

Local Program Participates in Handicapped Rider's Event of Devon Horse Show/Horse Awarded Therapeutic Horse of the Year.

On Saturday, May 27, 2007, nine riders and three horses from Ivy Hill Therapeutic Equestrian Center participated in the 28th Annual Handicapped Rider's Event of the Devon Horse Show. The show is held at Thorncroft Therapeutic Inc. in Malvern, PA. Ivy Hill riders participated in dressage, equitation and trail classes. Classes also included jumping, musical kur, driving, lead line and a costume class. Therapeutic programs could also enter their horses to be judged in hopes of winning the prestigious Therapeutic Horse of the Year award. Seventeen therapeutic programs participated in the event. 161 riders and fifty horses competed throughout the day. Thirteen perpetual trophies are awarded for division championships. Judges award points for horses for their performances throughout the day during the rider's events. Scouts also observed the nominated horses throughout the day to see their temperament, behavior, flexibility of riders and all the behind the scenes of a day of showing.

Megan Strychowski, Program Manager for Ivy Hill, was thrilled when she learned one of Ivy Hill's horses had been awarded the Therapeutic Horse of the Year award. "At the end of the show, parents and coaches were gathering awards for their students while announcements were rolling in with results for champions of the day. Thinking about previous years and the horses that have received therapeutic horse of the year I really didn't think any of our horses would get the award. They just didn't seem to fit the bill. But when we heard Blue over the loud speaker we all just stopped and froze. It took a minute until we realized Blue had won the award for Therapeutic Horse of the Year. This is such a great honor. Blue is a very well rounded horse and I guess that's what the judges and the scouts saw. He had three very different riders showing that day. His temperament and his attitude never changed with the constant mounts and dismounts of riders. Blue is a truly special horse and has been able to fit the needs of many Ivy Hill riders of all abilities. We are honored to have him as part of our program."

A total of twenty horses were competing for the award. Judges stated Blue's temperament remained consistent throughout the day – from being unloaded from the trailer in the morning until he was reloaded again at the end of the show. Blue, along with rider Kayla Aughe and Megan Strychowski, accepted his award on Sunday at the Devon Horseshow grounds. Blue's hard work earned him a cooler with Therapeutic Horse of the Year imprinted on it in, appropriately enough, the color blue.

Ivy Hill Therapeutic Equestrian Center offers equine-assisted programs for children and adults with special needs. Ivy Hill is committed to establishing, maintaining and delivering programs to enhance the lives of individuals with physical, social, educational or psychological challenges. Our services include horsemanship and therapeutic riding sessions, Hippotherapy sessions, programs for at-risk youth, camps, clinics, carriage driving, Special Olympics and competitions. Programs are customized to meet the objectives of individuals and organizations. We have an ongoing need for volunteers and various donations. In 2006, Ivy Hill became a North Penn United Way agency. For more information, please visit us at: www.ivyhillequestrian.org.