

RIDER FEATURE: *Scarlet Jasperson* & Preacher Man

Photos & Story by Michelle Oshins



It always makes me happy to see a child who is given much give back to those less fortunate. A prime example of this is 9 year-old Scarlet Jasperson. Since she could walk, Scarlet has been able to step out of her back door to a barn full of horses at her mother's training facility, Facet 58 Farm. Scarlet pretty much hopped on, got her first pony to go and hasn't stopped since! When she isn't filling her time with Hunter- Jumper Horse Shows, Combined Training Events, Dressage Shows, Trail Trials, Gymkhanas, Pony Club, Parades and Jr. Rodeos, Scarlet gives her time to the local organizations, *Horses for Heroes* and *Horses, Horses, Horses*.

Horses, Horses, Horses is an organization that provides the opportunity for youths who have faced hurdles in life to work with equines. Las Vegas' Regional Housing Authority selects ten very special young people to participate in the program which includes a semester of groundwork, riding, in-hand training and obstacle courses.

We can't tell the story of Scarlet without telling the story of her horse, Preacher Man. Preacher was discovered at a rodeo by a family friend. His original job was as a rope horse, which did not suit him due to some communication and trust issues with his owner. Initially, Preacher was purchased by Kurt, Scarlet's father, and he started a new life off as a pick-up horse. Pick-up horses are the mounts who save the fearless cowboys who have been thrown off bucking-broncos and bulls at rodeos. Preacher thrived at his new job and found a better life with Kurt. Scarlet, at the age of six, accidentally got on Preacher when her pony was acting up. Scarlet fearlessly cantered off on Preacher when no one else but Kurt could even mount him. There were a few mouths hanging open that day. Scarlet persevered to earn Preacher's trust on the ground, as it was still very difficult to catch, saddle or bridle the untrusting mount because of his years of mistreatment. Through treats, patience and love, Scarlet taught Preacher to come to her and accept his tack. At that point, what choice did Kurt have but to give Preacher to Scarlet? She had earned it!

Look out for Scarlet to be competing in local events in both the English and Western communities. You will also see Scarlet helping with the next semester of *Horses, Horses, Horses* and teaching a new group of kids to gain life skills through horsemanship. To find out more about *Horses, Horses, Horses* contact Janice Penney at 371-5977.

To nominate a special equestrian for Rider Feature, send your request to michelle@snvequestrian.com.