



Country Life Press

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Newsletter



Maryland's Oldest Thoroughbred Farm

Established 1933: Celebrating Our 90th Anniversary in 2023

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DIVINING ROD 2-Y-O "DIVINING HUMOR" WINS \$150,000 TEXAS FUTURITY



2-year-old filly Kellan, by Divining Rod out of Dirigo, wins impressively at Laurel on 6/25. Jim McCue photo



Divining Humor wins Lone Star Park's Futurity filly division by 6 lengths. Dustin Orona photo.

The Leading 2-Year-Old Sire in the Mid-Atlantic is DIVINING ROD. Two sensational juvenile fillies have appeared thus far. His Texas-bred daughter DIVINING HUMOR followed up her 11-length Maiden Special Weight debut romp with a dazzling 6-length victory when stepped up into stakes company, earning \$90,000 with her facile win in the \$150,000 Texas Thoroughbred Association Futurity filly division at Lone Star Park on July 1.

DIVINING ROD's second impressive 2-year-old daughter is the Maryland-bred filly KELLAN, the 1-2-favorite in a June 25 Maiden event at Laurel. Coming off a strong 2nd-place finish at Pimlico in Maiden Special company on May 25, KELLAN rewarded trainer Brittany Russell's confidence with a wire-to-wire win at Laurel.

Maryland-bred KELLAN was foaled here at Country Life Farm for breeders John Bayshore and Albert Klerlein. Consigned by Deb Ferguson to the 2022 Fasig-Tipton Timonium October sale, KELLAN was purchased for \$40,000 by Frank Alosa, agent for John Middleton. She is the pro-tem leader now of the Maryland-bred juvenile filly ranks.

Although foaled in Texas, DIVINING HUMOR descends from a familiar Maryland family developed by the late A. Brice Ridgely. The breeder of 2004 Eclipse Award champion 2-year-old DECLAN'S MOON, Ridgely maintained a small but select broodmare band at his Spring Meadow Farm near Cooksville, Maryland. Following his death in 2014, Ridgely's breeding stock was consigned to the Fasig-Tipton December mixed sale. DIVINING HUMOR's dam FINAL HUMOR was purchased for \$22,000 by John Stuart's Bluegrass Thoroughbred Services. Sired by influential broodmare sire DISTORTED HUMOR, Final Humor was last owned by Country Life Farm and was sold with this filly in utero. She is now the dam of three black-type winners: Hot Fun (\$187,225), E. Dubai's Humor (\$117,455), and most recently, DIVINING HUMOR (\$109,620 through 7/1).

Both DIVINING HUMOR and KELLAN are eligible for the \$100,000 Maryland Million Lassie on October 14. What a summer and autumn are shaping up for Maryland's only son of leading sire TAPIT: classics-placed, \$882,604-earner DIVINING ROD.

Click the link below to see what races we're watching this weekend, including entries for partnership runners [Covert Kat](#) and [Combat Queen](#) (Saturday at Laurel) and [Lady Ensign](#) (Sunday at Laurel)!

[Races We're Watching](#)

**COUNTRY-LIFE RACING PARTNERSHIP'S
GUN RUNNER COLT "SAGE RUNNER"
DEAD-HEATS AT LAUREL**



Sage Runner likes the grass. Trainer Mike Trombetta was smart to try stretching out the 3-year-old son of GUN RUNNER on the turf. At Delaware Park on June 1 at 1 1/6th-miles, SAGE RUNNER closed from 9th to finish 2nd in a crowded 12-horse field.

Back on the weeds for a 1-mile turf test at Laurel on June 23, SAGE RUNNER (co-favored at 2.60-1) stayed closer to the pace and came flying again, getting his nose down on the wire. At the same instant, so did SIGMUND. Rules for dead-heats divide the first-and-second place purse money equally, so SIGMUND and SAGE RUNNER shared the pot. It certainly appears that SAGE RUNNER likes "long on the lawn" as his favorite type of race.

Jockey Axel Concepcion rode him in both turf races and the two seem to make a good fit. With the Turf course at Colonial Downs a popular and lucrative option for the Kentucky-bred SAGE RUNNER, trainer Trombetta may head South for the sweeping turns of Colonial, which opens on Thursday, July 13, and runs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through Sept. 9.

**LAST RIDE
FARM FAVORITE "FRIJOLES"
June 24, 2023**



Photo: Cheyenne Piccolo

Country Life said goodbye to one of the best teasers in the industry last month. Our Standardbred warrior Frijoles---who may well have been over the age of 35--- came to the end of his long and colorful life as "The Man" in the breeding shed at Country Life Farm. Father Time took him on his last ride on June 24. Anyone who has been in the breeding shed at Country Life anytime over the last 25 years remembers his gentle but persuasive demeanor when encouraging mares to display signs of estrus, as a prelude to summoning the "varsity" stallions to march out of the Stud Barn and into the Breeding Shed with the "All Clear" sign from Frijoles.

He came to us in 1998 on the recommendation of prominent Midlantic veterinarian Dr. William E. Riddle. The Coggins test that accompanied Frijoles listed him as "Aged", which usually means age undertimed, but at least 10 years old.

Although his registered name wasn't known, the staff quickly nicknamed Frijoles ("beans" in Spanish). His easy temperament and sweet nature made everyone love him; he didn't have a mean bone in his body.

Frijoles always had a bounce in his step and a distinctive macho greeting to his mares. He was the unsung hero of every breeding season. We placed our trust in him to tell us when a mare was "ready," sometimes counter to a veterinarian's ultrasound diagnosis (as our own Dr. Russ Jacobson would tell you).

If Frijoles didn't like the reception after teasing a mare, he would give his longtime handler, stallion manager Jerry Zavala, a look that said: "You're kidding me, right?"

Mucho gracias, Senor Frijoles. R.I.P., amigo.

Country Life Bred or Sired Winners

DIVINING ROD

LIQUIDATOR: 6/10 at LRL, Allowance (breeder CLF/Stone LLC; owner Not The 1 Stable, Inc.; trainer Linda Albert)

VODKATINI: 6/15 at DEL, Starter (breeder Barak Farm; owner Original 6 Stable; trainer Michael Gorham)

PRECIOUS AVARY: 6/16 at MTH, Allowance (breeder/owner Smith Farm & Stable; trainer Timothy Shaw)

BORN FOR VICTORY: 6/20 at MNR, Claiming (breeder Gainesway Thoroughbreds Ltd.; owner Cynthia Cordero; trainer Alexis Cordero-Lopez)

BLISS THIS: 6/24 at CT, Maiden (breeder/owner Bill Bayne & Super C Racing; trainer John J. Robb)

KELLAN: 6/25 at LRL, 2yo Maiden (breeder John Bashore & Al Klerlein; owner John Middleton; trainer Brittany Russell)



Luv Ya Bye Bye, by Mosler out of Tizling, breaks his maiden at Laurel on 6/9. Jim McCue photo

MOSLER

LUV YA BYE BYE: 6/9 at LRL, Maiden (breeder Country Life Farm & Winding Creek Farm; owner Jose M. Gallegos; trainer W.,. Thomas McMahon)

HOWSAFEAREMYCOLORS: 6/22 at CT, Claiming (breeder/owner John Williamson, III; trainer David Walters)



Freeze the Fire, by Friesan Fire out of Scenario Analysis, turned heads with an impressive debut win at Pimlico on 6/3. Jim McCue photo

FRIESAN FIRE

FREEZE THE FIRE: 6/3 at PIM, Maiden (breeder Carl Lanier; owner Step Up Thoroughbreds Inc.; trainer Cathal Lynch)

SHADY MUNNI: 6/9 at LRL, Starter (breeder Dr. & Mrs. Thomas Bowman & Rebecca Davis; owner Robert D. Bone & Edward Brown, Jr.; trainer Rodolfo Sanchez-Salomon)

WILLFUL DESIRE: 6/25 at LRL, Claiming (breeder/owner Bell Gable Stable LLC; trainer Richard Sillaman)

RIPKEN: 6/29 at PEN, Maiden (breeder Sharon Banford; owner Sal Sinatra; trainer Flint Stites)

OTHER COUNTRY LIFE/PARTNERSHIP-bred or OWNED winners:

SAGE RUNNER (Gun Runner - Sage Mist) - Maiden win on 6/23 at LRL. Bred by Ernest C. Frohboese; owned by Country Life Farm & Sage Runner LLC; trained by Michael Trombetta.

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