

Sebastian Riding Associates

Quarterly Newsletter

www.sebastianriding.org



Fall 2020

15th Annual Legs for Lindsey Brighter Days Ahead



by Chris Hanebury

As the planning for the **15th Annual Legs for Lindsey 5K** began, we were uncertain whether we would be able to host it live. However, as summer arrived, it became clear that a live event would not be in the best interest of our participants, volunteers, sponsors, and supporters. We contemplated not hosting the event at all, not knowing if our community would participate, but with the mounting expenses and lack of program income, we needed to give it our best effort and went to work.

We changed the event from a live 5K walk/run to a virtual **“get out and move wherever you are and walk, run, ride, dance, however you like to move”** opportunity to support SRA. The event wasn't limited to just one day—participants had one week to do their part in moving as they wished and then share their photos on Facebook so we could all join in the fun. In addition, we wanted to commemorate the virtual event, and with the help of Lindsey's cousin, **Jess Hanebury**, we recreated the logo to reflect optimism towards brighter days ahead and a rainbow tie dye tee brought it all together!




We had 11 sponsors, with Network Partners, once again leading the way. In addition, we had 214 participants register for the event and together, we raised nearly \$9,000 to help support SRA.

Although we missed gathering on a summer evening in August, with SRA in our hearts and Lindsey on our mind, we surely felt the love of our community! Our thanks to everyone who participated, and we look forward to having you join us for the 16th Annual Legs for Lindsey!




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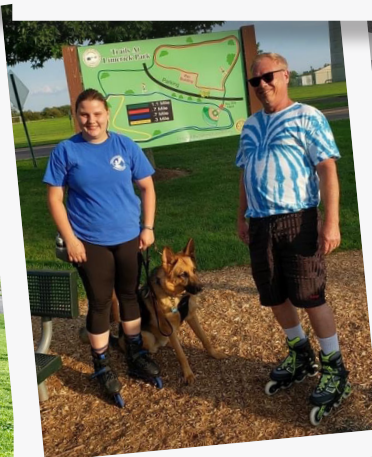
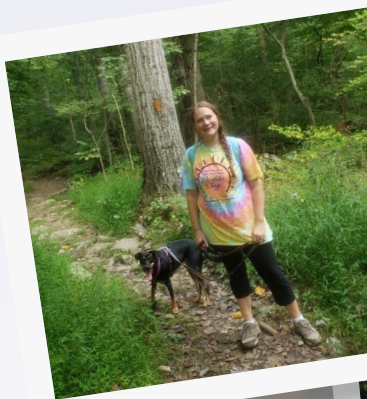
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2020 Student Horse Show Update

by Jenny Dec

We are sad to announce that after careful consideration, we decided not to have our Fall All Student Horse Show this year. We know it was a great disappointment to our students, staff, and families. Unfortunately, it just seemed wise at the time not to host a group event, not to mention that all of our riders are not back yet and those that are would not have had time to prepare.

The show has been a much anticipated annual event for more than 30 years. It provides opportunities for students to showcase their riding skills as well as socialize with other participants. It gives an opportunity for extended family and friends to come and appreciate the rider's accomplishments. It is just a fun feel-good day for everyone!

The good news is the show will be back next fall. For those of you who have not experienced the All Student Horse Show, here is a little information. The show happens over 2 days on a weekend in September. Each rider is eligible to show in one class that he or she and their instructor thinks is appropriate. The classes are divided up by age and skill level. There are two overall divisions, Trail and Dressage. Generally, Trail classes happen on Saturday, and Dressage classes happen on Sunday. The rider may invite friends and family to come and watch. Each year the show has a different theme. Last year we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Moon Landing along with NASA! Some students dressed up as astronauts, and the arena became Sebastian Space Center. Who knows what the theme will be for next year!



Meet the Volunteer

Carolyn Mowery

{in her own words}

I was first introduced to Sebastian Riding Associates in 7th grade through a school community day, where I was chosen to volunteer at SRA for the day. I loved that day of volunteering so much that I decided to return that summer to volunteer regularly. I started out volunteering Tuesday and Thursday nights, as well as helping out at the annual summer camps. Since then, I have been volunteering on Saturdays for just over 3 years.

I love spending time at Sebastian because of the relationships I've built with the other volunteers, instructors, students, and horses. I enjoy being able to help others, while also learning a lot myself. I've met many friends and mentors through volunteering and have grown so much in the years that I've been volunteering.

Aside from volunteering, I enjoy spending time with my friends and family, participating in school activities, and attending youth group. I am currently a junior in high school and am a member of my school's unified sports teams and engineering club. I also take riding lessons and am on my barn's show team.



In Memory of Lakota

by Wendy Bryan

A horse that adults ride, yet gentle enough for small children and therapy students...a horse that is very interesting to look at, with a Chestnut mane and tail, his bald face, and amazing blue eyes. That was our Lakota in a nutshell, so handsome, so special. Lakota was not with us for long, about 2 ½ years, but he made a huge impact on all of us. He was a showstopper for sure. He worked hard at understanding what was being asked of him during lessons, always trying to please.

Lakota came to us because of his large size, standing 16 hands. Not long after he arrived, he was diagnosed with cancer in his eye. The vets, including an eye specialist, treated him, and he was so patient with his treatments. Late in 2019 we learned that his prognosis was not good and were told he more than likely would not see the holidays but that he would let us know when it was time. We closely monitored his health and comfort for signs. The evening before his passing, he supported his rider with interest and pleasure.

He passed surrounded by loved ones. I am sure he is in heaven, running with the angels.



New Faces at SKA

~around the barn~

Meet Kota, who mysteriously arrived at the farm a few months ago. Being feral, it was very clear that she is a good friend of Rudy's as they are often seen together around the farm. Kota, named in honor of the late Lakota, is trying hard to trust people and although she doesn't frequently let people pet her, she doesn't immediately run away when you see her. So we are making progress for sure!



Have You Heard the Program Reopening News?

After nearly 3 months of having our doors closed and no source of income, we were able to welcome the return of our phase 1 riders in mid-June. We had to make some difficult decisions in developing our phased return, which included riders who needed little, if any, support. We continue to carefully review our safety protocol and our ability to welcome the return of additional students. This is an evolving process based on information provided by our county and state as well as the comfort level of the staff and volunteers involved. We are so fortunate to have about half of our riders returned to the program. We thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate these uncertain times. If you have not yet returned, please know that we miss you and love you and look forward to your return.

To receive a copy of our Safety Protocol, please feel free to contact us via email at Chris@sebastianriding.org or by phone at 610-489-3741.

(Copper wants to know!)



Something New at the Farm!

During the quieter time at the farm, we formed a team to develop a ground school curriculum for interested students to pursue learning more about such topics as Leading, Horse Anatomy, Grooming, First Aid, and Horse Sense to mention just a few. This educational new program offering will allow students to expand their equine knowledge through unmounted educational hands-on sessions with our equine partners at the farm. The program will allow students of all abilities and knowledge levels to participate in hands-on learning to earn ribbons for each topic offered.

Ground school will be offered as a standalone program but also as part of our existing lesson program. Students may elect to work on a ground school ribbon in place of the grooming portion of their lesson. We are also thinking about offering ground school lessons for small groups. So many new opportunities to participate and learn! Stay tuned for more info!

2020 Summer Camp Roundup

by Meghan Lemli

This July, SRA hosted ten campers referred to us by CCTC and sponsored by Hogs and Honeys Foundation for Kids. Most of the campers did not know us or each other when we began Monday morning, but by Friday afternoon, we felt like one big, happy herd. Our days started with a morning circle where Miss Ruth led us in games to help us engage. Next, Meghan introduced our idea for the day, including respect and boundaries, empathy, relationships and responsibility, choices and consequences, and gratitude. Then we were off to the races! One group would ride while another did fun activities like painting "Kindness Rocks," hiking, overturning creek stones, and of course, a Sebastian camp tradition—making ice cream! After lunch each day, the whole group would gather for EAL (Equine-Assisted Learning) activities where the horses would help us explore and discuss our daily themes. We all enjoyed watching some of our equine friends like Vinnie and Sebastian play together; and Choco, Copper, and Star made us laugh when they all tried to find new uses for traffic cones. There is something about a week of Horsemanship Camp at SRA that makes us forget about our worries, including a global pandemic. Because we enjoyed each other's company so much, we found it nearly impossible to stay socially distant at all times. Isn't the point of camp to come together? Sadly, although we did our best to take precautions like wearing masks and washing our hands frequently, we felt it best not to host a second or third week of camp. We realized we can't promise not to sit close to our friends, hold their hands, or offer a hug when a hug is the only gesture that will do. Thank you to everyone who made this fantastic week possible: our instructors, volunteers, donors, CCTC, Hogs and Honeys, and of course, our amazing herd of therapy horses. Next year will be even better!

Did you know...

Did you know that when you shop Amazon, you can elect to shop **AmazonSmile**. All the same features and products, but with AmazonSmile you can designate a charity to receive a small portion of your sale! No cost, no change in service for you, but a huge benefit to SRA! **As of September 2020, SRA has received \$1,646.27** with absolutely no effort. So this is the time to use AmazonSmile and have your shopping benefit SRA!!

Vinnie and his team recently attended **Skippack Days** with the **Harleysville Rotary**. As SRA is one of the charities supported by the Rotary Club, it was a perfect opportunity for both of us to share our story with the community. In addition, the Rotary Club visited the farm in October and created **a new 2-point obstacle and helped with fall clean up**. We are so grateful for their support of the people and programs of SRA!

This Fall, SRA partnered with **Make A Wish Foundation** in granting a wish of a young lady who wanted to learn how to ride. Inspired by the Amberly Snyder movie, *Walk, Ride Rodeo* on Netflix, we found working with her to be quite an inspiration as well!

We are proud to be a **Thrivent Choice-enrolled organization**. Through the Thrivent programs, we are eligible to receive grant dollars, fee-free donations, and support from the **Thrivent Action Team** service projects. If you are a Thrivent client, please consider supporting SRA!

The MontcoStong Non-Profit Resiliency and Restoration Grant program was established by the county to provide financial support to community nonprofits to remain resilient while responding to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 global pandemic. We are so fortunate to receive a \$40,000 grant to help cover our horse costs and other continuing expenses during the shutdown and phase 1 period.

The Vinnie Chronicles

by Meghan Lemli

This summer, Vinnie and his crew have had to learn new ways of spreading the mini horse love. Although Vinnie was not able to make his usual hands-on visits, he still found ways to bring smiles to people's faces and get the word out about the good we do here at Sebastian. He starred in a Zoom visit with the virtual campers of the STAP program at Indian Creek Foundation and was a huge success, prompting lots of questions from the campers about his size and personality! He also visited with our students during quarantine to share some horsie happiness via Facebook Live. Vinnie also performed outside the windows of the Shannondell Rehab facility, braving strange footing and landscaping to be able to sniff hands through screens. He employed his pit crew to haul his box, jump, and bag of carrots around the perimeter of the facility in 90-degree weather so he could show off his tricks. He even used a white board to introduce himself in writing to people who couldn't hear him. Vinnie did his part in participating in the Legs for Lindsey 5K on the trails in support of SRA! Back home on the farm, Vinnie continues to escort his herd mates along the trails and helps volunteers learn to lead. His favorite part of the summer was his sporty new haircut that featured a big superhero-style V on his cute little rump.

