

# Raider News

## St. George's Equestrians: 4H brings equestrian arts to Freeman

By Isabelle Ebert  
Raider News Editor

Do you know what a 4H group is? Well, 4H stands for health, hands, heart, and head. Freeman's St. Georges Equestrians group is an example of a community 4H group.

The main goal of an equestrian 4H group is to have as much fun with horses in the safest way possible. There are different events that members can enroll in,

even if they don't have a horse! For example, they have different clinics about horses where students can learn about horses, as well as different games that 4H groups compete in.

Third grader Scyla Dowd doesn't have a usable horse to ride, so she enrolled in several different horseless events.

"The two horses I have still need training, but I still do many different activities about horses, just without a horse,"

Dowd explained. "I did an impromptu and I am also doing horse bowl and the Horses for Beginners Day."

At the impromptu, Dowd had to write a report on a certain topic.

Horse bowl is basically trivia on horses, and the Horse for Beginners Day is a day to learn about the care and needs of horses.

"My favorite part so far would have to be learning tips on how to train horses," explained Dowd. "And I really liked learning about dressage! I would really like to continue learning dressage, and another goal of mine would have to be to eventually ride in shows."

A 4H group's meetings will usually involve a mini-game that will involve horses, or maybe a piece of information that someone learned.

"We are enthusiastic in the pursuit of the knowledge of horses and we accomplish this in fun and creative ways," said 4H Vice-President, junior Kristin Talbott.

Usually, a 4H group has a trainer to look to when they go to shows, or in some trivia games, they may need a coach. The current trainer for the St. George's Equestrians is Niki Marshall. She replaces St. George's previous trainer

Shannon Moore, who moved out of the area.

"We didn't have a whole lot of participation in shows," said Moore, the group trainer. "I'm looking forward to having a little more fun this year in shows!"

This year, the group has 28 kids under the age of 18. This is a step-up from last year, when they didn't have as many participants.

"Many of my students that I give horseback riding lessons to have joined 4H," explained Moore. "They have advanced and are continuing to learn more every time they do an event."

If you are considering joining a 4H equestrian group, it is recommended that you have a horse, but, again, you don't need one to compete in horseless event. A 4H group is a great way to make new friends, learn new things, and encourage the love of horses.



Photo courtesy of Shannon Moore

4H shows can be hectic, but still very fun!

## Between Shades of Gray sheds light on the forgotten Lithuanians

By Ali Tesch  
Raider News Editor

Between Shades of Gray is a fascinating novel that keeps you entertained from beginning to end. Throughout the novel, as Lina Vilkas struggles to survive, she learns and tests the bonds of love and she finds the true meaning of Krasivaya.

"Krasivaya... It means beautiful, but with strength," he slurred. "Unique." This quote describes Lina Vilkas perfectly. Lina is a beautiful teenage girl whose childhood was taken away from her in a single night.

During WW2, the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic States, including Lithuania. On June 14, Lina and her family were taken from their home because they were considered Anti-Soviet. Lina's dreams came crashing down instantly. During this time, Lina and her family are sent to a work camp in Siberia and are forced to work in brutal conditions. They were treated like animals instead of humans.

While working at the camp, Lina falls in love with Andrius. Together, they endure the horrific experiences of Siberia work camp. Then Lina and Andrius are separated and they are forced to face the challenges of WW2 alone.

Lina was an outspoken girl that loves her country. She was also a talented artist which helps her survive during WW2. In the beginning, she was the average teenage girl. She had

hopes and dreams, but when she was sent to the labor camp, she was forced to cope quickly. Throughout the novel, Lina matured immensely.

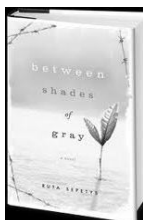
This gripping novel is amazing; it shows how strong the bonds love and faiths are during times of trial. *Between Shades of Gray* is a historical-fiction novel based on what happened to the Baltic States during WW2.

Author Ruta E. Sepetys' father was the son of a Lithuanian military officer. He escaped with his parents during the time the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic States. Sepetys felt obligated to write this book because most people have forgotten what the Lithuanians endured. She doesn't want people to forget how these tiny nations taught us that love reveals the true nature of the human spirit. It took two trips to Lithuania to gain enough research to write this book. All she asks is that you please won't forget what happened to the Baltic States.

Sepetys did a wonderful job handling the subject. Sepetys reveals the horrific experiences these people endured. Her writing is very detailed. By the end of the novel, you feel as if you knew the characters.

I would recommend this book for ages 13 and up because it's somewhat ghastly. Remember what these people had to endure and please read this book for them.

"Love is the most powerful army. Whether love of a country, love of a friend, love of god, or even love of an enemy," writes Ruta Sepetys.



## Leadership class raises money for the Shriner's Children's Hospital

By Jim Phinney  
Middle School Teacher

Jim Phinney's second and third quarter leadership class made \$416.00 through their heart grams sale, which will be presented to the Shriner's Children's Hospital on March 2. An estimated 2200 heart grams, complete with a Hershey's kiss were delivered district wide.

The second quarter class voted on where the proceeds should go and made the first 1000 heart grams, including a giant heart signed by anyone buying 4 or more heart grams. The third quarter class made the remaining 1200 heart grams as well as selling and delivering all 2200.

On behalf of the second and third quarter's leadership class, Mr. Phinney would like to thank everyone who bought and sent a heart gram to their friends and relatives. We're looking forward to breaking this year's total next year.



Courtesy of Denise Briggs

Second and third quarter leadership class made 2200 heart grams and distributed them district wide.



## Poindexter offers the unusual: a mini classroom zoo

By Isabelle Ebert  
Raider News Editor

Mrs. Poindexter is the science teacher in the middle school downstairs in room 28. So, what makes her class and the classroom so unique? The animals in it, of course!

In the classroom, she has stick bugs, hissing cockroaches, over 1,000 worms, crickets, a spider, a bearded dragon lizard, two tortoises, and three frogs. The crickets and worms are used to feed the spider and the lizard, but the rest of the animals roam freely in their own cages. Some students are frightened by Mo (the spider) or some of the bugs, but some are not.



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

Makenzie Dutt shows off her skills with Spike the lizard.



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

One of the tortoises gets ready to come out to play.

Makenzie Dutt, a seventh grader, is extremely fond of Spike, the lizard.

"Spike is my favorite of Mrs. Poindexter's animals," said Dutt. "Mo kind of scares me, but I really like holding Spike!"

Dutt holds Spike the most out of any seventh grader. She is one of the best students at handling him.

While most seventh graders have Spike as their favorite animals, another favorite is the hissing cockroaches.

"Students, the boys especially, like to let the cockroaches run up and down their arms," explained Poindexter. "The cockroaches are pretty friendly toward them."

When asked for an estimate of about how many students are scared of the spider, Mrs. Poindexter guessed about 80% of the seventh and eighth students. If you ask around,



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

Mrs. Poindexter has a great bond with the lizard, Spike.

you will probably find that this is true.

"I really love Spike, but Mo creeps me out!" said seventh grader Morgan Stokoe. "I also really like the frogs and the tortoises."

Even though most students don't like Mo, to some, Mo is fun to watch. Mo is shy, but friendly. Her hairs, however, can cause irritation to people.

"I don't usually have irritation, but certain people are more sensitive than others," said Poindexter.

Mrs. Poindexter made a note that she loves to talk about her animals, and loves it even more when peo-



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

Poindexter's stick bugs can be found hanging all over the objects in their cage.

ple come to visit her animals.

"We now have baby crickets in Mo's cage, the eggs that were in there just hatched!" Mrs. Poindexter exclaimed.

Even if you don't like spiders or bugs, you still may like Spike or the tortoises!

"Not only do I like it when students visit, but the animals seem to like the quiet visits they get every day," Poindexter added.



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

The science room's back corner is full of plants and animals!



Photo by Isabelle Ebert

Mo the spider burrows into one of her hiding places in the terrarium.