

Sebastian Riding Associates

Quarterly Newsletter



www.sebastianriding.org

Winter 2012

WE HEAR YOU!

It has been about a year since we implemented our new goal format for our lessons. In a society where the success of a program is measured based on its outcomes, we needed to change our lesson plan format to be able to better track our students' successes.

Each instructor writes five goals in the areas of fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, speech and behavior for each student for each 10-week session. The progress is tracked by the instructor after each lesson. At the end of the session, we document the success of the student in accomplishing the goals in each of these areas. After four sessions, we are able to report the following success rates:

- Fine Motor: 44%
- Gross Motor: 45%
- Cognitive: 51%
- Speech: 60%
- Behavioral: 63%

In addition, we sent a 10-question survey to our families to assess parent observations and program satisfaction and to find out what we could do better. Here is what we learned about our students:

- 60% have been riding at SRA for more than 3 years
- Almost 79% have experienced an increase in their balance and coordination
- Almost 90% noticed an increase in their self-confidence
- Almost 90% expressed satisfaction with our therapeutic riding and hippotherapy programs!

Further, we asked for your suggestions on how to improve the program, and what we heard was more communication and involvement! To this, we offer the following:

- Your instructor is available to answer questions regarding progress and goals. You will be receiving a brief biography about your instructor, which will include contact information for you to discuss your comments and questions.
- Our parents/guardians want the opportunity to be more involved helping around the farm during their students' lessons. To address this interest, we will be adding a parent communication board in the lounge. The board will include jobs that need to be done routinely and can be completed by anyone. You are welcome to help out while you wait. Many hands really do make light work!!

We appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey. Your feedback is important to us as we strive to always improve the program where we can. Please do not hesitate to share your comments and suggestions by contacting Chris at sebastianriding@verizon.net or 610-489-3741.

Thank you to all who supported the **Gertrude Hawk Candy Fundraising Event.**

The winner this year is once again **the Ericsson Family** who not only sold Candy but also had a non-Candy sale for friends who didn't want to buy Candy but made a donation!!

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Upcoming Events!



2/5/12-4/14/12

Session 4

3/19/12

Volunteer/Instructor Jam

Topic: Dressage With Jane Cory

4/15/12

Special Olympics County Horse Show

4/15/12-6/23/12

Session 5

4/23/12

Volunteer/Instructor Jam

Topic: Round Pen Work With Stephanie Barberra

5/5/12

Derby, Dine and Dance Fundraising Event

6/25/12-6/29/12

Summer Camp

7/9/12-7/13/12

Summer Camp

8/6/12-8/10/12

Summer Camp

THE KING OF 4-H HORSE SHOWS

By Kyle Ericsson

You know, I think that I'm very happy with the results that came from the 4-H State Horse Show this year. Why, you ask? Well, it's because I got **Champion Therapeutic Trail Rider of Pennsylvania** with the always reliable assistance of Herbie. Herbie is a very reliable horse, and he follows all of my commands perfectly.

I owe it to him for being the great rider I am today. 4-H State is a massive horse show that brings riders from all across the state of Pennsylvania to compete for the Champion ribbon, title and bragging rights.

The atmosphere is great because there are horses everywhere; there are eager riders all over; and hopeful horse show moms and dads. The bad side is it also smells like manure. Horses there come in all shapes and sizes, from tiny miniature horses to huge draft horses. There are many photographers there and lots of trailers and campers, as well as RVs.

The big event takes place at the Harrisburg Farm Complex in Harrisburg, PA, which is a huge place. The stalls are neatly lined up, and there is at least one row of stalls per county. The stalls always have a theme to them. The theme is carried out by the 4-H clubs of that county.

Montgomery County had a jungle theme this year. The events are fiercely

competitive. All of them are fun to watch. It's even **more** fun to compete in them. I was there to compete in therapeutic trail riding as well as therapeutic equitation. The classes for both were very big. I am used to riding in classes with only a couple of other riders, but this show had 16 other kids riding in the class with me!

One of the bad things about this show was in order for me to be there to show in my classes, I had to wake up at 4:45 in the morning! This was so we could do

all of the following: eat breakfast, braid Herbie's mane and tail, tack up Herbie, get dressed to show (that includes boots, half-chaps, gloves, helmet and changing out of my jeans) and finally take my meds plus warm up/practice the course.

To get ready for my class, Dawn Allen (my instructor) and Lori Benner (former SRA instructor), braided Herbie's mane and tail for me. He looked very handsome. I am very thankful and grateful to Dawn and SRA for helping me and letting Herbie go to the show.

I got a 5th place ribbon in the equitation class and won the Champion ribbon in the trail class!

So in all honesty, this is a show that if you go—whether as a rider or a spectator—you won't forget it!



Save the Date



DERBY, DINE AND DANCE

Saturday, May 5, 2012

Yes, that's the same date as the **Kentucky Derby**—hats are encouraged at Churchill Downs as well as at our Derby, Dine and Dance fundraising event.

We are once again at the beautiful hall at The Club at Shannondell, and the menu is set! We will watch the 138th running of the Kentucky Derby, then dine and dance the night away!

Contributing to the success of the fundraiser is the **Silent Auction**, which is held during the event, and we are looking



for A LOT of help with this! If you have anything that you'd like to donate to the silent auction, we'd love to hear from you. Examples of auction items include tickets to sporting events, plays, museums, etc.; gift cards; art work; perhaps a week's vacation at a timeshare or vacation home you have. Whatever you can think of, we'd love to hear from you.

The overall success of this event is due in large part to the efforts of all the people who help make it happen. If you would like to be a part of this team, please call or send an e-mail to the office.



Did You Know...



In the arena, there is a **very large carrot!** We have established a **Horse Fund** and set a very ambitious **goal of \$20,000**. The purpose of this fund is to provide for the retirement of several horses and to allow us to purchase additional horses for the program. As of the end of February, we have reached **\$9,000**. The carrot is helping measure our success in reaching that goal. We need your help to make that goal a reality!

We would like to extend our deepest sympathies to longtime student Jill Novak and her family for the loss of her mother, Linda. Linda was an avid supporter of the program; she was a parent, volunteer, and animal lover who also worked in the office for a short time and provided a retirement home to several SRA horses. Her presence will be missed by all.

MEET THE VOLUNTEER

Call for Study Volunteers!

Thank you...

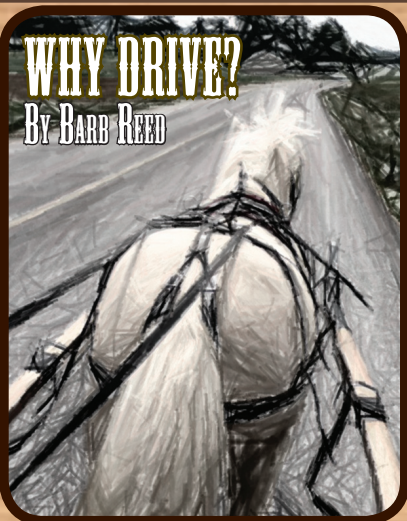
New Faces at SRA

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a dark jacket over a white shirt, smiling and standing next to a brown horse. She is holding the horse's halter. The background shows a grassy field and trees.

Please be sure to introduce yourself to Joy!

WHY DRIVE?

By Barb Reed



The reactions that most people have upon seeing **Sebastian, the mini-horse**, are "Oh, look at the pony. He's so cute." "What does he do at the farm?" "Who rides him?"

The opportunity for education has begun. I say he's used as part of an equine therapy program. Sebastian pulls the cart in which an instructor and student ride. The student is taught how to drive the horse and cart.

Myriad concepts and skills can be learned by the student, some of which include grooming the horse, the sequence of harnessing, driving using the reins and whip, voice commands, proper posture when driving, rules of driving, de-harnessing the horse, and inspecting driving equipment and its proper storage.

The applications from learning to drive a horse to everyday life include eye-hand coordination, memory, sequencing, balance, coordination, use of core muscles, situational awareness, empathy for others—equine and human— independence, confidence, sense of accomplishment, joy and fun.

Sebastian, the mini-horse, would love to meet you. He lives to amaze.



It's Show Time!

by dottie tyson

SRA is pleased to announce that we will be attending a number of "outside" shows this spring and summer. These shows are in addition to Thorncroft, Special Olympics and the student horse show in September.

One weekend a month, BuxMont Riding Club, in Tylersport, PA, holds a Western show on Saturday during the day, a gymkhana that evening and English classes on Sunday. They also have several driving shows scheduled. Working in conjunction with SRA personnel and the parent of one of our students, BuxMont has designed two divisions to showcase our students' accomplishments.

One division will be for students who need a leader and possibly sidewalkers for them to show at their best. Within this division there will be an equitation class (rider is judged mostly on position and use of aids), a pleasure class (judged on the appropriateness of the horse for the class and rider), a mounted trail class (judged on accuracy of completing obstacles while on a horse) and an in-hand trail class (judged on accuracy of completing obstacles when leading a horse).

The second division includes the same classes, but in this division, riders must be off-lead. SRA personnel may be in the ring or walking near, but may not touch the horse or rider unless there is a safety issue.

In both divisions, riders may show English or Western and will be asked to trot/jog

These classes will be held Saturday mornings. If your rider likes the thrill and fast pace of gaming, then sign her or him up for the gymkhana. These competitions are held Saturday evenings starting at 4:30.

There will be several races (barrels, pole-bending, etc.) in which SRA riders will be able to compete—on lead or off.

For those riders who are able, SRA will be taking a group to the regular English classes one weekend. These riders will be in classes with a group of riders and are expected to be off-lead and independent.

All classes will be on the flat at a walk and trot. These classes are held Sunday morning.

Finally, one weekend, Sebastian and his cart will be showing off in therapeutic driving class(es). We hope to have a few students participate in this event as well. These classes will be on Sunday also, but later in the morning or early in the afternoon.

In addition to the BuxMont shows, SRA will be taking a group of riders to North Ridge Farm to ride in their show in August, which is benefiting Grand View Hospital. We will also be attending several horse shows at the local 4-H center in Creamery. The classes will be the same as those at BuxMont. We also hope to find a few dressage shows to which we can take some students.

Please look in the lounge/arena for a notebook that will give additional information, including dates and costs, if known. Space is limited, so talk to your rider, check your calendars and sign up to join us for some fun riding experiences!

So that we can accommodate as many students as possible, we are limiting everyone to two shows. Please sign up for two shows and we will do our best to accommodate everyone's schedule. Please understand that signing the book commits you to the time and commits us to making sure we have a horse, volunteers and an instructor there for you.

If you have any questions after looking at the notebook, please feel free to contact Terri Myers (215-872-9061) or Chris Hanebury (610-489-3741).

Volunteers are needed to accompany students to the horse shows. There is a volunteer sign up page for each show in the lounge. If you are available, please sign up and join the fun!!

