



Three nights of the Fantasia Show saw the Percheron six with Sam and Kellie Rettinger performing to a full house.

Our Spring "Affaire"

By Kellie Rettinger

Sam and Kellie Rettinger of Whispery Pines Percherons of Kingsville, Ohio, and the Percheron Horse Association of America Education and Charitable Fund were asked to present at this year's Spring Ohio Equine Affaire. The Equine Affaire is North America's, Premier Equine Expo. The event, hosted at the Ohio State Fairgrounds, was held April 12th-16th. Equine Affaire is attended by hundreds of thousands of horse lovers, hosting numerous breeds of horses and drill teams worldwide.

Whispery Pines participated in numerous clinics, performances, and in-hand presentations over this four-day Equine Extravaganza.

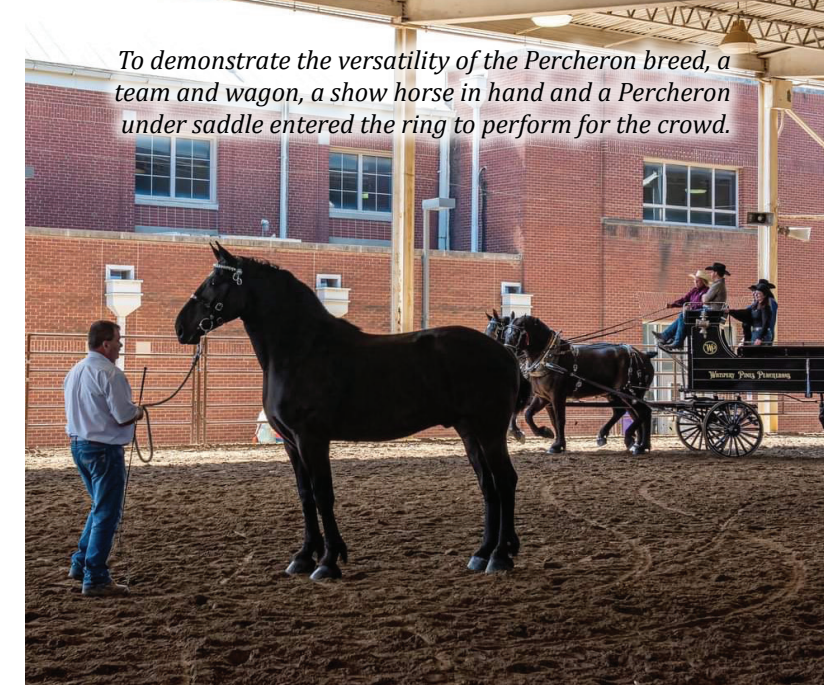
For three nights, Whispery Pines performed for the Fantasia Show. We were delighted that two nights were a sold-out performance in the Taft Coliseum. The evening Fantasia performance is an exciting musical celebration of the horse. Whispery Pines displayed a six-horse hitch in the ring,

accompanied by a six-horse hitch of Haflingers to the music from Queen. Docking, figure eights, and fanning were all part of showing the versatility and maneuverability of this beautiful Percheron Hitch. After each show, one of the horses returned to the coliseum for a meet and greet with the crowd after the show. At this time, fans could get up close and personal for pictures and autographs with the driver, Sam Rettinger, and a lead horse of the six-horse hitch.

During the day, Whispery Pines and the PHAoA Education and Charitable Fund were all about the education of the large black draft horse. Over the show's four days, Whispery Pines participated in three breed demos. The demonstrations involved a team hitched to the wagon, riding one of the Percherons, and a Percheron in hand for the presentation to an enthusiastic crowd. On Friday and Saturday, we also held two clinics. Using your



Students were offered a choice of driving the single with Kellie or a team with Sam Rettinger during the 2 hour Drive a Draft clinics held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.



To demonstrate the versatility of the Percheron breed, a team and wagon, a show horse in hand and a Percheron under saddle entered the ring to perform for the crowd.

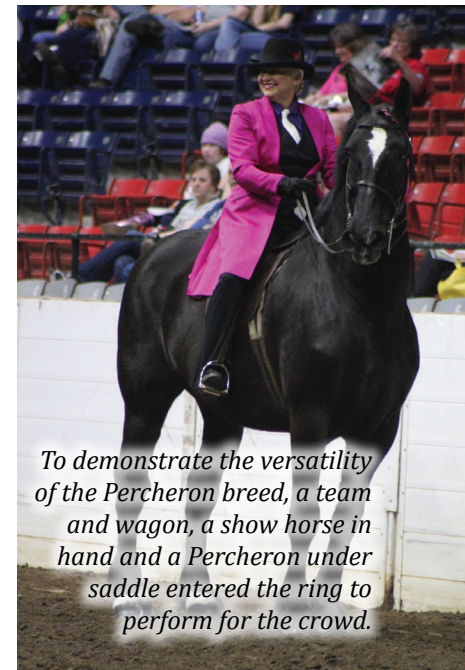
draft horse for chores around the farm drew a crowd that asked many relevant questions depending on whether the person owned a single or a team.

Showing your draft horse in hand was the second of three clinics we presented, which was also well attended. The attendees were encouraged to come to the barn after the clinics to meet all eight of the Percherons stalled in the breed pavilion, where we also had a large Percheron display set up.

What really "took the cake" at this prestigious event was the program called Drive-a-Draft. It was the chance to drive one or two horses from Whispery Pines Percherons with either Sam or Kellie one-on-one. It was a program that touched many people's lives. No matter your experience level, whether you had driven a horse before or not, you could drive one of the horses from the six-horse hitch that performed in the evening Fantasia Show. We had an overwhelming response to this program, with signups starting in the early morning as soon as the doors opened. Drive-a-Draft booked up in less than one hour for our two-hour time slot later in the day. Whispery Pines reached almost 40 people each day, having to extend the time to accommodate every signed-up person who wanted the chance to drive.

PHAoA Education and Charitable Fund Trustee Mary Ellen Williams headed up this daily event taking the lines to ensure everything ran smoothly with the signup and the program participants. The most significant difficulty was turning so many people away. Each day of the driving clinic started with introductions to basic driving and how the horses respond to commands. The participants then had to choose between driving the team or a single horse.

This program puts a smile on everyone's face while providing an experience of a lifetime. Working with people of all ages and backgrounds was a wonderful feeling for horse owners. Whispery Pines Percherons is looking forward to doing more of this in the future, and we hope to continue showing these beautiful Percheron horses.



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Kellie Rettinger demonstrates the proper way of holding the lines to each student before they start ground driving the single gelding in the ring with the instructor close at hand.