

I met Stevie back in 2003 when we both boarded our horses at a small facility in Richmond. She had her horse Buzz stabled there and I had my upper level event horse that was getting on in years (Bobo) and one of my sales projects there. We immediately hit it off and became good friends. Over the years she ended up moving out to Maple Ridge and I ended up in Delta. Even though we no longer were at the same stables, we remained good friends.

For the past couple of years now, one of my friends had been learning how to ride on Bobo. It wasn't until the past fall that I started to see his age catching up with him in some ways. Even though he still ran around in the field like a 4yr old, he was having some problems with his hocks when he was under saddle. I had the vet come out to do an exam on him and as I predicted, he was developing arthritis in his hocks, one worse than the other. When I found this out I was devastated, but knew that I was going to have to face this day someday...The vet offered me a couple of suggestions, one being to monitor the arthritis with bute, the second which he strongly advised, was retirement.

Now here was my dilemma...I didn't want to retire him at a "show" barn per say, where your horse lives in an individual stall and paddock and really doesn't have much interaction with other horses...besides over the fence which usually has hotwire ☺. The "show home" was fine when he was getting daily human interaction and exercise from his rides, but if he was no longer going to be worked under saddle and with my time constraints with my young horses, I didn't feel at all that it was fair to give him a home like this for his so called "golden years". Now on the flip side of things, Bobo has been with me for over 13 years and is far more than just a horse, he is a part of me. There was no way I would ever consider selling him to someone...but I didn't want to keep him where I was as it wasn't good for him...so what options did I have?

It wasn't until one of Stevie's and mine emails over the early spring of 2008 that she had told me that she had bought Meadowbrook Ranch, a beautiful piece of property up in Horsefly, B.C. I don't think I even let her get into details about the property before I was asking if Bobo could come live up there with her. A few weeks later, Meadowbrook Equine Retirement Center was born. I can't even begin to explain how thrilled I was to know that I had found a place for my special boy to live out the last of his years. I had found him a home where he would have a warm comfy stall to sleep in during the winter, and yet mass amount of field for him to roam during the spring, summer and fall. Not to mention an endless buffet of grass available everyday!

I moved Bobo up to Meadowbrook on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008. I shipped him up with Kevan from h-4 - Just a quick mention, Kevan was awesome, and I highly recommend him to anyone looking for a shipper for their horse. Bobo arrived at Meadowbrook around 1pm with his new buddy Strut, who he shared a trailer ride up to the farm with. Stevie had their paddocks all set up with hay, water and treats waiting for them. We unloaded them from the trailer and they both quietly walked into their paddocks and started eating like they had been there several times before.

Bobo settled in immediately (as did Strut) and within a couple of hours we had the two boys out in one of the small fields together. They roamed around the field eating grass, returning to their paddocks and shelter whenever they wanted shade or water. We pulled them off the field around dinner time and got them settled into their paddocks for night time. Both boys settled right in, ate their dinner and cozied up for a sleep.

It was such a relief to see my Bobo so happy and relaxed. Meadowbrook was everything that I wanted for him in a retirement home. I now have complete peace of mind knowing that he is up there being loved and pampered and spoiled everyday of the week. He has hundreds of acres to stretch his legs in and as much grass as the eye can see. He gets interaction with other horses and can now really just "be a horse" which was exactly what I wanted for him. I recently went up to visit him and was delighted to see him in the same sprits as he was when I had left him the first time. The only difference was that they four boys were all living together now and they had moved out into the big field. I got the pleasure of seeing them go out into the big field for the first time and it was quite the site to see. The four of them went galloping around the field like youngsters

again, stopping intermittently for bits of grass before finally settling and getting down to some serious grazing. They have so much room in the big field; I don't think they know what to do with all of it!

For anyone looking for a retirement home for their horse, I could not think of a better place than Meadowbrook Equine Retirement Centre. Stevie is incredibly knowledgeable when it comes to horses in all aspects – vet, farrier, health, maintenance you name it... Plus she has one of the biggest hearts of anyone I know, and will bend over backwards to ensure that your horse is as healthy and happy as they can possibly be. Meadowbrook is an amazing facility that Bobo and myself are very lucky to be a part of.

Erin Silo  
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