

A Very Special Friend



Tassy
(1977 – 2008)

She was born Feb 3, 1977. I bought her for \$800 when she was 3 years old. I was a sophomore in veterinary school. Ruth was going to school at Cal Poly Pomona and was working for an Arabian ranch. Another ranch nearby had Tassy for sale and Ruth knew I liked Arabians, but I thought they were too small for me. I became enamored with the breed because of Walter Farley's books.



Tassy was about 15.2, so pretty big for an Arabian. She was halter broken, but never ridden. I had no idea what I was doing. Prior to owning Tassy my experience with horses was begging my parents to let me ride a rental horse every time we went somewhere on vacation and a couple

of Girl Scout equine day camps. I had been taking care of and riding a palomino named Stewball while the student who owned him went to Humboldt State. That's how I met Ruth - Stewball was boarded at the same stable as Waggie, the dam of Ruth's horse, Oscar. I remember the night Oscar was born, 31 years ago. That's how long I've known Ruth.

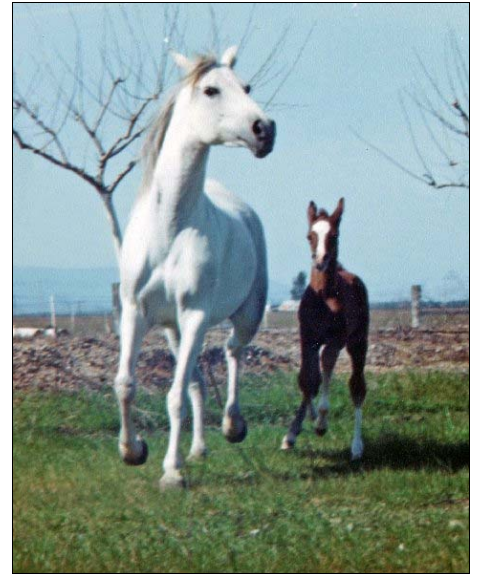
Anyway, I did ground work with Tassy for a week in the arena near where I boarded her here in Southern California while I was home from school for the summer. I then got on her back and rode her in the arena every day for another week. Then the third week I started taking her out on the trails and I never looked back. We would enter in schooling shows now and then and I took lessons sometimes. Ruth called



her my "Golden Retriever" horse because she was always so gentle and willing to do whatever I wanted her to.

In 1983 I bred her to a Polish Arabian stallion that was owned by the University of California. On Feb 25, 1984, Spirit was born. I had learned that foals will stay with their mothers, but the first time I took them out, when Spirit was 3 days old, he took off and left Tassy and me in the dust. He wore a halter after that.

In 1988 I saw a poster for the Los



Tassy & Spirit

Angeles County Sheriff's Posse and went to the Reserve Academy. Tassy had a long and successful career as a Posse horse. She carried flags in parades, she participated in our annual lollipop patrols at the Shops at Palos Verdes, and she kept her skills sharp by participating in training put on by the Sheriff's Department. She endured sponges being thrown at her, pushing medicine balls around and holding still while I shot a Beretta from her back. She was great walking through the gauntlet with the water hazards and dummies to be hit with mounted horse batons. She never liked walking on tarps. Her nemesis was plastic.

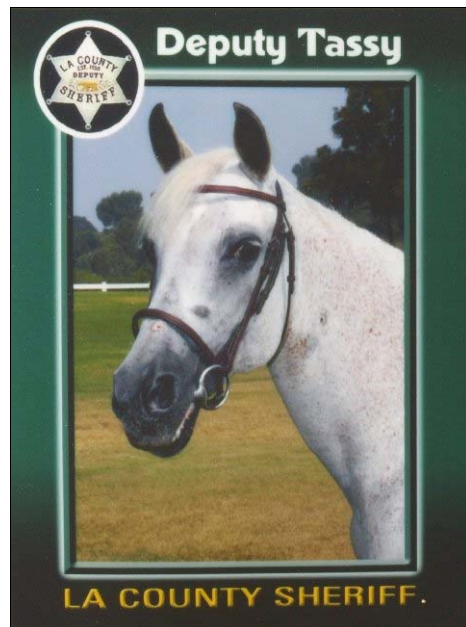


Tassy & Val with the California flag

In May of 2004, I noticed her limping a little when we did the

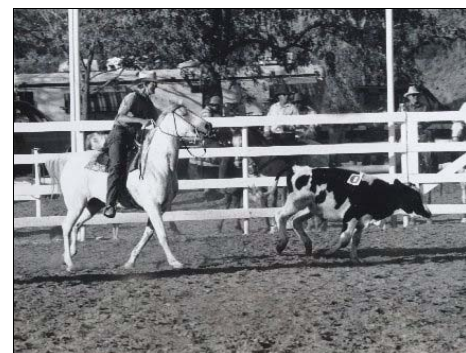
color guard for Memorial Day at Green Hills Mortuary in Rolling Hills Estates. Ruth diagnosed an arthritic knee and by September of that year, her lameness was severe enough that she was retired.

Last Tuesday, she was fine in the morning, but later was found laying down. I thought it would be her knee, but it turned out to be some sort of stroke. She could lift up her head, but she was completely unable to get her legs underneath her. Her tail was limp. After giving her some time, some medication and some fluids, it became apparent that she was not going to improve and I decided to euthanize her. She went peacefully and closed her eyes when Ruth gave her the injections.



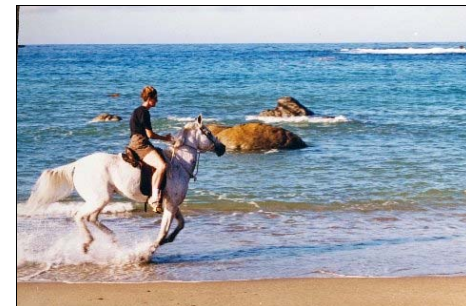
Val on Tassy at the funeral of Doc Olsen as the only color guard.

Her last duty was being the only color guard at the funeral of Doc Olsen, a long time Posse member. She is the only horse to ever be on the grounds of Rolling Hills Covenant Church. That's where the photo was taken.

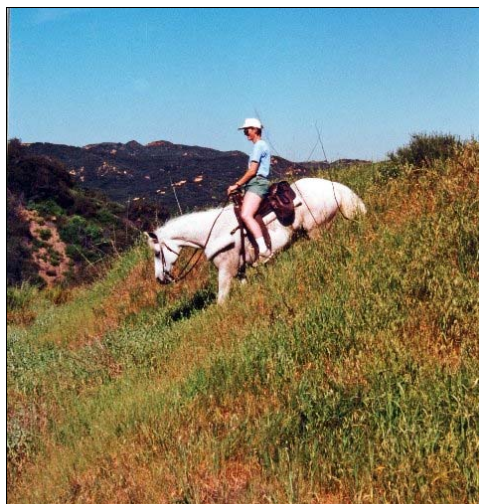


Val ponying Spirit off Tassy

She was a terrific horse and easy to take for granted because she was always there. There were never any scary moments with Tassy. She will be missed and remembered.



Her leg became more and more bent as the months went on, but her attitude was always good. She even trotted the day before she died.



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