

## **My Special Arabian**

**2011**

### **C.V. JATIN MAHRUS "SMOOCH"**

It all started in the spring of 2000, my daughter Heather was 8 years old at the time and taking lessons with Dawn McCuen. We had just put Heather's first horse down due to illness; only having had the mare for seven months. We knew we needed to replace her with another horse. We received a call from John Harley, a retired school teacher and owner of an Arabian horse farm, who knew we were looking, so we gathered our trainer and off we went to John's farm. We arrived at the farm and met "Smooch," so named because he loves to give kisses. "Smooch" is a beautiful grey with big brown eyes and very friendly. After a brief ride by Heather and me we were convinced he was the one! We went home and slept on it as Dawn always advised, then the next week we went for a second ride, but took the horse trailer along knowing that we would be bringing "Smooch" home. Heather was worried and remarked, I hope the horse likes me! We took "Smooch" home that night to KA Equestrian Center, which would be his home for the next eight years.

Then our journey began. "Smooch" had no formal training and Heather rode him every day. We started going to many local shows and "Smooch" was taking champion at every show. We showed him at Devon for the pony show, and he took Heather from mini mini all the way to amateur owner. We went to several Arabian shows, where Heather showed in grooming and showmanship. Every parent's favorite! In addition, "Smooch" was shown in hunter pleasure, working hunter, and native costume - in which Heather was the youngest to compete. He took various championships at East Coast and in 2003 was high point gelding at East Coast. For four consecutive years "Smooch" was high point champion at Dillsburg, our favorite show because we would camp there for the whole week. For many years, "Smooch" took high point horse awards in PAHA, and Heather also as high point junior rider. In 4-H "Smooch" made it to Regional's in halter and working hunter, flat and teams. He even participated in our 4-H paper chase, a ten mile ride, which Heather really enjoyed. "Smooch" has carried all three of us at the same Arabian show. There was my youngest Chelsea doing pee wee 10 and under, Heather doing everything possible she could enter, and me in hunter pleasure AAO and even a little dressage. Although my girls have grown, Heather who is now 21 years of age still likes to saddle him up and go on trail rides. And currently at the ripe old age of 25, "Smooch" still does lessons every Thursday with the ladies at Dawn's farm, and has started a new career in dressage - doing intro and training level. He even took champion in intro level at the DVCTA show this year.

"Smooch" is a great example of the versatility, beauty, and kindness of the Arabian horse. He is truly man's best friend and will always be a part of our family and my favorite horse.

Submitted by Terry Frank