

Hi everyone! This is the AskAnnie Podcast horse girl reviews on products you use!

Hi Devon, thank you for being on the podcast today! Would you introduce yourself and tell us your role at Straight Arrow? Yea, my name is Devon B. Katzev. I am the president of Straight Arrow Products, makers of the brands of Mane n' Tail, Cowboy Magic, and Exhibitor. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself and how horses have been a part of your life? Absolutely, a little bit about myself, I'm the youngest of three brothers and my parents are Phil and Bonnie Katzev. I was named after the Devon Horse Show in Devon, Pennsylvania. I grew up on our horse farm located in Phillipsburg, New Jersey, my parents were Definity avid horse lovers and we did Arabian show horses and that had a big impact on me growing up obviously and as I was growing up the other thing, we did was the family business which has been around since I was a little kid. Back in those days when I happened to work the family business, back in those days, I was paid by banana splits or little treats for helping out. How have horses been a part of your life? Well again, as a child growing up on the family farm and all the stuff in Phillipsburg, New Jersey the horses helped ground me a lot. My horse's name was Jari and she taught me a lot in life especially how to care for someone besides myself as I was growing up. I learned a lot, for example I remember when I was a little kid and this is again how the horses have influenced me, I remember going to an eastern Saratoga show, years ago when I was a little kid and I had to go into this halter class with my horse Jari and I never did halter classes before and my dad basically taught me how to be a showman with the horse and set her up and do everything for the halter class and get ready before the class started. Literally 15 minutes is what he trained me in, and the interesting thing is I go into the ring and I start doing everything he told me to do. I'm out in front of the horse and I'm showing and I'm doing everything to set the horse up and I'm looking to the left and right of me and there's other kids there in the ring standing there doing nothing, there just kind of like standing next to their horse not doing anything and for a minute there I'm starting to ask myself "am I doing something wrong?" After that entire class was done and I walked out of there with a blue ribbon I realized "wow, I did something right" because they were very impressed with how actively involved I was with my horse to do the setup and everything and that teaches you a lot that people perceive when you're getting involved and you're doing something, it sets a precedent for everybody whose watching you including the judge, so that was kind of one unique lesson I've learned from my horses over the years. Another interesting little fact is when I used to go around the horse shows people got a kick out of how my horse would follow me around the show. Literally I was probably around 8 or 9 years old and I'd be walking around the horse show and the horse would follow me without a halter without a lead and I'd walk all over the show grounds. I'd go up to the snack stands back then and get my hot chocolate in the morning and my horse would be right there next to me and that showed me that she cared about me and I cared about her, we had a nice bonding relationship. Things like this in life I just, were great things that I had to ground me as I was growing up in the horse world. Goodness, I'll say, and she sounds fantastic. Yea I miss her, I do miss her. So Straight Arrow has also been a huge part of your life for a while now. Can you tell us a little bit about how this family idea grew into the brand that it is today? Yeah, it has been a huge part of my life. Straight Arrow was established in 1970, I was born in 1967. The idea of Straight Arrow was very simple. When we were starting the product, back in those days there were a lot of horse owners that would wash their horses with cheap shampoos and dishwasher

detergent. That was going on throughout the 60s and people were just looking for cheap way to wash and clean the horses but what they weren't really fully understanding is that there are a lot of drying effects that can happen from those shampoos, they just aren't formulated for what they were trying to use it for. The idea was simple, we came up with a conditioner because even though we'd wash our horses with them, these conditioners to keep their hair, their coat, everything beautiful and shining and flowing. When we would go to the horse shows people would just look at our horses and go "Wow! What are you guys doing, your horses look great!" And we just showed them, we just made our own little concoction, and the rest is kind of history from there. We took it to the next level and started to manufacture it. Goodness! What a unique start! That is really cool. How do you think it being a family business has shaped Straight Arrow? Being a family business, I think the biggest thing is people understand about Straight Arrow is they know we care. We do make everything ourselves, from the development to the finished product that we ship and as we're doing it even as a family business, we try to make it fun along the process. That influence is all the quality that is led up to these products and how we make them, and it also led to because of the influence of all of these products and make them and do things it led to the biggest demands of our products which was back in the mid 90. What was happening was is people were starting to use our products on themselves instead of the horses because they kept seeing the results that were going on. Now, all of a sudden, we've got our consumers demanding these products and the biggest thing that was going on is people were using our products to grow their hair! By word of mouth just thrust us right into the world of retail and I've never seen anything like it even back in that day it was very challenging on the whole family because what was the hard thing was making the transition settling to equine tack stores and small pet to now being demanded by all the major retailers in the world back in the day like Walgreens, CVS, all these big chain stores of retail wanted our horse shampoo. It was crazy! Our tagline for all this became "discover the secret" and the demand just was going on in the world I mean it was an unprecedented thing that to this day I've never seen a launch ever in the retail side that happened like this truly by word of mouth. Truly retailers were calling us, demanding these products for these shelves and we met the challenge. We were able to get these products into their stores and get it going, and here we are today! We continue to be a top selling retail brand and we do it on a global scale. One of the things to kind of sum up what does this mean being a family business that shaped Straight Arrow, I'll take it one further. So Straight Arrow was not just shaped by us as a family, but it's also been by our customers from their demand and what they want from the product. So, our family commitment to Straight Arrow was the quality and the caring for all of these, basically all the species that are using our products, from the animals to the people all the way around and we'll continue to that. We're there for our customers as much as they are, all the way around! Yeah, and you really seem to have shaped the products for horse owners every-day needs. How do you think this influenced the product development for Straight Arrow? Well, the funny thing is the influence for what's going on with these products is it's all about feel. We do things a little different here as I've grown up and a lot of the products begin with, I'll test on me first because I'm looking for a specific feel. I have people on my team on the chemistry side, like a lot of chemists will work from a laboratory and develop products and put things out and what a lot of chemists will lack is the feel, to feel the end result of what their products will feel like and do on the end consumer or on a horse or on a pet. What I do is I drag my formulators along

with me and we solve all these problems for feel, how it is on the horses, how it feels on people, how it feels on pets. When they feel that result it makes them think differently including myself and makes us, it's interesting because we all start looking at new challenges to solve to help these products go to the next level and all of the unique things we've got going on as we develop our products and the influence of doing this around the horses that just really impacts the chemists in a way they've never experienced before because how many chemists do you know that have been on a farm and met a horse and pet them? So, it's an interesting, it's definitely interesting the way we work as far as the way we develop. Definitely! Combining two worlds and resulting in one great products! Exactly! So Straight Arrow started as feeling a need in the equine shampoo industry, but it has grown into so much bigger than that. What are the current product lines that Straight Arrow offers and how to they align with Straight Arrow's mission of "satisfy the customer"? Well again our roots are still very strong within the equine industry. Especially with our Mane 'n Tail brand and we continue to develop; we will continue to develop in the equine side. It's intersecting that over the years the Mane 'n Tail line has grown; it's had impact into people's pets and also specialty items for personal care for people. The line has really moved in a lot of direction and some people are familiar with it and some aren't, but everyday people are discovering more about what we're doing. The other things that's kind of interesting that's happened with Straight Arrow is how we've continued to grow. I've known other people from within the industry and we've acquired other brands such as we've acquired the brand Cowboy Magic and we've also acquired another brand called Exhibitors. So, we've taken on these brands and we have put the caring and everything we're doing into these brands and maintain the legacy that these brands have also created. we also make products today for pediatricists. We sell it under a brand of ours called Foot Miracle and we have a lot of different products that satisfy the needs for doctors, pediatricists. We make a lot of other products and so many other categories as well, so we've become a manufacture of a lot of different things in the world. Again, as we continue to grow and develop these products we continue to listen to our customers and we always are trying to interpret how these new products that we're creating will fill the need. It's just what we've been doing for fifty years now and we'll keep developing. That's fantastic! What would you say your go-to product is or the product that you see being most popular and why? Well, I, that is the obvious one is our original Mane 'n Tail hands down is one of our most faithful products it's been around for 50 years, our conditioning formula. We continue to maintain that quality for 50 years in that products and whether that's product used for people, for pets, for horses everywhere that is truly hands down our staple product, the original. That's awesome and you mentioned it, but I'm glad you mentioned Mane 'n Tail because in Episode 16 I reviewed Mane 'n Tails Ultimate Gloss Shampoo and Ultimate Gloss Conditioner and I loved them! I've been using Mane 'n Tail since I was a little kid and I really appreciated the evolution of the Ultimate Gloss line; how did this line evolve and what're the key highlights behind this formula development. Well, the Ultimate Gloss when I was first working on developing this formulate, we wanted to try something and the way we started out was to have it clean horses and pets more efficiently with less effort and scrubbing. A deeper cleaning to lift out the dirt and dander like no other shampoo. We started to go down a road to figure out how to make this product work even better. So, we went out and we kept trying to develop and help this to get more light, more cleaning, get it all out. Then what happened is we were in the middle of the process, and this

doesn't happen every time because I've been developing formulas for a lot of years and what happened was what happened during the development phase, I think we got to the fourth or fifth generation it was just like 4 or 5 times of trying to get the formulation working. On this like fourth or fifth try an interesting thing happened. When we got to the dry down of the horse on the coat and we're looking at it all of a sudden, this coat got so smooth, so silky, not only did the dirt and everything roll out of the coat which was amazing in itself that we got it all out, but then we got this shine, and I was trying to figure out what just happened there! Because sometimes things happen by accident as you're developing, and this was an amazing accident that when we saw it, we were like alright this is so cool that just happened. I don't know what happened it's like a gift from above, leave it alone! Let's try this out and make sure this is real and it's exactly real and what's going on here, even when I used this stuff, I'm very amazed with Ultimate Gloss because when we used it, we work the Bethlehem Police Department and when I was in the development stage, I brought the product down to the police department for the officers to try on their horses, just go wash your horses and see what you think. And when they started washing those horses, they were like amazed at how, they had never seen their horses that clean first off, they were like this is amazing there's no dander anywhere! They were also amazed at how long it lasted, it lasted for days. But the most impressive thing they couldn't believe was when the horse dried down the softness, the silkiness, and the shine that it actually put out they were just amazed because that made such an impression on the community when they're riding the horses around protecting the community. Then again, like I said, the effect lasts for days and when the horses, when you released them, they would roll and they were easier to brush out, easier to clean and they still were maintaining that shine and a lot of people when they start discovering what Ultimate Gloss is and they see that shine they're like wow! They can't believe how long it lasts, how good it looks, and how long the feel maintains. This thing is truly proud of this formula, this is one that we developed, were going to do everything in our power to maintain it all the way through, because this one as people discover it just how good the product is and there's a lot of people who still don't know that we even make it. So as people continue to find that, even our pet owners and everyone else are going to be like whoa what is this stuff. We hear it every day from people who discover Ultimate Gloss. It's an exciting formulation and it still has a long way to go. That's awesome, I love that firsthand account from the police station, that's so neat! How important is it to Straight Arrow to provide customers with products like these that they can use in their everyday life? I'll keep that one real short, it's not just important it's our passion. What I do I've been doing it since I was little and will continue to do so. If a listener has never heard of Straight Arrow before how would you recommend, they get started learning about your products? Well, the beautiful thing is that Mane 'n Tail has been around for a long time, we are all over the website, we have numerous pages developed around our numerous brands because obviously we have the main one which is manentail.com, we have Cowboy Magic, we have ExhibitorsEquine.com, we have UlitmateGloss.com and we are on a number of social channels. Here's the biggest thing, even if you can't find that just go to the back of our bottle, we have or direct number right on the back of the bottle. Call us! We have live bodies here to talk to and you can call us up and we'll answer your questions and help you out any way we can because we want people to have a good experience with Mane 'n Tail and Straight Arrow. Are there any new products that listeners should be on the lookout for? Here's the interesting thing, we have just finished a

major expansion in Court Township, PA overheard by Easton. We needed the facility because the product lines are growing at such a demand and I wanted to make sure we had this beautiful facility in order to keep quality and maintain it, so we had this state-of-the-art facility and yes, we do have a lot of new stuff that's happening. We have a lot on the drawing board that we have not even released but we're getting ready to do so within the next year or so. For example, we have released a new micellar shampoo for people. This twists a little bit in our own way for example when you hear the word micellar a lot of people think of a product that they use to clean their makeup and take oil and dirt off the skin. But the concept of micellar can also be applied to a shampoo and still be gentle because what you're going to do is in essence is remove the styling products, help removed excess oil in the hair and what you're going to do is set the scalp very nicely and clean and be gentle and everything is just a beautiful formulation comes together. We did the same thing pairing up with a conditioner so when the hair got finished it'd have a silky flow to it. So that's one of our new things that's out. Also, for our Cowboy Magic line, we had a little bit of fun here. We brought out a product that we did where the cowboy, you'll see it, I always kind of envision what would a girl do if she saw a Cowboy Magic like hand cream product on the shelf, well she wouldn't want to call it cowboy. What I envisioned is she'd take her lipstick out and cross out the word boy and write girl on it. That's awesome! It's cool and its funny at the same time, people are going to look at that and think "what?"! It's something a girl would do, this ain't no cowboy! So, we came out with Cowgirl Hand Ultra Hydrating Cream. This is a brand-new cream that we've put out for a lot of our horse riders that're out there they maneuver and show rodeo, barrel racers, all this stuff we even have rock climbers, what they wanted was a product that just absorbs in, conditions the hands, dries down and leaves them beautiful and dries quickly so they aren't sticky so they can get back into things and that's exactly what we've done with this formula. We've set it up in so many ways, they'll feel the benefits for that one coming up the road. The other thing we've done is with demand for different hair styles throughout the world on the personal side, we've seen sulfate free formulations becoming more and more popular depending on what kind of styles and your own personal hair care styles that you want to do. We've seen sulfate free products, so we are going to start introducing an array, so you have choices. there's nothing wrong with the old formulations we have, but people want the choice for something different. We'll offer them that choice and they can make whatever decision they want and because has their own preference. The other neat thing is people have not yet discovered Ultimate Gloss so we continue to grow that we'll have new sizes in that coming out and encourage the trial so people can start to understand. When we first released on the ag side, we had a large bottle but a lot of people have started demand I put it in a smaller bottle so they can start to get it, try it, and use it and get it out there more. So, there's a lot, and there's more to come even beyond that. We can't get into everything, because I can't give away all my secretes, but we do have a lot more in the pipeline and in the works. Well thank you so much fir sharing those with us. I'm excited to try out that hand cream that sounds wonderful. Absolutely, we'll make sure we get you some out, we'll get you a sample out to try it for yourself and let us know what you think. Sounds great, well that's all the questions I have did you have anything else that you want to talk about? As always, what I always like to say is thank you to all of the customers out there and we'll keep doing all our part of what we do here at Straight Arrow, making the products, keep them going out, other than that I just thank everybody and there we go!

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