

From: "Chris Brune at AHP" <ahorsepubs@aol.com>
Subject: **AHP Newsgroup: Certified Horsemanship Association
Announces Winners at 2012 Awards Banquet**
Date: October 22, 2012 11:06:44 AM MDT
To: "AHP Newsgroup" <AHP-LIST@mailman.bloodhorse.com>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**For More Information, Quotes from others on each winner and Photos
contact:**

Christy Landwehr at 720-857-9550 or clandwehr@CHA-ahse.org

**Certified Horsemanship Association Announces
Winners at
2012 Awards Banquet**

(October 2012) The Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) honored top individuals, horses and organizations at the annual awards banquet held at the International Conference at Canyonview Equestrian Center in Silverton, Oregon on October 13, 2012.

**CHA Distinguished Service Award goes to Phil
Peterson from Ritzville, Washington**

Phil Peterson is a life member of CHA and has been involved since 1992. He is Standard, Trail, Driving and Equine Facility Manager clinic staff and a site visitor for CHA. He has been on the

CHA board of many years as a director, treasurer and president. He created an excellent budget Excel spreadsheet that is still used by staff today. He is the person who led the charge to move from the CHA Corporate Office from Texas to Kentucky.

“Phil is such a loyal member of CHA and the horse industry,” says CHA Past President Bill Enns. “His future thinking and challenging ideas have contributed greatly to the success of the organization and its members.”

“I have never participated in CHA for recognition,” says Phil. “I truly believe that the greatest thing a person can do is invest their life in other people. This organization has invested in me by providing a professional baseline to evaluate my skills as a horseman and a manager. I believe in the excellent process that CHA has developed, I am encouraged by seeing another generation of leaders taking the safety and education of this industry to heart. I am honored to be an advocate and representative of CHA and its membership. My greatest reward is

seeing us keep the vision alive. The future is bright!”

Clinic Instructor of the Year is Michal Kays from Rochester, Washington

Without our clinic instructors CHA would not be able to grow and accomplish its mission. The CHA Clinic Instructor of the Year Award goes to a CHA clinic instructor who has shown outstanding service to CHA by conducting meaningful clinics and influencing the careers of numerous instructors over many years. Michal Kays conducted her first clinic for CHA in 1983 and has been clinic staff for 87 clinics! Her mentors were Lew and Melody Sterrett and Susan Harris who were CHA clinicians as well.

This is what CHA clinic participants have said about Michal as clinic staff. “She is motivational and inspiring!” “Excellent and thorough evaluations.” “Very helpful with lots of new ideas. I felt comfortable asking questions.” “Michal is helpful, professional, knowledgeable and open to suggestions.” “Fun, energetic and enthusiastic.” “Great knowledge and very approachable.” “Interested in individual’s success, spent extra time helping.”

“Michal was the Clinic Staff in my certification clinic in 1989,”

says Sherilyn Sander. “I thought one day I would like to be like her. From that very first clinic, I had mentoring and building up others along with becoming Clinic Staff on my radar. Michal has a gift of making participants see their potential as well as facing their weaknesses head on. She has always made me want to grow and share my growth with others.”

“It is an honor to receive this award,” says Michal. “I feel blessed to have had the privilege over the past 29 years to have had a small part in influencing so many riding instructors across the US and Canada, many of whom have become clinic staff themselves and are in turn influencing instructors in their own right. It is exciting to be part of CHA, an organization that strives to improve the quality and safety of the horsemanship industry at large. I hope I have another 29 years to give to the certification process!”

The CHA Partnership in Safety Award Goes to Riders4Helmets

For many years CHA has recognized an outstanding individual or organization that has helped not only the equine industry and CHA, but the community at large to promote safety awareness. Riders4Helmets was founded in early 2010 after Olympic dressage rider Courtney King Dye was seriously injured in a

riding accident. King Dye, who remained in a coma for a month, was not wearing a helmet at the time of the accident and is currently undergoing rehabilitation. Riders4Helmets has held three safety symposiums in which CHA has attended one of them to educate the public about head injuries from horseback. This group also sponsors and awards money to those that wear helmets in events such as the Supreme Mustang Makeover and others. The website has statistics on it about head injuries and it a great reference tool.

"Riders4Helmets is immensely honored to be the recipient of the 2012 Certified Horsemanship Association Partnership in Safety Award," says Lyndsey White the founder of Riders4Helmets. "CHA was one of the first organizations to lend support to Riders4Helmets when the campaign was launched in 2010. Riders4Helmets has a mission of educating equestrians on the benefits of wearing a properly fitted and secured, certified helmet. In the two years since its inception, Riders4Helmets has hosted safety symposiums, provided educational articles and videos via www.riders4helmets.com and founded International Helmet Awareness Day in which over 500 retailers globally participated in 2012. The support of the CHA is invaluable and we look forward to continuing our partnership."

CHA Instructor of the Year is Patti Stalley of Riverton, Wyoming

This award is given to an outstanding CHA certified instructor who demonstrates safe, effective and fun lessons. Students from around the continent send in nominations about their instructors and why they should be awarded this honor. Patti Stalley is a life time member of CHA since 1996. She is a Standard and Equine Facility Manager Clinic Staff and a site visitor trainer. She has been very involved in teaching at the college level for many years.

“She always sees that her students have what they need and even provides them with horses from her own string when necessary,” says CHA Program Director Polly Haselton Barger. “I have witnessed her giving a hand up to many who needed it and been a role model to all. Her students love and respect her.”

This is what her students have said about Patti. “Patti is more than an instructor. She is a friend, mentor, teacher, and role model for all of her students.” “She can really see talent when it comes to people, and she will do just about anything to bring out the best in us. It is like she sees the diamond hiding and does her best to shine

us up. She doesn't pick favorites, and always tries to see the best in people and inspires us to do the same.”

“Wow, what a wonderful surprise!” says Patti. “I was totally taken aback. I feel CHA has many truly great instructors and it had never entered my mind that I could be the recipient of such a great honor. Who would have thought it possible that a ranch kid from a remote area in Nebraska with seven sisters and two brothers could become CHA Instructor of the Year. I thank CHA for the knowledge, confidence and hope they instill in their members and instructors.”

The CHA School Horse of the Year is Shawnee from PLA Horse Play in Covington, Georgia

We often recognize people and organizations that have done great things in the horse industry, but what about the horses themselves? The CHA School Horse of the Year Program is about these wonderful animals that spend countless hours being patient with new riders and not-so-new riders. The winner of this award, not only gets recognition, but is immortalized into a Stone Horse model thanks to the generosity of Peter and Elaine Stone.

Shawnee is an 18 year old Paint mare who started as a school

horse for Girl Scouts in North Carolina and for the last nine years has been at PLA Horse Play in Georgia. This is what some of her students have said about her:

“The warmth in her big brown eyes just draws you right in and makes you want to sit astride her back and let the wind blow through your hair as you canter around the arena.” “She is so very patient with everyone in her saddle that they’re eager to learn everything their instructor can teach in a single lesson and they want to come back and ride her again and again.” “Shawnee seems to sense the riders’ abilities and fits herself to them.” “She mirrored my strengths and helped me to fix my weaknesses.” “A few of the many traits that embody Shawnee are compassion, kindness, knowledge, patience, skill and good communication, these traits are all instilled into her core and this is why Shawnee is the best if not perfect school horse!”

Top Five Finalists for the 2012 CHA School Horse of the Year Award are:

Mini from Cloud R Ranch in Steinbach, Manitoba

Ten Thirty from Clover Ten Thirty in Santa Rosa, California

Shawnee from PLA Horse Play in Covington, Georgia

Chance from Miracle Ranch in Port Orchard, Washington
Huldra from Swamp Creek Farm in Bothell, Washington

The Volunteer of the Year is Lori Maciulewicz from Berkley, Massachusetts

CHA relies heavily on our wonderful volunteer members to help in a variety of ways to help enhance the association. Lori Maciulewicz is the current CHA Region 6 Director whose region includes: New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and Newfoundland.

“Ever since I have known Lori she has been a tireless promoter of CHA and its values,” says CHA Master Instructor Mitzi Summers. “She really believes what the organization stands for and follows its tenets in her teaching and volunteer work. Lori has volunteered at the CHA booth at the Equine Affaire in Springfield, Massachusetts for many years, setting up the booth and staying there for the full length of the event. As a regional director, Lori has spent many hours organizing yearly regional conferences, finding people to teach and lecture, and a location that is suitable. Whenever I am in her area giving a CHA clinic, she has always made the effort of traveling over an hour each way to

observe the clinic and give the participants a "pep" talk about the organization. It is always a welcome addition to the schedule and she willingly answers any and all questions. She is one of the most energetic, positive, and giving people I know."

"It was such a surprise to be chosen as volunteer of the year," says Lori. "I became a certified instructor in 2003 because I was attracted to the emphasis on safety and horsemanship standards the certification process focused on. I've only missed one international conference since being certified. I enjoy meeting instructors and trainers from around the U.S. and Canada and love how the main goal is to better ourselves for our students. I wholeheartedly support the mission of CHA for the horse industry and take every opportunity to share this with others. Being chosen out of hundreds of other equally dedicated volunteers is an incredible honor."

TEAM CHA Horse Connections Rewards Winner – Jenny Sdrenka of Cape Coral, Florida

TEAM CHA is the youth arm of CHA and the Horse Connections Rewards program awards youth that turn in hours of working with horses, taking riding lessons and learning about horses. This year's winner is Jenny Catherine Sdrenka of Cape Coral, Florida

who owns AQHA gelding The Rockin' Doc, or Doc for short. Jenny is 13 years old and in seventh grade and loves to ride hunter pleasure, jump, go bareback, and do everything that is fun to do on horseback! Jenny has been a part of TEAM CHA for two years and is excited to keep being in TEAM CHA until she turns 16 and can attend a clinic to gain her Assistant Riding Instructor certification. Congratulations!

SAVE THE DATE! The 2013 CHA Annual International Conference is set for October 17 – 20, 2013 at The Showplex in Hamburg, New York with Houghton College. It is open to the public and to all horse enthusiasts. The purpose of the Certified Horsemanship Association (CHA) is to promote excellence in safety and education for the benefit of the horse industry. CHA certifies riding instructors, vaulting coaches, barn managers, drivers and trail guides; accredits equestrian facilities; publishes educational equine manuals, produces educational horsemanship DVDs, and hosts regional and international educational conferences that are open to the public. For more information please visit www.CHA-ahse.org or call 859-259-3399. To find a certified horseback riding instructor or accredited equine facility near you visit www.CHAINstructors.com.

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