

"Blind Love"

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Written by: Mandy Boggs May 21, 2014

Tied to a trailer waiting to head off to her next home was a 14 year old QH mare at the Sugarcreek Horse Sale. Rich offered the buyer \$50 more than he paid and the rope attached to her halter was in his hand. Rich thought she looked like a decent thing, maybe she could be a trail horse and serve some purpose better than this auction may have had destined for her. Time went by and Rich found himself at a loss for words at the buttons & training this mare had. She was not some throw away horse. This mare was someone's well trained show horse than somehow fell thru the cracks. Betty, who has worked for Rich for nearly thirty years, had been looking for a horse for her granddaughters for quite some time. They had finally given up and decided to wait until the girls were older. As fate would have it, Rich told Betty maybe the kids could try this new mare. She seemed quiet, sweet, willing, and safe enough for some kids to ride around. A few days later the mare not only had two little girls to call her own, but a pretty new name, "Bella". Bella loved the girls, Lauren age 7 and Ashley age 9. Before you could blink they were going to shows...and winning.

Not too long into their success Bella started having issues in one of her eyes. After extensive exams and trips to Ohio State, an ulcer on her left eye, despite endless efforts to fix it, caused Bella to become fully blind in that eye. The girls lost a year of showing while Bella learned to adjust to her blindness. Now, a year later, no one would ever know that the little mare couldn't see everything around her. She struts into the ring without hesitation, completes her showmanship patterns without a step out of place, and comes home show after show with two smiling little girls and a rainbow of ribbons.

Lauren and Ashley recently competed at the Youth Show in Columbus, Ohio. Lauren won ribbons in Walk Trot 9 yo, was 2nd in Western Showmanship, called back for the championship class where she won Reserve Champion, was 2nd in English Hunter Equitation, Reserve Champion, and won random placings in other classes as well. Ashley won ribbons in the 11 yo classes. She was 7th in Western Showmanship, 6th in QH Pleasure, 3rd in English Showmanship, and 4th in English Hunter Equitation. Many of these classes had nearly 40 horses & riders competing, many of these horses very fancy western pleasure mounts.

The girl's mother, Cherie, cannot say enough wonderful things about what this mare has done for her daughters. She is truly a backyard type of horse, is treated like part of the family, yet can go anywhere, in any class, and come home with ribbons. She can go from one ring with one daughter, rush back, change tack, and walk into the next ring with the other daughter all day long. Bella loves her girls and takes care of them every day.

You don't always need a trainer or fancy horse to get you where you want to go. Sure it helps, but sometimes just having love for a horse and determination to get you to the top is all you need. Sometimes it just takes a special horse and two little girls to lead the way.

Congratulations Lauren & Ashley, proud Mom Cherie, and proud Grandmother Betty!

(written by Mandy Boggs - photos courtesy of the family)