



Bits & Pieces
Issue No. 22

Mark Your Calendars!

August 5-9
Summer Camp Week 2

August 12-16
Summer Camp Week 3

August 26
Fall Session Begins

SAVE THE DATE
Special Equestrians
"Rock & Roll Dance Party"
featuring the legendary
Jerry Blavat
Friday, November 15, 2013



SUMMER 2013 NEWS UPDATE

Hard to believe summer is passing so quickly--and with such a long heat wave. We started some new programs this summer, so it's been a busy time. Read on below to catch up on our Spring events, and look for our next update and details of our new programs in collaboration with Hunterdon Hospice, St. James's School, and Christ's Home.

We are pleased to feature Doris Rafaeli as our outstanding volunteer of the Spring Session; read below for Doris's SE story. Doris was been a bright star in the SE firmament this past year and most recently helped us out with a giant new aisle fan to keep our herd cool and happy.

Special Equestrians has been honored by a number of awards and grants in June, and we thank all our supporters for their generous donations of funds, supplies, and services.

The Spring Student Horse Show (May 19) and the Handicapped Riders Division of the Devon Horse Show at Thorncroft (May 25) were great successes for all our riders. Thanks to our instructors, volunteers, and families for supporting our riders at both shows. Read on below for highlights and pictures.

If you have any suggestions for groups or programs we could work with, organizations interested in a hosting a presentation by Special Equestrians, or any questions, concerns, or suggestions for our programs, please [email me](#).

See you at the barn!
Denise Quirk, Executive Director

Featured Volunteer

Doris Rafaeli

Some years ago, Doris Rafaeli, a lifelong animal lover, completed Animal Therapy Dog certification with her adored Labrador Retriever, Ashley. Together, they brought much joy to patients at Abington Memorial Hospital and Rydal Park Retirement Community. Years later, Doris often drove by the Special Equestrians' road sign and thought this might be another kind of animal therapy she would enjoy participating in. Having never worked with horses, Doris expected to be more involved with the administrative side of SE, but then she attended the April 2012 SE volunteer clinic, met the horses, and fell in love with our herd!

Doris is an awesome Saturday morning volunteer, pitching in other days of the week as well whenever her position as a CPA allows. SE has also been the fortunate recipient of Doris's amazing gift for



photography. She has generously contributed the beautiful sale photos of our horses displayed in the observation room--with all proceeds going to SE--and the horse portraits and the lovely throw featuring Ebs adorning our barn walls. SE Barn Manager/Instructor Marika Jones says, "Seeing Doris step out of her comfort zone and work with all the horses, and then get on Halo J (for her Volunteer of Spring 2013 lesson) shows her dedication to SE. Between her hard work in the barn and lessons and her amazing photos of the horses, she definitely deserves to be recognized!" Kaitlin Staffieri of

our Barn Staff adds, "Doris is an amazing and dedicated volunteer! She is always willing to help out wherever and whenever she is needed. She is also very generous and quite a talented photographer. It's always a pleasure to have Doris in the barn when I'm working a shift!"

Instructor Diane Sampson notes, "I'm always happy to see Doris walk in the barn on Saturday mornings. She jumps right in and doesn't stop from the moment she arrives. One thing I am personally so grateful to Doris for is the photo of Rolex she had specially printed on canvas for one of my riders who is vision impaired. The texture of the canvas allowed her to feel the photo and when she realized it was her favorite horse, Rolex, she kissed the photo. This dear student rides Rolex every week thanks to the generosity of Doris and her father, Peter, who sponsor her."

Executive Director Denise Quirk added, "Doris has not only been a terrific volunteer and contributor to our lesson program but has also been such a tremendous help with our fundraising--serving on committees, taking pictures at events, providing the sales pictures, and bringing in sponsors. She's a bright star at SE."

When asked about her favorite SE things, Doris immediately said, "I love being with the kids, the amazing staff, and the awesome horses!" She has thoroughly enjoyed capturing the horses in various locations and poses with her camera, even coming out to fellow SE volunteer Jenny Hyde's church to photograph Suzie in a nativity scene. Her personal favorite photo is the lovely portrait of Halo hanging on our barn wall. As for our SE horses, Doris' heart belongs to Ebs. "Ebs loves his job and is so happy being useful, it gets me every time!" Doris added she also has a soft spot for Ben and, well, all of the horses.

Doris summed up her feelings about SE, saying, "I love the interaction among the instructors, the riders, and the volunteers. The good work that's done at SE just stops you in your tracks!" We are so grateful to have Doris as a member of our SE family.

Thank you, Doris, and congratulations on being SE's Volunteer of Spring 2013!

SE Students Shine at Spring Horse Shows



May was an eventful month at Special Equestrians, as our riders showed off their skills at two horse shows.

The first horse show was our annual Student Horse Show, held on Sunday, May 19. Thirty-two of our riders came out to the barn to show off their skills in front of family, friends, and our guest judge. Riders were grouped based on their ability level and were asked to demonstrate the skills they practice during their lesson, including steering, 2-pointing, and trotting. In addition to receiving a ribbon, everyone received a bag of treats from Dover Saddlery.

Our veteran judge, Kathy Sandoski, was impressed with the progress that all of our riders had made. "It's great to see the riders every year. They make incredible strides in just a short period of time."



The following weekend, five of our horses and sixteen of our riders traveled to Thorncroft Equestrian Center in Malvern to participate in the Handicapped Riders Division of the Devon Horse Show. Many of our riders participated in multiple classes, including a dressage class, where riders had to memorize a pattern to perform in front of the judge; a trail class, where riders completed an obstacle course on a grass field; and even a costume class.



All of our riders performed remarkably well, and our riders collected a total of thirty-eight ribbons, including three blue first place ribbons, nine red second place ribbons, and four yellow third place ribbons. They were also dressed to impress, thanks to donations of show jackets, breeches, and shirts from Horsemen's Outlet and Bucks County Saddlery.



While the parents of these riders were elated with their children's performance, most focused on the intangible qualities their children have learned at Special Equestrians which allowed them to perform well at the away horse show. Mark, whose daughter Erin rode Halo to a first place ribbon in the equitation class, wanted to thank Special Equestrians for "giving Erin the skills and courage to even participate [at] Thorncroft."



This sentiment was echoed by Glenna and Frank, whose grandson Chris participated in the highest division at Thorncroft. They wrote, "Chris had a great time and was pleased with his effort. This resulted from the years of fine instruction and encouragement from all the Special Equestrians team."

We are all so proud of our riders and we can't wait to do it all again in October!

Recent Awards

Special Equestrians is grateful for recent grant awards made by the

following organizations:

Foundations Community Partnership, Laura J. Niles Foundation, Quirk/Cooper Family Foundation of Fidelity Charitable, Great Meadow Farm Foundation of Fidelity Charitable, and the Chalfont Lions Club.

Special Equestrians is pleased to announce that another of our stellar volunteers has been recognized by EQUUS Foundation and Ariat International for her volunteer spirit. We are so proud of all our volunteers!

Danielle Kimmel, a volunteer since 2005, is one of five volunteers across the U.S. who won \$250 gift certificates for Ariat boots for their volunteer service in the second quarter of 2013 as part of the EQUUS Foundation "CHAMPIONS" program sponsored by Ariat International.

About Us

For 30 years, nonprofit 501(c)3 Special Equestrians in Warrington has been offering programs to improve the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals with disabilities through the equine experience.

For more information, please call Executive Director Denise Quirk, 215.918.1001 x102, or email dquirk@specialequestrians.org.

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to info@specialequestrians.org by community@specialequestrians.org | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Special Equestrians | 2800 Street Road | PO Box 1001 | Warrington | PA | 18976