteers that put it together.**

He stated it this way, "I knew it was going to be successful to a point, but I didn't know it was going to be what it is today. It is now the largest horse show and exposition in the world. I'm really proud of that and the Ohio Quarter Horse that has had so many people working all the time to make it a success. I thought at the time it was going to take a lot of volunteer labor and it still does. It has been that way for years. People standing in line wanting to volunteer and help."

He gave the following as an example of the dedication of those involved, "There is a young man here in Springfield that is in the water pump business. He attends every meeting and they have a meeting every month. He drives over there on his own time, pays for his own dinner and then spends the whole month of October at the Congress. He is the Traffic and Security Director. He spends all that time for the Ohio Quarter Horse and the All American Quarter Horse Congress."

The Congress has also given financial rewards that have been put to good use. Blair reports on these rewards, "We took up a collection one time for the President to buy a typewriter for his wife to type the minutes. But today the Ohio Quarter Horse is very wealthy and has an office in Richwood, Ohio that we built. We built the Celeste Center at the Ohio State Fair Grounds to the tune of \$3.5 million and then we turned the paperwork over to the Ohio State Fair. We also built the working area on the south side of that facility and the Ohio Quarter Horse paid for that. We remodeled the ole pig barn and made it into a horse barn. So they have been very successful thanks to the volunteer help and the All American Quarter Horse Congress."

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# The Folck Family Story

## Tim Folck & The All American Idea

Continued from page 15

more sales that gave him four Tattersall's Sales. The four Tattersall Sales and the Congress Super Sale make five major sales per year. Tim believes that a key to their success and ability to provide services to horsemen is that fact that they have five sales a year and not 12. He explained it this way, "Our philosophy is different because we have built our program around five sales a year and not a sale every month. We are committed to these five sales and putting a huge amount of time and energy into these sales. We do this to improve the services we offer and the quality of our sales in every step of the way. This allows us to pay more attention to our marketing and marketing promotions."

This statement certainly carries through when you examine several "ideas" that have been started by Tim. He revised the terms and conditions of the National Equine Sales Company to as he put it "modernize them and make them more explanatory." He believes that if the terms and conditions are more professional and clearly understood, then the buyer and seller will have an easier time doing business together and that promotes a healthy horse market.

Another interesting idea initiated by Tim is the NES Elite Sales Agent Network. The idea behind the Elite Agents Network comes from the Thoroughbred industry. As Tim put it, "The finest horses in the thoroughbred industry are sold at public auction. This can be done because of the legitimate business structure found in all and they follow a contractual format. This allows them to bring their highest end horses to the sale to be sold. The top breeders not only sell their horses but they are representing the smaller breeders as well. They have a structure where they charge a commission, a fee to sell, because people want to buy from someone that is reputable. This system allows the small breeder more exposure to sell their horse through a reliable agent."

He continued, "If you want to buy, you go through one of these reputable individuals and that would have a commission fee as well. This is why the thoroughbred sales are so successful. They have reputable 'agents' working for them and dealing with the high end of the industry. It not only worked in the thoroughbred, but it is used successfully in the Standardbred, Saddlebreds and Paso Fino as well."

"It is our desire through the Elite Sales Agent Network to encourage more of our quarter horse breeders to sell their high end horses at public auction and not through private treaty sales. This will allow the buyer a better opportunity to buy these top end horses by securing the services of a professional agent. We have set up on our web site an elite agents list. We have screened these people and we have a code of ethics and I've gotten permission through the AQHA that they follow the AQHA Professional Code of Ethics. All of the forms are on our web site for authorization to buy or sell."

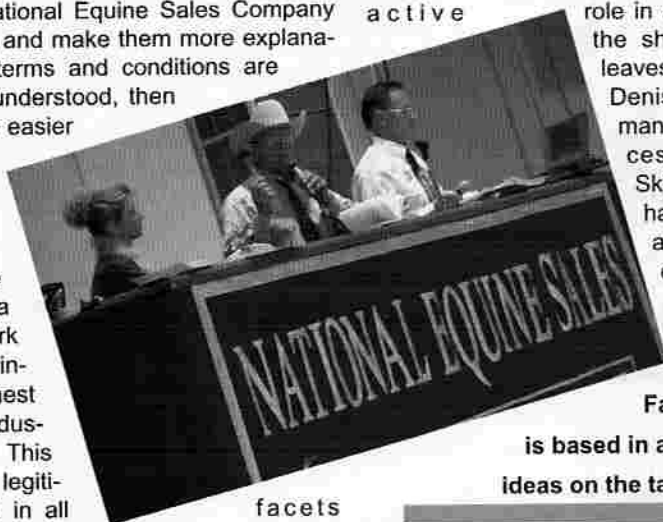
Tim went on to explain that the agent will provide or have available such services as sale conditioning, advertising, promoting and demonstrating representation to buy or sell the

horse. This will all be done for a set commission fee as well as training and or board fees. The big advantage is that this process will make commission fees more stable to those wanting to buy and/or sell horses. They know ahead of time what the fees will be and that fee can then be added above the purchase price. These fees are also in addition to the sales management fees and commission.

Tim believes that his "idea" will lend stability to the sales industry. But he readily admits that this system is new and that it will take time to get rolling. But that is a part of any idea. He implemented this network last fall and has found a 30% participation rate for his new system.

When discussing the horse industry, you get a clear idea that Tim Folck is a great supporter of the quarter horse industry with his own innovative ideas. He talks about his love of the race track, the show horse and the overall glamour of the quarter horse. Tim readily admits that he has never been heavily involved in showing horses but he still has a great love for this area of the industry. Even as a youth, he never did take an active

role in showing horses. He loves going to the shows and being involved, but he leaves the showing to his wife Denise. Denise has been showing horses for many years with a great deal of success. She is currently showing Skipafied. This 1993 mare and Denise have earned 161 Western Pleasure and Showmanship points. They have earned a Superior in Amateur Showmanship and an Amateur ROM.



facets

This allows them

**As we have seen, the Folck Family has been an idea family that is based in a strong work ethic to put those ideas on the table and fight for them.**

Tim related an interesting story about his grandfather Chester and an "idea" he had, "My grandfather bought an old airport 52 years ago for the county to turn it into a fair grounds. The first thing he wanted to do was build a sport and livestock complex. He wanted to have cattle events there as well as sporting events as all three of his sons were sports oriented. He couldn't ever get the county to do it. But I was fortunate to get involved about five years ago. Then three years ago, several of us put this project together and we built the Midwest Livestock Expo Center, a five million dollar complex at the Fair Grounds. It has a large covered arena and a big expo center. It is all state of the art and it is right on Interstate 70 about 45 miles west of Columbus. It opened on August 5th and it is 90 percent booked for 2005 and almost 50% booked for 2006. We will have the winter Tattersall Sale there."

Sometimes as we look back on our ideas, we see that they can be portrayed as our dreams. Blair Folck had an idea. That idea manifested itself into a dream that came true beyond his wildest imagination. It became the All American Quarter Horse Congress, the largest single breed show and exposition event in the world. Tim Folck has taken the reins as the next generation with some good ideas. He has even gone back to help fulfill a dream for his grandfather with the Midwest Livestock Expo. It is easy to see that the world needs good ideas and those ideas can play a major role in developing our industry. We see that Blair Folck's ideas have paid great dividends for the quarter horse industry and Tim is still providing ideas to make the horse world a better place to live. 