

“What Makes My Appaloosa Special”

By: Abigail Ryun

Appaloosas are very special in my family because they help us with chores around the farm and are fun to ride. One of them is a very special horse called Mighty McTax, or Mic, as I call him. He has only been in our family for three years, yet, we still have had many adventures. It feels like we've been together longer than just 3 years with all of the fun and learning we've had together. We both wonder how many more adventures we'll have in the future.

One way Mic is an awesome horse, is he saved him and me from a cow charging at us a couple of years ago. It all started like this, Mic and I were helping to bring up the pairs for spring branding, and when I got her up to the corrals, she didn't like that idea. She spun around quickly to head back out to pasture. When she saw Mic and me, she started running towards us! Mom said to me, “Get out of the way!” from her horse, but I was trying to turn the cow around by yelling and urging Mic forward. Mic filled the hole until he realized what was happening and that she wasn't going to stop. Then, he backed up calmly, out of the way, just like nothing went wrong. Mom was very thankful he didn't listen to me! He always does really well for me outside of the arena with farm or cow work.

The best part, Mic and I love getting ready for a horse show. I always wake up early enough to help Mom give the horses a bath so they are nice and shiny to show. When I go to catch him to bathe him, he always nickers to either ask, “What is going on today?”, or to say, “Good morning, Abby.” If he asks, “What's going on today?” I always tell him we have a horse show to get ready for! After he is all bathed, he has to be tied so he doesn't roll and get all dirty again! He doesn't like baths very much, so that wouldn't be good. When we get to the shows, Mic is an old pro. He knows what is going on right away. We show in all of the walk/trot classes available at our shows, and also in Youth Halter and Heritage. Some of the classes were new to Mic, but most he was an old pro. He has really helped to teach me. Of the 3 years we've shown together, we have been the North Dakota ApHC Club's High Point

Walk/Trot twice and Reserve High Point once. Mic's experience and steadiness have helped me to become a better and more experienced rider, and we make a great team.

Mic is also very special because he helps to teach my younger siblings how to ride. Since he's a gentle giant, my three year old brother, Kyle, can lead him around the ranch. Kyle can also ride him in the trail arena and go over the bridge and back through the L. He is also Kyle's leadline horse. Mic also helped my brother Adam accomplish many wins in leadline before Adam graduated to walk/trot. Adam still rides Mic sometimes to get the feel for something new. My sister, Katy, also rides him around. He is such a good boy and listens very well to what they ask of him.

My mom also thinks Mic is a pretty special horse. She was nominated to show in Spectator Showmanship at one of our shows last year, so she asked me if she could use Mic. She and Mic won a blue ribbon and trophy out of a crowd of competitors! Mom also likes how dependable and safe Mic is for me and my siblings.

There are many more ways that Mic is a special horse to me, my family, and anyone that knows him. These are just a few of my favorite memories that include Mic. I'm sure we'll have plenty more memories together that I will never forget. He's my favorite teammate.