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The USIHC Pleasure Riding Program - 1ST PLACE – Adult Division – Eastern Region – 2008 & 2009

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I love my Icelandic horses Gna and Freyr and the more I can do with them the better. I have had Gna for 6 years and I bought her from Iceland. She is the most awesome black mare with a great mind and a very fast tolt. She is a real sweetheart and my soul mate (don't tell me husband). I have had Freyr for two years. He is a little cutie, a golden dun and a natural tolt. So if anyone wants to feel a good tolt, he is your man. I am so lucky to have two great horses with really good gaits. I try to ride every day doing something fun out on the trails or in the arena. I have great people to ride with on Icelandics and other horse breeds. I am also lucky to have a great trail system in my backyard here where I live in New Jersey. Along with miles of park trails, we have generous landowners who give us passage through their properties. Even passing herds of buffalo at a local farm.

Including trail riding and generally having fun Icelandic style, we also get up to a few other things during the year. We were in 5 hunter paces last year and placed in each of them with 3 first place ribbons and a second and a third in the other. It is fun to watch the hunter jumper riders on their hunters look at the Icelandic horses and compliment the pretty little ponies. Next you have to give a quick history of the breed and educate them not to use the "p" word - and then shock them when you out run them on the pace! They look soooo smooth when they are tolt. Those cute little hairy beasties, they kick some butt. I also take Gna and Freyr to the New Jersey Horse Expo each year to give an Icelandic breed demonstration and participate



in a parade of breeds. We do a meet and greet with Gna and Freyr and hand out USIHC literature. This year our trail association provided a demonstration for local fire departments (five of them) on how to rescue horses from a barn during a fire. It was great to see the firemen in all their gear moving horses around. Most of the firemen had never handled a horse before. The horses had not seen the scary equipment before either, but all did very well. Each year I try to ride the NEIHC Bunny Hop ride held in the Spring as well as the Turkey Tolt ride in the Fall at Rockefeller State Park Preserve in New York. The turn out this year was great with about 30 Icelandic horses and riders participating, thundering along the trails. It is an awesome sight to see all the different colours of hairy horses tolt along. I am looking forward to many more miles of riding with Gna and Freyr in 2010. Happy tolting!