



Painting In Partnership, Inc.

Phone: (847)934-8885

Fax: (847)934-8157

Email: info@paintpartner.com

"When trust, craftsmanship and professionalism matter most!"

"Buck" King of the Farm, Forever

By Mario Guertin, President, Painting in Partnership, Inc.

Through the use of color and painted decoration, as painting contractors, we have the opportunity to significantly contribute to the quality of the environment and well being of our clients. Capturing that opportunity and realizing it for a customer's benefit is an integral part of the service we offer our clients. Sometimes, that opportunity arises in a most unexpected way, which leads me to share with you a project story where a horse named "Buck" played a central role.

As a young girl, Gwendy dreamed of being a cowgirl. That dream came true and, for thirty five years, she dedicated herself to raising, training and showing horses. This was a passion she shared with her husband Cliff and her children.

One day, a special horse came along, and life would never quite be the same. Beyond the physical abilities that made him a champion horse, Buck had the unique ability to connect with the people around him. A love bond grew between Buck and Gwendy, but also, in different ways, with every family member. Buck was a beloved horse!



Time came when Cliff and Gwendy had to retire and sell their horse farm. This was a hard decision, made a lot harder because it meant having to put Buck to sleep, who had been in failing health for many years.

After delaying making that decision for many years because of Buck, they finally made that painful transition, Gwendy and Cliff then looked to create a new living environment that truly nurtured them and kept alive their connection to horses and the American Western style of living. Painting in Partnership was retained to be the painting contractors for this complex and elaborate project.

The project included a four-color repaint of the exterior and the complete painting, staining and wood finishing of everything inside the house, including six hundred feet of specially milled logs used for the project. Rusty, the son of the owners, and also an architect, acted as the project manager and dedicated himself to creating that perfect environment for his folks.

During my first meeting with Gwendy, she expressed her desire to have a mural with horses, so she could "see horses when she gets up in the morning." But as we planned the project, she did not mention it again.

As Rusty went about the design of the house, I noticed that he provided for a recessed area in a special spot, right outside the master bedroom, that you saw when you first exited the room. This recessed area was also visible from nearly all areas because of the open floor plan. One day, I thought: “that space is begging for something special,” so I asked Rusty what the plan was for that area. He said he was not aware of anything being planned. In that moment, it occurred to me to ask Rusty: ” Was there a horse that was really special to your mom?” He answered: “Yes, that would be Buck”! Then, he proceeded to tell me about Buck. Having heard the story, I knew we had to do this.

As a sign of my true appreciation for their having selected Painting in Partnership for this special project, I told him of my idea to create a custom mural in the likeness of Buck for that recessed area, in order to preserve that found memory. I asked Rusty if there was something else we could include in the mural that would be very meaningful to Cliff and Gwendy. He said that the gate, which bore the farm’s name, Even Odds, would be perfect.

Having finalized the mural concept, we proceeded to the execution of the mural on a canvas surface, so we could keep it a surprise. On installation day, we draped the area while Renee, our wallpaper installer, was hanging the canvas. Fran, our muralist, was also on hand for any last minute touch ups. I had also asked my wife Rita, the co-owner of PIP, to attend the unveiling. We all could not wait to see Gwendy’s reaction to the mural.

What a touching moment that was! Words cannot adequately describe the outburst of emotion we witnessed. Cliff walked in minutes after the unveiling. The expression on his face was precious. Being a guy, it was more muted than Gwendy’s, but it revealed a different type of relationship that Cliff had had with Buck. He said “He still has that smirk on his face. You see, even though he had no teeth left, he still wanted to bite me.” It was also clear that he loved Buck as much as Gwendy. It was a true privilege to share in that special moment with our clients.

It can now be said “BuckKing of the Farm, Forever.”