**Katrin Levermann**

(PNER member #4231)

***ENDURANCE RIDING; A FAMILY AFFAIR!***

We asked Katrin to answer some questions about her life with horses and Endurance Riding. Enjoy getting to know more about our PNER Rider Representative from British Columbia!

Greetings to all my PNER friends (present and future) from 100 Mile House, British Columbia! My name is Katrin Levermann and I have been involved with horses since my childhood. I went to college for equine studies in Germany, worked in Thoroughbred racing and in dressage and jumping and was also functioning as a FN coach (Federal National level of a coaching/instructor license).

Currently I am a nurse working in the 100 Mile House general hospital and also started travel nursing in 2022 working in remote nurses stations in Northern BC. I am honored to be the PNER rider representative for BC.

My involvement with horses evolved into endurance riding after moving to Canada in 1995 with my husband. My husband and I went to school together in Germany. (We were in Kindergarten in the same class and we graduated together.) My husband is not a rider but he is a great supporter and has been on a trail ride at home with us.

After we had our two girls we got involved in Pony Club with our own horses, the show rink was not what we wanted. So we tried CTR and that lead to endurance riding starting in 2006 because many of the CTR riders we met also participated in endurance. Endurance riding allowed us to ride and compete together as a family, enjoy horse camping, traveling together and spending time as a family which was absolutely priceless!

What I enjoy most about the sport is starting 100 milers and enduring all extreme weather conditions you could possibly think of. The feeling of accomplishment finishing a 100 mile ride is what gives you that jolt of joy and relief and wanting to do it again
(I know it sounds crazy..lol) That's why we started to hunt for 100 mile rides. Unfortunately, they have become less and less.

You asked what challenges have I have faced as an endurance rider and how have I have overcome them: We live in the northern part of the NW region. The riding season is shorter and it was a challenge to get three horses conditioned enough in Spring to get to our first ride. Our first ride was usually one of our first "real" conditioning rides. We always had to take it slow because of that and also since we could not afford to have one of us being pulled for lameness. Which would have ruined the rest of the season for all of us. And it was also for financial reasons, after spending that much money, for health papers for 3 horses and driving a minimum of 2 days to a ride in the US, we simply opted for the Turtle award not wanting to risk anything. And we got lots of Turtle awards...

We had been in the standings for the AERC family award multiple times, we love 100 milers and multi day events, and both girls also participated in FEI events. They both became elite riders, representing Canada. Katya got to go to the Youngrider Championships in Kentucky in 2014 and Anya to the world championships in Verona, Italy in 2017. Anya also broke the AERC record of most 100 milers ridden in one year. In 2016, her last year as a junior rider she started 10 one day 100 mile rides and finished 8. As for myself, I reached a milestone with my horse Buddy in 2024.

Accomplishing the 10th one day 100 mile ride and also received our AERC decade team award.

We currently own Arabians. My current mount is a 16 year old Arabian, who is also my heart horse. I had him since he was a baby and he was the most challenging horse I have ever worked with. He lost me many times. Not that he wanted to, but he was so reactive, that I could simply not keep up with his energy and explosiveness. Once we started 100's he became a different horse, he is all business on the trail and took care of me when I started to fall apart during the last miles in the dark. We now have an incredible bond. He is the first one on the gate when he hears the truck and happily jumps into the trailer. I have a son, who I am also competing with.

We have SO many great memories of our time riding and traveling as a family. From flat tires to involuntary sightseeing because we couldn't find the ride site. We could probably write a book. Chased by a wild stallion at the Bandit Springs ride in OR, looking at petroglyphs in Oreana, ID, being literally on top of the world at the Big Horn 100, the exciting start of the Virginia City 100 in front of the Delta Saloon with music and flags ( my horse was almost having a heart attack), arriving on the holds and check points of Tevis to some very enthusiastic volunteers (and great food) But the City of Rocks ride in ID will always be my most favorite ride!

Every ride we learned from other riders, the most important thing was to always try to ride your own ride, even though it is not always possible, listen to your horse, after all those miles, you get an instinct for any abnormalities.

The Pink Flamingo ride was the most fun ride. The costumes riders choose were absolutely hilarious, the decorations of their campers, the inflatable flamingos dropped by a plane over the ride site, the scavenger hunt during the ride (finding little flamingos on the trail).

One thing comes to mind when you asked me about memorable experiences; my daughter Anya keeps telling me how "mean" I was to her when she started puking at the end of the Virginia City 100 and I apparently said to her "We don't have time for this now!" She is still reminding me of that situation.

Many of you have asked how my daughters are doing now. The girls started riding at a very young age. About 3, I would say. Doing pony club at first. They started endurance riding when they were 6. Katya is now 26 and Anya is turning 25 this year. (They also started hockey at 3 and made it all the way up to Rep hockey and winning the Provincial Championships. They still play hockey in recreation teams now.) Both worked as wildland firefighters over the summers to finance their university. Both have graduated now. Katya has a degree in Molecular Biology and Chemistry and works as an environmental Technician and coordinator and Anya has a degree in International Business and Management and works in Dispatch and Radio operations for the Cariboo Fire Center. But unfortunately no endurance riding anymore.

The 2019 Virginia City ride was the last time I rode a 100 with Anya. I miss our long travels together It's not the same without them anymore.

The advice I would you offer to someone who is new to the endurance world is to keep your eyes and ears open to learn from others, accept advice, but most of all...have fun!! We became PNER members right away (2007 I believe). Since we did most of our endurance rides in the US we felt it was the proper thing to do.

PNER is like a family to us, we always received so much support, especially for juniors, and we loved the PNER conventions in Portland, OR.

Both girls received scholarship money from PNER and were very thankful for that support . I would love to see more US riders coming to ride in BC. We have our own little club. ERABC (Endurance Riders Association of British Columbia) with about 5 rides per year. I am myself part of the management team of the Cariboo Gold Rush Express ride.

I have lent my horses out to OR riders and would love to continue to do so and I am also hoping that more people would be interested to do this and vice versa.