FEATHER SOUND NEWS

Serving the Tampa Bay Area, Florida

THE NAME GAME

Many people inquire why we have so many unusual spellings for the names of our animals and their locations. Very simply, Laurie Wolf had a gifted teacher for a mother who spelled naturally, and her father was a well-educated business professional.

“In spite of assumed quality language genes… I was never known to be much of a speller. Although it started as a joke, once I graduated and was out on my own, I not only derived joy from silly combinations of letters, but it led to a feeling that many of the animals I was naming really needed to be identified as different; in more than one way.”

A longtime canine family member was known as J’son (pronounced Jason) which stood for Jake’s son… which he was! Over a decade later a horse was aptly named C’zon, for Cimmi’s son.

Many of the spellings are actually pronounced as common names like; Jac (a client’s horse short for Jacson) and another client horse Jak - both pronounced Jack. Mhason is Mason, Mharkk is Mark; Lyzhi - Lizzy; or Shamm with 2 m’s and Slic without the k; are all fun but often with a deeper purpose as a special connection to someone important in their lives (or ours) or to distance them from some horror they had endured; some just look neat on paper.

Animals with human names just seem to need an alternate spelling but others are because they are named after someone of another species. For example; a lovely gold cat was named after a President of the Palomino Horse Association. The woman struck a chord in my heart and I loved her name. I asked if she minded a horse being named after her and she graciously said she’d be honored. When I met the cat and heard her tale of terror and torture I felt she needed the blessing of a very special name, so SHE was named after Raelene, rather than a gold horse. Since she was feline, not human, she became Rhaelima (Rhaina for short); simply pronounced Rayleema.

Over the decades, students have also had fun with spellings or made-up monikers. A Lipizzaner named after the famous pony show jumper Stroller, became Stroger due to a touch of dyslexia; Pegasus Danjahl was named after his owner, but the fellow’s parents did not spell Daniel oddly on his birth certificate. LO stood for Little One, a special nickname for her mother; Ani was short for Anniroc - her grandmother’s name backwards.

Our locations often include spelling challenges as well. For example, our rabbits live in the Bhunneri, cats in a Khatteri or Khitteri and our small animal foods are kept in a Kitchin. Most of our pastures are numbered but one is called "The L", however, even though at first glance it is shaped like an 'L', it actually forms a 'T'. No-one has yet complained that they cannot find the pasture...

It is certainly not a requirement to belong to the clan of alternative spellers! When my vet was told I picked a name for a horse she’d returned to soundness she asked politely, “can we spell it normal?”

She then procured a half interest in the wonderful lad, Sky. Spiritt had two t’s because she was twice as special; but Giotto got to keep his name just the way he liked it. Tomi was named after his breeder’s husband Thomas,

but Frosty liked her name the way it was, etc.

Although many of our show or registered names are more common, some have been a source of entertainment with announcers. Idle Gossip, Class Act, Small Talk were digs at pettiness too often seen at competitions. Sky High, Formal Attire, Night Moves, Neversaintless and Goodnight each truly fit their style.

So when you peruse our site and read up on our animal family, please bear with what appears to be a spelling nightmare.

Just know we have a lot of fun and take pleasure in many hidden meanings!

ENJOY! - Laurie Lianne Wolf (no funny spellings!)

For more intriguing & informative stories or to make a donation to help the animals,
please check out our website: http://www.EquestrianSpirits.ORG