

September 2017 - Show Report: Menlo Charity Horse Show

Written by photos by Alden Corrigan
Thursday, 31 August 2017 20:58

Perpetual trophies and smiles are highlights of heritage horse show.

photos by Alden Corrigan

The 47th Annual Menlo Charity Horse Show, benefiting the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, closed the books on yet another memorable week of Heritage horse show tradition Aug. 8-13 at the exclusive Menlo Circus Club in the Bay Area's Atherton.



Since its inception in 1970, the Menlo Charity Horse Show has focused its efforts on a legacy of philanthropy. The show's charitable partner Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired has received over \$6 million over the years resulting from the efforts of over 150 volunteers manning this annual event.

The week was filled with nightly events that combined the excitement of a variety of classes showcasing both hunters and jumpers. The social highlight of the week was the Friday night Gala. This year the theme was "Jazz Night!" featuring Grammy-winning vocalist Dianne Schurr with all of the proceeds going to Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Menlo Charity Horse Show was delighted to receive the donation of a new perpetual trophy in celebration of 17-year-old Pure Abundance and his retirement from competitive life. Pure Abundance's owner Hunter Siebel talked about her special horse. "Pure Abundance was my Junior Hunter for six years and his barn name is Piper. He is the cuddliest horse in the barn and he loves when you scratch him. We have had many accomplishments over the years. We have been Champion at Washington National Horse Show, Capital Challenge and Reserve Champion at Devon with a score of 90 to name a few. We were also successful at many

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California Shows. He has just been amazing.” Hunter proudly stated, “An award will be presented to the Large Junior Hunter’s 15-17 Champion in perpetuity at Menlo in memory of his retirement. Piper will come back home with us and enjoy his time with our two older western horses and another couple of retirement horses. He is going to enjoy his time living out in a paddock. We chose Menlo for this moment, as it is our home show and my last show before I go off to Stanford. It is a perfect ending for the two of us.”

In fact, it was Hunter Siebel who received the coveted Widget Perpetual Trophy as the judges awarded her a 92, the highest scoring round of the Junior Hunter and Amateur Owner Hunter divisions aboard her Junior Hunter Boss. Donated by Lindsay Maxwell in honor of her retired horse, Widget, The Widget Perpetual Trophy celebrates Widget’s retirement from competition. The Trophy goes to the highest scoring single round in the Junior Hunter or Amateur Owner Hunter divisions.



“The Lindsay Maxwell Charitable Fund is proud to support the Menlo Charity Horse Show,” said Lindsay Maxwell. “The Menlo Charity Horse Show is one of the highlights of the West Coast equestrian schedule, and is a wonderful example of partnership between the local community, a world-class equestrian event, and its charitable partners.”

The Lindsay Maxwell Charitable Fund is a private, charitable fund. It accepts grant proposals for the benefit of charitable, educational, or scientific purposes, exclusively from tax-exempt, charitable organizations. The issues where the Fund focuses its resources reflect Lindsay’s personal priorities and values: improving the lives of children with special needs; enabling

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access opportunities to education; and providing care, compassion, and protection to animals.

Reflecting on the 2017 show Phil DeVita explained, “At the core of Menlo Charity Horse Show is the volunteer system, the board and all the people involved with the horse show all year long. They are all constantly organizing, arranging and doing things and planning, working on sponsorship and getting everything organized. Menlo Charity Horse Show is a well-oiled machine.

“Menlo Circus Club is the absolute perfect setting; it is so beautiful here with the Clubhouse, the grounds, the food, friendliness of staff and the way everyone who comes here is treated is amazing. The hospitality is second to none.

“It was a fantastic week highlighted by both a great Grand Prix, great USHJA International Hunter Derby. You surround yourself with great people it just sort of works itself and that are sort of what has happened and I could not be happier.”

As the horses are being loaded, and people are saying their goodbyes, the Menlo Charity Horse Show committee members are hard at work painstakingly packing up everything from the Mountain Home Stables Sponsor Tent to three rings of jumps for the 48th annual event Aug. 7-12, 2018. To say this venerable and iconic event is a labor of love is an understatement. But beyond the physical beauty of the charity horse show is the almost indescribable way that lifelong relationships are formed. Menlo is not merely a horse show, it's where memories are made and friends from all over the country reunite each year, all in the name of charity and the love of horses.

Press release provided by the MCHS.