

2004

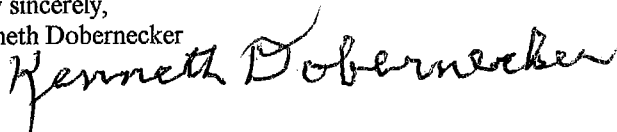
Kenneth Dobernecker  
Oakland, Iowa

The best part of maturity is all the stories and memories of the "good ole days". I was in seventh grade in 1939. I thought maybe I'd like to own a horse. The American Quarter Horse was starting to emerge as a breed and I thought perhaps I'd like to have one. My dad schooled me in a hurry and informed me that I would be riding my horse to school, a four mile trip, and that I would not want to ride "downhill" both directions. In short, an American Saddlebred was destined to be my new mount. She was a big chestnut mare that took care of me for the next two years. The winter days were really chilly, but we got along fine. I received my driver's permit in ninth grade, a set of wheels, and was able to drive to school from then on. My mare raised a beautiful foal, a filly that showed promise as a five gaited mount. I sent her to Max James Stables and she simply took to it. She lacked motion, but made up for it in her slow gait and rack. I guess that really initiated my interest in raising quality foals.

I have raised many fillies and colts in my adulthood, and have been fortunate to do some showing. The industry has changed a great deal, but nothing will ever erase the memory of "all those weekend" show "we" used to compete in. Every little town had a society show and all the exhibitors were the best of friends. All of us wanted to win, but we were always willing to help each other with training advice. I recall one such instance where Red Osler asked me to assist him with a good harness horse, a mare with excellent talent. He wanted me to smack her on the rump with a wet towel as he entered to ring....the rest was history. Jim and JoAnn Torrens, Judy Gauger, Loren James, R.T. Gould, Bob Whitlach, Bob McClure and Jack Whitmore and I go back some years. After the various shows, some of us "guys" would sit around and embellish our stories a bit. I guess some of it could have been considered bragging, but for the most part, it was just great fun!! We had so much in common. We loved the American Saddlebred horse, we loved competing and swapping stories and we all smelled the same. There is nothing like a little horse sweat and manure to bring a guy back to earth.

I am humbled by the honor that you have bestowed upon me. The Iowa State Fair Horseman's Hall of Fame is a wonderful organization and I am very moved to receive this recognition. I will now have another story to tell my friends and grandchildren. Thank you.

Very sincerely,  
Kenneth Dobernecker

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth Dobernecker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.