**Testimonial for Pferdehof**

**William Terry**

I keep my two dressage horses at home in the summer, but I have no indoor arena, so I board them in the winter so I can ride all year. This year I am boarding them at Pferdehof, a small facility west of Berthoud. I am very pleased with my experience at Pferdehof, and I would like to tell you why I am happy to be there.

My foremost reason is the owner and trainer, Verena Diaz. She is a Grand Prix rider from Germany who is giving me some very badly needed help with my riding fundamentals. She is an extremely astute horsewoman with a great deal of experience managing dressage facilities. She knows the principles of riding and can explain them to me so that I can understand how my faults are affecting my horses’ movements.

Next is the caretaker, Elias. He is very experienced with horses and personally conducts feeding, blanketing, and turnout, along with barn and stall cleanup. A unique advantage Pferdehof offers is that Elias and his family live in an apartment built into the barn. This arrangement offers unparalleled security. Nobody comes or goes without them knowing about it, and they are there to check on my horses pretty much 24/7. Elias is a man of many talents, including carpentry. And that leads to my next item.

Pferdehof has a brand-new indoor arena, which is the safest and most beautiful arena in which I have ever ridden. When the basic structure of the arena was completed, they built a wooden border that is tapered upwards and outwards. A rider is never close to the arena structure, unlike the situation in many arenas in which you have to be careful not to hit the support columns with your head if you ride too close to the edge. This border is very safe for horses, too, as a horse that gets up on the border is just shunted back down onto the footing. You are never at risk of getting too close to the wall with your leg, as the wall tapers away from you. The footing is wonderful, paradoxically both soft and firm. That is, it cushions well but offers firm support a couple of inches down. The base and footing were installed by Left Hand Excavating, a widely respected source of arena riding surfaces. Dust is controlled by daily watering, even in winter.

Finally, I like the turnout areas in which my horses spend their down time during the day. My horses are turned out in a large paddock bounded by Horse Guard electric fence, which is extremely safe. Their paddock is on a slope, which provides them with some hill-climbing exercise during the day. The paddock is cleaned up regularly to reduce the risk of parasite infestation.

I hope there will be room at Pferdehof for my horses next winter.