

Gary Raak

Pilot Point, Texas

Over the years, Minnesota native Gary Raak has made an impact on the industry through his breeding program, youth support, formation of futurities and his role with the Appaloosa Pleasure Horse Association.

Gary saved to buy his first Appaloosa, Chief Joseph Hi-Spot, when he was 14, won his first National Championship at 16 in Springfield, IL, purchased land and built a barn when he was 22 and the six box-stalls he started with soon grew into a 125-stall operation with six full-time employees to help with the breeding and showing. At one time he stood four stallions. One of those was Abdull's Pok-A-Son who won the National Western Stock Show in Denver, CO, in Western Pleasure, was National Champion in Halter in Syracuse, NY, and became a leading sire. The most influential horse he campaigned was the blanketed 1980 stallion by Skipa Star (QH), out of She'll Do II named Rock Star.

Rock Star impacted a generation of performance and halter Appaloosas and was awarded an ApHC Performance Sire Certificate. His get were so competitive that Gary formed the Rock Star Syndicate in 1985. Of his 530 foals, 320 of them amassed a combined 8555.5 points, 41 Bronze and two Silver Medallions, six Superior Achievement Certificates, and numerous other accolades.

In 2003 Gary received the Youth Supporter Award from the Appaloosa Youth Association in appreciation for his ongoing generosity, and in 2012 the Minnesota Horse Council voted him Horse Person of the Year in honor of his longstanding regional involvement. Gary continues to breed, show, and sell champion Appaloosas, and to sponsor and support the breed at both the regional and national level. In recognition of his lifelong commitment, the ApHC elects Gary Raak to the Hall of Fame.

