

Bert Mourits is a 39-year-old husband and father of four and lives on the prairies in the southwestern part of the Canadian province of Alberta. Bert and his wife Janee own a small-scale breeding operation with the registered name "fan Boulder Acres". In daily life Bert is a High School teacher and on the side he is a dressage coach, clinician and judge at local shows. Bert grew up in the Netherlands where the love for the Friesian horse started at a young age. Together with his father he regularly visited inspections and developed an eye for quality and knowledge about bloodlines. At the age of 19 he bought his first Friesian, a Winand 405 x Melle 311 mare, with whom he quickly advanced in dressage. After moving to Canada in 2011, it took a while before Bert was able to get back into the world of the Friesian horse. But the perfect opportunity arose when he and his wife came across a well- preserved older mare with interesting bloodlines (Pilgrim 336 x Laes 278) and a kinship of 15.6%. Bert enjoys the mentorship of accomplished breeders and particularly appreciates conversations about the history and future of the breed.

The mission to preserve the heritage and cultural significance, combined with the beauty and emotion evoked by the Friesian horse, is something Bert takes very seriously; He states: "The pioneer breeders of the Friesian Horse in North America went to great lengths to ensure they were breeding quality horses and had to overcome significant challenges. It is in this tradition and with this spirit that we must look forward and ensure we can continue to breed horses of the best quality. This could mean we have to change course and do things differently than before. Supported by research and relevant data we can have a meaningful dialogue about innovation so we can continue to breed quality Friesians for generations to come."

Bert is looking forward to serving on the membership council where he can contribute to the dialogue with his knowledge of bloodlines, breeding and sport. He is counting on your support and looks forward hearing from you how best to contribute to the quality and health of our Friesian horse population.