

Dear Stud-reader



Above top: Martina Gates photographing a herd of horses in Iceland

Above: Thórunn Kristjánsdóttir with stallion, Sleipnir frá Hrafnhólum

What an exciting year it has been! This time last year, we were going to press with our first StudBook, without knowing how it would turn out, nor how it would be received, but once it got into our reader's hands, the response was very encouraging! Some of our advertisers, studvertisers, and readers admitted that they were impressed at the high quality of the magazine and its contents. I'm not one to toot my own horn, but I was very proud and happy to hear such reactions, because it would only help the Icelandic horse.

When Martina and I traveled to Iceland last summer to work on multiple projects, including spreading the StudBook word, my fellow Icelanders were amazed when we handed them a copy. They were surprised to see a whole StudBook for North America, and directly connected with that, they were absolutely speechless to see the number of stallions that are to be found here. Not only were they impressed by the quantity, but they didn't expect to see so many first prize stallions, and stallions with good bloodlines. They were all very intrigued, and what followed were lively discussions about different stallions and mares that reside on our shores.

In putting together this 2011 StudBook, it was unfortunate that not everyone wanted their stallions listed. We understand that it has been a tough economy, that some stallions have passed away or been gelded, but for those that dropped out this year, we did get a number of new stallions in. This year, we also offered full page studvertising for first prize stallions. Our thinking was that this would allow the stallion owners to give more information about their stallion, show more pictures of him and or some of his offspring. This full page concept was well received, and it turned out nicely in the layout.

We were initially going to ask our readers to subscribe (in a way), and pay for the mailing cost, but Martina and I changed our minds early last fall. To us, it was more important to get this magazine into the hands of all of the Icelandic horse community in North America. The result was another labor of love on our behalf, but isn't that the way everything goes in this horse business?!

Martina and I got excited, and a little carried away (an understatement), when it came to this year's articles. But there were just so many breeding related topics that we felt we needed to share with you! Starting in 2011, The StudBook will be awarding the highest judged young horse in North America with a certificate and a trophy (see article on page 11). As a form of full disclosure, even though Martina and I own this magazine, you can bet that we'll also be competing for this award – it's so darn good looking!

We have an article by International FEIF Breeding Judge, Barbara Frische, about her young horse assessments in the last two years. As well as an article about some of the best breeding horses throughout history, and what made them special. Following that article, we have an overview of the recent scoring changes by FEIF, and we examine if these are good or bad changes.

Barbara Frische was kind enough to pen another article for us about the spirit and character of our horses. I personally think that the Icelandic horses' character is one of the things that makes it truly unique from other horses, so this is quite interesting.

We end our articles with the longest one: interviews with the six leading breeding farms in North America. We didn't spare them when it came to the questions either. We asked them some serious questions, and this article gives you great insight into these breeders' brains – we picked them for you!

We would again like to thank all of our supporters, studvertisers, and advertisers, because without you this magazine wouldn't be possible. We'd also like to thank our diligent readers. We hope that you will have a great breeding season, and we look forward to seeing the young horses at their assessments, the older horses at the breed evaluations, and all of the breeders, trainers, and enthusiasts at all of these events. Happy reading, and riding!

– Thórunn Kristjánsdóttir