

# LIFELONG FRIENDS AND BUSINESS SUCCESS

## LAURA CONNAWAY

*Grand Prix Jumper and Equine Insurance Professional*  
— Little Rock, Arkansas

### What part do you play in the horse world?

As a fourth-generation horsewoman, I've been involved in the horse world my entire life. In 1992, I started my insurance agency, Connaway & Associates, but before that I was just a regular amateur rider competing in hunter-jumper shows. These days, I manage my company full-time, but I also get to enjoy competing my homebreds in jumper classes. I've met just about all of my closest friends through my job, so it makes working really fun.

### What's your favorite thing about what you do?

Making lifelong friends through our business and being able to enjoy the success of our customers, whether it's long-distance or they're standing next to me at the ring, makes it so special. And when things aren't going as well, in the show ring or with their horses' health, being able to understand the trials and tribulations our customers are going through is really important.

### What's your biggest achievement?

My biggest achievement in the horse world is being able to breed my own horses and learning how to train them – from the time they're foals to when they're competing. Outside the horse world, it would be my business. I'm proud to have created a company that is able to support our employees and give them a good way of life, but also being able to support myself as well.

### What are your goals for the future?

To show again! Right now, I'm letting my top two horses, Quite Funny and Ceralena, relax after our winter season in Ocala. I'm working on training my young horses. At the moment, I don't have any competitive goals other than I want to keep jumping double-clear rounds. That makes me happy! We ended this spring season at Gulfport with two great double-clears in the grand prix. Hopefully, we'll start up again soon.

For my business, my main goal is working toward a four-day work week for all of our employees. I really respect my staff's quality of life: No matter how much you love your job, you still want to do other things. We want everyone to be able to have as much time as possible to do all the things they love.

### What's something most people don't know about you?

I think most people don't know that I'm a runner – I've completed the Boston Marathon twice. I'm also a complete gym rat. I love the gym. I've had the same personal trainer for twelve



Photos top to bottom:  
Laura and Quite Funny  
Laura with her horse  
Ceralena and dog Flo

years! He's part mentor and part best friend. He's supportive of everything I do, mentally and physically, and he always challenges me to be a better person. We do weightlifting and boxing. I find that it really helps me with my riding as well, because we work a lot on balance work, core strength and coordination.

### What's the best thing about your life?

Everything – the whole package! My free time is fabulous, but you don't enjoy that time as much unless you're also doing work as well. And I love my job. I think that for true happiness, you need the structure of work hours, so that you can look forward to the non-structure of your free time. It's all about balance. Having a variety of things going on is important thing for me, so I don't take anything for granted. I always remind myself how lucky I am to live this life. **SI**

Photos by Sandy Gregory