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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

"WE KEEP MOVING FORWARD, OPENING NEW DOORS, AND DOING NEW THINGS, BECAUSE WE'RE CURIOUS, AND CURIOSITY KEEPS LEADING US DOWN NEW PATHS."
—WALT DISNEY

IEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROXANE LAWRENCE

In the last year, I have discovered a whole new world of horse showing! It requires minimal investment, and the competitions require no lessons, trainer fees, boarding, or other expenses. At most competitions, a single entry fee of approximately $35 will allow you to show in an unlimited number of classes with any breed of horse you can imagine. It is the world of model horses, and it is a fun and affordable way to learn and compete!

As a kid, I collected Breyer horses and played with them constantly. My all-time favorite Christmas present was a beautiful barn for them that I had envied in the toy store for a year! I had about 20 Breyers, and most of them were handed down to my own kids to play with. My old collection of 20 horses became the inspiration that led us to the world of competitive collectors.

Admittedly, I was skeptical about going to a model horse show. My daughter had been collecting models for a few years and kept begging me to go to "BreyerFest," a three-day celebration of Breyer models that included special sales, shows, and demonstrations. I finally gave in, and begrudgingly I took her to the event last July.

It was held at the Kentucky Horse Park, and although I've attended many shows there, I have NEVER seen so many people at any other event at the park! There were thousands of families there, and it was easy to get caught up in the excitement of the latest releases and non-stop shopping for all-time favorite models.

On Saturday morning at 7 a.m., we unloaded our carload of Breyers and set them up on our show table. Each horse has to be labeled with its breed and sex on one side of the label card and the horse’s name and owner’s name on the other side of the card. There are four to six tables of shows happening throughout the day, so there is a lot happening at once. Models are taken to their appropriate show tables, and are then judged. The first point of judging is making sure that horses are in the correct class, showing as the correct breed of horse, so a fair amount of research is required to know the models and the various breeds of horses. Then, the models are judged on overall conformation and condition. Thirdly, the quality of the paint job and markings is judged, and finally, the overall impression in comparison to other models. Classes may have as many as 30 entries in them, and all classes are placed 1st-6th, with a few honorable mentions included in the larger classes. There are also classes for scenes with horses, and those are judged on the proper fit of the horse’s tack and equipment, authenticity and creativity of the scene, and the overall impression.

My daughter had a busy, but fun day of showing and ended up with a second in one class, and several other ribbons and honorable mentions—a very good day for our first show! We also acquired about 10 new horses throughout the weekend. So, immediately after that first show, she was researching the next show. We attended an open model show in Ashland, Ohio, in mid-January, and at that show, all brands of models were competing-Breyer Horses®, Schleich Horses, (Peter) Stone Horses, and custom horses, and young collectors were showing along with seasoned veterans. (One collector admitted to having 1,200 show quality models!) Top placing horses at this competition won a “NAN” card, which meant they were qualified for the National Finals of model horses. I am proud to say that three of my daughter’s horses qualified for nationals, and so we are really hooked now. At our house, we are now juggling our calendar to fit in all of the IEA shows and the model horse shows, and we really enjoy meeting lots of friendly horse-lovers in both venues. We have also found that hosting model horse shows is an enjoyable fundraiser for our own IEA team.

In this issue of Take the Reins, you can learn a lot more about the world of model horses as you read the article about custom-model and artist, Melanie Miller. I encourage you to look into the world of model showing and collecting. It is a great way to learn more about horses and to meet fellow equestrians of all ages and backgrounds.

"I encourage you to look into the world of model showing and collecting. It is a great way to learn more about horses and to meet fellow equestrians of all ages and backgrounds."

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Q: WHAT IS THE NAME OF YOUR BUSINESS, AND CAN YOU GIVE AN OVERALL SYNOPSIS/DESCRIPTION OF IT?
A: I operate Chinook Studios. There are a few main things I do; customize plastic horses, sculpt original pieces in clay, and paint. Most of my studio time is spent painting.

For the uninitiated, customizing involves taking a Breyer or Stone model horse and reshaping it into something new through a process of heating, cutting, and moving the plastic. The horse then must be rebuilt with epoxy clay, a material that comes in two parts and begins to cure when mixed together. It does not need to be baked or fired; it is a chemical reaction. The result is a new horse that is ready for paint without having to cast resin copies.

Pieces sculpted in clay usually start over a wire armature held up by a simple pipe construction. There are many sculpting materials available for use. Two of the most popular are oil-based clay (as opposed to ceramic clay) and wax. Measurements from live horses are mapped out on the wires. First the clay is blobbed on to achieve the general shape and then, as the learn-to-draw-books teach us, “simply add details.” The truth is, this method requires a lot of study to understand and accurately represent equine structure and movement but is very rewarding. The resulting sculpture is usually soft or fragile depending on the artist’s choice of material, so it needs to be cast to get a hard master copy in resin. That master copy is then what is perfected and used to make a production mold.

As for painting, there are many mediums and styles. I paint mostly in oils and some acrylic. There is really no wrong or right way as long as you get the results you are after!

Q: DO PEOPLE ORDER CUSTOM MODELS FROM YOU, OR DO YOU CREATE MODELS FROM YOUR OWN VISION AND SELL THEM (OR BOTH)?
A: I have done both over the past 20 years. I try to maintain a balance since each method has its benefits. My books are closed until my current orders are completed. While working on custom orders I make time to create models from my own vision. Those are sold in a variety of ways.

Q: DO YOU SELL ONLINE? DO YOU SELL AT EVENTS? WHAT ARE SOME EVENTS YOU ATTEND REGULARLY, OR UPCOMING EVENTS FOR SPRING AND SUMMER?
A: I do some of both, but most of my sales are online. The only event I sell at now is Breyerfest in July. This is a fascinating event where you will find people from all over the country (and even some world travelers) who participate in every segment of the hobby imaginable. When I sell online I employ a variety of methods. My hope is that by offering a smattering of pieces at auction and some available as “first come, first served” more people will have access to my work.

Q: HOW DOES SOMEONE BUY A MODEL HORSE FROM YOU? WHAT IS THE PROCESS? WHAT IS THE COST/COST RANGE, AND WHAT DESIGNATES THE COST-SIZE/QUALITY/CUSTOMIZATION/ETC.
A: The best way to buy a horse from me is to subscribe to my blog where I announce sales. The Model Horse Sales Pages is a wonderful site dedicated to secondary market sales. Anything you want, you can find there! When my books are open I do variations on lotteries and selection processes.

My price range is quite wide. From $125 or so for a paint job on a mini Breyer foal up to thousands for an intricately...
patterned paint job on a large resin or drastically-customized horse. Size, complexity of the paint job, amount of customizing, quality—all have a bearing on the final price.

From time to time I like to do batches of simple customs, ideal for people entering into the world of custom showing or collecting. These pieces are designed to be competitive while taking less time to create, enabling me to keep the prices lower. They're still excellent show horses with all of the detail my work is known for, but the color palette is limited. No dapple greys or roans here! The fastest colors to paint are dark bays and chestnuts, so that's mostly what this line consists of.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET STARTED? DID YOU START AS A COLLECTOR OF BREYERS, ETC.? HOW DID YOU LEARN TO MAKE THE MODELS?
A: I did get started collecting Breyers. One of my friends in grade school found out about a model horse show and we both went. From there I was hooked! I had never known about customizing or performance (tacking models up and showing scenes) and I dove right in.
For a while my models were pretty bad. It was a time when education was very difficult to come by and a lot of artists were secretive. The internet as we know it today didn’t even exist then so the only way to connect with people was to write letters. There were also magazines, so I pored over those, admiring black and white photocopied pictures of state of the art customs.

Eventually, a wonderful painting book was published by one of the premier artists of the time (and still one of the hobby’s best artists), Carol Williams. Others began publishing books as well, hobbyists were starting to make use of listservs and chat rooms online, and then forums blossomed from there. Sculptors began holding clinics and soon information was everywhere! Now you can take a picture, post it on a forum, ask for a critique and many wonderful hobbyists will help out. There are even different forums for gentle beginner critiques and for more experienced artists looking for nit-picking.

As far as learning how to actually make the models, that takes lots of practice. Just like riding, you can study all day long but there’s no substitute for getting out there and doing it. Eventually you’ll develop the necessary motor control and eye, and your hands will be able to execute what’s in your head.

Q: WHAT TOOLS AND SUPPLIES DO YOU USE REGULARLY?
A: Because I use oils, when I paint I use brushes. Some artists prefer to use an airbrush with acrylic or airbrush paint, and other artists who work with powdered pigments prefer to use

Resources Links

A HANDY GUIDE FOR MORE MODEL HORSE INFORMATION.

NAMHSA (model horse shows by state):
namhsa.org/membershowsbyregion.htm
Breyer Model Horses: breyerhorses.com
Model Horse Blab: modelhorseblab.com
Live Show Help Facebook Group:
facebook.com/groups/350468378368353
Equine Sculpture Artists Facebook Group (model horse art, including tack making):
facebook.com/groups/575460269187676
Model Horse Sales Pages: modelhorsesalespages.com/
Tutorial section of Chinook Studios:
chinookart.com/articles/articles.php
“Equine Tapestry” by Lesli Kathman, model horse artist and a color researcher: createspace.com/3644290
Chinook Studios blog, Tips for painting and other hobby activities:
chinookstudios.blogspot.com/search/label/grey
Jennifer Buxton’s blog, tack making and showing tutorials:
braymere.blogspot.com/2013/09/communication.html

“Vistoso” a Breyer Keltic Salinero custom. (Lusitano) This is the finished product of the video tutorials:
chinookstudio.blogspot.com/search/label/grey

“Andromeda” a Breyer Wixom custom. (Belgian)

“Xanthe” a Breyer Cleveland Bay custom. (Zorse)
soft makeup applicators to scrub color onto the horse. My brushes range from cheapies for quickly applying paint up to expensive detail brushes.

For sculpting any tools will do. There are special sculpting tools with various spoon, ball, and needle shapes which are very handy but even a sharpened pencil, the blunt end of a paint brush, and fingers are tools! Different shapes do different tasks better, so there's always an assortment on my desk when I'm sculpting. When sculpting with epoxy it is nearly a necessity to have a Dremel tool to sand away unwanted material.

Q: HOW OLD ARE YOU?
A: I am 35.

Q: WHAT COLLEGE DID YOU ATTEND, AND WHAT WAS YOUR MAJOR?
A: I attended Lake Erie College and majored in Equine Teacher/Trainer.

Q: DO YOU RIDE/OWN A HORSE?
A: I don't own a horse right now. I haven't ridden in a year or so unfortunately. My current work schedule is pretty brutal, but I am looking forward to getting back in the saddle once my two-year focused drive on Breyerfest production is over!

Q: WHAT IS YOUR WORK SCHEDULE/HOURS IN STUDIO? ARE YOU ABLE TO WORK ON YOUR MODELS FULL-TIME, OR DO YOU HAVE ANOTHER JOB TOO?
A: I do work on models full time. I spend about 12 hours a day in the studio, every day (including weekends). Within a couple months of Breyerfest it will be more like 14 plus hours a day. Yikes!

Q: WHAT IS YOUR ALL-TIME FAVORITE MODEL THAT YOU MADE, AND WHY IS IT YOUR FAVORITE?
A: Wow, this one is tough! Any of the models pictured here are favorites for one reason or another. Some are favorites because of how much “horsey soul” they turned out with and some because of achievements in technical difficulty.

Q: WHAT TIPS WOULD YOU GIVE TO A YOUNG/NEW COLLECTOR (SCHOOL AGE)?
A: The very first thing to do would be to find a local show, sign up for a forum, or join a Facebook group to see what it’s all about. Most shows are welcoming of new visitors and attendees are happy to answer questions. Be aware that many people are concentrating on getting their horses into the proper classes, so some people might not be able to chat. There are two unspoken rules when you are in a show hall:

1) do not touch anyone's horses without their permission and
2) no running. If you decide to attend a show you can let the show holder know you are new. Often they will go out of their way to help you get started, and may even find an experienced buddy to seat you with.

If you find you are really interested in an artistic element of the hobby, try it out! At first I got involved in absolutely everything because I wanted customs and tack but I certainly couldn't afford to buy all that I wished for. There are so many things to make; sculpting and/or painting horses, making props, tack, clothing for riders, scenic bases. And help to get you started is readily available online. Most of these activities have projects that are not cost prohibitive to get started so you can see if you like it. If you want to show what you have made, there are often novice divisions available.

If you don't want to be involved in the creative side of the hobby, you can research breeds. Pick out the most likely breeds for your models, print up some reference cards and show your horses with this material. It can be fun seeing how your breed assignment stacks up to all of the other entry’s picks. You can research colors, and you will find that there is a wealth of knowledge among hobbyists. In fact, because much of the hobby revolves around research, it will soon become evident that model horse people know a lot about real horses even if they have never touched one.

Most of what I have mentioned involves showing, but there is a very large segment of the hobby that does not show at all. You can still do all of these things just for yourself! You can concentrate on collecting, or crafting scenes and taking photographs, or even participating in discussions without owning a single model. The hobby is what you make of it, and ultimately the point is to have fun and hopefully learn in the process. Good luck! [8]
Chatham Hall riders helping one another before heading into the ring at Sedgefield Show Grounds in Greensboro, North Carolina, at an IEA show hosted by Fox Run.
IN THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF AN INTERSCHOLASTIC EQUESTRIAN ASSOCIATION (IEA) Coach there are several items that are unlisted: Confidante, Psychologist, Head Cheerleader … the list goes on and on. At Chatham Hall, our jobs extend beyond even those based on the nature of the boarding school atmosphere. We teach our students daily. At the end of an eight-hour class day, a two-minute walk from where they immerse themselves in classrooms every day, it was a simple deduction to ask them to develop an understanding for the way they learn in and out of the saddle, and ask them to create a process for being prepared for horse shows the same way they prepare themselves for an exam.

The Survey Says
So we had students fill out surveys that gave us insight into what they worry about, what types of horses cause them to freeze, what they think about in a flat class, how they

Director of Riding James F. Morris goes over the course with Chatham Hall Teammates (L-R) Coach Morris, Tabea, Ana, and Jane.
best learn a course, and what they want to hear from us as coaches in the last minute before they walk into the ring.

There were a lot of revelations that came out of the survey. Things we already knew about our students, things we never could have guessed, and it gave us a cheat sheet to best mentally prepare each individual rider on our team. That was our ultimate goal. The other unpredictable benefit is that it has helped the students put their weaknesses and strengths right out into the open for them to collaborate on to support one another, and to help each other succeed. It has solidified our team.

**Visualization**

We always ask the students to “visualize the win” and several of them say that closing their eyes and riding the course in their mind helps them feel prepared. It has now become a part of our routine to set aside a few minutes before each student’s division to have them stand near the ring and close their eyes and visualize each step. The simple answers to questions about the types of horses that make them nervous has helped us in planning lessons, assigning horses, and to give our students the best possible preparation.

We’ve also adjusted our last minute tips at the in-gate. Some students want to hear instruction, some students want us to distract them and some want us to be stern, giving them quick pep talks and asking them to “do it for the team.” We asked them to gauge their ability to handle pressure, push through stressful situations, and have adapted our coaching accordingly. Based on the surveys we have also incorporated more
stressful situations into our lessons so students no longer only experience extreme pressure at horse shows. We incorporate lessons like “Find It Fridays” where riders only have three jumps and have to find perfect distances to each jump before trading mounts. And everyone’s favorite … the “Hunger Games” style flat lessons where they only get one chance to make a mistake, after which they come straight to the middle of the ring to wait for the lone survivor who wins.

Community Goals Board
Finally, the best activity to come out of the surveys was our most recent Community Goals Board. Apparently the thing our students are most nervous about at IEA shows is disappointing their team and one another. In the equestrian world that is so reliant on the success of an individual, IEA allows our students to work independently and together. In order to help our riders focus on supporting one another toward success, we asked all the students to write down a goal that would be achievable within six weeks and we have posted them on a bulletin board. Every student can see their teammates’ goals alongside their own. Our team knows that is our collective responsibility to achieve these goals by our deadline. That includes being encouraging, offering helpful advice, different points of view, helping one another during hack days or on weekends, and in general knowing what one another is working toward and helping in that way.

The 10 minutes it took for each of my students to fill out this survey has given me at least 10 minutes of additional teachable time in each lesson. In the past year, subtle but effective changes like the survey and its outcome have only reinforced our philosophy that the riders at Chatham Hall “Ride Smart.”

There are hundreds of teachable moments in lessons, in the saddle and out of, where I find myself helping my students correctly polo wrap, leg yield, or execute a proper rollback. I challenge each of us as coaches to look at our riders, ask them to develop a process for understanding how they learn and progress. To help them understand how to ask for what they need in order to succeed. I guarantee they will inspire you.
THE BYFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS, BASED EVENSTRIDE, LTD. IEA team (Region 1, Zone 1) is well-known for their IEA horse shows. It's not the dependable horses and ponies, the giant indoor arena or the trainer goody bags that make the stable an IEA favorite. What sets the Evenstride shows apart are the themes: Hawaiian. Gobble, gobble and on November 2, 2013, breast cancer awareness. Their efforts netted more than $550, which was donated to the Susan G. Komen Foundation.

Pink was the dominant barn color on November 2. According to team member Rachel Hutter, an 11th-grader from Boxford, Massachusetts, the pink theme included decorated browbands on every mount's bridle, pink hair bows for the younger competitors and donation buckets decorated top to bottom in pink. "Even the judge got into it—he wore pink pants. The entire barn was pinked out, there were decorations everywhere," said Hutter.

Led by coaches Olana Laffey, Andrea Mank, Michele Abren, and Scotty Laffey, the Evenstride IEA team includes 30 middle and high school riders and was founded in 2008. Evenstride team members rocked a Hawaiian theme when they hosted regionals last year. This included Hawaiian leis for each competitor, a wall decorating contest where each team decorated a wall, and a fully decorated viewing room. There was one disappointment at that show—Coach Scotty drew the line when his students requested he wear a coconut bikini top.

But when the time came to wear pink to support breast cancer awareness, Scotty proudly donned a pink boa, much to the delight of his students. Decorated buckets collected raffle tickets and cash donations. The family of team members got involved too, preparing and selling the food that fed a hungry crowd. More than $200 of the food proceeds went straight into the donation bucket.

According to Evenstride team member Jordan Kroschwitz, raffle items included iTunes gift cards, and co-hosting team Over the Oxer, led by coach Deanna Kravitz, pulled together amazing gift baskets that rounded out the raffle offerings, while still keeping with the day's theme and color scheme. "We are the only barn that does a theme for our IEA shows," said Kroschwitz, a 17-year-old high school senior from Byfield. The judge, Richard Luckhardt, waived rules about regulation show attire and allowed competitors to wear pink. In fact, Coach Scotty's inspiration for a pink themed show to help raise money actually came from the judge, "Richard is famous for his fashion sense, especially his pink pants. They're kind of his trademark, so when searching for a theme it hit me to do a "pink" charity show and give all the riders a chance to rally around a cause." The moms helped by making little pink lapel pins and riders wrapped crops with pink vet wrap.

Evenstride middle school competitor Hannah MacDonald, 13, said breast cancer awareness and pink was a motivating factor that had the barn's younger kids volunteering to help get ready for and during the show—even though they weren't riding. Coach Andrea kept it in perspective, "Our staff and students are lucky to be healthy, and riding horses, it's important to give back to those who are not as fortunate."

That day, there was a great turnout; 331 rides before the day was over. Over the Oxer coach Deanna Kravitz said it was the best display of horsemanship she'd ever seen at an IEA show. "All it took was the color pink. It gave the kids an opening to open up and talk to each other. Everywhere I went I heard comments that led to conversations and budding friendships—'Oh, I love your pink socks.' and 'I love the way you decorated your helmet.' It really motivated the kids to look beyond their individual ride and focus on the cause. They were less nervous and I think they had better rides for that reason."

With a total donation of $550, Evenstride and Over the Oxer teams, along with all of the competitors that showed have a reason to feel proud of this accomplishment.

Evenstride will host the Zone 1 regionals March 8 and 9, 2014.
Cornerstone Team L–R top row: Molly Garrett, Sarah Sardella, Krystina DerBogosian, Emma Eaton, Nicole Sardella (no helmet).

PHOTOS PROVIDED

Sarah Sardella “Most Pink” Cornerstone Team, Zone 1.

Dominika Silvestri and Tierney McCue, Cornerstone Team Zone 1.

Hannah Johnson, Cornerstone Team, Zone 1.

Cornerstone Team L–R top row: Molly Garrett, Sarah Sardella, Krystina DerBogosian, Emma Eaton, Nicole Sardella (no helmet).
Fit for FIRST PLACE

BY DANA MILLER, CHAGRIN SADDLERY

From the moment an IEA rider hears “you are being judged at the walk” until “line up facing away from the judge,” a rider is in fact being evaluated—but not just on performance. A polished look sets the winner apart, with the rider’s turn-out equally as important to the judge when deciding who gets the blue.

IEA riders on any budget can look the part of a National Champion by simply following the tried and true guidelines laid out below.

Let’s begin at the top. The importance of an ATSM/SEI certified, properly-fitted helmet cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Riders should not enter an IEA program sporting a helmet handed down from an aunt who field hunted long ago. Selecting and sizing a properly fitted helmet is essential. While there are many popular options available on the market, the ideal helmet should be black and conservatively styled, such as the reasonably priced Charles Owen JR8. An experienced (ideally certified) helmet fitter will begin by sizing you in a helmet with your hair contained in a hairnet. The fitter will make sure it fits snugly and comfortably. The front brim of the helmet should not sit more than two fingers’ width above your eyebrows. Once the perfect helmet has been selected, we always advise our clients to wear it in the store for at least 10 minutes to make sure it is comfortable.

And, speaking of hairnets, the show ring is not the time to go temporarily from brunette to blond. Hairnets must match the color of the rider’s hair and secure the locks neatly halfway over the rider’s ears.

Perhaps the most important aspect of equitation show apparel (running neck and neck with tall boots) is the hunt coat. Conservative is the order of the day when it comes to selecting a hunt coat. A dark (ideally navy blue) properly fitting hunt coat will elongate a torso and present an elegant image under saddle. Whether your preference is a solid color or one with a subtle window pane or pin stripe, coats are available today in a variety of technical fabrics (including washable) and are reasonably priced. Again, an experienced equestrian stylist will fit the coat with the length being three fingers or slightly less from your bottom. The hem of the sleeve should almost reach the knuckle where your thumb begins. That will allow one-quarter inch of the shirt cuff to show when the arms are bent holding the reins. Hunt coats that are adorned with shiny buttons, velvet collars and colored piping are better left to the jumper rings and are not appropriate for IEA.

One of the major advances in riding clothes over the past few years has been the innovative changes in show shirts. The moisture-wicking wrap-collar show shirt is quickly becoming the most popular choice among riders today. This shirt is designed with a collar that neatly snaps, giving the appearance of wearing a choker. Comfort and movement are most important when sizing this shirt. The collar should fit neatly without being too snug or loose. The body should be fitted with ample room across the back and bust. When it comes to color, white is the
A properly fitted hunt coat, boots and helmet gives the judge every reason to pin this rider first.
safest choice in the equitation ring. However, the advent of fun, brightly-colored, printed collar linings and cuffs leaves some room for individuality.

Technical fabrics have also modernized breeches, allowing for a flattering fit, freedom of movement and comfort. For the show ring, you’ll want to present a tailored appearance. Breeches should be snugly fitted and wrinkle free, not tight or baggy. The Euro seat breech in a low or mid-rise is the most popular style worn in the ring. Available in front or side zip, these breeches can be found reasonably priced at under $100. In terms of breech color, tan is preferred but khaki is an acceptable, less popular option. Breeches should always be worn with an appropriately sized, black belt. The belt width should match the size of the belt loops. A skinny belt worn with breeches that have two inch belt loops will not offer the polished look that a wider belt will achieve.

When it comes to accessories, less is more. Your riding should be the only thing shining in the show ring.

Children under the age of 13 should wear tan jodhpurs unless otherwise directed. Paddock boots should be partnered with matching garter straps worn just below the knee. Paddock boots and garters may be black or brown.

Nowhere does the old phrase “Spit and Polish” apply more aptly than to a rider’s boots. A shiny, properly fitted, tall boot, also known as a field boot, is one of the first things that will catch a judge’s eye. There is no better way to emphasize ideal leg position, which is tantamount to winning in the equitation classes, than wearing a properly fitted pair of tall boots.

The advances in the design of boots today, which now include zippers, allow for a “custom” fit without breaking the bank. Such boots offer riders many options in height and calf width. An experienced boot fitter will take these areas into consideration when sizing a rider for boots. As a rule of thumb, boots must be fitted a bit on the tall side to allow for dropping. Spanish cut tops (which are higher on the outside of the leg than on the inside and elegantly curved) are a boon for riders with short legs.

Complete your winning look with a pair of black gloves. Synthetic “leather look” gloves are “hands-down” the choice of many competitors. Not only are they machine washable, but they are often less expensive than their leather counterparts. Although some riders still prefer real leather to synthetics, there is no alternative to wearing gloves in the show ring. Black gloves are a must in equitation classes.

A class of equally talented riders, executing crisp transitions and perfect distances presents a challenge to any judge. Turnout can turn-around the order of finish on the judge’s card, giving the blue to the rider who both looks and rides the part.

Dana Miller is a partner and highly sought after equestrian stylist at Chagrin Saddlery, Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Recognizing a serious need for knowledgeable, friendly service, Dana and her staff can assist in outfitting riders from a first lesson to showing at the highest levels, at prices you will love. Dana’s daughter Skylar is a middle school rider and competes for the Little Glen Equestrian Team, Chardon, Ohio.
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BY SUE WENTZEL,
IEA NATIONAL STEWARD:
PLAIN CITY, OHIO

During the Western National Finals in Oklahoma last spring, I heard about a charitable act by members of the Autumn Rose Team. The town of Moore, Oklahoma, located a few miles south of Oklahoma State Fair Park where Nationals were taking place, had recently been struck by an EF5 tornado. Many lives were lost and dozens of homes, businesses, and schools destroyed. Within a few days, members of the Autumn Rose Team collected and boxed basic essentials like clothing, water, and home goods. A caravan of Autumn Rose riders and family members on their way to Nationals made a quick detour to deliver the items they collected. Their thoughtfulness and generosity helped families in Moore who were struggling to recover and rebuild.

Like Autumn Rose, many other IEA teams support programs within their community or champion charitable causes. The collective efforts of a team can be a powerful and positive force. Below are examples of more IEA teams in action.

COOKEVILLE CAVALIER EQUESTRIAN TEAM
SUBMITTED BY: VICTORIA RAND, WESTERN & HUNT SEAT RIDER, COOKEVILLE CAVALIER TEAM:
COOKEVILLE, TENNESSEE

The Cookeville Cavalier Equestrian team is making points count for more than just qualifying for Regional and Zone Finals. I organized a fundraiser in which team members got people to pledge money per point the rider earns or give a flat donation. The money is all going to benefit the Susan G. Komen fund.

RCR FARMS
SUBMITTED BY: BRENDA ABERCROMBIE, CONTRIBUTING MEMBER, RCR FARMS: GILBERT, ARIZONA

When RCR Farms heard the news about Claire Davis, the 17-year-old student who was shot at Arapahoe High School in Centennial, Colorado, and later died, we were stunned, as many of the other IEA teams were, I’m sure. We did not know Claire personally, but she was one of ours. She was a fellow equestrian, a good student, and by all accounts, an amazing young lady. She was one of us! The Saturday following the incident, the team put on a fundraiser to help Claire and her family with anything monetary that we could.

We hit the streets asking for donations from businesses and individuals willing to help. We raised over $843. The experience, although somber and sad brought a group of riders and trainers together. We found ourselves talking about Claire as a member of “our” team. Just recently the RCR Farms Team(s); High school and Middle school, qualified for the Region/Zone finals in Colorado. The team is excited to have made it that far, but is especially excited about meeting some of Claire’s teammates.

SOUTH FORSYTH HIGH SCHOOL
SUBMITTED BY: LEAH HACHEM, HUNT SEAT RIDER, SOUTH FORSYTH HIGH SCHOOL EQUESTRIAN TEAM:
ALPHARETTA, GEORGIA, SOUTH FORSYTH HIGH SCHOOL IEA TEAM

The captains of the South Forsyth High School Equestrian Team, Sarah Green and Kaitlyn Prince, selected Literacy Forsyth as the team's fall service project. Literacy Forsyth is a community and education partnership offering a variety of adult literacy services, including free books. The team collected over 750 books for Literacy Forsyth, which will be distributed to promote literacy and reading, county wide.

The team also operated a concession stand during one of the high school football games to help support the booster club. In the spring the girls will volunteer at the Atlanta Steeplechase. They enjoy working together as a team to help make a difference in their community.

What makes your IEA team fun or special? Share those details in a short paragraph or two along with a photo. Submissions for the next Leg Up column should be sent via email to Susan Wentzel at swentzel13@gmail.com.
CR RARMS, IEA TEAM, ZONE 8, SPONSORED AN ESSAY contest on sportsmanship. The task was to write about “What Sportsmanship means to you.” The winner won a free entry into a Kyle King Clinic being held at the SVS Horse Auction and Expo at West World in Scottsdale Arizona. We had 13 entries, and Kyle King himself choose the winner to join him in the arena.

Kyle King, and his equestrian partner; Capone, have over 10 Grand Prix wins under their belt, including the prestigious CN Performance Grand Prix at Calgary, Alberta’s Spruce Meadows in June 2011. King and Capone are a partnership to watch. Most recently, the pair has been celebrating victories in the $25,000 SmartPak Grand Prix at the HITS Desert Circuit in Thermal, California, and the $100,000 CSI** Oil Patch Grand Prix at the Rocky Mountain Classic II Tournament in Calgary, Alberta, and they competed in the Spruce Meadows Summer Series and Masters Tournament.

Being chosen by such a decorated sportsman, Rene Carda of Tucson, Arizona, was delighted when she received the call that her essay had been chosen. Rene rides for Renae Coates of RCR Farms. This is Rene’s first season in the IEA program and she has contributed to the team tremendously. For the Kyle Clinic, Rene drove three hours to Scottsdale the night before. She stabled at the SVS Auction and was treated like royalty. She was introduced personally by Kyle as she entered the arena. Kyle talked about his very difficult task of selecting the best essay, but he described how Rene’s essay really touched him when she talked about including our horses in sportsmanship.

The definition of sportsmanship, according to dictionary.com, is sportsmanlike conduct, as fairness, courtesy, being a cheerful loser, etc. Sportsmanship separates the good rider from the great rider. Sportsmanship is the ability to have a good attitude on your worst day. Most of all it shows the character a rider needs to excel in this spectacular sport of equestrianism.

Sportsmanship has a big effect on other people. It can cheer someone up and give someone the confidence to keep going. I experienced this at a show when my horse and I just weren’t having a good day. Our rounds suffered and I was feeling discouraged until someone came up to me and told me that I was handling the situation well. Without that assurance, I wouldn’t have pulled myself together. On that day, sportsmanship helped me and showed me how much it actually meant.

Although sportsmanship usually refers to people, riders need to have sportsmanship toward their horses as well. Sportsmanship, good or bad, can affect a horse’s performance. An encouraging, can-do-attitude results in a horse giving its all. Horses can be unpredictable and sometimes things just don’t go as planned but that doesn’t mean the horse needs to be punished or blamed for having an off day. If we get mad and blame them they will quit trying. In the equestrian world, sportsmanship is essential. It can completely turn a rider’s day from bad to good. It is an important key to show horses the same sportsmanship you would show another person. To me it is essential for an equestrian to demonstrate sportsmanship. It means a lot to know someone cares enough to say something positive to you. I love getting a positive comment from someone and that’s why I try my best to show good sportsmanship. Sportsmanship can be summed up in the saying, “treat others as you want to be treated.”
STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12: TAKE THE REINS AND JOIN THE IEA

No Need To Own A Horse!

Riders in grades 6-12 can compete with teams in the Interscholastic Equestrian Association (IEA). School-age children, with various levels of experience, compete in Hunt Seat, Western and Saddle Seat disciplines throughout the school year. Riders not only compete for individual points, but for their team as well.

It’s fun and challenging—and there is no need to own your own horse! Horses are provided to each rider at every event. All mounts are selected by a draw. Moms and dads really like that the IEA provides an affordable format for their child, as they build their equestrian skills. Many of the IEA senior championship riders receive college scholarships based upon their winning performance at the IEA National Finals, too.

Founded in 2002, the IEA has over 8000 members across the United States. For additional information about the IEA or answers to questions concerning team organization, please contact Jennifer Eaton-Membership Marketing Coordinator by phone at 877-RIDE-IEA (877-743-3432), Extension 1 or email Jenn@rideiea.org. You may also visit the IEA website: www.rideiea.org.

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