

Written by Cheryl Erpelding
Wednesday, 01 June 2016 06:19

Veteran San Juan Capistrano hunter/jumper program keeps pace with demand for quality training.

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When trainer Carole Willner-Hansen learned that Kelli DiGioia Bautista was available last November, she approached Kelli about joining her well -established hunter/jumper training business in San Juan Capistrano. Carole, originally from Massachusetts, has been working in Orange County since 1988 and is well respected by her peers. She was ecstatic to add Kelli to her team. “Kelli is an extremely talented rider and trainer who brings a fresh perspective, great attitude, and a ton of positive energy - the clients love her!”



Kelli comes to Wilmont Farms from San Diego, where she owns and operates her own business, KDB Training Stables. She started riding at the age of 6 at Foxfield with Nancy Turrill and JoAnn Postel and was a member of the famous Foxfield Drill Team. As a junior rider, Kelli rode with Nick, Jenny and Kost Karazissis at Far West Farms. Her accomplishments include winning the Rosewood Medal Finals, and reserve champion in the PCHA Medal Finals.

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Throughout her junior years, Kelli consistently placed in medal finals both locally and nationally and earned many year-end championships in the PCHA and LAHSA. In 1994, Kelli finished third in the USET Talent Search Finals. That same year, she was reserve champion in the WCE Finals and competed back East under Karen Healey at the AHSA and Maclay finals. Kelli finished her junior years working with Richard Spooner, with whom she began to learn the art of training and preparing horses for competition.

Another integral part of the Wilmont Farms team is Jennie Bershon from Maryland. Jennie spent her junior years with Lee Flick and Tony Workman, focusing mainly on the hunters and equitation divisions. She acquired numerous championships on the East Coast and is a soft-spoken, beautiful rider as well as an excellent instructor.

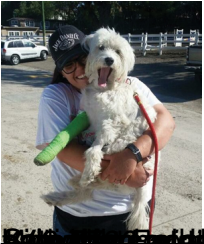
Jennie has been with Carole for 10 years and is a mainstay for the business. Carole can't imagine Wilmont Farms without Jennie. Her care, approach, and true passion for the horses is apparent on a daily basis. Carole says the clients and the horses "adore" Jennie.

Wrapping up the team is Tiffany Herzog, a new addition in 2015. Tiffany has a strong medical background and was brought on board as the barn manager, head groom and overall "girl Friday." "She keeps us all completely organized," says Carole, laughing. "She is a tremendous asset to the business and we all rely upon her to help maintain the day-to-day operations at Wilmont."



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