

# SEBASTIAN RIDING ASSOCIATES



Quarterly Newsletter

[www.sebastianriding.org](http://www.sebastianriding.org)

Spring/Summer 2011

## DEFINITION OF A VIRUS: SOMETHING YOU DON'T WANT TO CATCH

BY: JENNY DEC

Like a computer virus, a biological virus is something you don't want to get. In horses, you vaccinate at least yearly against viruses, and sometimes, the horse can get it anyway. Just like in people, the older horses may be immune to a virus or they may be more susceptible to complications.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, one of our horses came down with symptoms of a virus. By the time he showed symptoms, it was too late to stop the spread of the disease. We instituted standard procedures to help prevent the spread of the virus from our barn to other barns. In actuality these procedures should be followed on a daily basis every time anyone goes from one barn to another. (Wash your hands, change your

clothes, and wash the soles of your boots.) Overall, it took two months, countless vet visits, a week of hospital treatment for Winston, and a close call for HiWay, for the virus to run its course through the barn. The first vet bill topped out at over \$6000, and that is just the start.

Initial treatment was about the symptoms—some anti-inflammatory medicines for fevers. Then the secondary infections hit. 'Bacteria of opportunity' the vet called it. Bacteria that are present on the skin all the time took advantage of lowered immune systems to attack Oreo, Buster, Winston, and HiWay. Oreo and Buster each got an infection in a thyroid gland.

Winston contracted cellulitis, and HiWay essentially developed pneumonia.

**Cellulitis: an infection of the tissue just below the skin surface; it causes tissue damage resulting in painful inflammation. Also, something you don't want to get.**

Winston contracted a particularly acute case of cellulitis because his immune system had been compromised by the virus. The antibiotic required to beat the cellulitis caused Winston to suffer from colitis and that is what prompted the trip to the vet hospital. He had four days of IV fluids around the clock. On the fourth day he stole someone's donut right out of their hand and started looking much happier! Now that he is home, Winston has been getting better every day. He feels good and eats well. He hangs out with his buddy HiWay. His ankles still get daily care (which is better than three times a day when he first returned from the hospital.) His ankles were the entry point for the cellulitis and took quite a beating.

HiWay received antibiotics and steroids to help with the pneumonia, and then continued the antibiotics when he contracted a milder form of cellulitis. He is doing well.

It took lots of incredibly hardworking volunteers and staff to help all the SRA horses through this. When Winston and HiWay were getting their legs hosed with cold water for 20 minutes per leg—three times a day—everyone pitched in. It took a whole community of good people to nurse Sebastian's horses through this incredibly stressful event. As of today, Sebastian is free and clear of the virus. Hip Hip Hooray and thanks to all!!!

### Inside this issue:

Definition of a Virus	1
Derby, Dine & Dance	2
SRA Farewell	2
New Faces at SRA	3
Upcoming Events	3
Meet the Volunteer	4
Special Olympics	3
Meet the Volunteer	4
6th Annual Legs for Lindsey	4
Did You Know	4



# Derby, Dine & Dance; A Great Success

On May 7, 2011, the 1st annual Derby, Dine and Dance Fundraiser Party was held at The Club at Shannondell. It truly was a great success thanks to the help and generosity of countless volunteers, staff, families and friends of SRA. We had about 150 guests donned in delightful Derby hats ready to watch the 137th running of the Kentucky Derby. The evening included an enjoyable dinner and fabulous cake made by cake boss and volunteer, Ruth Swartz. The room was decorated to perfection by parent Susan McClung, with centerpieces designed and assembled by parent Carolyn Ruch. The dance floor was the place to be after dinner and we danced the night away to the music of the Bill Koss Combo. The Silent Auction was amazing thanks to the many generous donations made and was run smoothly by parents Susan and Peter McClung. The evening was also photographed by parent Brian Mengini. Please feel free to view the pictures by visiting [www.shutterfly.com](http://www.shutterfly.com). As if that wasn't enough, thanks to the generous attendees, we raised more than \$6,000!

Great thanks and appreciation to Kathy Grubelic and Susan McClung for their countless hours of planning and preparation which made the evening so enjoyable for everyone!!

Keep the 1st Saturday in May (May 5, 2012) open for next year as we are already planning the 2nd Annual Derby, Dine and Dance!!!



## OUR BEST WISHES, BONNIE!

As many of you know, on June 4th we bid farewell to instructor and volunteer Bonnie Stevens. It has been a long-time dream of Bonnie and her husband, Bob, to build a house in a rural part of Virginia. That dream has now come true and we are very happy for Bonnie but very sad for SRA.

Bonnie began volunteering at SRA in 1993 after seeing an ad in the paper. She had an appaloosa draft cross named Foxfire while in college, so SRA seemed like a good fit. In 2006, Bonnie became an assistant instructor working with students in the barn. Her interest in the students and the horses continued

to grow. She pursued continuing education focusing on different disabilities as well as riding instruction. In 2007, she became an instructor. She received her NARHA certification in 2009. Her background with Gymboree, working with small children, lent itself very well to our younger students. Her ability to always have an appropriate song to encourage or redirect a student has long been the envy of everyone at the barn! She was always very creative in her approach to lessons. Many times her students could be found "pulling monkeys from the rafters." She leaves a legacy at SRA and will surely be missed. We wish Bonnie and her family much happiness and success in their new home!!

## Kudo Korner

Student and volunteer Anthony Timinski was recognized by the Montgomery County Dept. of Behavioral Health / Developmental Disabilities at the 24th Annual Developmental Disabilities Awards Ceremony. Anthony was presented with a Personal Achievement Award for the volunteer work he does at SRA. Thank you Anthony for all you do for SRA. He is a celebrity as well, that is Joe Hoeffel and James Matthews in the picture below.



Longtime volunteer Sara Brandt recently received a Volunteer Award from the Phoenixville Soroptimist Club. Sara was recognized for her outstanding volunteer service here at SRA. Come to SRA early any Sunday morning and you will find Sara and her dad feeding all of the horses. Sara received a plaque as well as a monetary award. In addition, the Soroptimist Club made a donation to SRA. Congratulations to Sara and thank you for all you do for SRA!!!





# NEW FACES AT SRA

Come to SRA any Thursday evening and you are likely to run into **Jo Feldman** either assistant instructing, feeding dinner to the horses or directing volunteers! Although Jo has been volunteering for a long time, she recently has become an assistant instructor. Growing up, there was a thoroughbred farm next to Jo's family home and she quickly became involved. She learned to ride bareback and still prefers a bareback pad to a saddle anyway! "Jumping and driving are a lot of fun but nothing can compare to laying down the neck of a Thoroughbred in a full gallop!" Shortly after moving to Eagleville, Jo had not been able to find a "horse" situation in the area and was hosting an autograph event for author Nancy Springer, who features horses in her stories. Jo commented about the lack of horses in her life and Nancy suggested volunteering at a therapeutic riding center. While exploring Evansburg State Park, Jo and

her family got lost. That twist of fate, thirteen years ago, brought her to SRA. Jo has been here since that time except for a brief time off to have a baby. Jo comments that the fact that she gets the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of people living with disabilities is “icing on the cake.” Jo shares her passion for horses and for volunteering at SRA with her daughters, Lara and Leannan. When Jo is not managing the retail store where she works, she loves to play scrabble and read anything she can get her hands on!



**Diana Bogan** has joined the staff as an assistant instructor and is also an instructor in training. She became interested in volunteering at a therapeutic riding facility when her sister, Elaina, passed away in Summer 2010. Elaina had Autism and in her life benefited from therapeutic riding. When looking for a facility, her mom, volunteer Jeanne Paddon, had suggested SRA as Jeanne had volunteered here in the 1970's. (Diana has a long history of riding, hunters/jumpers and eventing ) The wonderful horses, instructors, volunteers and STUDENTS are what keeps Diana at SRA. She has formed close relationships with the people and the horses and when she is here she says she can't stop smiling!

When Diana is not at SRA, she is working an office position but is wishing she was at SRA. She loves to walk, bike, hike, run and hula hoop! Yep, you read it right, Diana makes her own hula hoops. It is a great form of abdominal exercise and a lot of fun. So, if you would like her to make you a hula hoop with custom colors, email her at [dkbogan@gmail.com](mailto:dkbogan@gmail.com).



# SPECIAL OLYMPICS COUNTY HORSE SHOW

On April 10<sup>th</sup> of this year SRA once again hosted the Montgomery County Special Olympic Equestrian Competition. Even though it's been a wet spring, athletes, families, horses, and volunteers were treated with a dry comfortable day for the competition. Over 20 athletes competed in Trail, Dressage, & Equitation classes throughout the day. In addition to the loyal & dedicated SRA volunteers, additional support was provided by

a group of volunteers from the North Eastern Athletic Conference. These volunteers were student-athletes and advisors from colleges throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey and were a welcome

addition. Our judges were Linda Adkins from the Animal Welfare Project and Lori Benner. The horses & athletes performed wonderfully and received ribbons and medals based on their performance.



## Upcoming Events !

## June 9-11, 2011

Special Olympics State  
Competition

**June 13, 2011 6:30 pm**  
**Volunteer Training SRA**

**June 21-25, 2011**  
SRA Summer Camp

**July 11-15, 2011**  
SRA Summer Camp

**July 18, 2011**  
**Volunteer Jam Session**

**July 25-29, 2011**  
SRA Summer Camp

**July 24, 2011**  
Jeopardy Challenge Trail Ride  
(July 31st mud date)

**August 8-12, 2011**  
**SRA Summer Camp**

**August 10, 2011**  
6th Annual Legs for Lindsey  
5K & Fun Run

**September 24-25, 2011**  
Student horse show

# MEET THE VOLUNTEER

teered at a therapeutic barn years ago and decided to pursue something in the area. She had heard the Sebastian name but didn't realize it was a therapeutic riding facility otherwise she would have been here years earlier. She came for a visit just over a year ago and hasn't left since. She says "it felt like coming home". Everyone from the students & families; the instructors & staff and all the volunteers

have taught her many things and have helped her learn to help them in return. “It is a large and busy family that never ceases to amaze me. The energy that is produced by being here is electric and invigorating. I can’t see not having these wonderful people in my life anymore than my own family”.

Speaking of family, Mary Ellen comments on how fortunate she is to have her understanding husband of 24 years, Bill, who never sees her anymore as she spends so much time at SRA! She further comments that her “flowerbeds at home are not as full as they once were but my heart and life have been so fulfilled by my time at SRA that I don’t seem to mind”. If you come to SRA on a Sat. or Sun., you will most likely see MaryEllen in her blue ball cap unless we have finally convinced her to go home for the day!!!



The 6th Annual Legs for Lindsey is scheduled to be held on Wednesday, August 10, 2011, at Evansburg State Park. The race commemorates the life of former student, Lindsey Hanebury, who rode at SRA for 17 years. Having Down Syndrome, riding helped Lindsey with her low muscle tone. In 2004, Lindsey developed leukemia at the age of 19 and lost her battle with the cancer, ten days before her 20th birthday.

lounge, paid the transportation cost for two horses to State College to participate in Special Olympics State Games and purchased our horse, Chex. Most recently, Legs for Lindsey has purchased a new miniature horse and a custom cart for use in the program. SRA is now a riding and driving barn! Look for emails as we will be having a contest to name our newest addition who will be arriving within the next month.

This year we have a new, flatter race course starting at a tent on Skippack Creek

Road between Germantown Pike and Mill Road. Visit our website at [www.sebastianriding.org](http://www.sebastianriding.org) for the flyer or register online at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). Runners and walkers as well as dogs are welcome to attend this event ! This is also a huge volunteer intensive event, so if you don't want to walk/run but want to join the fun, consider volunteering! We hope you will consider joining us to make this another successful race!

# Legs for Lindsey

Sebastian raised more than \$1,000 from the Gertrude Hawk Spring Candy Sale thanks to the sweet tooth of many. The Ericsson Family was once again our top seller!

Keller Williams Blue Bell office recently spent a day at SRA. They power-washed stalls, cut down a tree, weeded the gardens and moved the objects (the mailbox, basketball net, flower box )from the activity trail so that they can now be used by all of our trail riders!

Be sure to check out pictures of the Derby, Dine and Dance and Special Olympics County Show and other events.

Go to: [www.shutterfly.com](http://www.shutterfly.com).  
Acct name: sebastianriding  
@verizon.net  
Password : horseshow.

Please add your pictures as well  
for others to view!!!!

Volunteer Jam sessions are held monthly and everyone is welcome to attend. The topic is different each month but focuses on the horses and the program. Next Volunteer Jam Session is scheduled for Monday, July 18th at 6:30. Please try to join us for some fun!

For those who wonder where all of that manure goes..... behind the arena we have manure piles. Please feel free to help yourself to the manure for use in your garden. Speaking of gardens, we are always looking for help in keeping our gardens as weed free as possible. Please feel free to pull some weeds !!!!!