



Summer 2006

*Kent Special
Riding Program*

A Tribute to Dude



Dude is a 29 year old quarter horse belonging to the Schumacher family, who own the property where KSRP is located. His registered name is *Hey Flashy Dude*. He was born here on the Schumacher's farm in 1977 to his mother, *My Bonnie Gene*. Dude had a half brother, *Joker (Joker is Trouble)* and a full sister, *Dolly (Hey Flashy Doll)*. All three of Bonnie's offspring were used as therapeutic horses in the Kent Special Riding Program.

Dude was trained by Bill Schumacher, and was so quiet that he started being used in the program when he was only 2 years old. He was used by KSRP consistently until he retired in 1995, then returned to occasional program use until last summer.

Throughout his life, Dude has seen and done it all. He's been to the 4-H fair countless times, being shown by both Deb Schumacher and her sister Sue. From 1991-1998, KSRP had a group of special-needs 4-H riders called *Stablemates*. The riders in *Stablemates* also showed Dude at fair and at various horse shows. Dude's quiet personality and versatility led to his use in English and Western classes, as well as vaulting. He placed in many different classes, and one year won the high point trail trophy.

Every Fall, KSRP sponsors a Ride-a-Thon as its major fundraiser. Besides participating in KSRP and going to shows and fair, Dude has attended almost every single Ride-a-Thon until last year.

One year, on Superbowl Sunday, Dude was out in the pasture and became stuck in the mud! The Schumachers had to call for help, and ended up putting stall guards under him and dragging him out with a truck! Luckily, Dude suffered no permanent injuries from his adventure, but that swampy area of the pasture is now fenced off.

Dude developed a problem with his feet called “Navicular.” At first, he was able to manage well with special shoes, but more recently he began stumbling more. Dude is now retired from program classes, fair, and Ride-a-Thons, but Deb still rides him a bit around the property. Next time you’re at the program, look in the main herd for a dark brown horse with a white blaze and four white socks. He’ll probably be doing his favorite activity – taking a well-deserved nap!



Open House a Success!

On Saturday, July 8th KSRP had an Open House at the barn to celebrate our 30th year of operations. Many people stopped by to learn about the program, meet the students, instructors, volunteers, and



horses and watch program classes. Several of the visitors were former volunteers or previous owners of program horses. It was a beautiful day and a fun time was had by all!



Kent County 4-H Council
775 Ball NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

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Permit #279

2006 KSRP Schedule:

Volunteer training: September 11
Fall Session: September 18 – October 28
28th Annual Ride-A-Thon: September 30



Phone Numbers:

Program Director:
Lynn Schumacher (616) 891-8066

Volunteer Coordinator:
Connie Van Belkum (616) 891-8243

Barn Phone: (616) 891-0057

Looking for Volunteers!

Volunteers participate as horse leaders or side walkers. Time commitment is 2-3 hours, once a week for 6 weeks. The next Volunteer Training session will be **September 11** at 7:00 pm at the barn. The training session and experience with horses are helpful, but not required in order to volunteer. If you are interested in helping out, please call Connie at 891-8243.