

Clarity Dressage – Clare Long



Wonderfully eclectic groups of horses call LaVigna Ranch home in the San Antonio Valley area of southern Petaluma. Clare Long is the resident dressage trainer at this lovely private facility. Clare's focus is individual attention to each horse and rider. Full and customized care and training are provided in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. The facility offers a 100' x 200' covered arena and an outdoor dressage short court, both with excellent footing. There are oversized and well-ventilated stalls, stalls with paddocks, indoor warm water wash racks, a real bathroom, and a gated entrance for security. "The facility is especially wonderful in the winter, because everything is conveniently located around the covered arena," says Clare. "The weather won't affect quality time spent with your horse."

LaVigna's full-care board offers many amenities, including seven-day-a-week grooming, graining, blanketing, scheduling of vet and farrier appointments, basic medical care, and so forth. All of the horses are turned out at least half of the day, every day. They are brought in for lunch and then most go out again for the afternoon. "It is very important to me that the horses are out as much as possible," Clare says.

With her bronze and silver USDF medals and 30 years of training/riding experience, Clare is now working her way to USDF

Gold. In 2004 she will be showing Amantiado at Intermediare I. This lovely 17.2 hand bay Hanoverian gelding is owned by longtime client Breen Jenkins.

This year, Clare is also competing with two young and talented Friesian geldings. Titan, owned by Bob, Nancy, and Mariah Durand, and Tsjibbe, owned by Bradley and Chris James, have both been doing exceptionally well. Of the five shows entered so far in 2004, Titan has won all of his classes and Tsjibbe has won most of his. In addition, Titan was high-point at the Flying Cloud Farm show in April; the Marin chapter show at Fairwind Farm in May (where Clare was awarded the Nancy L. Martin Perpetual trophy for the highest score of the day), and at the Sonoma chapter Shelley Siegel Memorial show held at the Santa Rosa fairgrounds in June. Tsjibbe was high-point at the Flying Cloud Farm show in May.

Clare has been enjoying Titan and Tsjibbe immensely. "They are both so much fun to ride and to be around," she says. "I am just loving the breed, and am looking forward to continuing up the levels with them." Although Clare has been showing the horses, Tsjibbe's owner Bradley still takes two lessons a week, and Titan's 12-year-old owner Mariah has already begun her competitive career with Titan at the Intro levels.

Clare has taken many students from



pre-training up through the levels, including some to Prix St. Georges and to schooling the Grand Prix movements. Breen Jenkins is competing with Amantiado at Fourth Level this year; has received her USDF Bronze medal, and is currently pursuing her Silver.

Clare's junior riders have excelled in the Junior Championships and in the USDF Junior and Horse of the Year standings. Jeniece Thomas, for example, was first in the Nation

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CLARITY DRESSAGE

CLARITY DRESSAGE AT LAVIGNA RANCH WITH TRAINER CLARE LONG

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*Clare Long, USDF Silver & Bronze medalist
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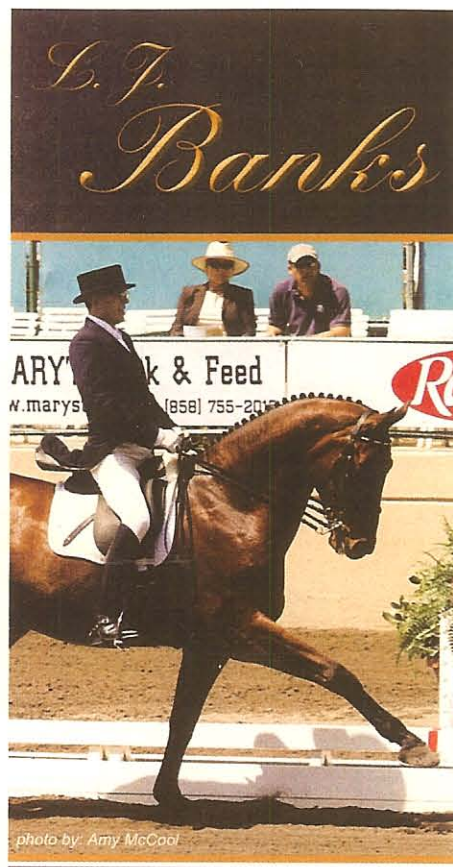


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Junior Rider, and her Lipizzaner gelding was first in the national Lipizzaner division at First, Second and Third levels. Junior student Lacey LaVigna has progressed from Training Level to PSG in just three years, and last year was awarded her USDF Bronze medal aboard Bravo, Breen Jenkins' Swedish Warmblood gelding. Lacey also received the highest score at Second Level in 2003 and the highest score at Fourth Level in 2004 at the Marin Chapter show at Fairwind Farm. Currently, Lacey is competing at PSG, actively pursuing her USDF Silver.

Clare stresses that it is not necessary to compete to board at LaVigna Ranch. "About half of my clients are serious competitors, and half are just learning about and enjoying dressage," she says. "There are also youngsters being started, and rehabilitation horses boarded here."

Also calling LaVigna home is Heather Pollard-Krause. Joining Clare in 2001, Heather began as a student but quickly advanced to assistant trainer. Heather specializes in rehabilitation of horses and is an integral and invaluable part of the team. Luis Lopez does all the daily barn work, is an excellent horse handler, keeps the barn neat and clean, and pays close attention to each horse's health and soundness.

Clare's training programs are flexible, ranging from one to five sessions a week, depending on the requirements of the horse and rider. Her approach is focused on consistency, solid foundations, and happy, willing horses. "All of the horses at LaVigna get lots of treats every day, before and after their work. They also get to roll after every training session. I believe that rolling is a wonderful reward, and is a great way for each horse to naturally adjust its body," adds Clare. "It is also very important to me that all the horses are enjoying their lives and careers."

Clare specializes in dressage training for horses of any breed or discipline, and at any level of training. She very much likes working with different breeds, which is evident by the variety of horses living at LaVigna Ranch. Clare has worked with and competed extensively on Swedish and Dutch Warmbloods, Hanoverians and Trakheners, as well as Friesians and Andalusians, Lusitanos, Lipizzaners, Arabs and Thoroughbreds.

Although space is limited at LaVigna Ranch, please feel free to call Clare at 707-824-4884 for more information or to arrange a visit.

