

# 16 THE INVESTER

**Endowed with overall balance  
and powerful hindquarters,  
he was built to move.**

Heidi Nyland

**POINTED FIRST TOWARD A CAREER** as a halter horse, The Investor seemed destined to remain within that realm. And, while he and his offspring did well in that event, it soon became apparent that the stallion's true calling would be as a rail horse.

Endowed with overall balance, a powerful stifle, well-rounded croup and strong hocks, he was built to move.

The Investor, a 1969 sorrel stallion by Zippo Pat Bars and out of Hank's Peppy

Lou, was bred by Eldon England, Oklahoma City, Okla.

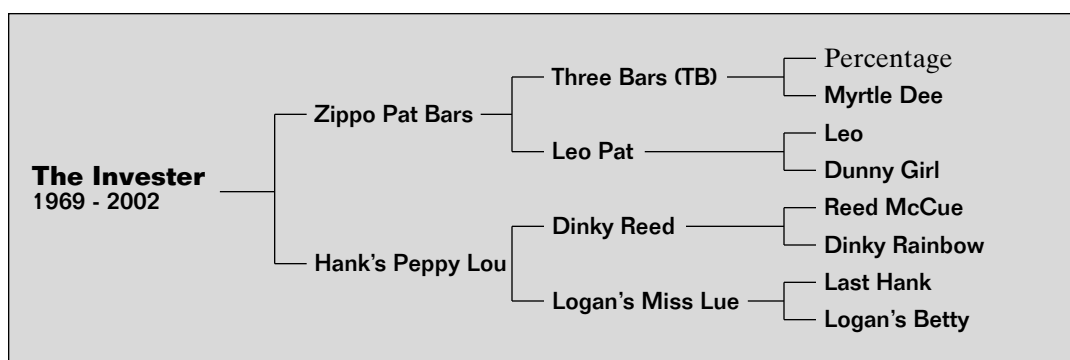
Zippo Pat Bars, a 1965 chestnut stallion by Three Bars (TB) and out of Leo Pat by Leo, had been purchased by Paul Curtner of Jacksboro, Tex., to cross on his Poco Pine mares.

The AAA-rated racehorse's first foal crop hit the ground in 1969. Among its 12 members were The Investor and Zippo Pine Bar. Both colts would go on to achieve legendary



PHOTO BY DALCO

The Investor – one of the pleasure industry's first great sires – is enshrined in both the AQHA and NSBA Halls of Fame.



sire status and, in effect, serve as each others' most formidable breeding pen rivals.

## A Well Thought-Out Plan

The Investor first entered the show ring as a halter prospect named Hank Lou Bars. An up-and-coming young showman named Jerry Wells watched from the stands as the then-70-something England showed the sorrel weanling colt at the 1969 Oklahoma State Fair.

While the youngster did not place well in the class, Wells knew he had to have him. He followed England out of the show pen and asked him if he would sell the young horse.

"I thought he was the hand-made, prettiest colt out there," Wells recalled. "He had a very pretty head, a pretty neck, and about as pretty a hip and croup as you could put on one. And he had a nice stifle. He didn't carry a humongous gaskin or hind leg, but it fit him. He had correct feet and legs and he was made with overall balance.

"I asked England what he'd want for him," he continued, "and he quoted me a price. The biggest old tears came out of his eyes when I said I'd take him.

"I asked if he was sure he wanted to sell him. He said he didn't want to, but thought he should. The colt was going to be a yearling soon, and England didn't think he'd be able to handle him."

Buying the young stud for a modest \$3,500 was an investment that would

**Halter and Performance Record:**  
Open Performance Register of Merit; AQHA Champion;  
Superior Halter; AQHA Hall of Fame Horse.

### Progeny Record:

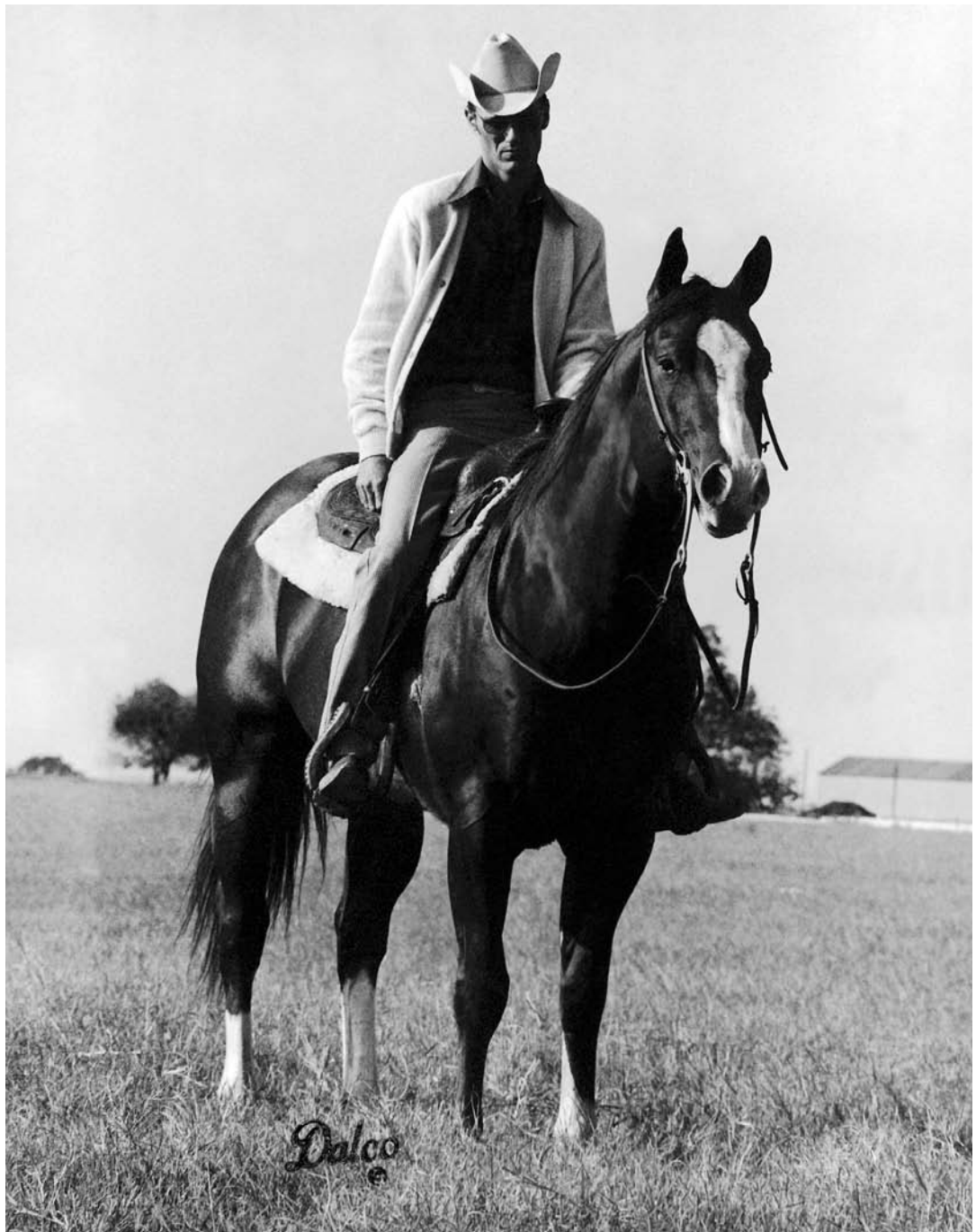
Foal Crops: 29	Performance Point-Earners: 687
Foals Registered: 1,163	Performance Points Earned: 21,029
AQHA Champions: 11	Performance Registers of Merit: 341
Amateur Champions: 1	Superior Performance Awards: 143
Youth Champions: 4	World Champions: 4
Halter Point-Earners: 158	High-Point Winners: 3
Halter Points Earned: 1,476	NSBA Earnings: \$313,220
Superior Halter Awards: 4	

jump-start Wells' horse-handling career. The native Oklahoman would go on to secure a firm reputation as a horseman capable of finding the proverbial "diamonds in the rough." Among the other legends he is credited with discovering and/or owning are Sonny Dee Bar, Te N' Te, Impressive and Conclusive (see chapter 18).

But Wells didn't keep the England-bred colt long enough to show him. Just two months after taking the youngster home to his new property and half-finished barn, Wells found a buyer for him.

"I knew I probably wouldn't have him that long because he was sure stud material," he said. "Plus, I was going into business for myself then. My barn was just about finished. I had room for a few horses in it, but I had to sell the new ones. I didn't have any place to keep him."

In December of 1969, George Pardi of Fredericksburg, Texas, was in the market for a new horse. He asked Jack Benson to



While owned by George Pardi, Fredricksburg, Tex., The Investor was shown by trainer George Benson to an AQHA Championship and Superior halter award.

find a perfect riding horse for him; an older horse ready to work under saddle. Two years earlier, Benson had bought Three Storms from Wells on Pardi's behalf. The horse had been a racehorse and Pardi successfully showed him to his AQHA Championship.

Unfortunately, Three Storms died soon after Pardi purchased him. Benson and Pardi were happy with Wells' horse selec-

tion and went back to him for a replacement horse.

"Jack called looking for another horse for Pardi," Wells said. "He wanted an older horse he could get going under saddle. I had The Investor. I told him all about him. He said he wanted an older horse, but he'd look at him. I told him, if you look at him, you'll buy him. I priced him at \$15,000. That's what Pardi gave."



Here's a nice circa late 1970s shot of three men who were instrumental in The Investor's development as a top performance sire. From the left, Jerry Stanford and Brad McCamy are mounted on a pair of young Investors and Jack Benson is astride of "the old man."

PHOTO BY JIM KEELAND, COURTESY QUARTER HORSE JOURNAL



Vestida Moneca, a 1973 sorrel mare by The Investor and out of Muneca Mia, earned a Superior in western Pleasure.



Wells added that The Investor went to the right place in a deal that was good for everyone involved.

“That little rascal went a long way toward getting my barn finished,” he said. “That was a lot of money at the time. And, he found his niche. I might not have done all that with him. I would have focused on showing halter. It worked out well for everybody.”

In the short time between the Oklahoma State Fair and December 12, when Pardi signed for The Investor, Wells took time for one more thing. He changed the young stallion’s name.

At the time, Wells considered the horse a solid and well-planned investment. Little did he know that when he changed the 8-month-old’s name, he established a theme that would identify Investor-bred horses for years.

“Hank Lou Bars just didn’t fit him,” Wells recalled. “I didn’t like that name at

all. He was such a pretty son of a gun to have a name like that. I don’t remember how we came up with The Investor, but I knew his name had to be changed.”

With his new name and owner, The Investor headed to Texas.

## Texas Unlimited

At the Pardi ranch, trainer Benson quickly bonded with the horse he nicknamed “Baldy.” Under his care and conditioning, The Investor earned Superior halter horse status and was on his way to becoming an AQHA Champion.

Benson knew he had to keep his prized horse when Pardi dispersed his stock in 1973. Owner and trainer worked out a plan. Benson would buy The Investor for \$25,000, paying \$5,000 down and the remainder over time. Benson moved his training operation and his newly purchased horse to Irvin

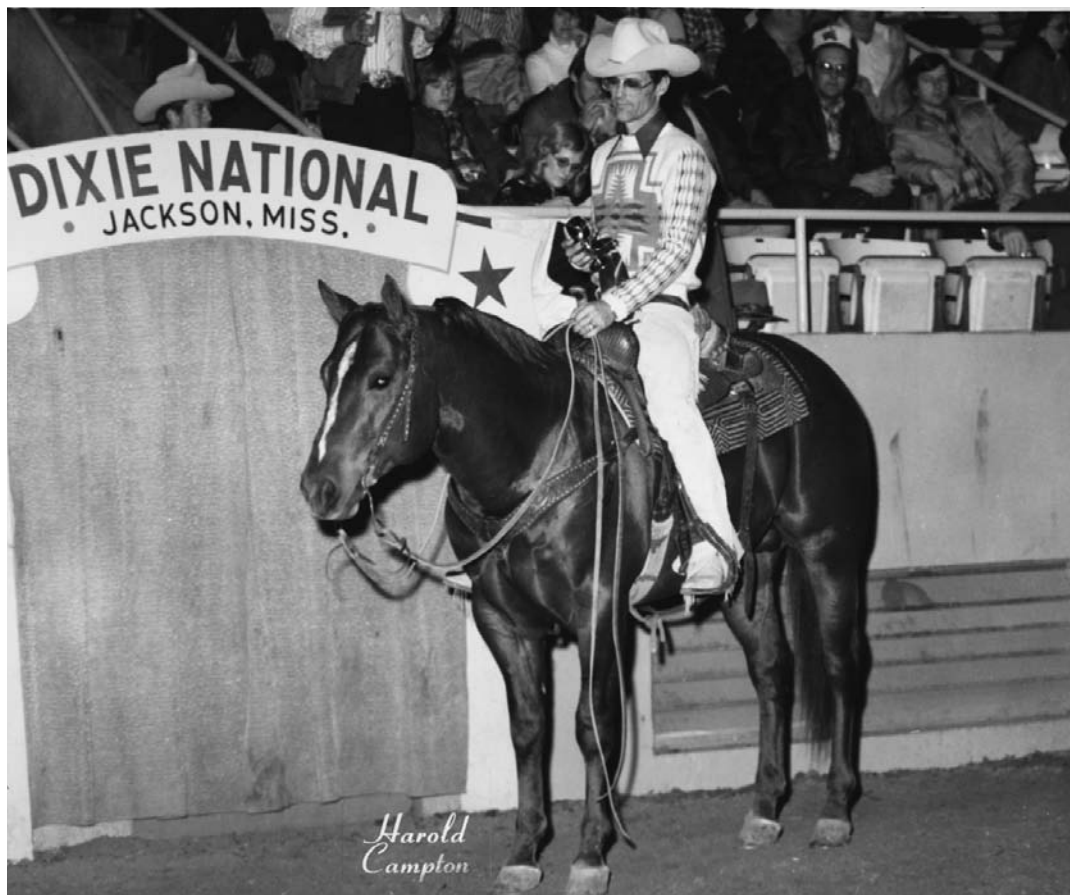


PHOTO BY HAROLD CAMPION, COURTESY QUARTER HORSE JOURNAL

Vester Vision, a 1975 sorrel stallion by The Investor and out of Miss Pocket Money, was an AQHA Champion and earned a Superior in western pleasure.

Catchman's ranch in Bellville, Texas. There, Benson stood The Investor and shared the profits with his landlord.

The move introduced Benson to new friends who would be instrumental in The Investor's future. Future co-owner Brad McCamy first saw The Investor while working at Catchman's. "He was running out in the pen," McCamy remembered. "Even if you didn't know much about horses, you'd know there was something special about him. He just had that presence."

McCamy began working for Benson a year later. He watched Benson's special bond with the stallion he worked with daily, the stallion McCamy called "Big Daddy."

"I never saw anybody else ride him," McCamy said. "Then Jack went away and asked me to ride him so he wouldn't be so fresh when he got

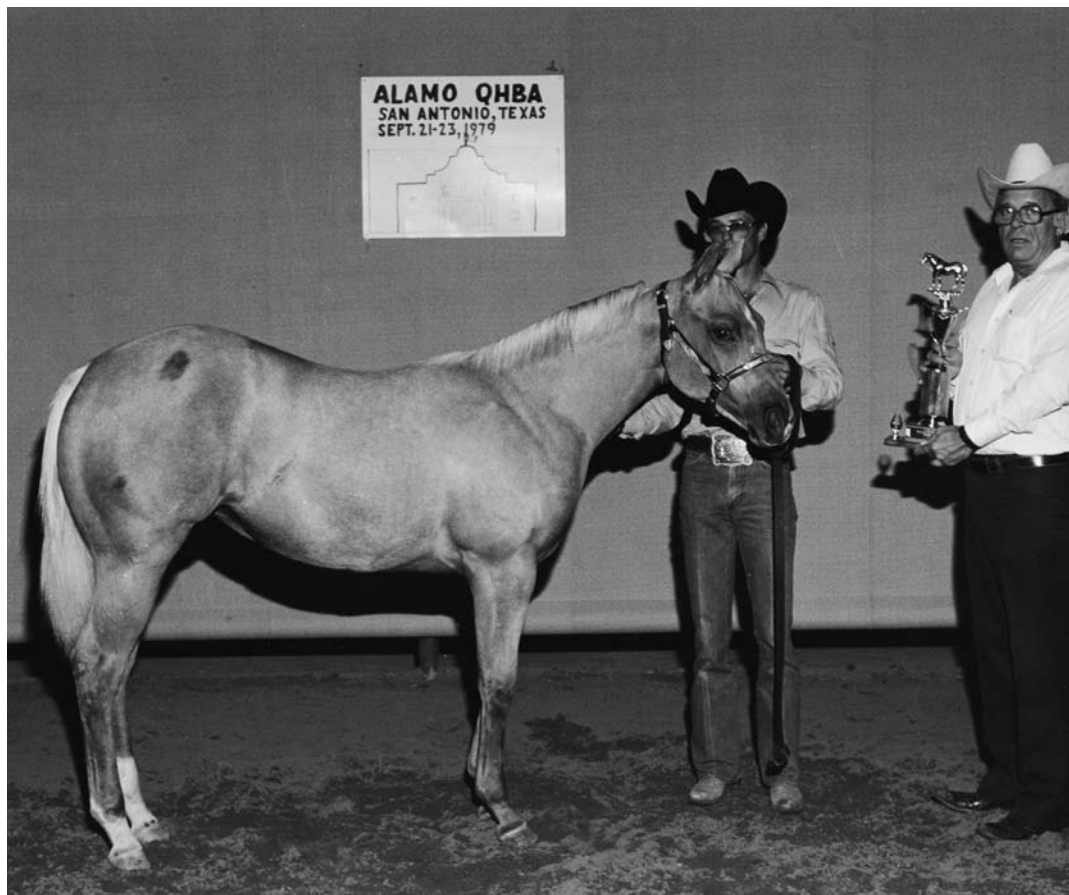
home. He was big and strong, but he could stop and spin and work a cow. For Jack to let me ride that horse, that was something. He was special to Jack. He truly loved that horse. He promoted him and he knew what he had."

## The Makings of a Sire

Two years later, in 1977, the Benson-McCamy pair founded Stallions Unlimited and co-owned The Investor. There, the sorrel stallion stood next to several of the day's top stallions, including Hobby Horse and Red Dee Hobby. The Investor quickly proved himself as a promising young sire.

"For his first four or five foal crops, The Investor was one of the leading sires of halter class winners every year," McCamy said. "Then, when those foals were old enough to ride, we found out it wasn't a fluke that a

PHOTO BY REGGIE RUSSELL, COURTESY QUARTER HORSE JOURNAL



Miss Balance Plus, a 1979 palomino mare by The Investor and out of Miss Gay Gold, was typey enough to win halter futurities as a weanling, and balanced enough to earn a Superior in western pleasure as a mature horse.



PHOTO BY DON SHUART

few of them were good movers. We changed what we were doing and focused on breeding pleasure horses. They were what pleasure horses should be.”

McCamy immediately recalls names of The Investor’s early and successful sons and daughters. El Cicatriz, a 1973 bay gelding out of Bar Moon Miss, was the 1974 AQHA World Champion Yearling Gelding. The Pardi-bred gelding also earned Superior halter awards in both the open and youth division.

Later in life, El Cicatriz proved himself an excellent mover. With owner Jocelyn Wejroch-Williams in the saddle, the aged gelding won numerous dressage competitions.

Of The Investor’s first successful get, a 1973 mare named Vestida Moneca topped McCamy’s list. Nancy Cahill rode the mare to her AQHA Register of Merit in performance. Then the duo went on to become highly-successful in open western pleasure competition.

In 1980, The Investor served notice that he was a sire to be reckoned with when, at the 1980 All-American Quarter Horse Congress, six of his get placed in the 2-year-old snaffle bit futurity finals.

Trainer Marty Johnson successfully trained three of the finalists with help from her then-husband, Jerry Stanford: Sure Investment (first place), The Collateral (second), and The Matinee (sixth).

“Jack Benson made arrangements for us to ride and train three Investors while we were employed at Misty Acres in Lufkin, Texas,” Johnson said. “The 1978 foals were broke in 1979 and shown as early as July 1980. They finished their 2-year-old careers at the 1980 Congress.”

The Investors won \$55,390, or 58 percent of the total class purse. Tommy Manion and Sure Investment placed first. Stanford rode The Collateral to a second-place finish. Keith Whistle and Double Vested claimed the third spot, and Barney Hinds on Miss Cash Ticket slipped into fourth place. Investors Reward and The Matinee stood by their family members in the finals lineup.



PHOTO BY DON SHUART

**Invest In Ears**, a 1979 bay gelding by The Investor and out of Miss Cozy Chick, was another great two-way performer. As a yearling (top), he won the 1980 TQHA yearling gelding halter futurity and placed in the Top 10 at the World Show. As a mature horse, he earned Superiors in Open and Amateur western pleasure.



PHOTO BY HAROLD CAMPTON



Sure Investment, a 1978 brown mare by The Investor and out of Sure Edith, was ridden by Tommy Manion to win the prestigious 1980 All American Quarter Horse Congress 2-year-Old Futurity.

PHOTO BY DON SHUGART



Jerry and Marty Stanford of Lufkin, Texas, trained several of The Investor's earliest pleasure champions. In addition, the couple also mentored an up-and-coming young pleasure trainer named Cleve Wells in art of making a winning rail horse. Here the trio is at an early 1980s Texas Classic horse show.





PHOTO BY HARLOD CAPTION COURTESY OF QUARTER HORSE JOURNAL

**Impulsions, a 1987 chestnut stallion by The Investor and out of Randados Rosa, was ridden by Kelli McCamy to win 1989 AQHA World Champion 2-Year-Old Snaffle Bit Futurity.**

Johnson remembers watching the futurity class with Benson.

"It was a real proud moment," she recalled. "When Jack realized the first six were Investors he started down the stairs, from where we were sitting to where I had moved to congratulate the winners, and said 'We did it Red!' That was a nickname he had given me.

"It was a special moment and something that hasn't been duplicated. It was the beginning of history. Soon after, if people didn't have an Investor, they wanted one."

In the next years, Johnson's patient training methods helped solidify The Investor's get as successful competitors. Johnson and Stanford worked with young Cleve Wells in Hempstead, Texas. Wells, an experienced calf roper, was anxious to learn Johnson's training methods and worked with them for nearly six years. Johnson's program consisted of training the disciplines of dressage in western form.

"The Investors were beautiful and pretty movers," Johnson recalled. "They presented an elegance in the arena. From the first one that I rode, I knew they were trainable horses, but not by the ordinary way. I did walking and stretching exercises along

with a modified dressage program. They had to learn my program at the walk to apply it at the trot and then advance to the lope. Every day you'd regress back to the walk, progress to the trot, then the lope and try to add something new to keep their active minds from being bored. A lot of people were interested in the program.

"If people wanted to be successful on an Investor, they had to figure out how to be patient. These horses would try you, but with patience, they would always reward you."

Johnson remembers a special Investor son, Coys Investment, a 1979 gelding by The Investor and out of Bonanza's Bay Lady. Babs Bashore worked with Johnson and took on the colt as her special project. She showed him to win an Open Texas Classic Futurity Reserve Championship. Jerry Wells then bought the young horse for his daughter Nancy to show at the 1982 Congress. The horse went on to earn open and amateur ROMs.

"Nancy stepped on him for the first time at the Congress, practiced for two days, went in, and won the 13-and-under pleasure class," Johnson said. "He packed her around and was extremely broke. The crowd just loved him. To my knowledge, Coy was the only 2-year-old to win a Youth Western Pleasure class at Congress."

Johnson remembers her favorite Investor son from the 1980s. Invest In Ears was out of Miss Cozy Chick. The 1979 gelding known as "Ears" made his debut at the 1982 Silver Dollar Circuit in Las Vegas, Nev. He was circuit champion, winning all five days with Stanford in the saddle. Johnson also showed him in hunter under saddle classes at the 1982 Congress. "Ears" won NSBA money and earned a Superior in amateur and open western pleasure. He also earned his performance ROM as a 3-year-old.

While The Investor's first-generation get secured his reputation as a top sire, future generations assured that his legacy would live on.

Ten years after his first progeny claimed Congress titles, a new generation of Investors entered the 1990 Congress 3-year-old derby. Impulsions, a 1987 chestnut stallion by The Investor and out of Randados Rosa, won the prestigious event with Kelly McCamy in the saddle. Five more “Investor” get or grand-get placed in the top 10.

## Syndication and Change

In 1979, the McCamy-Benson duo was encouraged to syndicate ownership of The Investor. Only the Quarter Horse Doc O’Lena (Legends 4) had been syndicated previously. Spreading ownership would up the stallion’s advertising budget and limit the number of mares he bred. Benson and McCamy held onto 20 shares and sold the rest to breeders across the country.

“Each share guaranteed you could breed a mare a year for the life of the horse,” McCamy recalled. “We limited the book and increased the quality of mares that bred to him.”

The duo’s plan proved sound. The Investor topped the AQHA’s leading performance sire list and sired numerous AQHA high-point horses.

Then, a tragedy occurred in January, 1989, that cast the 20-year-old stallion’s future into uncertainty.

Benson was killed on his way to a Texas horse show. He stepped down from his truck and was hit by a passing semi. The tragedy left the horse without the owner who cared for him and loved him. After months of mourning, Benson’s family agreed to sell the prized stallion.

## Home for Good

In the late 1980s, Dan and Carol McWhirter of Doniphan, Nebr., were searching for a breeding stallion. The couple knew all about the aging sire because they had stood his son, The Big Investment, until his untimely death at age 6 in 1986.

PHOTO BY K.C. MONTGOMERY



**Assets**, a 1991 bay mare by The Investor and out of Miss Rebel Rita, won the 1994 NSBA 3-Year-Old Non-Pro Derby with Mary Carole Heckaman in the saddle.

PHOTO BY HARLOD CAMPTON



**Vested Pine**, a 1991 sorrel stallion by The Investor and out of Zippos Bay Lady, won the 1996 All American Congress Western Pleasure Maturity Limited Open with Alex Ross aboard.



The Big Investment, a 1980 sorrel stallion by The Investor and out of The Country Girl, sired 129 foals before his untimely death at the age of six. His get went on to earn 29 Superior awards, 64 performance ROMs and 4,554 points. In 1998, The Big Investment joined his sire in the NSBA Hall of Fame.

In his short life, The Big Investment sired 129 foals, which had earned 29 Superiors, 64 ROMs, a collective 4,554 AQHA points. The McWhirters knew winning was a family tradition.

“We were looking for a new horse for our breeding program,” Carol said. “I had really wanted The Investor earlier, but in this business the good horses don’t come up for sale very often. When Jack passed away, we waited a polite amount of time. Then I called up Jack’s wife and told her I was interested in buying The Investor. She said the family just hadn’t decided what to do. She’d put me on the waiting list and call when they were ready to sell.”

The following September at Nebraska’s Pitzer Ranch Sale, Carol heard that The Investor was up for sale. She was so excited she couldn’t sleep. She called to ask for a

price early the next morning. Acting as an agent for the family, noted horseman Dale Livingston priced the stallion. Carol called up her longtime customer and world championship halter showman Wayne Atchley, of Elkhorn, Neb., to ask if he’d partner with them to purchase the stallion. With a solid “yes,” the McWhirters and Atchley formed The Investor Syndicate. All the pieces were fitting together to move the stallion north.

Then time stood still. Still rattled by their family’s loss, the Bensons kept The Investor on their property for nearly three months. After legal setbacks surrounding the sale, the McWhirters finally moved the stallion to his new home on January 3, 1990. When he stepped off the trailer, the McWhirters were surprised to find a thin and neglected stallion.

“We were on a rescue mission,” Carol recalled. “I truly believe that in another

PHOTO BY DON SHUGART



Principle Investment, a 1987 bay stallion by The Big Investment and out of Tiger Serena, was an AQHA Superior western pleasure performer and the NSBA earner of \$35,566.

month, he would have been dead. We wouldn't let Wayne see him for two months - and he owned him with us. The Investor had big sores in his mouth. It took six to eight months to get to the point we didn't have to apologize for his appearance."

"We had spent a lot of money on a skinny horse," Dan seconded.

The McWhirters focused on getting The Investor back to top form. They had an equine dentist evaluate and form his teeth so he could better chew and process nutrients. Dan began feeding him a late-night snack of steamed rolled oats - a treat that was soon expected as part of The Investor's daily routine. Every night after the 10 o'clock news, Dan put on his coat and made a final trip to the barn. "He was always waiting for me," Dan says.

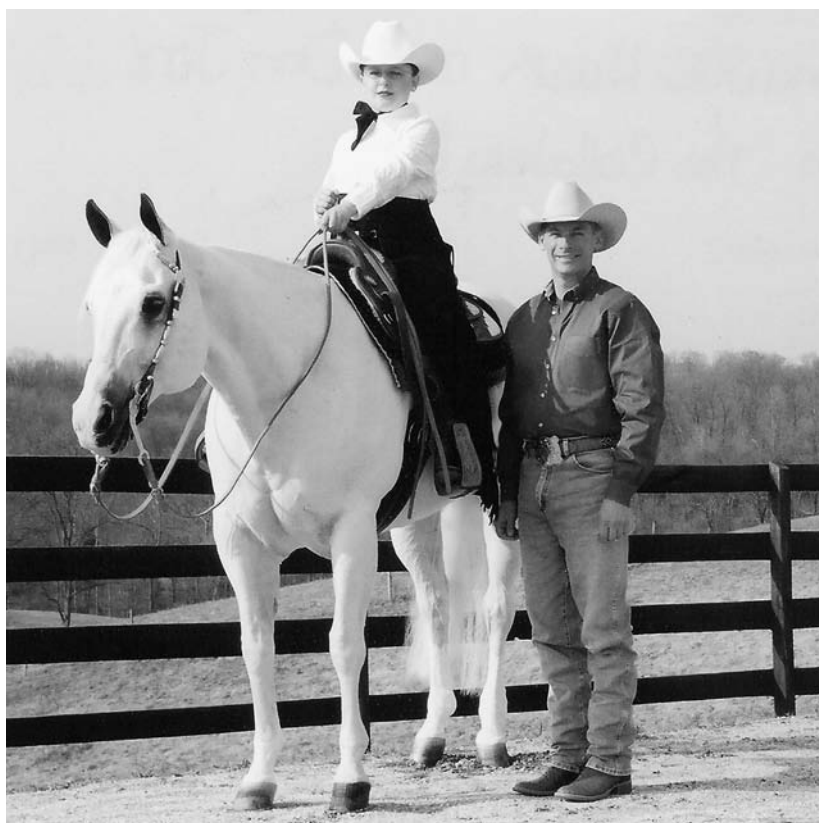
## Analysis and Research

As The Investor fattened up, the McWhirters researched his siring trends and set up a plan to choose mares he would breed. Carol spent countless hours on the phone with McCamy, discussing his extensive experience standing the stallion. Pedigree analyst Larry Thornton worked with the McWhirters to review their new stallion's progeny records and study which bloodlines best crossed with The Investor.

Thornton found that mares with Three Bars breeding that also carry Leo, Joe Reed, Chicaro Bill, and Joe Moore blood crossed especially well with The Investor.

The Investor's Bonafide, Collectors Prize, El Cicatriz, Good Investor, Impulsions, Miss Balance Plus, Miss Cash Ticket, Mr Investor,





**The Collateral**, a 1980 gray gelding by **The Investor** and out of **Sage Siemon**, ranks as one of his sire's most durable offspring. In all, the versatile performer was ridden by 16 open, amateur and youth competitors to earn 962 points. The 26-year-old trooper is show here in March, 2004, with his latest partner – **Shanaine Huck** of Vincent, Ohio. That's trainer **Don Jox** with the good-looking pair.

Ms Big Spender, Ms Safety Deposit, Pardin Me, SR Market Investor, and Vester Vision are just a few Superior horses with this breeding scheme.

Carol says the syndicate established careful breeding criteria. If a customer's horse didn't fit the criteria, she'd simply tell them about the research they had done. With education, the McWhirters were able to help The Investor pass on top traits to mares and stallions.

"The Investor is a true curiosity because not only is he the sire of siring sons, he's the sire of producing daughters," Carol said. "We don't understand why. It's unusual. So many horses in the business are sire-line horses or maternal-line horses. He was equal."

The Investor passed on traits that were easy to see in his offspring. Most notice-

ably, he passed on strong, low-set hocks, and a low tail set.

"There was no better hocked horse around," Dan said. "He could fix a mare's jog. He was the epitome of what a Quarter Horse should be."

McCamy focuses on The Investor's distinguishable legs.

"His biggest attributes were his hocks," he said. "He kept his foot on the ground when he loped and was just really powerful. That's a trait that hasn't diluted out."

## The Boss

Life was good for The Investor in Doniphan. The McWhirters never saddled him and never put a chain over his nose. Stabled in the first stall, he stood next to his buddy, Good Asset, by Zippos Mr Good Bar.

"If Good Asset was outside too long, he was looking for him," Dan recalled. "The minute you'd bring him in, they'd touch noses through the bars. One day, Good Asset bit his nose. The Investor was mad for a week. He stood on the other side of his stall and didn't have anything to do with him."

The Investor showed off his management characteristics in other ways, too. When Brad McCamy visited the McWhirters shopping for broodmares, he went into The Investor's stall to see if he'd remember him.

After more than 10 years away from his one-time co-owner and manager, The Investor quickly recognized him.

"The Investor started dancing in his stall," Dan said. "When Brad led him out, he reached over and grabbed his sleeve. I apologized and told Brad he'd never done that before."

"He wasn't trying to hurt me," McCamy said. "He just liked to do that. It was something he and I had always done. He was just different from any other horse I'd been around."

But while The Investor let you know he was the boss, he was never mean or pushy.

"Anyone could lead him," Dan continued. "He'd stand just like a halter horse. You could drop the lead rope, walk off,

come back and he'd be standing right where you left him."

Some have said The Investor's get can be difficult to work with. Those close to the horses say they are smart and incapable of being intimidated. McCamy suspects that The Investor and his progeny helped redefine training, requiring trainers and riders to ask before demanding.

"It wasn't that the horses were tough," McCamy explained, "If you had an Investor, you had high expectations. Some people fought with them and tried to change them by pulling their faces. They just weren't going to take it. If you pulled and poked, they would fight. The Investor was like that, too. You could correct him, then you had to leave him alone. If you jerked him when he didn't do anything wrong, he'd paw your hat off. The Investors would not be intimidated. You had to train them by thinking, not by intimidating them. They taught us all how to be better horse trainers."

It's The Investor's personality and presence The McWhirters miss most. He easily bonded with those who worked with him.

One day in early 2002, when The Investor struggled to get up, the McWhirters knew it was time to say goodbye. He had lost weight and his eyes appeared tired. Wanting to keep him comfortable and healthy as long as possible, the McWhirters monitored his organs' function for more than a year.

On Feb. 28, 2002, The Investor was euthanized.

"The morning that we made arrangements to put The Investor down, out of the clear blue sky Jerry Stanford called," Carol said. "We hadn't talked to him in six months. He didn't have an agenda, he just knew he had to call. Something was wrong. I was crying. I'll never be convinced it was just coincidence."

It was no coincidence. The Investor made his presence known in and out of the show pen. His good looks, smart demeanor, and strong, flowing movement secured his place in Quarter Horse history as a top Quarter Horse performer who was able to consistently pass on his strong characteristics to future generations.

PHOTO BY FAYE ZNEK



Here's a circa 2000 shot of The Investor at his final home in Doniphan, Neb. Shown with the 31-year-old legend are (from left) Carol, Daniel and Dan McWhirter. Also pictured is "Roy" the Corgi.