

Dusty Boots Riding Club
By Penny Nichols/Sally Stowe

NEOHA year-end winners certainly enjoyed the limelight at the 27th annual awards banquet held February 16th. After a year of hard work, this was their time to shine—and shine they did, brightly, with class and flair!

On a decidedly chilly evening, everyone warmed up during social hour. Members and guests enjoyed table-hopping to catch up on the latest with fellow horse show affectionados. Business was brisk for ticket sellers Sue Elliott, Jeanne Oxley, Sandy Borelli and Sally Stowe, as a steady stream of customers purchased 50/50, Chinese auction and instant tickets.

After a warm greeting and the invocation, a buffet dinner was served. Attendees dined on tossed salad, chicken Parmesan, Swiss steak, lasagna, mashed potatoes, green bean almandine, along with bread and rolls. Dessert was a delicious assortment of cookies provided by Kathy Magola of Chili Piaz and Jenny Schuerer of Four Moms and an Oven. It was definitely bon appetite time!

Master of Ceremonies, Roger Downes, took over then to welcome everyone and introduce the Dusty Boots 2008 hierarchy. They are President, Mary McLaughlin; 1st Vice-President, Marnita Loose; 2nd Vice-President and Public Relations Chairperson, Charlotte Downes; Treasurer, Jeanne Oxley; Secretary, Sally Stowe; Point Secretary and Membership Chairperson, Betty Hare; Reporter, Penny Nichols and Website Manager, Gary Somnitz. Directors Betty Hare, Charlotte Downes, Donna Lowe, Lisa Yopp, Jeanne Oxley, Debbie Koffel, Ruth Somnitz, Amy Holderman, Jodi Miller and Alta Kress were acknowledged, as well as Trustees Shirley Lewis, Betty Hare, Jaime Green, Sally Stowe, Connie Downes and Mary McLaughlin.

Immediate past president, Connie Downes, then took center stage to announce her choice for the President's Award. Mary McLaughlin was honored for her help in running the club after Connie became ill. Congratulations Mary—and Connie—Dusty Boots own "Dynamic Duo" in 2007.

Since turnabout is fair play, Connie herself was then honored with a beautiful embroidered Dusty Boots past president jacket and was presented by Sandy Borelli. We all admired your perseverance as 2007 club president, Connie. The jacket looks good and fits great, which now makes you an "Official Dusty Boots Fashionista!"

Although unable to attend, the Jefferson Rotary Club was honored by DBRC with a beautiful plaque marking their decades of sponsoring horse shows. Betty Hare hand delivered the plaque to club president, Don Burkholder, along with our thanks.

Two aspiring students were the beneficiaries of the scholarships offered by DBRC. Sally Stowe presented the Dan Borelli Memorial Scholarship to Dakota Fetty and the Chuck

Lewis Memorial Scholarship to Courtney Yopp. Congratulations to these two deserving winners and continued success with your schooling.

Next up was the Royalty Contest, Chaired once again by Jodi Miller (thank you, Jodi). Contestants made an elegant entrance with their escorts; Jason Somnitz with Mom Ruth; Dakotah Fetty with Mom Jamie; Hailee Pavisich with Dad Danny; and Brittany Lowe with Dad Wes. Contestant, Erin Hanahan, was unable to attend due to a prior commitment at college. She was there in spirit, however, and was named Miss Congeniality by the other contestants. Erin also tied for first in both the interview and horsemanship portions of the yearlong contest. Dakotah Fetty received the highest written test score as well as tying for first in the horsemanship and interview portions. In the finale of the Royalty Contest, Hailee Pavisich (the 2007 winner of the Huba Huba Hondo Award) was named 2nd runner-up, Erin Hanahan earned 1st runner-up and Dakotah Fetty was crowned 2008 DBRC King. Congratulations to Dakotah and all members of the Royalty Court. Dusty Boots is very proud of each one of you. Jodi would like to thank the following sponsors for their contributions to the Royalty Contestants: J.R. Hofstetter, the family jeweler, Jefferson, Ohio; Arcaro's Saddlery, Kingsville, Ohio; Bloomers Florist, Ashtabula, Ohio plus Wes and Donna Lowe, Penny Nichols and Lisa Yopp and family.

Class and Division Winners were announced next. Their stash of prizes came courtesy of the Banquet Awards Committee of Deb Koffel, Betty Hare and Amy Holderman. Thanks, ladies, for another outstanding job. Awarded sharp looking embroidered jackets were the following 2007 Division High Point Winners: WALK-TROT 10 & UNDER with 145 points was Alison Holderman & Phantom Jazzy; NOVICE RIDER WALK-TROT 11 & OVER with 124 points was Zachary Downes & Lotsa Foxx; BEGINNERS with 200 points was Kenna Gribble & Boogie Sparks A Comeback; 15 & UNDER with 197 points was Brittany Lowe & Willy Be Deadly; 16 & OVER with 196 points was Kenna Gribble & Boogie Sparks A Comeback; 30 & OVER with 100 points was Jennifer Richards & Just Call Me Fred; HALTER HORSE with 45 points was Shez Untouchable Too with Renee Campagna. Please see all the 2007 Class Winners listed below in this article.

Emerging as the "Best of the Best" in the NEOHA SuperHorse Competition was Boogie Sparks A Comeback with owner Kenna Gribble. This winning horse and rider combination were awarded a saddle. The Reserve 2007 SuperHorse was Dolls Della Doc proudly owned by Holly Carr. They received a show headstall. Rounding out the Top 5 in this competition was Phantom Jazzy with Alison Holderman, 3rd place; Just Call Me Fred with Jennifer Richards, 4th place and Lotsa Foxx with Zach Downes and Kathryn Kress 5th place. Dusty Boots would like to thank Chairperson, Debbie Koffel and the following SuperHorse sponsors: Schneider's Saddlery, Rome Feed, Lutz Feed, Dave Treehorn, Dean Fence and TDDS.

A round of applause for all our award winners for a job well done in 2007. It won't be too long before it's "Show Time" again!

Wow! Wasn't this year's Chinese Auction the best ever?? We thought so setting it up, but the final \$ figures proved it! For everyone who contributed items—thank you so much. We were overwhelmed by your generosity. Jason “Lucky” Somnitz continued his winning ways picking up the nifty saddle stand donated by Shirley Lewis. Lisa Yopp scored the gallon of Show Sheen from Arcaro's Saddlery. Alta Kress won the \$100.00 gift certificate to Clothes by Maggie (Carrington), so we expect daughter, Kathryn, to continue looking red carpet ready in 2008! Thanks to everyone who participated in the Chinese Auction—not only was it F U N—It was a terrific FUNdraiser too! Thank you all, again.

Judi Ferguson, of Autumn Mist Stables, won a nice chunk of money in the 50/50 raffle. She and husband, Gary, were there to cheer on their grandson, Gage Baker, a lead line year-end winner. Once again, our top 3 finishers in lead line are Avery March, Kyler Smith and Gage Baker were boys, so the “Little Men Lead Line” legacy lives on! Thank you to the Nichols and McLaughlin's for the boys' lead line bags. They enjoyed them so much. We were informed the contents were “almost like Christmas all over again!”

Lucky ladies, Michelle Lazor-Seeley and Jaime Green, won the horse prints of Secretariat and Riva Ridge that were raffled off. Thank you to Judge Alfred Mackey for donating them. The Holderman family donated a corn hole game, which went home with winner, Becki Mencer.

F-8 Imaging was on hand all evening to take those professional photos you'll cherish. We appreciate them being there.

The evening was capped off with some lively dancing by members and guests. Thank you, DJ Jeremy James.

Wasn't that the “Best Damn Banquet Book” ever?? There was, in fact, a lot to like about this year's banquet. We hope those of you, who attended, felt that way too. A special shout out to Lisa Yopp, who has the uncanny ability to know who needs help and when and where, and is always there to pitch in. Ditto to Gary Somnitz, who spends most of his banquet night tirelessly taking the photos that we all enjoy on the club's website www.dustybootsridingclub.com.

There were countless people who helped in countless ways to insure that success of this banquet. As Connie Downes put it, “It truly is a celebration of what we have achieved together”. Saying thank you is easy, as you've all come through again. See you next year!

The Big Dee's Bonus Bucks Program was in action banquet night. Bonus Bucks were used toward the Division Winners' jackets and towards Royalty. Whenever you purchase items from Big Dee's t 9998 St. Rt. 43, Streetsboro, OH, please give our code (DBRC) when checking out. Use the same code when you order toll free at 1-800-321-2142 or fax an order at 330-626-5011. DBRC code works for online orders, too. Visit www.bigdweb.com. DBRC appreciates your participation.

Have you sent your 2008 Dusty Boots membership in yet? Use the membership form found here in the [Corral](#) or contact Betty Hare at betty@dustybootsridingclub.com or 440-992-4531.

Did you pick up your 2008 NEOHA rulebook at the banquet? There's a lot to read up on before show season kicks off. Divisions have been revamped, new classes have been added, old classes have been moved, double point shows have been eliminated and all rules clarified. Check out all the changes ASAP.

Kudos to club Prez, Mary McLaughlin, for sitting down with GPHA and working out a show schedule that is complimentary to both organizations. No more conflicting show dates allows exhibitors to compete at both NEOHA and GPHA shows all season long. Here is the NEOHA show schedule to date:

Sunday, June 15-----Blue Lakes Farm, Newbury, OH
Saturday, June 21-----WPQHA , Harlansburg, PA
Sunday, June 29-----Dusty Boots at Grand Haven Stables, Jefferson, OH
Friday, July 4-----Runnin' Free at Ashtabula Co. Fairgrounds, Jefferson, OH
Sunday, July 13-----Jefferson Rotary at Ash. Co. Fairgrounds, Jefferson, OH
Sunday, July 27-----Ashtabula Co. 4-H at Ash. Co. Fairgrounds, Jefferson, OH
Sunday, August 24-----Pending
Sunday, September 7----Benefit show for Ashtabula Co. Humane Society at Grand Haven Stables, Jefferson, OH
Sunday, September 14---Dusty Boots at Grand Haven Stables, Jefferson, OH

Dusty Boots welcomes the Ashtabula County Humane Society benefit show September 9th to our NEOHA 2008 schedule. Our club was able to take in \$50.00 in donations for them banquet night and we are obviously hoping that this show proves to be a big fundraiser for them.

On a personal note, thank you to everyone who called or sent a card after my Paint mare, Brett, died February 19th. I truly appreciated your words of comfort.

If you're lucky enough to attend it, enjoy Equine Affaire April 10th-13th.

Spring is right around the corner.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 3-----Dusty Boots meeting at 7:30 PM at the Ashtabula Co. Joint Vo-ed School
May 1-----Dusty Boots meeting at 7:30 PM at the Ashtabula Co. Joint Vo-ed School