

# Sebastian Riding Associates

Quarterly Newsletter



www.sebastianriding.org

Spring 2014

## Montgomery County Special Olympics County Qualifying Horse Show

*by Chris Hanebury, SRA General Manager & Special O Coach*

The **county Special Olympics horse show** is a sure sign that spring has arrived!

The horse show is highly anticipated for our nearly 50 riders who train from October until April for a chance to attend the **Special Olympics State Games at Penn State** held in June.

This year, our athletes trained in either trail or dressage. The trail course was designed by **instructor and Buxmont Riding Club Trail judge, Audrey McMichael**.

It was a challenging course but **our athletes did a great job** navigating the obstacles, many of whom had not participated in a show before! **Our dressage riders also did an outstanding job** of navigating 20 meter circles and other predetermined movements. **Our esteemed judge, Lyn Harper Mozley**, had her work cut out for her. **Students from Ursinus College** came to spend the day with our athletes as well and offered an activity to do with the athletes as a team.

Athletes were selected based on their scores and blue ribbon status to attend the PA Special Olympics State Games. This year, **SRA took 8 human athletes and 2 horse athletes** to Penn State main campus, June 5 through June 7. More to follow in the next newsletter!

**Please join me in congratulating the 2014 Montgomery County Special Olympics Equestrian team!**

**Special thanks to our coaches**, as they are the ones who make it possible for our athletes to attend.

This year's human and equine athletes were **Cindy Moore, Meredith Tyson, Rebecca McCarthy, Megan Mullock, Christopher McLaughlin, Darren Johnson, Tony Clement, Anthony Timinski, Honey, and Chex**. The 2014 coaching staff includes: Jeff Eshelman, Terri Myers, Dottie Tyson, Jim Lafferty, Faith Kopycinski and myself. I think I speak for us all in that **we are inspired by these athletes** and feel fortunate to be a part of the program.

*No Team!*



## 2014 PATH Region 2 Conference at Green Chimneys

*by Jamie Juliano*

The 2014 PATH Region 2 Conference was hosted at the beautiful campuses of Green Chimneys in Brewster and Carmel New York from March 27th through March 30th. Chris Hanebury, Jenny Dec, and I had the opportunity to attend the conference to network with other Therapeutic Riding programs.

It is a great way to share ideas and experiences. The presentations were on topics ranging from *Utilizing Teachable Moments* to the *Warrior Camp at Touchstone Farm* and wrapped up with a tour of the Green Chimneys Brewster campus. Despite some treacherous fog and cold and rainy weather, the PATH conference was enjoyable as always.

One presentation that was particularly interesting was the Warrior Camp at Touchstone Farm in Temple, NH. The camp is a week-long treatment program for active-duty and recent veterans that aims to help these men and women address the

trauma of war in a safe and supportive environment. The treatment uses the EAGALA model of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) in hand with other therapies like yoga, hiking and Eye Movement and Desensitization Reprocessing (EMDR). Currently an evaluation of the success of the Warrior Camp is being conducted by the Weill Cornell Medical College Department of Public Health.

At the close of the conference, we had the fortunate opportunity of touring the Green Chimneys Brewster campus. The campus is home to a school designed for students who have been unsuccessful in a traditional educational setting, as well as a residential therapeutic treatment program for adolescents, an outdoor education program, and a farm and wildlife center that is home to over 300 farm animals, horses and permanently injured or imprinted wildlife.

The Conference was a truly incredible opportunity

to experience all that Green Chimneys has to offer. We all came away with great information in the ever-evolving world of equine therapy. 🐾



# SRA has... Friends, Indeed!

## Never Underestimate the Power of Social Media

by Chris Hanebury

As a relative newcomer to Facebook and as the keeper of the **Sebastian Riding Associates** Facebook page, *I love to share with our "friends"* things that are happening at SRA. It is a great way to keep people informed of events, sharing cute pictures of horses...what a great way to keep in touch.

What I didn't expect was a challenge...*a challenge by Univest*. Could it really be, *a \$1,000 giveaway for having the most votes on Facebook?* So I voted for SRA, not knowing what was to ensue over the next 2 weeks: sharing, sending personal pleas—but how could SRA compete with organizations that have more employees than we do students?

I have to hand it to Univest—they know how to run a contest. Baiting us halfway through the contest as being in the *top five*, how could we stop now? So the frenzy continued, with me sending daily reminders to vote. It was an amazing thing that was happening: *the community rallied around SRA by voting daily*, and guess what? We did it! We won the contest, we won the \$1,000, and *we won the community support!*

Thank you to Univest for challenging our amazing supporters into making this possible. And deep gratitude goes to our supporters who really went to bat for SRA. *We are all winners!*



Thanks, Friends!

↪ Let's be friends! Visit us at  
[www.facebook.com/SebastianRidingAssociates](http://www.facebook.com/SebastianRidingAssociates)

## Fun {shopping} fact...

When you shop on **Amazon.com**, you can log into **Amazon Smiles** and select **Sebastian Riding Associates**. When you do, *we will receive 0.5%* of the purchase through the **Amazon Smiles Foundation**. It doesn't cost you a thing and *it benefits the program!* 🐾

## Meet the Volunteer

Pat Dougherty

{in her own words}

Sebastian is truly one of the greatest joys in my life. I always look forward to the days I volunteer at the stable. I've been a volunteer for about 2-1/2 years, and I love it more than ever.

I first heard about therapeutic horseback riding many years ago from an acquaintance who was a volunteer (probably at Sebastian). I love children and horses and was intrigued by the idea of therapeutic horseback riding. It was something I wanted to do, but I mistakenly thought volunteers had to know a lot about horses and horseback riding. Since I had no experience with horses or riding, I reluctantly dismissed the idea of volunteering.

When I retired after years of working as a social worker with children and their families, I felt restless and empty. I wanted to find something meaningful to do. Then, amazingly, one day while hiking with my dog in Evansburg Park, I saw a flyer from Sebastian. You might call it "serendipity"! This time, I didn't hesitate. I called the office that day and made an appointment to complete a volunteer application. I was so happy to learn that Sebastian doesn't require experience with horses or riding!

Volunteering at Sebastian has continued to be fulfilling, challenging, and a lot of fun for me.

Assisting our student riders and their families, and getting to know them has been heartwarming and inspiring. The volunteers and the staff at Sebastian are a wonderful group of people who work incredibly well as a team. They're so friendly, so helpful, so genuine, so enthusiastic, and upbeat. Everyone involved with Sebastian seems to love being there. Their enthusiasm is contagious!

Working with the horses is another "perk" that Sebastian offers. The horses are lovable, fascinating, exciting, and challenging. There's always something new to learn about them, and the staff is always willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

I love volunteering at Sebastian because it has such a warm, welcoming, upbeat environment. We volunteers often marvel that it's such a "happy place." I think maybe that's because everyone there shares a common interest and passion – a love for helping others and a love for horses. 🐾





# Derby, Dine & Dance 2014

by Kathy Grubelic

It has been my pleasure once again to help in the planning of the **4th Annual Derby, Dine & Dance held at The Club at Shannondell on May 3, 2014**. We had a lot of great helpers again this year and are so thankful for every one of them. Our families and volunteers really came through with gift cards and other items for some terrific baskets that were put together for the silent auction and raffles.

**Jenny Dec** coordinated with our amazing volunteers to help set up for the event (in addition to the previously mentioned auction donations), and her party coordination and decorating talents were again key to the evening. Beautiful roses for the centerpieces were donated and assembled in mint julep cups by **Risher Van Horn Florist** and with our horse and jockey topper (made by your's truly) were a great addition to the table — and a pretty nice parting gift to a lucky person from each table. **General Manager Chris Hanebury** was on the job 24/7 getting our sponsors and donations for the event.

We had so many family members, friends, and volunteers attend — we filled the room! We were especially thrilled to have in attendance **Bannie Stewart, one of our founders!** She even donated a beautiful hand painted (by her) gourd bird house for our auction. Also, **special thanks to the PennSuburban Chamber of Commerce** (SRA is a member). Many of our fellow Chamber members came to the party and several were sponsors. We're so happy to be a part of such a great group.

Of course the evening's cocktail hour included **mint juleps** (with our commemorative glass), **delicious snacks**, and watching **the 140th running of the Kentucky Derby** on a big screen! It was a blast cheering on our favorite horses — including California Chrome! So sorry he didn't win the Triple Crown, but Two Out of Three Ain't Bad! (Isn't that a song???)

Everyone danced the night away to the great sounds of **The Bill Koss Combo**, ate from the delicious buffet dinner prepared by the talented **Chef Matt at The Club at Shannondell**, and all had fun competing for some great silent auction and raffle items.

I can't forget to mention the desserts!!! Dedicated volunteers **Ruth Swartz and Casey Pearce** teamed up and outdid themselves with **their cupcakes!!** They were the perfect sweet treat to top off the great meal. If you haven't tried one of their cupcakes, you're missing out — they're great! (Didn't someone else say that before?)

So we are now planning our **5th Annual Derby, Dine & Dance!** It will be on the same day as the Kentucky Derby (as usual) so save the date now — **May 2, 2015**. Since 2015 also happens to be **Sebastian Riding Associates' 40th Anniversary year**, we're going to make this event extra special!

If you would like to be a part of the fun, we'd love to have your help!

You can reach me at the office or you can send me an email at either [kgrubelic@msn.com](mailto:kgrubelic@msn.com) or [sebastianoffice@verizon.net](mailto:sebastianoffice@verizon.net).

## New Faces at SRA

Meet **Janice Uricchio**. Janice has been riding since about age 6. She got her first horse, Sonny, at age 9 and showed in the jumper ring with him for a few years. Next,

she rescued and began rehabilitating her second horse, Hamlet, about 2 years ago.

"After showing, I went on to teach lessons for a few years and am now studying to be an occupational therapist as an undergraduate student at Ursinus," says Janice. "I

volunteered and judged at Thorncroft Equestrian Center

throughout high

school and wanted to continue, so I came to SRA to combine years of horse experience with increasing OT knowledge." When Janice is not at SRA, she is studying, riding, or enjoying her part time job as a veterinary technician at Animal Medical Center in Trappe. 🐾



### FROM THE MEDICAL FILES

FOZZIE HAD A BENIGN TUMOR REMOVED FROM BEHIND HIS LEFT ELBOW ON 5-14-14 AT QUAKERTOWN VETERINARY CLINIC.

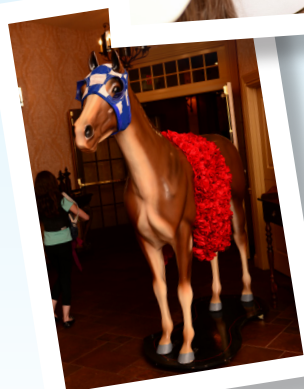
FOZZIE WOULD LIKE TO REPORT THAT HE HAS MADE A FULL RECOVERY AND IS HAPPY TO BE TEACHING STUDENTS AGAIN. HE HAS A LUMPY SCAR THAT WILL DIMINISH WITH TIME (AND ANYWAY HE THINKS IT MAKES HIM LOOK TOUGH). HE WOULD LIKE TO THANK EVERYONE WHO HAS WORRIED ABOUT HIM SINCE THE TUMOR STARTED GROWING AT THE END OF LAST YEAR.

HE BELIEVES ALL OF YOUR SPECIAL THOUGHTS AND LOVING CONCERN HELPED HIM THROUGH THE SURGERY.

### Check out SRA online!

Have you seen the **new and improved SRA Website**? If not, be sure to check it out! Many thanks go to **instructor Jamie Juliano's mother, Loretta Sawyer**, for donating the funding that allowed us a very much needed face lift! Be sure to take a peek at the **Gallery** while you're there — you can see candid shots from this year's **Derby, Dine & Dance!**

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





# Music in the Park

On May 31, 2014, SRA hosted **Music in the Park**, featuring the musical talents of **Renee Arner and Clare Maher and their friends**. It was a beautiful day with the Celtic music dancing on the wings of a gentle breeze. Renee and Clare even **demonstrated some clogging** for our guests. **Dene Mitchell**, volunteer and developer of our **Riding Free** program was on hand, selling her handmade jewelry from which the proceeds benefit the Riding Free scholarship fund. Attendance was not as we had hoped, but for those who were there, they enjoyed a wonderful afternoon! **Our sincere thanks to Renee, Clare, and the musicians from the Philadelphia Area Traditional Music Society.**



## A Visit With...

...our beloved **Winston**, who retired in the fall of 2012 and returned to his owners, **John and Penny Hunt at Eden Valley Farm** in Spring City, PA.

I had the pleasure of catching up with Winston, and I'm happy to report that **he is doing wonderfully and enjoying retirement to the fullest**. He spends time grazing, enjoying other horses, and **his visits from his new friend, Amanda** (in the photo, below). She has taken a particular liking to our boy, Winston. She is enjoying riding him and even took him on **a slow fox hunt this winter** — and **Winston loved being out with the hounds!**

No worries, he is living the life!

~Chris Hanebury



Greetings from Retirement Land!  
Having a great time...  
Wish you were here!

## SAVE THESE DATES!

On August 13, 2014, the **9th Annual Legs for Lindsey 5K** will once again be held in Evansburg State Park. For up-to-date information and registration, check out [www.LegsforLindsey.com](http://www.LegsforLindsey.com)!

**Summer Camp 2014** is being offered for 3 weeks this summer — July 7–11 and August 4–8 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Young Adult Camp runs July 21–25 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. You won't want to miss it — a week of all things horsey! **Call the office to register, (610) 489-3741.**

**September 27 & 28 is the Student Horse Show.** ALL students are eligible and encouraged to participate, so mark your calendars now! Our theme this year is Winter Wonderland. In conjunction with the Student Horse Show, we are most fortunate to have another quilt donated to us by Pat Grotzinger and Cindy Ryan. It is a horse-themed quilt this year and just outstanding! We will be sending raffle tickets to our students to sell to friends and families for the drawing at the Student Show. Watch for them! 🐾



Look at the amazing detail in this quilt!

## Did you know...

🐾 If you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, you can now direct your choice dollars to SRA. For more information, contact Tom McGuire at [Thomas.McGuire@Thrivent.com](mailto:Thomas.McGuire@Thrivent.com) or 215-368-4888.

🐾 SRA hosted a work outing in March with Pharmica Consulting. Not only did they do an amazing amount of work around the farm, they donated money for a new saddle for the program! Fencing was donated by Pharmica employee Gerry VonBlohn who is also a former board member and parent of a former SRA student.

🐾 All of the maintenance, repair, and upkeep of our leased 27 acres is completed by volunteers. It takes a lot of hands and ours are clapping for SEI Investments who donated their time in April to help with spring clean up!