



The Pony Express

Editor: Sandy Zelmer
April 2006

Send Information, Dates, or Classified Ads to the Editor at:

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Dates and times

- ◆ Events with the dates and information on them can now be found at the following locations to avoid repetition. Check for dates you don't want to miss.
 - ◆ For all Pony Club dates and results - Be sure to check the WOR website at <http://www.canadianponyclub.org/WesternOntario/index.htm> and the CPC website at <http://www.canadianponyclub.org/index.html> and especially the calendar there to be up to date!
 - ◆ For all eventing and eventing clinic dates - <http://www.eventinginCanada.com>

News Snippets:

- ◆ Huron Bruce has amalgamated with Glen Highlands
- ◆ Welcome to Willow Creek a new pony club branch in WOR.
- ◆ Charm Bracelets - CPC is offering charms that fit on the flat charm bracelets. These are for all testing levels as well as the pony club crest
- ◆ Thank you to the OEF for the grant money that was allocated to WOR in November, at the OEF Annual Conference.
- ◆ Thank you to Apple Saddlery for supporting our Regional events.
- ◆ Brubacher's Harness Shop to receive a "bonus" of 10% of the value of all purchases and repairs for Pony Club members at either the Ailsa Craig or Wallenstein stores. We encourage all members to have a look at their catalogue:
<http://www.brubachersharness.ca/Storefront/catalog/index.htm>
- ◆ International PPG 2006 - Congratulations to Erin Hendriksen of the London Pony Club who will be on the National PPG Team, which will be travelling to Great Britain in May.
- ◆ Instructor & Coaching Programs are available from OEF. For the 2006 schedule contact Catherine Barker, Education Coordinator, ONTARIO EQUESTRIAN FEDERATION Phone 905-709-6545, Toll Free 1-877-441-7112 Direct Email education@horse.on.ca Website www.horse.on.ca

Disciplines

- ◆ **Quiz:** Penny McLaren: Quiz will be held on May 6th in Guelph. Venue is GCI in Guelph like last year. Guelph Pony club is doing lunch again \$5.00 - Grand River is handling the silent auction. Tack sale has been arranged. The opening will be deferred to 11:30am this year until everyone has a chance to see items. Clubs can rent the rooms with 10% proceeds to Region. Nationals will be held in Saskatoon in October.
- ◆ **A/B/C Rally** - Lynn Morris: confirms 14 15 16th of July. Will be at Checkmate
- ◆ **PPG** - Tom Radcliffe: We need to have to have D2s fast tracked. Perhaps D1 - D2 National chair doing something with the A group, perhaps an event rather than the fun day or at the same time. This will be the transition year - competitors have to be two years as A to qualify for nationals. The tentative date of June 10th is picked for the fun day. May have to change location from Aberfoyle to accommodate this. July 8th: Regional PPG. This year C Level riders- walk trot only, can have a spotter or leader aged 15 or older, safely attired with helmet and proper footwear. If you don't start with a helper then you don't get one. If the helper takes control of the horse you will now have to walk. If you canter you will be disqualified.
- ◆ **Dressage** - Sue Eagleson: As a National Committee we decided to have a National Dressage Competition starting this year. To qualify for Nationals it will be the following divisions: Starter, Pretraining, Training and 1st level and above. It will be the highest score at the Regional Finals and only one in each division will qualify to go on to Nationals. So technically only the most kids each level will have is 13 to 15 kids. Qualifications will be discussed at the Dressage Workshop as the Regions decide on how this should work. Starter Division would be D1s and D2s - 12 years and older, Pretraining Division would be D1s to Cs - 12 years and older, Training Division would be D1 Level and above - 12 years and older. At these Nationals the rider will ride the 2 tests that they qualified on, but on strange horses. They will then ride a mystery test that will be called to them and finally they will write a written test also. They will be placed in teams and they will be billeted with families to help keep costs down. Also if any Regions have Pas de Deux Teams and Drill Teams they can be video taped and sent to Kasia and a committee will be set up to judge them and they can then be also National Champions.
- ◆ **Show Jumping** -Lani Harris - there is a new rule book so we don't have to refer to EC. There may be a schooling show in Saturday June 17th. COR wants to have zones this year -To be held August 12 in Oshawa. Also, looking at doing a national competition in 2007 with a 3 foot medal round - one rider per class probably in Alberta. We could possibly use Zones this year to qualify for next year.

A Guide for DCs and possibly parents and volunteers too

Ralph Rainford's list of helpful hints for DCs from last year. They are as follows:

1. You are **not** queen/king. Be a leader, not a dictator.
2. Be an advocate in your branch, not just for your own kid.
3. Listen to others, be polite and friendly.
4. Attend **all** Regional Events.

5. Organize, organize, organize - active member meetings, Parent Meetings (agenda, beginning and ending times)
6. Be enthusiastic!
7. Delegate, but **ask** for help.
8. Read, learn, educate yourself
9. Educate your Executive and parents
10. Keep good records, keep copies.
11. Remember to pass on records to other members of the Executive and Incoming DC
12. Don't reinvent the wheel. Ask!
13. Learn how to run a meeting/rules for voting.
14. Organize a new member evening. Meet with all new prospective parents before registering children. (Video, pictures, handbook, brochures, website)
15. Build an effective Executive for success.
 - Complete (fill all positions)
 - Friendly
 - Effective
 - Room for growth and progression

Cross Country Schooling Etiquette

In Ontario, we're lucky that we have lots of Horse Trial competitions to choose from. Many of our event organizers kindly and generously allow people to school on their property between shows. In order to keep this privilege, event organizers have asked us to help educate our members, both competitors and coaches, on how to ensure that cross country schooling does not damage their properties or their courses, and to ensure that your schooling experience is safe. With the help of our organizers, we've compiled a simple list of Do's and Don'ts for Cross Country Schooling. If you are aware of and follow these guidelines, your schooling experience will be safer, your hosts will be happy to have you back, and our courses will last longer. We all win.

Dos and Don'ts For Cross Country Schooling

Do: Respect the land. If you want to enjoy good footing all season, this is the number one priority.

Do: School with a qualified, experienced coach.

Do: Pay up front and sign a waiver. Please don't make your host wait around until you are finished.

Do: Wear a helmet, proper footwear, and body protector.

Do: Confess if you've broken something or see something amiss.

Do: Take everything with you that came with you. Pick up your garbage and the manure from mucking out your trailer. Leave everything cleaner than when you arrived.

Do: Thank your host.

Don't: Attempt to jump fences above your current training and experience level. Be aware that the height of cross-country jumps is not necessarily an indicator of the appropriate level. Just because a fence is low does not mean that the "question" being asked is not at a higher level.

Don't: Keep attempting a jump if you are having multiple refusals. You will ruin the footing. Please move on after 3 tries; either coming back to it later, or finding another jump with a similar question.

Don't: Allow your horse to paw in or at a water jump. This is the quickest way to destroy pond liners and create potholes. Don't allow your horse to stand about at a water jump. This encourages pawing; and besides, you want your horse to go forward through water!

Don't: Tolerate abuse, either of the horse or the rider. This one goes without saying, but our organizers want to reinforce this point. They stress that this goes for any abusive behavior in the parking lot as well as on course.

That's it! Be gracious, be safe, be respectful. Thanks for doing your part in making sure we all have places to school and compete in the years to come.

Classified Section:

- ◆ Classified are **free** to all pony clubbers, and for things that would interest pony clubbers.
- ◆ PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHEN YOUR ITEMS SELL SO I CAN DELETE YOUR AD!!!!!!!!!!!!!! THANKS. If I deleted your ad because I haven't heard from you and you need it back in, please let me know and I will put it back in.

HORSES AND PONIES

- ◆ **Chestnut, 13.1hh gelding pony**, arab x, 8 yrs.(approx.) moves nicely, great personality, athletic, energetic (a little too strong for present owner), asking \$2,800 or best offer. Contact: Glen Beard - 519-836-5451
- ◆ **Canadian Sport Horse 2yr old Filly**. 1/4 Clyde 3/4 TB. Bred to excel in hunter/jumper/eventing. Will finish 16+hh. Excellent disposition, handled since birth and has been under saddle. Nice straight movement. \$5,800 obo. cherryhill_equestrian@allstream.net 519-461-1171
- ◆ **Sunshine - 13'2 quarterhorse welsh cross pony**, 8 years old, used by, Shannon Townsend, right up to her B level. He's done everything - games, both English and Western, dressage, and many times a jumper champion. He was used for the Inter Pacific Exchange last summer and placed at the top for both jumper and cross-country. He's very easy to handle and has no vices. He's very quick and agile, and always willing to try anything. Needs a rider with some experience, but has been used in lessons for beginners as well. We would like to sell him and will discuss any offer, but will also lease him very reasonably (off property) as he is just not being used. call 519-787-1383 for any further information.
- ◆ Experienced, **16.1 mature chestnut thoroughbred gelding** is looking for new partner to teach and take to new heights. Trillium, Pony Club, Hunter-Jumper, Eventing, Dressage and Fall Fairs, he's done it all. Good, honest jump, medium level dressage. Tons of show experience. Good to trailer, bathe, and groom. Stands well for vet and farrier. Vet

checked, all shots up-to-date. Loving and friendly, needs a rider that rides from the seat and legs, not on his mouth. Bonds well with his rider. Not a school horse. Partner too busy to give him the time he deserves. \$3400. - 519-369-6008

- ◆ **Arabian/Saddlebred 15.2 mare.** Beautiful bay, black points, 1 white foot. 7 years old, affectionate, eager-to-please, looking for her perfect partner. Loves to trail ride, wonderful floating movement. Hunter type, needs practice to shine. Partner has no time to spend with her. Intermediate rider only. Will consider lease to right person. \$2000. Durham area. 519-369-6008
- ◆ **"Lady" - 5yr, 16.1, solid built, tb,** for sale(\$6,500) or lease to an event rider- mare-doing basic dressage and started over fences-requires confident rider to bring her along-has attended few schooling sessions with Margie Godson-will make ideal event prospect. **Also I have a whole bunch of TB's to sell** - young prospects suitable for hunter/jumper/dressage and eventing: Starting at \$5k.Barbara www.hutchesontraining.ca/saleshorses.asp
- ◆ **16h 1" registered bay thoroughbred gelding 10 years old.** Are you planning to test up to B, B2, A? This gentleman has been used at a riding camp with beginners to advanced riders. He has successfully competed at pretraining events and unofficially competed at training level. He loves water, cross country and show jumping. He has beautiful movement - a rocking horse canter that covers ground easily. He trailers, ties, clips and generally is friendly and handles well. Must sell as rider is at university and Dad is going broke! \$8000. Contact Alison Rainford (519) 843-3841 e-mail arrainford@sympatico.ca
- ◆ **Park Lane Ranch has the following for sale (Way too many horses!!!!)** Others available parklaneranch@darwood.ca
 - ◆ **LONG JOHN SILVER** - 2001 steel gray registered **Canadian Sport Horse gelding.** A show gelding deluxe by Yellow Creek out of branded Westfallian mare, (Sympathy by Sylvander by Sioux) he is an incredible mover. And schooling well over fences. Dressage, hunter, eventer or any other discipline, this is a quality colt! Conformation and movement deluxe. Well handled, rides quietly. He was Fourth place in 2004 Governor General's Cup at the Royal and placed well in hunter flat and over fences this year. He evented twice and got 8s and 9s in his dressage. \$20,000 cdn. Or reasonable offer
 - ◆ **PEARL** - 8 yr old gray Quarterhorse/TB cross mare, 15.3, quiet and well schooled flat work, bold over fences both stadium and cross country. Very pretty, excellent conformation and movement. Started jumping last fall - now doing a 2'9" course, would excel in hunter or eventing, sound, \$3500
 - ◆ **CICI** -2005 solid bay paint colt, bay with star and socks - Sire is paint "Wash My Socks" and Dam is AQHA "Easy Girl at the Bar" (Shown as "Small Town Girl") - both old style QH type horses so this guy is a real chunky kid from working lines. Will be about 15 hands and very handy. His Mom Kailua was champion at PPG, Tetrathalon, D & C Rally, Regional Show Jumper, Hunter shows, Jumper shows and in Eventing with Jen Zelmer. Both parents have reining, games and western performance backgrounds also. \$1500 obo.
 - ◆ **COMADRE** - 2000 bay TB mare, 16 hands, by Compadre (El Gran Senior, Northern Dancer) out of Born Irish (Avies Copy). Excellent conformation, not riding sound, in foal to Yellow Creek for May 2006, LFG, \$2500.

- ◆ **2004 and 2005 Canadian Sport Horse fillies by Yellow Creek**, all bred to perform, Superb movers, athletic, will mature 16 to 17 hands, blacks and bays starting at \$3500. Szelmer@sympatico.ca 905-936-2658, www.parklaneranch.ca

Staff and employment opportunities

- ◆ Summer position available for pony clubber 16 years or older. Duties include councilor/instructor at beginners summer camp, plus the possibility of riding green horses, helping at events, working with weanlings/yearlings, and much more. Very little mucking. Remuneration includes: \$100 per week, daily lessons from Sue Boyle or Jen Zelmer, room and board for rider and horse (or use one of our horses), the opportunity to event, show and do pony club, the opportunity to learn first hand about running a camp, a breeding and foaling operation, and schooling young horses. Dressage ring, stadium jump rings and cross country course on site. Parklaneranch@darwood.ca or Sandy Zelmer at 905-936-2658

Wanted

- ◆ This is retirement year for some of our old faithfuls and they always leave a hole in the kid's hearts. I am looking to buy or lease a couple of **older, quiet, reasonably sound horses/ponies** to play and be loved in our small beginners camp in the summer and to eat all winter. Sandy Zelmer, 905-936-2658 szelmer@sympatico.ca
- ◆ Halton Place: Cynthia looking for volunteers for a show Aug. 23 - Sept 6 Grand Prix level showjumping . Eligible for high school volunteer hours. For more information: Email Cynthia at: cynthia_cowper@hotmail.com

Tack and Equipment

- ◆ **Quality jumps** for sale. Brand new. Painted or unpainted. Great prices. Variety of jumps available as well as custom design. idealjumps@sympatico.ca
- ◆ **Tipperary Vests**, Tall-Medium, white, cover comes off for easy washing, brand new, \$100. equus3d@ican.net

Services, Shows, Clinics, and other

- ◆ **Standing at stud: Yellow Creek** - 16.3 hand homozygous black TB stallion, Bronze Premium Sport Horse, Approved AQHA www.parklaneranch.ca
- ◆ **Xcountry schooling opportunity**- Langford Church Stables - Series starts June 7th and runs through August 16th. - this is NOT a pony club event- but is open to all/any riders and focussed on the entry or introductory cross country riders. The course is inviting and not too difficult, they are having a schooling format cross country, with 6 sessions (one every other week) on Wed evenings starting at 7pm- using your horses/ponies or theirs, you will be able to school over the courses, and ribbons will be awarded for performance. - <http://www.langfordchurchstables.com/html/x-country.html>

Reports from our clubs

(These were supposed to go out in the winter but that didn't happen so here they are now!)

- ◆ **Willow Creek** is a new club that formed in March of this year. We began with twelve members, two 17 year old teens that transferred from a different branch, another 17 year old that wanted to try Pony Club vs 4H, and nine younger kids between 6 and 13 with no Pony Club experience. Our DC (me!) had NO Pony Club experience either, but we were all game to give it a try and had the more-than-able guidance of Robin Milroy, who became our Educational Advisor. An accomplished equestrian and gifted coach, Robin has become the heartbeat of our branch, especially for the kids!
On June 19th, Abby Miller and Jean Eagleson came up for our first testing day, and the Regional DC, Catherine, came up with them to lend moral support and guidance to us 'newbies'. They were all great! Very informative, helpful and most of all, reassuring!
Six of the kids tested for D, and all passed with flying colours! Emily Brolese, Kinsey Collins, Mickey Collins, Summer Hunter, Kristyn Miller and Jodi Pullman all did very well. Emma Winkler, our 4H transfer, also tested for and passed her D2. It was an exciting day for all concerned and we were very grateful for Catherine's calming guidance. Our coach had to remove herself lest she blurt out some inadvertent corrections. As she pointed out, we parents were rooting for one or two kids... all of them testing felt like her own!
While we were unable to field a team for PPG's, some of Robin's lessons' ponies went and a few of our members and families went along to Fergus to see what to expect for next year. It looked like a fun day and we've been hosting PPG practices on a regular basis since.
Three of our D's and a D2 went to D rally. It was truly a learning experience for all of us - not least of all the parent volunteers. We gained a new appreciation for the dedication of the behind-the-scenes organizers, and the helpfulness and support of everyone present. It was a great experience. None of our kids placed, but we all learned a lot and especially the value of exposing our horses/ponies to different environments. In fact, to that end, several of our kids made a point of traveling to many of the fall fairs in our area to gain even more experience for both themselves and their mounts. Many of them won ribbons and we were especially impressed because in many of their events, they were the youngest and least experienced competitors taking part.
Over the summer we held a number of simple fundraisers at which we displayed an information board about Pony Club, and over the last few weeks, have signed on 10 new members! Most of them are younger (6 to 11) and very keen. Our executive (with Robin's help) is planning our education and excursions calendar for the next 6 months, our achievement banquet, and a group trip to the Royal Winter Fair. It's been a somewhat disorganized and very busy 'year', especially given the inexperience of most involved. Thank goodness for Robin's dedication, support and knowledge! Not to mention my fellow executive officers, Shelley Miller and Connie Hutchinson, a lot of parent involvement and support... everyone has been great and we all look forward to our second year as a club.
Grateful thanks also go to Crawford Dales and Catherine Miller (and a few others) who patiently answered my many questions through email and phone calls. Thank you all to everyone! It's been an interesting year.

Lynn Young Collins DC, Willow Creek Pony Club

- ◆ **Grand River** - Tom Radcliffe - Hi, here's some info on the summer of Grandriver. We held three camps starting with ppg, held at townsend's farm, sadly the kids did not participate in regional ppg due to a pony with stangles, although onto the next camp show jumping and dressage hosted by Glen Arden farms, who are past grandriver pony club members! We had a great week there and many kids went on to compete at regionals, we also did a D Rally prep camp, which was also very good. We had a new event this year which we hope to make an annual event, our mother daughter weekend. Hosted by the Adams Schieck families, the saturday evening we had a catered dinner, a lady to do reflexology and a lady to do nails, we also did a session on colours and personality. This was followed by a sleepover and riding lessons for moms and daughter on sunday, some even went on a trail ride (way to go Valerie riding bareback!!) This upcoming weekend the Godkin/Kelton family are hosting a poker ride at their farm. We try to keep the fun in the riding for all the members, on to the next year which should prove to be just as great!
- ◆ **Mount Nimo** - thanks to super support from members, parents, the riding community and our other clubs in the region- Mount Nemo Pony Club enjoyed its most successful year!! From educational events with Top Farriers, Vets, and Horse Trainers, to Super (hard) crafts including our great horse head craft that was displayed in the local library for all to see. We took up improving our tetrathalon results through weekly swimming coaching together, weekly runs together on the rail trail, shooting with the continued support of Jack and the Burlington Gun Club- and some great cross country training and practice- we enjoyed again the Guelph Mini Meet, and thanks to all the other clubs attendance and support, this was the MNPC mini meet best year yet. Everyone did very well- and not only placed well at Regionals but 2 of our members (Naomi and Nakita K) went on to National Tetrathalon and did super there too.
 - ◆ Our kids had a lot of fun this year earning badges from the badge program- they learned to drive a sleigh and went on a sleigh ride, then toured antique carriage facility, they got PPG tips and training from another branch senior member (thanks Shannon) and earned a badge building stadium and cross country jumps at a clinic here. We enjoyed riding together in the conservation area and cross country practices everywhere we could find something suitable to jump.
 - ◆ Great fundraising on the part of our clubbers and some amazing sewing skills of one of our parents- saw all our kids decked out in the navy and tan MNPC colours with custom made saddle pads, cross country jerseys and helmet covers- Thanks Jen!
 - ◆ We benefited from lots of expert riding instruction from high level Stadium Jumpers, Cross Country and Dressage competitors and this helped our clubbers be safe, and have fun at Regional Show Jumping, Dressage and Rally. We ended up with many of our members qualifying and doing super at Zonal Show Jumping & Dressage. Jessica enjoyed immensely the opportunity provided her by pony club to take her horse to camp with Paige Lockton and learn more about eventing from an expert. Our kids participated together as a team in WWHunt Hunter Trials and placed 2nd in the team event and well individually. Our kids enjoyed their first Rally Camp where all our members spent 2 days

camping with their hores- having fun together- and benefiting from some very skilled coaching in all the disciplines from a number of outside coaches. Proof of this was our D-D2 kids all participating and doing very well in D rally- accompanied by coaching by our more senior level kids. I am especially proud of how closely every parent in our club worked together to benefit not only their own child- but every child in the club- from 8-21 years old they all participated in every discipline and helped each other. This was evidenced the night before Rally when one of our clubbers family was still at the hospital in the wee hours, awaiting a new baby- and another parent went off to the barn to wash and groom the other families pony so that the child would be able to compete at rally. Another supporter of our club sat up all night watching over a sick pony then showed up at rally bright and early to help cheer us all on. Bravo!!!!!!Our supporters and barn owners, opened up some great facilities to us- and allowed us to do testing, practice, education and clinics free of charge at some top notch facilities- thank you- we couldnt have done it without you. Special Thanks to Averyhill, Hamilton Hunt Club, Langford Church Stables and the Well! lington Waterloo Hunt Club as well as many coaches and private individuals far too numerous to mention.

- ◆ This was a year of expanding our kids comfort zones, and having fun together as a club- and in this way- as in every other it was a rousing success for every member and parent of the MNPC. I am proud that every member of our club achieved the goals that they set out for themselves, and had fun doing it- and that all the parents pulled together to Find a Way!!!! As we are hosting our registrations for new members in mid September, again I see all the members and parents and supporters joining together to make this another successful event- you have all proven that working together can result in success. This article is just my way of thanking our great, supportive members and families for a fun, successful pony club year and I am looking forward to us all working together to make 2006 as successful and fun. for more information contact: Ann-Marie (DC MNPC) amc2sitel@aol.com
- ◆ **Is your news here? It could be, send stuff please!**

Editorials, jokes, other things worth reading

Article from a pony club member about her first D Rally! By Caitlyn Parisi, Age 15, Hamilton, Ontario, (Niagara PONY CLUB)

From Therapeutic riding to Show Jumping, Jem can do it all!

I remember when I first noticed Jem out in the pasture at Shady Maple Stables in Smithville. As soon I saw the grey Arabian pony I could not take my eyes off of him. I had never noticed him before so I then asked around about him. I found out that he was one of the horses used in the H.A.T.S (Horse Alternative Therapeutic Services program), a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to the belief that the unique bond between horses and humans enhances

the physical and emotional well being of riders who have disabilities. Coincidentally this was around the same time I was going to start volunteering for them.

Supreme Jem , one of H.A.T.S horses, is a 9 year old purebred Arabian sired by Csardas Jemil, out of Supreme Lace, bred by Neil and Janice Anderson and donated to H.A.T.S by the McLachlan family.

When I first started volunteering with H.A.T.S. I noticed that Jem spooked at everything, including his own shadow. I started exercising Jem, and was shocked at how often he spooked and how afraid he was of everything. I came off on several occasions, so spent a lot of time slowly introducing Jem to new things around the arena. I also noticed that his hip/stifle would lock frequently and then found out it was due to a stifle problem.

I am also a member of the Canadian Pony Club (Niagara branch) which is a volunteer-run, non-profit national organization across Canada for young people who want to learn more about horses, riding and stable management. I have been a member of the Niagara Pony Club since 2003 and have enjoyed participating in activities at the branch, regional and zone levels. This year all of the major events were in our region and I needed a horse so that I could participate. The most fun event in Pony Club is called the Prince Phillip Games (PPG) and you need a pony to participate in this event. I decided to start working with Jem on a regular basis to see if I could prepare him for not only this fun event but also for another Pony Club event called Regional Dressage and Show Jumping.

In May 2005 I started riding Jem in my two lessons during the week with my coach Renate McGillvray at Shady Maple Stables. Once he was ridden regularly, Jem spooked less and seemed a much happier pony. We began giving him MSM and his stifle no longer locked up. We started jumping, developing frame and gaining trust from each other. I started to part-board Jem from H.A.T.S so that I could ride and show him.

June 4, I took Jem to PPG fun day held in Aberfoyle. This day was going to be the true test and would tell me if I had a pony for show season. PPG fun day went wonderfully and I was so proud of Jem and also of myself for getting him there. Jem enjoyed playing the games and didn't spook at any of the props. I was then looking forward to the whole show season with Jem. From that day on my entire focus was working with Jem so that we could participate in both the Pony Club's Regional Dressage and Show jumping event which was to be held on July 30, 2005 at Glenarden Farms in Fergus.

My coach Renate and I decided that on top of regular lessons we would need to take Jem to various schooling shows to prepare Jem for these Pony Club events. Renate and I worked very hard at training Jem. I admit there were moments of pure frustration and times I wanted to give up. It always seemed that we would take two steps forward and three steps back. Renate taught me how to teach Jem. We worked as a team; Renate, Jem and I. I found out just how much work, effort and time is needed to train a pony. Although it was a lot of hard work, it has

also been a very rewarding experience. Jem's name is very fitting because he really is a "gem". He has a lovely disposition and is eager to please and overcome his fears for me. I wouldn't take any horse over Jem. He is a very unique pony and the relationship we have is very comforting. He follows me around like a dog and will also shake a tongue. To me he seems like my little brother. It is truly hard to explain the bond. But this whole experience has shown me that animals and humans can have the same sort of bond as people have daily.

During the summer months we attended several schooling shows and the Hunter Pace at the Hamilton Hunt Club placing fourth in the jumper group. Along the way we earned some ribbons but more importantly we made noticeable progression; the ribbons just added to my happiness. As long as I coaxed Jem over the first round of jumps, there were no more problems. Jem soon gained enough trust in me and didn't think the jumps were going to eat him anymore and he stopped looking at them in time. Jem and I were developing a partnership and we were having a good time in the show ring.

Regional PPG was held on July 9/05 at Fergus Community Centre. We played on a Masters Team and Jem had a great time playing the games. He didn't mind the balloon popping but definitely didn't like the fishing game. Our team placed 1st in the Masters Division.

I also had the opportunity to take Jem to my dressage coach, Elaine Ward-Turcotte, to use her 20 X 60 dressage ring. I needed to expose him to the dressage ring prior to attending the Pony Club Regional Dressage Show. We were going to do First Level Tests 1&2 and needed some practice in the bigger dressage ring. I began to question if we could perform at this level in a show but decided we were up for the challenge.

July 30/05 was a perfect day for a horse show. It was a nice sunny day and not too hot - a rarity this summer. We were successful in completing our first level tests and Jem had an amazing stretchy circle in both tests. We placed 3rd overall and I was very pleased with our performance. In show jumping we participated in the Entry Level Division 2'3" with a 2'6" jump off. We placed 4th overall and just qualified to participate in the Central Zone Show jumping and Dressage Championships which were to be held at Blacks Equine Centre on August 20-21, 2005. I was thrilled. This event brings riders from 3 regions; Western Ontario, Central Ontario and St.Lawerence Ottawa Valley to compete against each other.

The previous two years I had also qualified for Central Zone Championships. The first year it was held at York Equestrian Centre and I went for the dressage and won the event. It was a great experience. Last year I also qualified for the Show jumping championships and I was so excited because I knew we could win. Unfortunately it was held in the Kingston area and we couldn't afford the trailering costs. It was a disappointment but we took champion at D Rally, another amazing pony club event.

Qualifying for Central Zone Show jumping and Dressage Championships meant another 3 weeks of hard work but I was up for it. During these 3 weeks I started experiencing problems with Jem. He seemed to have more energy and he would just race around the ring like he was running away from me and playing games. My coach had always said "acting up before a show is a good sign, it will give you a better performance" and "Rome wasn't built in a day". Once again, she was right. We had our dressage tests on the Saturday and Jem performed beautifully. We came in 3rd overall again but to me we were the class champions. Those were our best dressage tests and I was so happy with Jem. Jem received so many compliments that day as well. After ribbons were handed out, I settled Jem in his stall; gave him water, hay and lots of carrots for his stay away from home.

Bright and early the next day I saw him, with only one dirty spot on him. That was a shock to me. So I got Jem ready and I got myself ready. I was pumped for this event. Jem was all decked out, in the jumper attire as we walked up to the turnout judge. We had a great warm up and Renate was there helping and supporting. Now it was time for the course walk. I had the course memorized and knew that I would have to chase Jem over the first 3 fences as that is where he normally hesitates⁷. My heart was racing as I entered and once I heard the whistle after the salute the adrenaline started pumping. Although it probably wasn't a pretty round we got over every fence with no refusals, just one rail down. This meant we didn't make it to the jump off. It was no big deal for me as I was happy we got over all those scary jumps. We got a third in that round. The second round, we made it to the jump off and got great corners and quick shortcuts and pinned a 1st in that round. The third round was an equitation medal class. I can honestly say that, that round was the best ride I've ever had on Jem. We seemed so perfect and got a lot of compliments. It felt really good. We got a 1st in that round. This made us the Entry Level 2'3" with a 2'6" jump off champions! Plus we got 1st in turnout out of the first three divisions!

When I first started riding Jem, I did not expect any of this to happen. The feeling that day was so overwhelming and I felt I had achieved such an accomplishment with Jem, I was so proud of myself and of my new pony. Jem and I have moved up a notch on the ladder and are doing newer and harder things. This experience hasn't just found me a pony to ride and train, it has found me a friend. A friend that will never bring me pain and will always be there to comfort me. Whether its when I'm laying down with him in his stall, galloping around the field or joining up in the round pen, Jem and I have created a bond that will never break. Jem is not just a riding pony to me, he is a friend, a true companion.

I would like to thank H.A.T.S. for giving me this opportunity, for I would trade it for none other. It has taught me many things and one thing is for sure; everyone needs a Jem in their life.