

Name: Claire Gordon

Where Born: Minneapolis, MN

Education: BA in Theater Studies from Connecticut College

Any family? I have family throughout the country. My parents and immediate family live in Boulder, Colorado, Seattle, Washington, and Sun Valley, Idaho. I grew up traveling between those three great places.

Married? Some day... Children? No thanks!

How did you get into horses? I always loved to feed carrots to the neighbor horses that lived across the street from my parents' farm. I liked the way they smelled and how their long whiskers tickled my hands! I thought they were majestic. I began taking lessons at a local barn the summer after my fifth birthday. That was nineteen years ago!

What is a favorite memory? Growing up I lived with my dad in Colorado for six weeks every summer. Although I loved our summers together, it meant saying goodbye to my barn friends, riding instructor, and beloved horses. One summer, the stakes were decidedly high. I was eight years old and the horse of my dreams was *for sale*. No matter how intently I begged, my parents recited their mantra, "We are not going to be a horse family!" Having made my last appeal, I got on the plane and off I flew to Colorado. Weekly, I called to check on the horse's status. Five weeks passed without any interference, but not quickly enough. Then on week six... SOLD. Devastation! I was one broken-hearted eight year old. On my flight home, I was consumed by sadness. Seeing my mum at the airport brightened my spirits a bit and I cracked a smile when she said that we'd stop at the barn before heading home. When we arrived at the barn, and I walked up the aisle, I was met by my very best friends, my riding instructor, and MY horse in his stall with a red sash around his neck, "For Claire. With love, Mom and Dad!" Taz still lives with my parents in Seattle and we are very much a horse family!

What is a great accomplishment? I think that being a Mystic Valley instructor is a great accomplishment. I take great pride in my job and my farm.

What do you find rewarding about teaching? I love standing by the in gate at a horse show, having prepared as thoroughly as possible in the weeks prior, and watching my student take ownership of their ride. At that point, its up to them to draw on their own knowledge! I love to foster in others, the passion and joy I have for the sport and the animal.

What motto would best describe your teaching? "Get it done and look gorgeous doing it!"

Did you show? Did show, still do... more great things to come! Look for Sonnet and I ringside!