

Horse venture a big step for this Stouffville realtor

By BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

A seven-year interest in horses and a desire to escape the rat race of urban living has led John Whytall to his biggest real estate venture ever.

The proprietor of the local real estate company Country Tyme Realty Ltd., Whytall took possession of a 22-acre horse farm on the Aurora Sideroad east of Ninth Line this past April.

And he is looking to turn it into far more than a hobby farm.

"I started raising horses with Denis Sainsbury in 1982. But I have always had to board my horses out, so I didn't have much control over them," he says.

"But now I can raise my registered American quarter horses as well as run a boarding operation."

Whytall, along with his wife Dolores and his two children, has adapted quickly to the rigors of farm life, with everybody pitching in. And he says real estate and horse farming are very compatible.

"Real estate and horses seem to go together well for me," he says. "I'm up at seven each morning doing chores and by nine my regular work day starts. The kids help with the nightly feedings."

"I've wanted to do this for a long time, but it was Dolores' idea to buy this farm. We've done lots of real estate investments in



Photo: BRUCE STAPLEY

John Whytall has given up the fast lane urban life for the slower pace of farm life. He's enjoying his recently-purchased horse farm. Here, he enjoys a relaxed moment with his children Adam, 11 and Kristen, 9.

the past and she said it would be nice to live in one for a change."

He admits it's taken some adjusting to cope with the demands of farm life.

"In the spring, when you start cutting the hay on Monday, you're not finished until Friday," he points out. "The hay has to be taken off the back field and there's weed control in the spring."

"The last time the fence was painted, it took 65 gallons, they tell me, and it will need doing again soon. There's always something to do around a place like this, and you can't take holidays when you're working with animals."

But while he may be new to the farm, Whytall is well versed in horse breeding. He has been breeding his own mares to stallions from as far away as Texas and has partial interests in several horses at other farms in southern Ontario.

He shows his horses at the various futurities throughout the province, as well as at Quarterama in Toronto. In 1983, an Appaloosa weanling owned by Whytall and Sainsbury, husband of Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Fran Sainsbury, won the Ontario Breeder's Futurity.

His current pair of weanlings were bred by world champion quarter horse stallions.

"We're trying to build up some good stock," he notes. "Within five years, we plan to have a pretty exclusive herd of quarter horses. We'll be going to Texas in the fall to pick up one or two brood mares."

In the meantime, he is tending to the tack barn, the horses and the fields in what has become his own backyard. The farm will be named Serendipity, he says, which means "fortunate accidental discovery" after the fable of the four horses of Serendip.

Whytall takes a philosophical view of his decision to abandon urban living in favor of farm life.

"We got caught up in the idea of working nine to five. There's a lot more to life than that," he says. "I ran the Deer Park Inn for a year and I never saw my kids. Here, we're all working together. It's a really different lifestyle, but it's not hard to get used to."

He has purchased two golden retrievers for son Adam, 11, and daughter Kristen, nine. Both children are being given riding lessons and have taken favorably to life on the farm.

"They won't go back to town for anything," says Whytall. "I think we'll be here for some time."

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