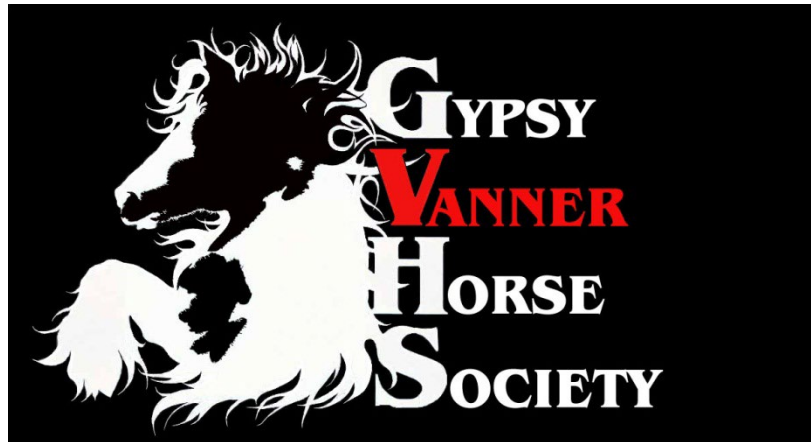


# Gypsy Vanner Horse Society Conformation and Performance Evaluation Program



**Gypsy Vanner Horse Society**

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# I. Introduction to the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society

- *The history, goals and beliefs of the GVHS* -

Founded November 24, 1996, the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society is the world's first Registry to recognize a breed of horse developed by the Gypsies of Great Britain and the only such Registry founded on an in-depth study of British and their horses.

Soon after World War II, a vision was born by the Gypsies of Great Britain to create the perfect caravan horse; "a small Shire, with more feather, more color and a sweeter head" was the goal. Selective breeding by the Gypsies continued virtually unknown to the outside world for over half a century until two Americans, Dennis and Cindy Thompson, noticed a magical looking horse standing in a field while traveling through the English countryside. That very horse became #GV000001F in the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society. His name is Cushti Bok, a name that means "good luck" in Romany, a language of the Gypsies. The logo of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society is an image of Cushti Bok, the letters GVHS with an emphasized "V" for Vanner.

The Gypsy Vanner Horse Society's mission begins with 'a commitment to bring honor, recognition and a better understanding to one of the world's most colorful, least understood societies and the horses they so dearly love' and ends with 'a commitment to remain quality based, culturally sensitive and socially responsible'.

This Registry was established to protect a vision that was born over half a century ago to create the perfect caravan horse to pull the Gypsies' colorful caravans. Specific goals will enable the GVHS to achieve the mission. Those goals are:

## **THE LOOK**

- Establish the breed with the look envisioned by the Gypsies.

## **THE GENETICS**

- Establish the breed with the genetics that it, identified through DNA verification whenever possible.



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## **THE FEELINGS**

- Establish the breed with the feelings of the status and pride that Gypsies feel for their selectively bred horses. "I'd give a thousand pounds just to walk him in front of the boys," said Tom Price (the Gypsy who raised Cushti Bok) as he described the famous stallion, The Kent Horse. We honor Tom and Gypsy breeders like him by breeding Vanner horses a Gypsy would want to "walk in front of the boys".

## **THE VALUE**

- Establish the breed in parallel to the values that Gypsies place on their selectively bred horses. Remaining culturally sensitive requires that we understand and strive to preserve (or elevate) the British/Irish Gypsy culture's established means of making a living raising horses.

## **THE NAME "GYPSY VANNER" HORSE**

The name GYPSY VANNER HORSE is the first name in the world to identify a selectively-bred horse raised by the Gypsies of Great Britain as a breed. The name was painstakingly chosen and has three components- the people, their vision and the species. To shorten the breed's name one would use the breed's vision word, "Vanner" or "Vanner Horse". Compare this to the American Quarter Horse or Quarter Horse- a people, their vision and the species. Vanner, in the English Chambers Dictionary is defined as "a horse suitable to pull a caravan". A Gypsy's caravan horse is a "Vanner".

## **WHAT THE GVHS BELIEVES**

All breeds result from a crossing of breeds by someone or some culture focused on creating a specific looking horse from their dreamed image or vision. Once the vision horse is achieved and recognized, the basic function of a breed society is to protect, perpetuate, promote and educate others about that breed. Therefore, cross bred horses are not accepted for registration into the GVHS Studbooks.

The GVHS has the distinction of being the first breed society established in the age of the Internet. Due to this communication phenomenon, people seeking information may quickly become confused by multiple names and mixed messages on the Internet. Confusion is counterproductive to a breed, our Society's goals and to a breeder's ability to achieve success. Registering qualified horses solely with the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society is an important step toward eliminating that confusion.



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The GVHS offers useful website guidelines designed to help our membership send the message of the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society. Members' websites, which showcase their farm's individuality, accompanied by a sense of unity, breed clarity, and the pursuit of like-minded goals, will ensure the success of the breed, the Society and its members in this unique age in which we live.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

Every ingredient described in this introduction- the look, the genetics, the feelings and the value- existed the day Cushti Bok was discovered. The heartbeat of our Society and the inspiration for its mission is founded on a desire to preserve and share those special ingredients with others. Through achieving our goals, Gypsies- one of the most colorful, least understood societies on earth- will take and extraordinary place in the annals of equine history.



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## II. Gypsy Vanner Horse Evaluation Program

### INTRODUCTION

The Gypsy Vanner Horse Evaluation Program has been developed as an educational tool for the horse breeder, to promote thoughtful breeding of Gypsy Vanner Horses of the type as detailed in the breed standard, and for the public to educate them about the breed. The program's purpose is to help breeders and owners to educate themselves about the strengths and weaknesses of their horses so they can use this knowledge in making educated breeding and purchasing decisions. This system should be looked upon as an important tool to help preserve the wonderful characteristics of the Gypsy Vanner Horse.

The conformation-movement evaluation is also an integral part of the GVHS Registration process. Horses lacking DNA verification of both sire and dam require a certain minimum conformation-movement evaluation score to move from the GVHS Pre-Studbook into the Regular Studbook. More information regarding the Registration Rules and process can be found in Appendix I.

This is a voluntary program, therefore its success depends on its acceptance and use by Gypsy Vanner owners. It is a controlled system based on the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society breed standards. Each horse is scored against the breed standard, not against another horse. It is not a horse show and not judged as such. There are all ages, and the performance testing for horses age three and older in English pleasure, western pleasure and pleasure driving. A horse can be entered into any part of the evaluation program in a given year, whether it be conformation/movement alone, performance alone or any combination.

### GVHS APPROVED EVALUATORS

Horses will be evaluated and scored by two or more GVHS approved Evaluators. The GVHS reserves the right to choose and train evaluators.

Candidate Evaluators must have verified, relevant equine industry experience and must complete the Evaluator Training Program. Training will consist of classroom work, slides and videos, hands on training and participation as a learner evaluator.

Following completion of a training seminar, potential Evaluator candidates will be identified to proceed through the learner Evaluator process.

The GVHS will cover travel expenses to help defray the costs for the potential evaluator.



Once granted Evaluator status, Evaluators must sign the *Evaluator Agreement* with the GVHS indicating that they acknowledge and agree to the following conditions:

- To only evaluate Gypsy Vanners within the GVHS Evaluation program and will not participate in private evaluations on farms or at horse shows unless they are part of an approved, organized GVHS Evaluation.
- Evaluators are expected to maintain an up-to-date Membership with the GVHS during their tenure as an Evaluator.
- Ethical principles must be adhered to by the Evaluators. In every situation the evaluators should attempt to act and behave with the highest ethical standards in mind.

Evaluator status will be reviewed on an annual basis. During this time, the GVHS will attempt to offer each qualified Evaluator equal opportunities annually to conduct Evaluations. Evaluators will be offered these opportunities based upon their proximity to the planned Evaluation location in order to allow GVHS to minimize travel expenses. Evaluators who have been actively evaluating at least one session each year may have their Evaluation status automatically renewed on an annual basis.

Ethical principles must be adhered to by the Evaluators. In every situation the evaluators should attempt to act and behave with the highest ethical standards in mind. Evaluators have a compelling responsibility to fairly, and independently, evaluate each horse and to provide the horse owner with information and guidance which is clear and useful. Some owners are novices, evaluators should take care that explanations are understandable. Evaluators are expected to be able to verbally explain their assessments in addition to the written scores and comments on the Scoresheets. Brief explanations can be given in the ring and evaluators should be available to make explanations to horse owners outside the ring and after the evaluation is finished.

The Evaluator must attempt to present a positive and professional image. The Evaluator should be willing to offer helpful information and suggestions. The verbal manner of an Evaluator and his/her personal behaviour is very important. The Evaluator shall be friendly and respectful while evaluating and educating. Evaluators will dress in an appropriate manner and be prompt and on schedule, while also taking enough time to sufficiently evaluate each horse. The Evaluator must never disparage a horse, its breeder or owner in any way.



The Evaluator evaluates a horse only by comparison to the Breed Standard and not by the pedigree, the bloodline or the breeder/owner/handler. The Evaluator must judge a horse objectively as it is presented before them on that day. The Evaluator must ensure that handlers and riders have been given adequate instruction and opportunity to show the horse to its best potential. Any information previously received or heard, regarding a particular horse must be rejected, and the evaluation based on only what is seen at the time of evaluation.

### **THE EVALUATION MANAGER**

- Prepare scoresheets for each Evaluation with complete information for the horse being Evaluated.
- Collect and tally TOTAL SCORE for each Evaluator. IF the total score differs by more than 5 points, bring this to the attention of the Evaluators so that they are given the opportunity to review, discuss their scores to ensure that something was not overlooked by one of the Evaluators. Following this review, either Evaluator may have the opportunity to adjust their scores if deemed necessary. The Manager must then re-tally the TOTAL SCORE for each.
- Discuss any noted concerns with the Evaluation process, the scoring and written and/or verbal communications with the Evaluators as they arise.
- Ensure Scoresheets are handled and stored securely, allowing only review by the horse's owner and the Evaluators.

### **DISPUTE RESOLUTIONS**

In the event it is claimed an evaluator has acted in an unethical manner, the following procedure should be followed:

1. The incident or complaint should be reported to the on site Evaluation Manager immediately. It is preferable if the matter is raised at the evaluation site. If not, there is a 30 day time limit to file the concern.
2. The Evaluation Manager will make every effort to protect the privacy and dignity of all concerned.
3. If the matter cannot be resolved on site it will be taken to the Evaluation Committee which is overseen by the Board of Directors of the GVHS.
4. The GVHS BOD will make final decisions in all disputes after hearing recommendation of the Evaluation Committee.



## **CONDUCT OF OWNERS AND BREEDERS**

Owners and breeders are expected to present their horse in a professional manner. Breeders and owners will be respectful of the Evaluators, the other breeders and owners, and show management. Breeders and owners have an obligation to respect the view of the Evaluator. Care must be taken not to misquote evaluators, take them out of context, or disparage an Evaluator. Any issues or complaints are to be taken to the Evaluation Manager.



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## III. Evaluation Rules

### A. Eligibility

1. The horse (of any age) must be registered or pending registration with the GVHS in the Gypsy Vanner Studbook. Pending registration means a GVHS application has been received and the registration fees have been paid.

### B. Equine Health and Fitness

1. All Gypsy Vanners must provide a negative Coggins test from their veterinarian if required of the venue. The Coggins test date must be the shortest of one of the following date requirements:

- a. within 12 months of the evaluation
- b. in accordance with state regulation of the state where the evaluation is being held
- c. in accordance with the requirements of the facility.

2. Horses traveling across state lines or country borders must comply with health certificate requirements for the state or country where the evaluation is being held.

3. The GVHS will convey to exhibitors any known recommendations regarding local outbreaks or contagious diseases.

4. Cruelty or abuse of a horse by any person at an evaluation is forbidden.

5. No horse will be misrepresented by the use of drugs, surgery, medications or appliances of any type.

6. The GVHS, the committee, the evaluators and the host venue will not be responsible for any accident, injury, damage, or illness to any horse, handler, owner, spectator, or other persons or property.

7. All tack, harness and vehicles will be safe, fitted and in good working condition.



### **C. Entries**

1. A completed entry form and fees must be paid and submitted to the GVHS office by the closing date.
2. Entries will be accepted on first come, first served basis.
3. Number of entries may be limited depending on location, number of stalls or other criteria.
4. If the evaluation does not go forth as planned, entry fees will be refunded.
5. Refunds will only be issued for extraordinary circumstances such as sickness or injury of horse or owner.

### **D. Other**

1. All entrants are responsible to understand and abide by the rules and regulations of the evaluation process.
2. Handlers under age 18 must be supervised by an adult and are not allowed to handle stallions.
3. Substitute runners for running conformation/movement patterns are permitted.
4. If a horse presents a risk to itself, the handler, the evaluators, or the public it will be removed from the area and may be disqualified from the evaluation.
5. Once you have shown your horse in conformation or performance you cannot ask to have the score erased.

Once the score has been written it stands and will be recorded. A horse can be re-evaluated at another evaluation and each score will be recorded in the record book. The newest score is considered the current score. A horse can withdraw part way through a conformation or performance presentation if the handler deems the animal not fit to continue and the score will not be recorded.

6. The owner will be given the owners copy of the score sheet. A digital copy of the original will be saved in the permanent file in the offices of the GVHS.



## IV. Conformation/ Movement Evaluation

### A. SCORING

There are eight categories of conformation based on the breed standards, each worth 1-10 points. Breed type is worth 1-10 points X 2 providing a maximum of 100 points possible. Each horse will be scored by the Evaluators independently and these scores will then be averaged to compute the official scores.

Numerical values given to each category reflect the following:

10 = Ideal	5 = Unsatisfactory
9 = Excellent	4 = Poor
8 = Very Good	1-3 = Very Poor
7 = Good	
6 = Satisfactory	

Total point scale:

0-59 Very Poor - Unsatisfactory

60-69 Acceptable - Satisfactory

70-79 Good

80-100 Very Good to Ideal

### B. CONFORMATION SCORING CATEGORIES

#### 1. Head

- Length proportional
- Forehead flat and broad
- Frontal facial bone – flat to slightly convex
- Nostrils large
- Ears – proportional size, shape, position
- Eyes – large, expressive, placement
- Bite

#### 2. Neck

- Length appropriate
- Crest arched and well-muscled
- Shoulder Attachment
- Throat latch and neck underline



### **3. Body**

- Shoulder angle
- Withers, defined, not sharp or round
- Back, short, strong
- Coupling/Loin proportional
- Croup round, high tail set
- Hip
- Chest, wide, developed
- Barrel, Girth deep with well sprung ribs
- Flank area deep
- Muscle development appropriate for age/gender

### **4. Forelegs**

- Straight, correct
- Defined joints
- Dense flat heavy to medium bone
- Forearm to cannon ratio
- Pasterns length and angle
- Hooves round / size
- Base stance

### **5. Hind legs**

- Straight, correct
- Defined joints
- Dense flat heavy to medium bone
- Gaskin muscling
- Hocks, set, angle
- Base stance
- Pasterns length and angle
- Hooves round/size

### **6. Movement at walk**

- Natural free flowing
- Length of stride[Profile]
- Deliberate, forward, straight
- Suspension
- Use of knees and hocks
- Tracking [Front/Rear]
- Head and neck carriage

### **7. Movement at trot**

- Natural, free flowing



- Length of stride [Profile]
- Deliberate forward straight
- Use of knees and hocks
- Tracking [Front/Rear]
- Head and neck carriage

### **8. Overall Impression**

- Balance and harmony
- Gender characteristics
- Presence, attitude, temperament

### **9. Breed Type**

- Image of a small draft horse
- Overall substance and bone
- Abundant feather
- Ample flowing mane and tail
- Conformation form to function

## **C. CONFORMATION PRESENTATION**

### **1. Grooming**

- Horse is to be presented clean and groomed.
- Horse can be clipped or unclipped.
- Mane, tail and feather to be free and flowing. Tail can be slightly banged or natural.

### **2. Tack**

- Mature horses to be shown in halter or bridle, reins, chain shank or lead rope.
- Stallions are NOT to be presented in stallion tack.
- Young stock (under the age of 3) to be shown in halter, chain shank or lead rope.

### **3. Attire**

- Attire should be comfortable, clean, neat, appropriate and safe.

### **4. Presentation**

Horse to be presented standing 10 feet in front of the judge. Horse will be asked to walk a triangle pattern with 40 foot sides. Then they will be asked to trot a



triangle with 60 feet per side. Cones will be placed at the points of the triangles and the horse/handler will go on the outside of these cones.



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## V. Performance Evaluations

There are three disciplines, ridden under English saddle, ridden under western saddle, and driving. Horses can be entered into any combination of evaluations and tests, at any time, whether it be conformation and all performance tests, just performance tests, or any combination thereof. Tests may be retaken another time if a higher performance test score is desired. A horse **cannot** take the same performance test over on the same day.

The purpose of performance testing is to reflect the various ways the Gypsy Vanner is shown or used. The patterns have been adapted from standard patterns that are regularly used in the various disciplines of English or Western riding and driving. The tests are designed to allow the participant to show the horse's willingness to work, obedience, quality of the gaits, and level of training. **The emphasis of evaluating the horse's performance is focused on the horse's behavior.** Rider/driver errors made while executing the patterns will not cause the horse to lose points for its performance. An entry may be asked to repeat parts of the test if the evaluator believes that a rider/driver error caused the horse not to perform well. Because it is best to give the horse every opportunity to show himself to the best of his capability, it is recommended that participants familiarize themselves with the tests in advance and practice them prior to the evaluation date.

### A. GENERAL RULES

1. Performance tests can be taken by any horse age 3 or over
2. Performance participants may be any age, however, no one under the age of 18 will be allowed to ride or drive a stallion. If the participant is under the age of 18 the entry form and release must be signed by a parent or guardian.
3. A reader is allowed for all tests without penalty.
4. Harness, saddles and bridles do not have to be show type. They must be clean, safe, serviceable and well-fitting of the proper type for the discipline being tested. In the case of driving, the harness must be appropriate for the type of vehicle being used.



5. Mounting assistance for the physically challenged may be granted without penalty in advance by the Evaluation Manager. A mounting block may be used by anyone without penalty.



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## VI. Awards and Recognition

### A. GENERAL RULES

1. Award levels can be published in the online registry. All 4 and 5 star horses scores will be published unless the office is notified not to publish on the online registry.
2. Other scores will only be published if the owner gives permission. Contact the GVHS office to have scores posted on the online registry record of the horse.

### B. STAR AWARD

The Star Award is given to horses age 3 and over that attain qualifying scores in the Conformation/ Movement portion of the evaluation program.

- a. 70-79 Score will be given a Four Star recognition
- b. 80-100 Score will be given a Five Star recognition

A horse with a total score of 80-100, that has a 6 or below in any category of conformation/movement will be given a Four Star recognition.

Young stock scores are temporary and the horse is expected to be re-evaluated at age 3 or more. The Young stock score does not count toward the performance award levels.

- c. Young stock (under age 3) that score 75 or more will be given a 1st Premium recognition.
- d. Young stock (under age 3) that score 65-74 will be given a 2nd Premium recognition.

### C. GOLD MEDALLION OF QUALITY

Any horse with qualifying scores in the Conformation/Movement portion of the program and the Performance portion of the program will be awarded a Gold Medallion of Quality.

**Gold Medallion of Quality in Under Saddle-Western** requires a score of 70 or more in the Conformation/Movement Evaluation and a score of 70 or more in the Western Riding performance test.



**Gold Medallion of Quality in Under Saddle-English** requires a score of 70 or more in the Conformation/Movement Evaluation and a score of 70 or more in the English Riding performance test.

**Gold Medallion of Quality in Driving** requires a score of 70 or more in the Conformation/Movement Evaluation and a score of 70 or more in the Driving test.

#### **D. VERSATILITY MEDALLION OF HONOR**

Versatility is a very important attribute of the Gypsy Vanner Horse. Because of this it is encouraged that Gypsy Vanners be trained in a variety of disciplines. The ultimate horse has good conformation, movement, and is a willing partner in multiple riding disciplines and driving. Tests can be taken over a period of time as training and skill level develop.

When a horse has received a Gold Medallion of Quality in all three performance tests, that horse will be presented with the Versatility Medallion of Honor.

#### **E. HALL OF FAME**

A Gypsy Vanner stallion or mare can also be qualified for honors, based on recognition of the quality of its offspring. To be called a GVHS Hall of Fame Stallion or a GVHS Hall of Fame Mare the horse must meet the following requirements:

1. The horse must have offspring that are evaluated in the GVHS Evaluation program. These offspring must be evaluated in Conformation/Movement and in Performance.
  - a. A Hall of Fame Stallion must have 5 offspring that have received a Gold Medallion of Quality.
  - b. A Hall of Fame Mare must have 3 offspring that have received a Gold Medallion of Quality.



## VII. REGISTRATION

**A horse that is not eligible for registration** due to its DNA status will be eligible to be registered in the Pre Studbook if it obtains a score of 70 or above in conformation/movement and 7(x2) in breed type. If a horse obtains a score of 70 or above plus a score of 7 (x2) in breed type, this horse will be registered in the Gypsy Vanner studbook.

**A horse currently registered in the pre studbook will be moved to the Gypsy Vanner studbook if receive a conformation/movement** score of 70 or above overall AND a score of 7(x2) in breed type.

