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[roadpony](#)
Administrator
★★★★★

USA
1893 Posts

Posted - 12/05/2005 : 12:03:56

This was just received from Mary Waickman...

It is with great sadness that I would like to report the passing of Jr. Seay. A founding member of the UPHA, and one of the first to break through the racial barriers in this industry, he was a peer with the great men of the past - the Bradshaws, Earl Teater, Walk-Trot Thomas, etc. I do not have funeral details, but am in contact with his wife and will let you know as soon as I do.

This is the passing of a great horseman, and for me, a truly great friend.

More details to follow...

Posted - 12/05/2005 : 12:34:43

That is terrible. I'm glad that he made it to Warren this year. My condolences to Mary and the family.

Shannon

It is not enough for a man to know how to ride; he must know how to fall. - Mexican Proverb

<http://community.webshots.com/user/srutan23>



[srutan](#)
Limit Member
★★★

USA
445 Posts

Posted - 12/05/2005 : 14:20:01

THAT IS VERY SAD TO HEAR - ONE OF MY GREATEST MEMORIES IS WATCHING HIM AND STONEWALL'S CRESENDO AT LOUISVILLE - HE WAS A GREAT HORSEMAN WHO DID ALOT FOR THE INDUSTRY AND WILL BE MISSED



[albert](#)
WGC Member
★★★★★

1222 Posts

[basquiat](#)
Academy Member

Posted - 12/05/2005 : 18:36:39



73 Posts

STRIKE A TROT

Open Member

USA
550 Posts

We are so sorry to hear about Jr.Seay. Mary - everyone from Sunset Farms sends you their Love and Condolences. I know that he was proud to be associated with you. We always enjoyed him and his abilities. He visited Don several times over the years. Thank you for letting us know. Pam

pamjb



Posted - 12/05/2005 : 21:26:28

Love and prayers to Jr. Seay's wife and family as well as his friends. I am blessed to have known this fine horse trainer and recall many conversations over the years with him. Mary, no words can change the way you feel today. May the pain ease in time and you remember all the good he left in your memory. Please let us know when the funeral plans are finalized as there are many who would like to know.

RIP Jr.
Johnna

Highpoint Saddlebreds

<http://community.webshots.com/user/pd89ace>

Posted - 12/07/2005 : 08:42:13

Just wondered if there are any plans yet on his funeral arrangements?

Highpoint Saddlebreds

<http://community.webshots.com/user/pd89ace>

Edited by - STRIKE A TROT on 12/07/2005 08:47:07



Posted - 12/07/2005 : 10:32:37

Mary Waickman

Starting Member

USA
39 Posts

Hello everyone...

It has been a hectic couple of days. Some details: Visitation for Jr's family is 11 - noon on Friday December 9th, at Stewart & Calhoun Funeral Home in Akron, Ohio, services immediately following. Burial at Lakewood Cemetary on Waterloo Road, I am not sure if there are to be graveside services or not, as I am not familiar with the customs of his church.

I have set up a Fund account, as the family is really struggling to pay all the bills and the funeral expenses. The account is the Jr Seay Memorial fund is being held at Western Reserve Bank. Anyone wishing more info about this Fund can contact me directly (MWaickman@aol.com or 330-721-7225)

We are trying hard to have the wonderful write up Linda White

did on him a few years ago for the American Saddlebred Magazine reprinted in the Akron Beacon Journal. We are also working on getting it reprinted for the other publications in this industry. If you are not familiar with his story, it is a true classic tale of someone pulling themselves up by their bootstraps to make something of themselves, when the social thinking of the time was almost prohibitive for doing so.

Thank you all, for your concern and best wishes, it means a lot to the family and to me...

Mary Waickman



[sit](#)

Open Member



USA

586 Posts

Posted - 12/07/2005 : 11:00:21



Thank you Mary.

There are a lot of wonderful photos of Mr. Seay on the web site www.blackhorsemen.com, including a lovely one of Ms. Waickman and Mr. Seay and one of Mr. Seay and Stonewall Crescendo.

I'm not sure, but Mr. Seay may have been the first African American to show at Lexington. He was the first I remember and it was with Stonewall Crescendo. The State of Ohio was out in front of the rest of the Saddlebred world in accepting African American trainers. Let me tell you, it was NOT accepted in Kentucky or most of the other states in the Midwest and South. Mr. Seay was a pioneer on this front. The greatest irony is that while the bigger Saddlebred world might not have accepted Mr. Seay at first, his horses did. We talk about how smart Saddlebreds are. Well, they have always been color blind. We still have a lot to learn from them -- it's too bad we didn't listen more in the old days.

We will always remember Mr. Seay and he is an inspiration for all of us.

-- Bill Marple

(I looked again at the Lexington photo of Mr. Seay and Stonewall Crescendo on the Blackhorsemen web site and my father and I are standing on the rail in the background. I have this same photo at home in a magazine. It is the only one I have of my father and me together at a horse show. It is a real personal treasure -- as was Mr. Seay driving that beautiful horse.)

Edited by - sit on 12/07/2005 11:54:45



[LeslieReyn](#)

Novice Member



USA

169 Posts

Posted - 12/07/2005 : 18:03:07



Anyone with stories or memories of Junior, please post them to this site. Mary will be compiling them for the family.

Leslie

Edited by - LeslieReyn on 12/07/2005 18:08:29

virtualasb@hotmail.com

Novice Member



USA

201 Posts

Posted - 12/07/2005 : 18:41:25   

Jr. Seay was very encouraging to me when I moved to Ohio. I brought Hayden Fox with me as a two coming three year old. I had started racking him and Jr. was my ground man when he wasn't working his own string. Anyone that knew Jr. knew whent the horse was right he would let out that unmistakable laugh of approval and say, "RIGHT THERE, YESSIR!" It was amazing to me that he went to dialysis 3 times a week and continued to pursue his passion in the barn. He never complained or let on that his conditions were getting in the way. And he did what the doctors told him without question. I am a nurse and this is RARE. This attitude and drive are what sustained him for as long as it did! Amazing! I am thankful to have had the opportunity to know such a person as Jr. Seay.

Wendy Lewis

Virtual Saddlebreds-Home of The Sky King
See His Babies at www.virtualsaddlebreds.com

Edited by - virtualasb@hotmail.com on 12/07/2005 18:42:44[AKalla](#)

Starting Member

USA

1 Posts

Posted - 12/07/2005 : 20:45:52   

Junior Seay was a part of my childhood. A good part. The memories are long lasting. Growing up in Pittsburgh, I was smitten with horses. After two seasons we found our way to Willowbrook Farm. It wasn't hard to find as those were heady times for Junior...Stonewall's Crescendo, Lotta Firefly, Wings of Fire, Sweet Deception, his World's Championships, that night at Lexington when he won not one but two classes, the first black man to do so!

I too looked at the photo taken at Lexington on the Black Horsemen web site. I hadn't seen that photo in years and I had forgotten that I am in the photo, fourteen years old, sitting in the front row smiling with pride at Junior driving the black stallion that was so charismatic.

I remember Junior's wonderful expressions, his funny superstitions, his great horsemanship. He teamed me with Lucky Colleen and I think of him often when I look at the big silver bowl we won in our first class, the juvenile five-gaited stake at River Ridge in 1971. It is now filled with dried rose petals from the garden.

How lucky one is to have great memories of special people.

Ann Kalla



[ceiling](#)
[unlimited](#)
 Open Member
 ★★★★★

523 Posts

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 00:38:47



I have many fond memories with Jr.when I was a young kid,when he was training horses at Scott Petry's place.If there was ever a man who truly loved horses,and had a special way with a horse...it was Jr.He has always been such an inspiration to me,and he was always so kind,gentle and such a good hearted man,to so many people.I have always cherished that quality about Jr.The first Saddlebred I ever owned and showed was a beautiful 5-Gaited Granddaughter of Stonewall's Crescendo,to whom Jr.was always very fond of.He always encouraged me,and he always offered to lend a hand at the shows whenever he was nearby.He was such a dear freind.It just breaks my heart to hear of his passing,and no words can describe how sadly he will be missed.

-Kelly Westphal Miller

"Don't leave spontaneity to chance" ~ Neil Peart

Edited by - ceiling unlimited on 12/08/2005 03:30:46



[aimhigher](#)
 Open Member
 ★★★★★

USA
 658 Posts

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 12:45:00



Jr. was also a great morgan trainer. He was very successful with a horse we had in common--black river thor.He really rode that horse masterfully. When I was a teenager Jr. Seay and Tom Butler was a regular at our table.I spent many a late night listening to them hash out every training idea and stories about how they do things and how they came up. These were great horseman who had great philosophies that they wanted to share with others.I wish I would have had the insight to have tape recorded those days because the stories and ideas I learned at my Dad's table(with a fifth of J&B set promptly in the middle of that table) are hilarious as well as educational. Jr. mentored are first outside trainer in those days--Jack Noble.Those were great days and quite full of history now.I also will never forget that for people who had come up in times of a great racial barrier--these were quite educated and insightful men of high character and of great conscience.They really cared that the world would not lose sight of the old ways completely and they hoped history would remember them. I could never forget either of them. They were both in my view truly unforgettable characters and very talented horseman!! treasure the lessons I was honored to learn from them at an early age. They made a big difference in how I learned to work horses as well.

Edited by - aimhigher on 12/08/2005 13:23:26



[aimhigher](#)

Open Member



USA

658 Posts

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 13:07:19



I just wanted to add that the memory of those men is forever wrapped up with the memory of my own Dad(He is now suffering the horrors of alzheimers disease and in a nursing home which due to his marital situation none of us kids can do a thing about getting him out of there) But Jr. and Tom will always be a good memory my family has of my dad--my dad with his fiddle and ideas about breeding the next great one---those two men with there knowledge all laughing and telling there stories--my dad also had quite humble beginnings being born in 1928 poor -- in the old South--in Tennessee--for people racially divided they were ahead of there time because they enjoyed each others company and knew instinctively how much they really shared in common and how much we all need each other. I miss them all. They are my good christmas story this season.I can hear there laughter and those stories in my ear like it was yesterday.characters each and every one!On a lighter note--one time my brother and I got free BB King tickets and went to the concert downtown Akron at the civic theatre--well--we were the only white people there and in those days we were rethinking our decision to use the tickets when out of the crowd came Jr. He laughed so hard to see us two at that concert and quickly motioned us over as with him and we all had a big laugh about the two white folk who come to see bb king!--the only white folk for miles.....

Edited by - aimhigher on 12/08/2005 13:29:51

[equit8er](#)

Moderator



USA

1033 Posts

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 18:00:21



This was a letter from ASHA:

Legendary black horseman Junior Seay mourned

Lexington, Kentucky – William R. “Junior” Seay passed away Monday, December 5 after a long illness.

Junior Seay was born in Lebanon, Tennessee on June 28, 1930 and lived in Akron, Ohio for 44 years. When Seay was 12, his grandfather sent him to Albertville, Alabama to train horses for W.S. “Doc” Hewett. There, Seay worked with such horses as Noble Knight and ponies Fireball, Chief’s Delight and Slick Chick. After working with Hewett, Seay returned home shortly to work with his grandfather. Then, Seay was recruited to work for the successful Saddlebred trainer Taft Johnson in Detroit, Michigan. While in Michigan, Seay met his wife of 51 years, Pauline. Seay earned a great reputation with trainer after trainer for developing young horses who went on to World’s Championships including CHPenny’s Stonewall, Feudist Star, Tambarina Supreme, Supreme Irene, CHSupreme Airs, CHGlamorous Lucretia and many others. Seay used all of those great skills and experience to become the first black man to win a class at the Lexington Junior League Horse Show in 1970 with CHStonewall’s Crescendo in the

Fine Harness Stallions and Geldings Stake. Preceded in death by his parents and two brothers, he leaves to cherish his memory his loving and devoted wife of 51 years, Pauline; daughters, Carol Seay, Connie Shinholster (Saleem) Abdul-Hakeem, Rosetta Peters and Barzella Seay; adopted son, Ronald Jackson; brothers, JB (DJ) of New Haven, Mich., Sammy Lee, Edward (Wilma), Kenneth, all of Bellwood, Tennessee; sisters, Juanita (Ralph) Payne of Haines City, Florida, Lucy Mae (George) Phillips, Cornelia Seay, all of Lebanon, Tennessee; nine grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren and a host of other family members and friends. Funeral services for Seay will be Friday, December 9 at 12 p.m. at Stewart & Calhoun Funeral Home; interment at the Lakewood Cemetery. Condolences may be sent to Springhill Apt., 1221 Everton Dr., Apt 910, Akron, OH 44307. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be sent to Western Reserve Bank, c/o Junior Seay Memorial Fund, 405 Medina Rd., Medina, OH 44256.



LeslieReyn
Novice Member
★★

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 21:53:54



USA
169 Posts

Keep the stories coming! Like Aimhigher I wish I had a tape recorder when Junior got rolling about the good old days. I had ridden with his cousin, Charlie Hatcher, when I was a kid and met Junior several times at shows back in the 1960s. They would harrass each other about this horse or that horse... usually with a bottle of something being passed back and forth. It was finding out that Junior was working with Mary Waickman that brought me back to horses in 2002 after 40 years of not riding at all.

Charlie died just about a year ago. They are probably up there right now debating whether it was right to trim Belle of the Dell or leave her in Fine Harness.

Leslie



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virtualasb@hotmail.com

Novice Member



USA

201 Posts

Posted - 12/08/2005 : 23:07:44

<http://www.legacy.com/OHIO/Guestbook.asp?Page=Guestbook&PersonId=15888499>

To send condolences to the family go to this site.

Virtual Saddlebreds-Home of The Sky King
See His Babies at www.virtualsaddlebreds.com

[LeslieReyn](#)

Novice Member



USA

169 Posts

Posted - 12/10/2005 : 07:46:34

The Akron Beacon Journal carried another story with more history on Junior yesterday.

Horse trainer broke through racial barriers

Akron's William Seay became legend in sport by making champions

By Marilyn Miller

Beacon Journal staff writer

<http://www.ohio.com/mld/ohio/news/13366979.htm>

If you miss the article on the Akron Beacon Journal site, I have posted it to Mary's site.

<http://www.marywaickmanstables.com/obits/Junior2.html>

[286vs](#)

Academy Member



Posted - 12/10/2005 : 09:40:13

59 Posts

Jr. will be missed. Don't forget about El Cid, a Walk Trot horse he had in the 70s. In my mind's eye I see the open classes at River Ridge in the 70's that were filled as there were more open horses shown during that time. Those classes are filling up over the Rainbow Bridge to which we send thanks for our wonderful memories.

**286vs**

Academy Member



Posted - 12/10/2005 : 09:41:44

Cloudy memory...I believe that was the 60's.

59 Posts

LLAVERY

Starting Member

Posted - 12/10/2005 : 19:14:22

USA

18 Posts

I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to work for JR in 1967 & 1968. I rubbed and was allowed to exercise Crescendo and several other World's Champions. I also worked for many other "famous" trainers in my life. There was no one with the work ethic and skills that JR displayed and was able to pass on. As a competitor, he could do everything he could think of in the ring to beat you. When the class was over he would be the first gentleman to congratulate you if you were lucky enough to beat him. The worst horse in his barn got the same treatment or better than the best one. The "poorest" client got the same treatment as the "richest". Bottom line, he loved a horse like no one I have ever met. (He never met a horse he didn't like.) They will tell you he broke ground for his race. That, of course is a true statement, The fact is he was a great horseman that loved them and the industry. I have known him for 46 years and race never was part of his equation. The industry has lost a great horseman and a very great friend.

**LeslieReyn**

Novice Member



Posted - 12/11/2005 : 07:46:51

USA

169 Posts

Thank you, Lonnie. You hit the nail on the head. Junior broke ground for his race because of the gentleman he was, not due to any intent on his part. He truly loved horses and was content to be in the background if necessary as long as he could work with them. I never heard him utter a single word of discontent. All he ever said was "That's the way things were back then."

Junior never forgot a horse. He continued to follow the careers of every horse with which he was ever associated. The last couple of years he talked often of wanting to see Berringer Red show. He wasn't able to make those nights at the Cleveland Classic. It meant a lot to him to finally see Jenny ride Berringer at Warren this year. Even in the rain, sitting in a car at the rail, he was as happy as I've ever seen him. I'm so glad his wish was granted.

I'm sure he's up there right now with a whole herd of his former charges around him.



Nic Nac 92
Starting Member

Posted - 12/13/2005 : 11:52:49   

8 Posts

Junior was a true gentleman in the sport of champions. This talented horseman first captured my attention when I was a young rider in Minnesota. My sister and I were the only African Americans riding and showing American Saddlebreds in our area. We were so excited to see another black person riding and training the horses we so loved. We were very inspired to reach for our own dreams of great horsemanship by reading about Junior's successes in the "horsey" magazines.

Although I would only meet Junior once in my life at the River Ridge horse show, his legacy and dedication to the Saddlebred world will always be remembered. Heaven got a great one the day Junior was called.

Nicole Foster-Briscoe



Mary Waickman
Starting Member

Posted - 12/13/2005 : 13:43:18    

USA
39 Posts

Thank you, all, it means a lot. I am putting together notebooks of all the pictures we have collected, and wonderful memories you all have shared. One of these notebooks will be given to Jr's wife.

Sincerely,
Mary Waickman



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