



# THE OLD MIDWEST CONNECTIONS TO THE SPLASH GENE

*Where some of the white comes from in the Morgan gene pool.*

By Laura Hornick Behning

Color enthusiasts tend to want to discover just where certain color genes originated in their breed of choice. It's a fascinating treasure hunt, tracing backwards through pedigrees, finding old photos, and using production records to try and determine if a certain ancestor had a particular color gene. This relationship has been well established for each of the "fancy" colors found in our breed, but the historic sources of the splash gene have remained a bit of a mystery. The availability of the test for splash, which came out in 2008, made identification of splash



(photo collage by Lynn Peterson; original photos by Karen Burridge)

**ABOVE:** The homozygous splash mare Shahaylee (Marvelous Intrigue x Marvelous Pophecy) and her 2009 bay splash son UDM High Waters (by Sharp Dressed Gentleman) belong to the Royal-Glo family.





### ROYAL-GLO FAMILY

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** The 1963 bay splash mare Royal-Glo (Emerald's Aristocrat x Caven Glo Saguaro), whose splash line continues today in Morgans descended from the Marvelous-prefixed breeding program of Ellie Mason. Royal-Glo was very conservatively marked, with only a star, snip, and spot on the inside of her left hind; Royal-Glo's sire, Emerald's Aristocrat (Our Emerald King x Rhythm Lovely Lady), foaled in 1957. Aristocrat was a more typically marked heterozygous splash, with four white feet and a connected star, strip, and snip; Ellie Mason on her 1966 dark chestnut splash stallion Marvelous Gem (Moro Hills Medallion x Royal-Glo); Marvelous Legacy (Marvelous Gem x Marvelous Reflection), a 1982 chestnut splash mare; Marvelous Intrigue (Marvelous Ideal x Marvelous Legacy, by Marvelous Gem), a 1990 brown splash stallion, and his breeder/owner Ellie Mason; UDM White Water (Sharp Dressed Gentleman x Shahaylee), Jennifer Hazen up, after winning the 2017 Grand National Parade Finals (photos: courtesy of Ellie Mason, Kathy DeFazio, Howard Schatzberg).

Morgans much easier than the previous method, which was simply guesswork based on markings. Testing is a particularly valuable tool for identifying splash, since many confirmed heterozygous splash horses have turned out to have very little white—in some cases, none at all!

There are six splash white genes that have been identified so far—SW1 through SW6—but only SW1 is found in the Morgan breed. The currently available splash test, available from UC Davis (<http://www.vgl.ucdavis.edu/services/coatcolorhorse.php>) and several other equine color testing facilities, tests for all six splash variants. SW1 is an incompletely dominant gene. What this means is that heterozygous splashes have less white than homozygous splashes, as the gene has an additive effect when there are two of them present. It is like the cream gene in this respect. Heterozygous SW1 horses tend to have a blaze and white leg markings, but may be very minimally marked, even to the point of having no white markings at all. They may have one or both blue eyes. Homozygous SW1 horses appear more obviously “pinto,” with blue eyes and white markings that extend from their legs up onto their bodies.

There are, at present, three confirmed splash lines in the Mor-

gan breed: descendants of Royal Glo (found in horses descended from the Marvelous Morgans breeding program, mostly via Marvelous Intrigue); Lady In Lace (horses descended from the Sweet's breeding program); and Icestone Whitewing (horses from Vicki Greer's breeding program). Interestingly, all these splash sources are mares. Well-known splashes from each of these three sources include Marvelous Intrigue (Royal-Glo line), Old Ways Bimbeau (Lady In Lace line), and MEMC Crown Royal (Icestone Whitewing line).

One way of tracing splash color lines back through a pedigree is to start at the last known splash ancestor, then look for the horses behind him or her that have, or seem to, produce a lot of white. Unfortunately, this is not always an easy task, because many heterozygous splash horses have very little white. Morgans have traditionally been selected for less white; there is some thinking that there are genes that restrict the amount of white a given horse might have. This made it possible for splash to survive in the Morgan gene pool during the years the High White Rule was in effect by hiding in minimally-marked individuals, only to arrive as a surprise some generations later.

In March of 2007 I posted on the Morgan Colors Yahoo





### ROYAL-GLO FAMILY, CONTINUED

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** UDM Savannah (Faircrest Dark Knight x Shahaylee), a 2013 dark bay splash mare; Roseridge Blue Intrigue (UDM White Water x Baymount's Tiana), a 2016 bay splash gelding owned by Gloria James. He is actually homozygous for splash, although more conservatively marked than most; Roseridge Cotillion (UDM White Water x Ultra's T Party), a 2014 chestnut splash mare with Daryl Hopson up at the 2017 Far West Regional where the mare was the Junior Western Pleasure Reserve Champion; Roseridge Tempest (UDM White Water x Baymount's Tiana), a 2014 bay splash mare; Oregon Country Flash (RDKs Oregon Rising Son x Marvelous Ima Darling), a 2013 palomino splash stallion with Andy Marlett up; Stolen Affair (Oregon Country Flash x SSLC A Royal Affair), a 2019 chestnut splash mare bred and owned by Stolen Aces Farm. The roan ticking over her body is not the result of the splash gene but likely comes from her maternal grandsire Cedar CreekHarlequin, who produced a lot of white of unknown origin (photos: Tonie Cowan, Steve White, Savannah Sturm).

webpage that I had noticed one very interesting commonality in the pedigrees of the three splash source mares: all three have old Midwest breeding in close relationship. A mare named Byrrh (Handy Allen x Abner Royce Mare) is in all three of these pedigrees through two of her offspring, Archie O and his full sister Rose Bay. A third offspring of Byrrh, the stallion Selim's Best, also appears in one of the three pedigrees. Though Archie O was a very popular sire in his day, this family is rare in Morgan pedigrees today. Only a handful of breeders, like Harry and Mabel Sweet and their daughter Georgia in Kansas, as well as a few breeders in Illinois, New York, and Pennsylvania, bred them on in any quantity until recently. Quite a few breeders are now trying to preserve what is left of this family. Let's examine each of these three splash lines and their current descendants a little more closely.

### ROYAL-GLO

#### SPLASH SOURCE #1

The first splash family is that from the mare Royal-Glo (Emerald's Aristocrat x Caven-Glo Saguaro), foaled in 1963. We know Royal-Glo was splash because she produced several blue-eyed

foals by different stallions. These foals were not registerable at the time due to the High White Rule. Fortunately, Royal-Glo's line has continued through her more conservatively-marked heterozygous splash offspring, most notably Marvelous Gem, the maternal grandsire of Marvelous Intrigue, who has many descendants today carrying on this splash line. Royal-Glo's only markings were a small star, snip, and a white mark on the inside of her left hind coronet, demonstrating just how minimally marked a heterozygous splash can be.

Royal-Glo's splash gene is thought to come from her sire, Emerald's Aristocrat, who was marked like a classic heterozygous splash with four white socks and a blaze. He only sired two registered offspring in his short life (he passed at age 11), Royal-Glo and a full brother who was gelded. Aristocrat has two crosses to the Byrrh descendant Rhythm Lovely Lady (Rhythm Ramble x Roxie De Jarnette), whose only marking was a star. He also has another cross to Byrrh through the stallion Selim's Best.

The splash line from Royal-Glo largely descends from her grandson, Marvelous Intrigue. The birth of the obviously pinto homozygous splash Intrigue daughter, Shahaylee, in 1994 was a big reveal that *something* was going on in these lines. Shahaylee

was not registerable at the time of her birth due to the High White Rule but was registered when it was repealed a few years later. Both sides of her pedigree carry a line to Marvelous Gem, the source of her two splash genes. Shahaylee's complete story can be found in the April 2007 issue of *The Morgan Horse* magazine ("Making a Splash—the Story of Shahaylee").

Owned by Michael and Karen Burrige of Upson Downs Morgans in Florida, Shahaylee would produce four offspring. Her first foal was the 2008 buckskin splash gelding UDM Indian Summer (by UDM Fortune In Gold) who had a dressage career for owner/breeders Mike and Karen Burrige. Shahaylee's second foal was the 2009 bay splash stallion UDM High Waters (by Sharp Dressed Gentleman) who unfortunately passed at a young age, but like his brother he had a successful show career (this time in the Western pleasure division) for the Burridges. Shahaylee is also the dam of the bay 2011 splash stallion UDM White Water (by Sharp Dressed Gentleman) and the 2013 bay splash mare UDM Savannah (by Faircrest Dark Knight).

UDM White Water stood at Gloria James's Roseridge Morgans in Washington before being gelded and sold to his current owner, Marci Mauthe. Gloria has been breeding Morgans since 1978. Her introduction to colorful Morgans came a few years later in 1990 with the purchase of the stallion HVK Warlock, who had won both regional and Grand National titles in the 1980s. "He was a flaxen chestnut, and I loved his color," Gloria says. "Then the High White Rule was abolished and I could now have a goal of breeding quality pinto Morgans." Gloria bought the bay splash Marvelous Intrigue daughter Baymount's Tiana and then the bay splash stallion UDM White Water from the Burridges. "We produced two homozygous splash foals from this cross, Roseridge Blue Intrigue and Roseridge Tiana," Gloria says. "Roseridge Blue Intrigue was regional champion and futurity champion in halter, under saddle, and in harness. We then purchased Ultras T Party who was a chestnut pinto but didn't carry the splash gene. She gave us four pinto splash fillies in a row. Roseridge Cotillion showed regionally and in futurity as well." In addition to his success in the Western pleasure division, UDM White Water made quite an impression as he won the Grand National Parade Finals in 2017.

UDM White Water sired several splash offspring that have joined other splash-focused breeding programs. These include the stallions Roseridge Bourbon & Water (out of Baymount's Tiana), owned by Jessica Pellisier; and BTTR Scotch On The Rocks (out of Marvelous Amore), owned by Judith Dexter's Mia-Mar Morgans in Canada; and the mares Roseridge Tempest (out of Baymount's Tiana), owned by Steve and Jacque White of White Gold Morgans in California; and Roseridge High Cotton (out of Ultras T Party), owned by Annemarie McLaughlin in Colorado. Gloria sold most of her stock last year due to her husband's illness. Recently, she was able to re-purchase Roseridge Sassy Dancer when she was offered for sale. "She is in foal to Roseridge Regal Intrigue (Regal Charade x Roseridge Tempest, by UDM White Water) for a late 2022 foal, which has a 25 percent chance of being homozygous splash," Gloria says. "So, the breeding program will have one more splash baby before we retire."

Shahaylee's sire, Marvelous Intrigue, was leased to various breeders later in his life, siring quite a few more splash Morgans

for those programs, as well as outside breeders who brought their mares to him. Jeanne Michaelis of Baymount Morgans in California produced several splashes by Intrigue during her lease of the stallion, as did Dale and Susan Beach of Beaches Triple T Ranch in Ellensburg, Washington. The Beach's Intrigue offspring bear Ellie Mason's Marvelous prefix (used with permission), including their stallion Marvelous City Lights (out of Marble Mtn Rose) and the mare Marvelous Cool Breezes (out of Amberfield Zephyr), owned by Jessica Pellisier.

Carol Dombrowsky of Oregon Morgans bred her mare, Blacksaddle Jasmine, to Marvelous Intrigue in 2005 and the result was RDK's Oregon Rising Son, sire of current show ring star Oregon Country Flash. This 2013 palomino splash stallion has had a fabulous career in the Western pleasure ring dating back to his first-place debut at the Oregon Morgan Classic Futurity in 2016. Currently owned by the Sturms of Stolen Aces Farm in Las Vegas, Nevada, "Fabio," as he is known, has attracted followers from across the spectrum of Morgandom. "He is always a favorite with the crowds and his legion of fans," Terri Sturm says. "Many times, we are followed back to the barn by people just wanting to see him up close. We acquired him as a four-year-old in May of 2017. Our trainer, Andy Marlett, found him through his trainer network and I fell in love with his beauty instantly. I have been a lifelong fan of palominos, owning my first back in 1975, so having the opportunity to own another was a simple decision for me. The splash was not so much intentional as it was a bonus. Fabio has the most wonderful disposition for a stallion and Andy has done a fantastic job finishing him for Western pleasure. He has soft, smooth gaits with a true Western lope. He has produced five foals for us, each either inheriting a cream or a splash gene, but none have received both. We are expecting two more foals in 2022 and I have fingers crossed for a colt with both cream and splash." Terri's daughter Savannah adds "He has been a tremendous asset to our breeding program due to his wonderful and willing temperament, straight legs, and size which he seems to be putting into all of his babies."

## LADY IN LACE

### SPLASH SOURCE #2

The second splash family descends from the mare Lady In Lace (Sky Chief x Rhythm's Tonga), foaled in 1959. She was a bay with the typical markings of a heterozygous SW1 horse: a blaze, three white socks, a white coronet, and one blue eye. Lady In Lace is responsible for all the currently known splash descendants from Kansas breeder Mabel Sweet's line of Morgans. A look at Lady In Lace's linebred old Midwest pedigree shows her dam, Rhythm's Tonga, was by Archie O and out of Rhythm Lovely Lady. Rhythm Lovely Lady's granddam, Rose Bay, was a full sister to Archie O (Archie Hudson x Byrrh).

Lady In Lace produced six offspring: three geldings and three mares. Her splash descendants come through the mares Rhythm's Joy (foaled in 1965 by Rhythm's Bimbo) and Sweet's Lady Diamond (foaled in 1970 by Classy's Pride). Rhythm's Joy was the dam of 14 foals, including the splash mare Sweet's B Bomb (by T-Bone Bimbo) who produced the dark bay splash stallion Sweet's





### LADY IN LACE FAMILY

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Lady In Lace (Sky Chief x Rhythm's Tonga) is the founder of the "Sweet's" line of splashes. She was marked with four white feet, a blaze, and her left eye was blue; The 1990 brown splash mare Sweet's Jada Babe (Sweets Jet Hawk x T-Bone Card's Fancy), pictured with Katherine Buel, is a great example of how stealthy the splash gene is, illustrating how it could "hide" in the Morgan population during the time of the White Rule; Old Ways Bimbeau (T-Bone Bimbo x Sweet's Jada Babe), a 1997 chestnut splash stallion; KS Bluestem The Old Guard (KS Buffalo Soldier x Sweet's Jada Babe), a 2009 black splash stallion owned by Suzanne Avery. "OG" has no white markings at all, but he is indeed heterozygous for splash; Prairie Hill Grace (FCR Magic Act x Sweet's Living Doll), a 2014 chestnut splash mare, on her first trip to the Badlands in western North Dakota in 2021, with Susan Motter up; Prairie Hill Armani (Old Ways Bimbeau x Ebony Echo), a 2015 bay splash stallion with Susan Motter up; Prairie Hill Atlas (Prairie Hill Armani x Prairie Hill Grace), a 2020 bay splash (homozygous) stallion; Heritage Hollow Simon Saz (FCR Magic Act x KMA Lime Light), a 2015 chestnut splash stallion owned by Renee DeRosier (photos: Suzanne Avery, Susan Motter, Suzanne Avery, Susan Motter, Renee DeRosier).

Bayberry in 1994. Bayberry is currently standing at Bryan Blatt's Westwind Morgans in Montana. He has 23 get to his credit so far, with the 2021 crop yet to be registered. Sweet's Lady Diamond had six offspring and her splash line comes down to us from two of those: the full siblings Sweet's Brandi (mare foaled in 1979 by T-Bone Bimbo) and Sweet's Jet Hawk (stallion foaled in 1986).

Sweet's Brandi is the dam of Adiel's Snicker Zip, standing in Lexington, Georgia, at Sue Martin's Stonelake Morgans. He has sired 16 foals so far, at least eight of whom have inherited his splash gene, including the homozygous splash mare Journeys Made To Order. Now owned by Judith Dexter, "Maddy" has produced five foals to date, four of those for Judith. "As a little girl, I always

dreamed of having a pasture full of Morgans of every color under the sun,” Judith says. “The splash gene has been my instrument to add pinto to my band of colorful horses. Maddy’s first foal [2018] was a buckskin splash that I called Mia-Mar Is It Time. ‘Time’ now resides with Renee Dreis DeRosier in Minnesota. The next spring [2019] I got the palomino homozygous splash colt Mia-Mar Landslide. Maddy’s third foal was a filly, Mia-Mar Gone Global, by my splash stallion BTTR Scotch On The Rocks. The fourth foal out of Maddy is a colt, Mia-Mar Come Here Often, who is marked as a future stallion here at Mia-Mar.”

Judith’s homozygous splash colt Mia-Mar Landslide has at least two mares in foal for 2021. “He has Triagn Wild Waters and Mia-Mar Do You Dance confirmed in foal,” says Judith. Judith has just recently added another homozygous splash mare from the Lady In Lace family to her herd. Two-year-old Silver Spur Stella (KS Bluestem The Old Guard x Westwind Medicine Hat, by Old Ways Bimbeau) made the trip north from Washington in October. With three homozygous splash breeding horses in residence, the future looks bright for lots of chrome at Mia-Mar.

Sweet’s Jet Hawk, foaled in 1986, sired just three registered offspring. His splash line comes from his daughter, Sweet’s Jada Babe (foaled in 1990 out of T-Bone Cards Fancy), who is the dam of 11, including the prolific breeding stallions Old Ways Bimbeau, KS Bluestem Jada Joe, and KS Bluestem The Old Guard. As a ten-year-old, Sweet’s Jada Babe joined the linebred herd of old midwestern Morgans owned by Jim and Suzanne Avery of Kansas Bluestem Morgans in Westmoreland, Kansas. Unbeknownst to anyone at the time was that the pretty bay mare with a star, snip, and two hind fetlocks was also carrying a splash gene. “What we were actually breeding for were dark driving/family horses of little to no white with excellent temperament, substance, size, and movement,” Suzanne explains. “We purchased our all-black driving pair of Morgans in 1986 from Kent Burch of Gypsum, Kansas. The pedigree of the line was WAR Justin x Sweet’s Tonga. We found this cross to be exceptional. They were animals with lots of size, substance, excellent trainability, and boy could they cover ground at the trot. We moved to New York for a short time and took our pair. There we competed in driving events with them, and they did very well. There were lots of people who were very interested in our horses and asked if we bred Morgans. We had so many people interested that when we moved to Kansas, we decided to breed this cross, WAR Justin x Sweet’s bloodline. We acquired the original mare Sweet’s Tonga, Sweet’s Cin Della, and Sweet’s Jada Babe. We crossed these mares on WAR Justin, Kells In Kirby’s Honor, and Kansas Buffalo Soldier. Our current stallion, KS Bluestem The Old Guard (Kansas Buffalo Soldier X Sweet’s Jada Babe), carries the splash gene but you would never know that as he is solid black with no white hairs. Since breeding Old Guard on our current mares and outside mares we have found that Old Guard, who was bred for usability and trainability, also will add a little fancy on his offspring too. All courtesy of the mare way back in the pedigree, Lady In Lace.”

Susan Motter and daughter Megan Kramer had also been primarily breeding for no white at their Prairie Hill Morgans in Cooperstown, North Dakota. That all changed when Megan spotted (pun intended) a photo of the splash colt MEMC On Target in *The*

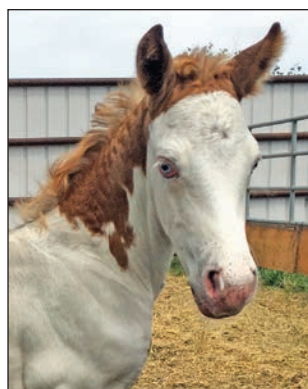
*Morgan Horse*. “As long as we kept our goals of versatile and easily trainable Morgans with classic type and old pedigrees, I was eventually on board with developing a splash wing of Morgan horses,” Susan says. The mother-daughter team researched pedigrees over two winters but found no splash Morgans of the old lines for sale. They decided to look for a stallion to breed their mares to. In 2013, they hauled four mares to Wyoming to be bred to Jennifer Murdock’s splash stallion FCR Magic Act (BFM SWT Chuckanut Jubilee x Mist Chief Mistara). “In our first attempt for splash we ended up with the splash colt Prairie Hill Prophecy and our very special splash filly that’s now my riding horse, Prairie Hill Grace,” Susan says. “Our second attempt at splash using Magic produced for us in 2015 a beautiful bay splash filly, Prairie Hill Juliet, from our leased mare, WAR Cotana. We were lucky enough to get a third foundation splash filly from Magic in 2019, Prairie Hill Liberty (out of Red Rose Tana), who now resides with Jennifer.”

Susan and Megan’s goal was to eventually produce a homozygous splash, so they needed to add another line of splash from a stallion of older bloodlines. That search ended with the lease of Old Ways Bimbeau (T-Bone Bimbo x Sweets Jada Babe) from his owner Sharon Jayne in 2014. “Beau’ had the kindest disposition a horse could have and consistently produced versatile Morgans,” Susan says. “In our first wave of foals from him came one of the centerpieces of our splash program today, Prairie Hill Armani, a 2015 bay splash stallion out of Ebony Echo. Beau’s last two Morgan foals were our chestnut splash mare, Prairie Hill Confetti (out of Kanters Cherished Secret), and chestnut/flaxen mare Prairie Hill Ruby (out of Fortunes Antoinette).” Prairie Hill Armani is the sire of the farm’s first homozygous splash Morgan, Prairie Hill Atlas, a bay splash colt foaled in 2020. Atlas has attracted much attention on social media with his very obvious pinto markings. Another exciting opportunity for a homozygous splash will arrive next year from the cross of Prairie Hill Armani on Prairie Hill Juliet.

In October of 2021, Susan and Megan added the black splash colt KS Bluestem Some Gave All (KS Bluestem The Old Guard x KS Bluestem Herod O Correll), bred by Suzanne Avery, to their growing herd of splash Morgans. “We have many wonderful future plans for him as a performance horse and future breeding stallion,” Susan says. “Now, having the building blocks with two lines to splash we can continue to produce and promote versatile Morgan horses, splash or no splash. [We’re] thankful to the breeders that shared their Morgan lineage with us. It’s exciting to move forward with them as they come of age to train under saddle and harness. Versatility is and always has been our main goal raising Morgans, no matter what the color.”

Renee Dreis DeRosier of Heritage Hollow Farms in North Branch, Minnesota, owns three splash Morgans from the Lady In Lace family, headed by her homebred stallion Heritage Hollow Simon Saz (FCR Magic Act x KMR Limelight). “I’ve been breeding, buying, selling, and starting Morgans since the late 1980s,” Renee says. “My herd today is a culmination of dreams over the last 30 years. I don’t focus on one bloodline, but I do watch the performance records and base my goals [on] combining parentage discipline performance and their way of going (both movement and relaxation). ‘Simon’ has been well started under saddle and has a canter to die for. He is a forward mover and loves working over





### ICESTONE WHITEWING FAMILY

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** W-B Her Royal Highness (W-B Enchantmint x Icestone Whitewing), a 1997 dark chestnut splash mare; MEMC Crown Royal (Robbi Sue's Mr Alert x King Blaze Mint), a 2003 buckskin splash stallion; Mia-Mar Halestorm (MEMC Crown Royal x RG Stormy Bell), a 2019 bay splash mare owned by Judith Dexter; Mia-Mar Landslide (MEMC Crown Royal x Journey's Made To Order), a 2019 palomino splash stallion owned by Judith Dexter; W-B Blue Barry (W-B Royal Blue x W-B Encasemint), a 2004 chestnut splash gelding (photos: Jennifer Monroe, Judith Dexter, Laurie Faust).

obstacles." Joining Simon in the splash lineup at Heritage Hollow are the mares Mia-Mar Is It Time (Mia-Mar Remo x Journeys Made to Order), a 2018 buckskin splash, and the 2015 chestnut splash FCR Scarlett (BFM SWT Chuckanut Jubilee x APH Secret Sauce). "Time" is a big bodied and tall mare, who is started under saddle and has participated in a working equitation clinic. This mare has no fear," Renee says. "I bought her last year to cross on Simon. Scarlett was purchased this past May, still by her dam's side. She's been fascinating to watch mature as she was, and still is, occasionally like a wild mustang. I see big potential for reining in her movement, though I doubt she will ever be a finished reiner. My dream would be to have a black splash Morgan. Color is the cherry on top for me, movement for sport and disposition are priority."

### ICESTONE WHITEWING SPLASH SOURCE #3

You might think this Midwest connection is just coincidence until you look at the final splash family, which descends from the 1980 chestnut mare Icestone Whitewing (Townshend Don Bird x Tamarlei Pa Waltz). I've never seen a photo of this mare (and if anyone has one, I hope they will share it). She is listed in the registry as marked with a blaze that extended into both nostrils, a right front fetlock, and stockings on the other three legs—all suggestive

of splash. How can we determine that Whitewing's splash may be coming from her Midwest-bred dam Tamarlei Pa Waltz (marked with hind pastern white only), and not her sire, Townsend Don Bird (who had a star, snip, and left hind fetlock white)? Several of Tamarlei Pa Waltz's other foals, by various stallions, were marked with blaze faces and four white feet like their sister. An even bigger clue came when interviewing well-known colorful Morgan breeder Judy Hinman for her profile article in *The Morgan Horse* in 2013. She mentioned that her first Morgan was a son of Applevale Kinsman and Tamarlei Minute, the latter a full sister to Tamarlei Pa Waltz. Judy's gelding was marked with high stockings behind, a big blaze face, and one blue eye, thus it's a pretty good guess that Tamarlei Pa Waltz was the splash source in this family. Tamarlei Pa Waltz has two crosses to Archie O on both sides of her pedigree. There's that connection again!

Icestone Whitewing was the dam of seven foals. Longtime Morgan enthusiasts may recall one of them from his ads in *The Morgan Horse* magazine: the very flashily-marked King Royal Mint (by Windhoverenchmentmint), foaled in 1988. Like all the W-B prefixed Morgans, he was bred by Vicki Greer. King Royal Mint only sired four foals and his splash line does not seem to have survived to the present, but his two full sisters, W-B Her Royal Highness (1997) and King Blaze Mint (1991), have carried the line

down to the present day.

W-B Her Royal Highness produced several unconfirmed splashes for Jennifer Monroe's MEMC breeding program, including full sisters MEMC Graffiti (who has had a long and successful career for various owners in the hunter and Western pleasure divisions), MEMC Gold Card, and MEMC Confetti, all by MEMC Tequila Cuervo. Bred to MEMC Crown Royal (Robbi Sue's Mr Alert x King Blaze Mint), Highness produced Jennifer's homozygous splash gelding MEMC On Target and MEMC Royal Heiress, currently showing in the hunter and dressage divisions for owners Stephen Finch and Christopher Barnes.

King Blaze Mint is the dam of eight foals, including the splash stallions MEMC Crown Royal and W-B Royal Blue. Crown Royal was sold in 2015 to Carlos Villareal in Saltillo, Mexico. He has sired four foals to date in Mexico and 19 in the United States and Canada, some produced via frozen semen after his sale. W-B Royal Blue's splash descendants are fewer in number, but he is the sire of W-B Blue Barry (foaled in 2004 out of W-B Encasement) who showed in the Western pleasure division for then-owner Laurie Faust and current owner Sally Thomason. His semen was collected and frozen before being gelded in 2016, so we may yet see more foals in addition to the seven already registered from this flashy boy.

With three splash families in the breed, today's breeders have a wide selection of bloodlines to choose from. Some are pulling from all three families in choosing their breeding stock. For Tonie Cowen of Cobblestone Creek Morgans in Conewango Valley, New York, splash Morgans are the fulfillment of a childhood dream. "Chromed-up horses are the ones that have always stood-out for me, whether it is in the field or in the show ring," Tonie says. "I wanted a pinto park horse as a child, but I grew up with Morgans, so I knew that was impossible, although I later got into pinto Saddlebreds. I stopped breeding Morgans in 2012, but after retirement in 2019 I decided I wanted to put together a little breeding program again. It was seeing Gloria James's Roseridge Blue Intrigue that first interested me in splashes, although I didn't fully understand the genetics of them at that point in time. It really wasn't until the winter of 2020 when I was researching the genetics of splash and was tracing the lineage of them and other white markers that I fully understood. That understanding had me looking at my herd a little differently. I had unwittingly put together a little splash herd."

Tonie purchased the bay splash stallion Skyloft Aftershock (foaled in 2010) earlier this year and has retained frozen semen on him. He is by Skyloft Dream Catcher (from the Lady In Lace splash family via paternal grandsire Old Ways Bimbeau) and out of Shock And Awe. Her up-and-coming junior stallion is the 2020 bay splash Mia-Mar Wildly Contagious (MEMC Crown Royal x Triagn Wild Waters). Her mare lineup includes the 2020 fillies Roseridge Aurora (Roseridge Blue Intrigue x MLB The Color Issue), Roseridge Harlequin's Joy (Cedar Creekharlequin x Roseridge Tempest), and UDM Savannah (Faircrest Dark Knight x Shahaylee), a 2013 dark bay mare who is currently in foal to Cedar Creekharlequin for 2022. Tonie is back in the Morgan breeding business for good. "I sold my last Saddlebred this spring, a pinto of course, and now I am back to being an

all-Morgan barn," she says. "Now I have five splashes, plus a few others with cool chrome that carry other white markers, and some that don't test for white markers at all, plus the token bay park mares, can't forget them. One thing that I really like about splashes is the blue eyes. Those eyes are just crazy amazing and so much fun to look at!"

## OTHER SPLASH POSSIBILITIES

Aside from more common ancestors such as General Gates, who is found in nearly every Morgan pedigree today except for pure Lippitts, the only line that all three splash sources share is Rhythm Lovely Lady and Archie O, both of whom have the mare Byrrh in common. It should be mentioned that there are other lines in these splash source pedigrees that carry a lot of white markings, but they don't appear in all three lineages. Sky Chief (Laruby King Royale x Annie De Jarnette) appears in two of the three splash source pedigrees, as the sire of Lady In Lace and paternal grand-sire of Tamarlei Pa Waltz. Sky Chief's photos show a pretty, chromed-out horse. The flashy Lippitt Searchlight (Lippitt Sam x Green Mountain Twilight) is behind Tamarlei Pa Waltz. You would think if splash was in the Lippitt lines, it would have appeared numerous times, as closely bred as the Lippitt gene pool has become. It is possible these horses were quietly culled in the past, or the right individuals have simply not been crossed together to produce more obvious splash offspring. There are some Lippitts with quite a lot of white, but none to date have tested to be splash; their flashy markings are due to another, unidentified, white pattern.

It's entirely possible that other high white horses in the pedigrees of today's splash Morgans are splash lines as well; there's no rule that says that splash has to derive from only one ancestral source. Or, these high white horses may be due to an as yet undiscovered splash gene (there are six currently) or another white pattern. There are "splash-like" white marked horses, some with blue eyes, which are testing as "not splash." Probably the best known of these is the stallion Regal Charade (War And Peace x RRG Flash Dance), whose white markings likely come from both of his grandsires, Cedar Creekharlequin and Century Free Spirit. The genetic cause for the high white from these lines is currently unknown but may be discovered in the future as more tests are developed for the various white pattern mutations.

It was interesting to discover that our three confirmed splash lines all have old Midwest roots in common. Unfortunately, we cannot go back and color test long dead ancestors, so we'll likely never know for sure if these horses were indeed splash. Uncovering more photos of these individuals may help, or it might not, as little can be inferred by the markings a splash suspect might have, but it's still fun to speculate!

Rhythm Lovely Lady and Archie O were prolific, producing 17 and 115 offspring, respectively. Though many of their lines have died out, perhaps someday more splash lines will be discovered with these individuals in their pedigrees. One thing is certain: there is major interest developing in Morgans with pinto coloring, splash in particular. Perhaps looking back is not as important as looking to the future and breeding the best splash Morgans that we can. ■