"was some horse, but we lost at such a young age," Fran said. "We were lucky to have 22 of his get." She named some of his most outstanding offspring as Apollo's Reflection (Floyd), Tara's Hallmark, and Tara's Phaedra.

Floyd [1975-2001] was the first Tara Farm owned horse to be named World Champion Stallion, a title he won in 1981. He was by Empyean Apollo and out of Bar T Regina. In addition to her big bay winning the world title, the other thrilling experience for Fran with Apollo's Reflection was when he was invited to participate in the 25th anniversary celebration of the Morgan Grand National & World Championship Morgan Horse Show. "He hadn't been on a van in years," Fran said. "He marched right on and seemed to tell the younger horses on the van how to do it. I think it was great for Ken [Swanson] to be able to lead him into that ring."

Several of her favorite broodmares are Fox Ridge Command (who was also one of her favorite show mares), Southerly Maria, Tara's Deborah, and Tara's Diana. She also mentioned Tara's Shechinah, and Tara's first World Champion, Cat'skill Senator Lad as two of the integral mares in the history of Tara Farm.

Fran had an early love of horses. She grew up with a real appreciation of horses, and rode them at school and camp. But she never owned one of her own until her husband, Watson, a pediatrician, surprised Fran on their third wedding anniversary with Miller's Ben-Del. Dr. Pugh happened upon this Morgan through the Pugh's friendship with the late Barbara Cole of October Farm.

Dr. Pugh's sister, also a pediatrician, took care of Barbara Cole's children. The three families became friends, and when Dr. Pugh wanted to get his wife a horse, Barbara talked him into buying a Morgan.

Since they didn't have a place to keep the stallion at the time, 'Ben' stayed at Watson's sister's farm. The Pughs had two children at the time, and Fran found it difficult to get back and forth to her sister-in-law's barn to ride her horse, so in 1961, the Pughs bought 100 acres of land only seven miles from their home in Raleigh. This property became the home of Tara Farm.

Fran Pugh has taken pride in watching the farm's winning show string perform in 2001. Diana Swanson, Fran Pugh, Ken Swanson and Holly Johnson celebrated a winning show at Mid-A (left). Man in Motion (above) is Fran Pugh's current world championship collaboration with Lynn Peoples.