SEBASTIAN RIDING ASSOCIATES



Quarterly Newsletter

www.sebastianriding.org

Summer/Fall 2010

STUDENT HORSE SHOW 2010



Pictured below: Vince & Gail Simmonds established and presented the Suzie Anders award to Student Katie Hibbert. Above: Instructor, Jeff Eshelman received the Suzanne Rampley Award



The Frank J Viall Jr Volunteer Spirit Award was established this year to honor Frank, a longtime volunteer, Board President and Parent of SRA student. Volunteer Kathy Sands was the first year recipient of the award.



The student horse show took place over two days, Sept 25th & 26th. We had 36 students compete in the trail classes on Saturday. The trail course was designed by instructor, Bonnie Stevens and had a Wizard of Oz theme. Each class had 7 or 8 judged elements for a total of 50 points and an equitation element of 50 points. The obstacles included weaving through the scary forest, over the bridge past the scarecrow, oiling the tin man, over the ground poles through the poppy field and melting the witch played by instructor Kathy Catagnus and volunteer Natalie Bonczek. Many of our students also dressed the part for the show as well. Our trail judge was returning Brenda Cobb, longtime leader in many county 4H programs such as mounted drill team, equine horse club leader, horsemanship skills program coordinator and SRA supporter. Brenda had her work cut out for her as all of our students rode very well. Scribing for Brenda was Assistant Instructor, Lara Feldman.

On Sunday we had 16 students compete in Dressage. We had 6 dressage classes; 3 walk tests and 3 walk-trot tests. Dressage is a French term meaning training. Dressage is judged using a variety of printed tests which include required movements. Our judge was Keith Newerla, a USA Para Equestrian National Champion as well as a member of the USA Paralympic Equestrian

Team in 2008. Keith has been a long time supporter of SRA and our students. Scribing for Keith was Lori Benner, who taught at SRA for many years. She loves the opportunity to come back and see the progress of all of the students. Once again the students really showed off all of their hardwork since the last horse show. Congratulations to one and all !!

Volunteer photographer, Judy Hernan captured many of the moments with her camera. All of the photos that she took on Saturday and Sunday are available to be viewed. Please check the moutat at www.shutterfly.com, click on "My Shutterfly", the account is sebastianriding@verizon.net and password is "horseshow". Please feel free to add your photos as well.

In addition to the ribbons that were presented at the horse show, it was my honor to present several awards as well. The Suzanne Rampley Award, established in 2001 to acknowledge the dedication of the recipient in bettering the loves of others through their love of horses was presented to instructor, Jeff Eshelman. Jeff has been an instructor at SRA for more than 5 years and is also our Special Olympics Head Coach.

The second award was the Suzie Anders award which was established in 2002 by Vince & Gail Simmonds who cared for Suzie for several years. The award is in tribute to strength of spirit, triumph over life's challenges, the ability to bring

happiness and the desire to just have fun and was presented to student, Catherine Hibbert by Vince and Gail Simmonds. Katie has been a student at SRA for 19 years and was chosen as the recipient by the instructors. New this year, is the Frank I. Viall Jr. Volunteer Spirit Award. Anyone who knows Frank knows how deserving he is of this honor acknowledging his generous donation of time and talent to SRA. Frank is our Board President, parent of a son, lamie, who rode in the program for many years, head of our Community Service program on Saturdays and long time volunteer. Frank was presented with a plaque acknowledging the award in his honor. The first year recipient of the award is long time volunteer, Kathy Sands. Many of you might know Kathy from the "Meet the Volunteer" in the Winter 09 newsletter. Kathy has been volunteering at SRA since 2005.

Each of the Awards will be proudly on display on the walls of Lindsey's Lounge. Please join me in congratulating all of the horse show participants and the award winners. Special thanks to Jim Lafferty and Mary Ellen Murphy for all of their hard work the day before the show and to all the volunteers that made the show possible.

In addition to the horse show, we held our annual Plop Drop. We are happy to report that all of the deeds were sold, many thanks to our parents and volunteers. This year's winner was Frank Viall (he had a big weekend) and donated the proceeds of the Plop Drop back to the program.

Guidelines for Barn Visitors

Don't Scare the

Horses! No running, loud noises or scary objects (such as balloons, umbrellas or noisy toys) around the barn. If a horse acts alarmed, stop, stand still and lower your hands.

Always speak to a horse and quietly get his attention before touching him. Horses sometimes doze on their feet, and you could startle him and make him jump if you surprise him.

Stay out of the horses blind spots. A horse can't see what is directly behind him, underneath his head and belly and right under the end of his nose.

Don't duck under the neck or belly of a horse when he's tied up-this can startle him.

Stay in the safety

the horse's neck and shoulder. If you go behind a horse, stay out of kicking range. Don't stand directly in front of a horse; he might toss his head and bump you.

Watch out for your

feet! A horse weighs about half a ton and he doesn't look where he steps. When leading, walk beside the horse's neck, not close to his feet.

Leave all gates and doors closed.

A gate left open can let a horse get loose and into serious trouble.

Don't go into a pasture or stall with a horse unless you have been asked to.

Farm machinery, haylofts and some places around the barn are also off limits because they aren't safe for visitors.

Supervise children closely whenever horses are near.

Do not allow kids to go to the barn or pasture without an adult who is experienced with horses.

These are good rules to keep everyone safe at the barn !!!!

MY LIFE IN SPECIAL OLYMPICS

BY SAMANTHA WEITZ

Ever since I got involved in Special Olympics, I have met so many wonderful people. I met my best friends through Special Olympics. involved in many sports; soccer, floor hockey but my favorite sport of all is horseback riding. In the past I have participated in skiing, swimming, rollerskating and softball. I think Special Olympics helped my self-esteem a lot. I have much more confidence in things that I do. I am even thinking of taking a course to be a Special Olympics Global messenger. I have gone to Special Olympic Pennsylvania events like State Summer Games at Penn State or equestrian, Winter Games in Wingate, PA for floor hockey and Fall Festival at Villanova University for soccer. For the past few years, I have been an athlete representative on the Villanova Fall Festival Committee. Being on the committee provided me with the opportunity to see how much work and effort goes into planning and putting on a Special Olympic event. Special Olympics is an important part of my life, I have learned to play sports and have made wonderful friends.



Upcoming Events!



Sept 5, 2010—Nov 13, 2010 Session 2

October 10, 2010 Jeopardy Equine Quiz Trail Ride (Raindate 10/17/10)

November 1st, 22nd and December 6th Volunteer Jam Session 6:30 at SRA

Nov 14. 2010 Feb 5, 2011 Session 3 -Make up lessons for Thanksgiving will be held 12/23/10.Program closed 12/19/10 and reopens 1/2/20.

NEW FACES AT SRA

Many of you know **Terri Myers** in children's lives through one of for 35 years. During those years sharpened. she learned many styles of riding and participated in a few competitions such as Huntseat Equitation, Dressage and Eventing. She also broke a two year old thoroughbred and competed with him at the Devon Horse Show. Terri is married and has four children and loves to spend time with them. She has volunteered at SRA for two years and enjoys using her experience with horses to help her students.

as a volunteer here at SRA. She her hobbies. When she is not at Mexico are built like him, helps with lessons and schools our the barn or with her family, she small in stature and chestnut horses. Terri is now an instructor enjoys biking, running, zumba dance in color. Now that Nacho, at SRA on Tuesdays! Terri has classes, baking and sitting in the as he is known around the worked at Leidy's for over 30 pool. She is currently riding with years and has been riding horses Ashley Leith to keep her skills to settle in, he has been



"It gives me Meet **Nacho Hombre**. Nacho is joy to see them feeling good about currently auditioning to be a therathemselves for what they can do peutic horse and is on loan from a with the horses." She is very pas- Camp Horse supplier. He is a 17 yr sionate about making a difference old, 14 '3 hand horse from Mexico.

He has a brand on his right hind. Although he is not a specific breed, we are told that many of the horses from barn, has had some to time showing his sweeter and kinder side. Nacho will "work" at SRA during the winter/spring and then return to his camp job for the summer. You will be starting to see Nacho in the program soon.





Alicia McElroy has been volunteering and working at SRA for 9 years. She started as a volunteer and became an assistant instructor. She continued to help with feeding and lessons until she decided to pursue becoming an instructor. Alicia is a senior, majoring in Art Education at Kutztown University. She plans on going to grad school for Art Therapy. She enjoys studying Art History and creating her own artwork through painting, drawing and sculpture. Alicia enjoys taking yoga classes and singing in her spare time. Alicia first became interested in horses when she was a toddler and her passion for horses has continually grown throughout her life. She has been riding since she was 11 and is very interested in Dressage. Alicia shares that her experiences at Sebastian have given her so much wisdom towards her own life. "Working and volunteering at SRA has inspired me to pursue the field of teaching and has inspired me to become a passionate disabilities advocate.

🌣 SPECIAL OLYMPICS PENNSYLVANIA 2010 SUMMER GAMES

The Special Olympics Pennsylvania Summer Games were held June 10th through 12th with thousands of athletes from across the state coming together to compete in their chosen summer sport. Montgomery County was well represented at this year's games including the equestrian team of 8 athletes, 2 horses and 6 coachs/horsehandlers. SRA continues to be the driving force for the equestrian force in Montgomery Cty with all participants benefiting from their involvement. Of the 8 athletes competing this year. 3 were "first-timers"-new to the three day Summer Games experience. This year's group of athletes was quite diverse in age and experience but all shared one common attrib-

ute.....they were well prepared. The families and instructors of the athletes did a great job of having the athletes ready to compete and it showed in the results. Overall, they competed in a total of 18 events including Dressage, Equitation and Trail. Of those 18 events, they medaled in 17 of them! And of the 17 medals. 11 were gold!!! What a wonderful performance with every athlete winning at least one medal. Of course, they did not do this alone, they had a great pair of show horses to ride...Winston and Herbie. Winston really seems to enjoy showing and Herbie is Just so "solid" in the ring. Coaches, horse handlers &

sidewalkers all played a part in another excellent showing by the Montgomery Cty team and along with the additional support provided by family. friends, helped make this a great and memorable event. Jeff Eshelman Head Coach



MEET THE VOLUNTEER

per looking for volunteers some three years ago. Jim was looking for an opportunity to help others, get some exercise and with his experience working at a stable as a youngster, volunteering at SRA seemed like the perfect fit! Come to SRA any Friday from the morning into the evening and you will see Jim, helping with lessons, fixing this or that, mowing the lawn or feeding the horses. lim has a quick wit and a great sense of humor. He keeps everyone in the barn laughing. Jim has a sweet spot

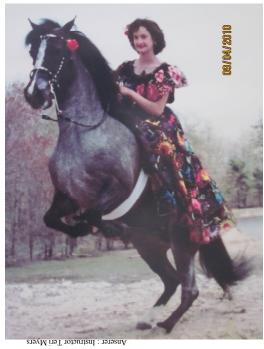
Jim Lafferty saw a SRA ad in the pa- for Miss Honey so you might find him talking away to her, as far as we know, she doesn't yet talk back.

> Jim has been a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary for about 35 years. His main interest is in teaching safe boating classes. He is involved in Search & Rescue patrols on the Delaware River and Bay. He is a commercial fishing boat examiner for New Jersey and Delaware and continues to work two days a week at the Coast Guard base in Philadelphia. In addition, he also operates a small business selling parts for different types of shop machinery. I know his family through 4H and know that he is a

> > devoted father and husband as well. lim, his wife and son are involved in the 4H Seeing Eye Puppy club. When asked what keeps Jim at SRA, he comments that he likes that everyone works together but has fun doing it. Jim adds that "seeing the benefits that our riders receive from the horses makes it worth the effort." " At the end of each Friday, I go home with a feeling that I have helped someone today!"



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE RIDERS?





DID YOU KNOW ???

We hosted a work outing for returning SEI Investments on Friday 9/10/10. Angela Lester led the team of 11 employees and they sanded and refinished the outside of the arena doors, sealed the outdoor mounting ramp, scrubbed the feed buckets and spread wood chips along the trail. Thank you Angela and the SEI team for all of your help!!!

Please go to escrip to designate SRA for your Genuardi escrip donations or to renew your existing account. To do this, log onto eScrip.com and follow the directions. SRA's # is 148948792. It is that easy to make a difference for SRAIII

We were once again fortunate to receive a \$1,000 grant from the PA National Horse Show Foundation. We are appreciative of the community support of our program.

Be sure to look for our Whinny Wishes in the lounge and at Bit of Heaven Tack Shop and consider including SRA on your holiday shopping list.

Legs for Lindsey paid for the transportation of the horses to the Special Olympics State games held in June 2010.

Dallas left SRA in September to audition to be a summer camp horse however an 18 yr old employee of the Camp horse dealer quickly fell in love with her and she has gone to live with her! It is good to know that she will continue to receive special attention.

SRA SUMMER CAMP 2010

SRA held two weeks of summer camp this August. This is in addition to the camp provided for the Montgomery County Association for Blind in July. The first week was designed for Young Adults ranging in age from 16 to 25. We had 6 participants and the focus was on horse care and riding time. We worked on barn chores. we had a horseshoer presentation and a trip to Summerwind Farm, breeders of Spanish Arabians and also the owners of Buster. We got to see and visit with the foals. We had 7 campers on the second week ranging in age from 8 to 14 and we played games on horseback, learned about horse anatomy and painted Drizzle. (She always loves that!) This group also got a look at some of the work required in the care of a horse. The 4H Seeing Eye Puppy club came and did a demonstration as well.

Both of the camps shared lots of time on horse-back either riding in the arena or on the trails, lots of learning and a good time was had by all. Our thanks to all the volunteers who came to camp with lots of energy and ideas!! We look forward to next summer!



The 5th Annual Legs for Lindsey was held on Wed, August 11, 2010 at Evansburg State Park. those who do not know about the race, the Legs for Lindsey 5K came to life in 2005 to commemorate the life of my amazing daughter, Lindsey who rode at SRA for 17 years before losing her battle with Leukemia in 2004. Lindsey was born with Down Syndrome and benefited so much from the program over the years.

The race begins and ends at the main park pavilion

on May Hall Road. The course runs down May-Hall Road and over the bridge to Water Street. The water stop is set up at Sebastian's so the runners get to see SRA, the recipient of the race proceeds. This year we had 259 registered runners which was down a bit from prior years but a good turnout none the less. We had 17 fun runners and many dogs participated in the event as well. The race winner ran the 5K in 16:26. Race results are available www.pretzelcitysports

.com. We had many volwhich included unteers volunteers and families. students of the program. A huge thank you to all the volunteers, we couldn't have done it without you. My continued thanks to the race committee for a tremendous job!! This year we raised nearly \$6,000 for Sebastian Riding Associates and had a great time in the process. Please check out our website for this year's sponsors and support them as a way to







say thank you!



Cameron & Kasey—A Trail Ridin' Duo

By: Cameron McClung

After many weeks of practice, my family and I drove to Thorncroft where I was going to do a trail ride. Thorncroft is the "handicapped-riders" division of the Devon Horse Show, in case you don't know. I thought I'd be riding Buster, but when I got there I was told I would be riding Kasey. I overheard some people saying that Kasey had been rather jumpy and nervous with other riders who rode earlier than me. riders had been nervous, but not me. Thankfully I had ridden Kasey before and I know some of his tricks so I knew I needed to show him who was the 0 S S

My friend, Kiery, was also there working as a volunteer. She is like a sister to me and she *really* loves horses! Well, I like horses, but I'm not sure that about loving them. She loves giving hugs, too, but that's not really my style either. My mom says she thinks that Kiery was more nervous for me than I was for myself.

Well, Ms. Bonnie and Ms. Alicia were there along with many other Sebastian people. (I saw Mr. Frank was there, too. He's always there!) Ms. Bonnie and I studied the trail I would be following. Once I look at it, it is pretty easy for me to remember where I'm supposed to go. I

think one of the best things about having autism is how good my memory is. It does help a | o t ! !!

Ms. Bonnie has been teaching me to handle my nervousness by breathing deep, so when I mounted Kasey, that's what I did. Amazingly, we got through the entire trail ride with no mistakes. I couldn't believe it. I was overjoyed to find out I perfect h a d а score! Then I heard I was going to receive a plague which made me more overeven joyed! Then, later that day we heard that I was going to ride the next day at Devon. That left me overjoyed beyond words!

Once Sunday morning came, my family and I got all dressed up and headed to Sebastian to meet up with everyone who was also going to Devon. Unfortunately, Kasey was really tired after having been ridden a lot the day before, so Winston was being driven to Devon for me. I hadn't ridden Winston in quite a while, so that was a bit of a sad change for me. My Mom and Dad told me that I didn't need to be nervous about riding at Devon, even though it's a great honor. Just being there was honor enough for me, so I decided not to think of it as a competition. That helped my nerves go away so I could

enjoy being at the light blue and white championship ring, the Dixon Oval.

It was rather hot and since I had to wear a jacket, I was sweating a I forgot my show gloves (oops, I brought my winter ones by mistake!) but by some miracle there was a store right next to where we were standing where we found s o m e nice gloves. Whew! That worked out well, didn't it?!

It was really nice to have so many people from Sebastian come to Devon to cheer me on. That was really special to my family and I. We took lots of pictures, which made Winston and I even hotter, but it was still fun! Once Ms. Bonnie and I walked out into the ring along with all the other Thorncroft champions,

there was a lot of cheering. We had to show the judges our walk and trots and two-points which was okay except that I had a hard time getting Winston to trot. It didn't matter that I didn't win "Grand Champion" though because I had already had my big honor the day before; I knew I didn't need to worry about winning first place here.

At the end of our ride in the ring, all the riders were presented with their tri-colored ribbons and silver plate. Then our pictures were taken--again! I felt very proud of myself and Sebastian. I'm thankful for having this opportunity because I know that some kids didn't get to compete because their horses were sick. Hopefully all the horses will be healthy by May 2011 because my family and I think that lots of riders from Sebastian would do well at Devon! Go SRA!!!

