

Would-be *First Lady* is a First-Rate Lady



BY JEANETTE BENNETT

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Ann Romney is not just “the wife that Mitt built.” She has opinions, community board positions and horses all her own.

But for 12 months, Ann put the campaign before the horse and traveled around the country giving speeches nearly every day at the side of her Republican husband. After the couple bowed out of the presidential race in February, Ann got some much-needed sleep (12 glorious hours per night for a time), and now she’s again “off to the races” — this time with her thoroughbreds.

Although the Oval Office was the Romneys’ goal, Ann is now settled in an oval arena where she has traded Gallup polls for galloping. And she couldn’t be happier.

At age 59, Ann has learned that peaceful is tied to productive, and with her five sons now fathers, her busy “nest” is full of four-legged creatures. To say she likes horses is to say Mitt kinda wanted to be president. Ann *loves* her horses — she knows their personalities and their pain. And they have helped her feel less of hers. Ten years ago, Ann was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which took away the energy her life has always required. Her animals became her therapy, and she became their caregiver.

Ann and her spouse won’t be living in the White House (at least not within the next four years), but she recognizes the benefits of no longer having to hold her horses while she and her sons blog and brag about Mitt. The Olympic-sized businessman still has a bright political future, but Ann has returned to a “regular” life of horse training, making homemade granola and leaving Mitt in the car while she runs into the grocery store. “It’s either that or have him put a paper bag on his head so that it doesn’t take so long to go anywhere,” she laughs.

The Romneys — who both graduated from BYU — have a home in Utah, but Ann invited Utah Valley Magazine to her Moorpark, Calif., equestrian training facility where she spent the month of June in a rigorous training schedule for the Olympic trials.

Here is a portion of our conversation where she shares memories about their small Provo basement apartment, giving birth at Utah Valley Regional Medical Center and why she’s addicted to Sudoku.