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LOCAL NEWS

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Von Bidder finds her niche in Aiken

By BEN BAUGH
Staff writer

The Golden Apple served as the ideal place for Stephanie von Bidder to develop her skills as a horsewoman. The native of Yonkers, N.Y., has been riding horses since early childhood. Her Aiken-based Daybreak Farm specializes in a locally active training and showing program.

Von Bidder was working with several of her students, junior and adult hunter/jumper riders at the Aiken Spring Classic Horse Shows at the Aiken Horse Park at Ford Conger Field.

She realized at a young age she wanted to devote her time to the equine industry, and would put in countless hours into a world that has its share of adversity and pitfalls.

"I rode a lot of young horses that came off the racetrack while I was growing up," said von Bidder. "I've been fortunate to be able to incorporate that experience with young horses into my business. I'm still working with a lot of young horses. I've been able to take a number of horses from other disciplines and make the transition with them to the horse show world."

Von Bidder showed horses in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut during her high school years, and after college, moved to Atlanta before shifting her tack to Aiken.

"I love Aiken, I'm here to



Staff photo by Ben Baugh

Daybreak Farm's Stephanie von Bidder and Lilly at the Aiken Horse Park at Ford Conger Field.

stay," said von Bidder, who has been in Aiken for almost five years, but has been operating Daybreak Farm for the past six months.

Daybreak Farm offers a number of services, including boarding, training, showing and consigning horses, said von

Bidder. And although the horse trainer places a great deal of emphasis on the horse, she also understands the importance of working with people.

"I work very closely with my clients," said von Bidder. "I try to make my clients happy and confident. It's very

rewarding for me to see the horses and riders come together. I'm very fortunate to have great clients, and that my clients are like my family. Everyone gets along. It's nice to be able to find my niche here. I'm looking forward to the future."



Staff photo by Rob Novit

East Aiken Elementary School physical education teacher Kathy Linton, left, music teacher Renee Owens, center, and visual arts teacher Carrie Power are strong supporters of arts integration.

East Aiken students celebrate their creativity

By ROB NOVIT
Senior writer

At an assembly program focusing on the character trait "creativity" recently, East Aiken Elementary School students displayed their artwork, danced enthusiastically and demonstrated their surprisingly capable vocal skills.

The program featured a behind the scenes collaboration between teachers Kathy Linton (physical education), Carrie Power (visual arts) and Renee Owens (music).

All are strong proponents of arts integration, not just within their own class, but as a supplement to regular classroom instruction. The concept has been around for years, said Power, but remains new to a lot of people. She calls it a multiple-intelligence way of teaching.

Power has taught at East Aiken for 16 years. When Linton arrived, she introduced creative movement in her classes and soon established the monthly "character" assemblies. She also worked on schoolwide programs, anything from "adopting" wolves from Yellowstone Park, participating in Make a Difference Day and walking at school for various charities.

"When Renee came, it was a nice mesh for us," Power said. "She is so wonderful with the chorus, pulling the talent out of her children in the performances."

The teachers developed a strategic arts plan that provides a common vision. Power also wrote a grant through the State Department of Education that has funded a number of guest artists in residence the past two years.

Teachers have long integrated the arts, but are now doing it more formally, said Owens.

"Look at the ABCs," she said, "All of us learned them by singing. The kids here are so proud of what they do in the arts."

Body movement can help kids learn letters and numbers. When they learn to shoot a basketball or a soccer goal at the goal, they learn about angles, said Linton.

"It can lead them through the critical thinking process," she said.

Principal Mary Robinson said the three teachers work together seamlessly in creating exciting productions and in promoting arts integration.

"We can teach reading, math, science and social studies using the arts," Robinson said. "Children learn better when they use all their difference sense. They can sing math songs and learn and social studies concepts when they draw."

A 14-year teaching veteran, Kim Herring is completing her first year at East Aiken. But the second-grade teacher was familiar with the arts activities of Power, Owens and Linton through her daughter Rachel, now a fifth-grader at the school.

She tries to incorporate the



Staff photo by Rob Novit

Carly Baughman, an East Aiken Elementary School kindergarten student, displays a character aspect of creativity during an assembly program.

arts into some of her lessons every week.

"It makes the children more interested in what they're learning," said Herring. "We did a big cooperative learning program with the fifth-graders. The kids took the lyrics from a song and illustrated the words. They had a really good time, and such interaction decreases the amount of behavior problems from the kids who have those issues."

When children see their completed artwork up in her room or around the school, said Power, it validates them. There's also

an important social aspect. Children learn how to be an audience during an assembly. Many kids in Linton's classes were unwilling to dance; now they even make up their own dances. When she started the character assemblies, she and other teachers dressed in wacky costumes and did the skits themselves.

"This year I've hardly been on stage," Linton said. "The kids do it all. And Renee has brought the music room alive too."

Contact Rob Novit at rnovit@aikenstandard.com.

Council to examine ambulance service

By BEN BAUGH
Staff writer

Aiken County Council will be holding its regular meeting tomorrow night at 7 p.m., at the Council Chambers.

There will be three public hearings tomorrow night, including a proposed ordinance to amend the fee structure for ambulance services to conform to the new federal medicare billing regulations and a proposed ordinance to amend the County code of ordinances to clarify when a permit is required for the cremation of a body and a request for a zoning change at 845 Huntsman Drive in Council District 6.

The regular consent agenda features a number of items, including the proposed resolution to authorize the central procurement division to purchase Department of Motor Vehicle software from CSRA Computer Service; a proposed resolution to authorize the purchase of new and

upgraded software from HTE for the finance department and the public works/engineering department, a proposed resolution to authorize the purchase of flat screen computer monitors for the finance department using a credit rebate from the Quill Company; a proposed resolution to authorize the Council Chairman to execute a renewal lease with the Audubon Society for the Jackson Boat Landing Property; a proposed resolution to authorize the Council Chairman to enter into an agreement with T.B. Bulldozing, Inc., for Union Hill Road, Snipes Road and Stono Court Road paving.

A proposed resolution proclaiming April 16 through April 22, as "Protecting Our Communities" week, and County Council will also recognize the Fireman Association, the Fire Chief Association, Emergency Services, and the Sheriff's Office for County Government Week.

The Aiken County Council Chambers are located at 736 Richland Avenue.

Ball players dial into HELP LINE challenge

Submitted article

A total of 12 teams and 72 players recently played in the first "HELP LINE Hoops Challenge — a series of benefit basketball games to benefit HELP LINE of Aiken County.

The event was sponsored by the Aiken Sunrise Rotary Club. The games were played at USC Aiken and Aiken Technical College.

The Tigers of the Aiken Area Council on Aging captured the women's division title, while the men's champions were the "Aching Back" with players from as far away as Columbia.

They edged the Shaw Industry Thoroughbreds by two points in the finals.

In the co-ed open division, the "Hoosiers" knocked off the "JAAMS."

The Tigers wound up playing a "grudge" match against their male counterparts from the Council on Aging, the "Panthers." The Panthers came out on top, but laughter was the key ingredient. The men and women exchanged a lot of trash talk, and both sides had personal cheering squads

For pictures, see Focus on You

of family, office pals and children.

Charlie Staffa often wears colorful hats to his office, so in his honor, his wife Gail wore Mickey Mouse ears. Bob Marchese sported a beanie with a propeller on top, and Jill Marchese brought her own sparkly butterflies mounted on wings.

Carol Covell last touched a basketball in 1958, while teammate Ethel Walker played for Schofield High School in 1966.

Sunrise Rotary President Jacqui Workman and Doug Wilhelm, the event coordinator for the club, were pleased with the benefit tournament.

"Our support of this event to benefit Aiken County HELP LINE provided our club with the opportunity to put into action Rotary International's founding tenet of 'Service Above Self' at the local level," Workman said. "We have a very successful inaugural event and have every confidence that it can grow into a larger and larger annual event."

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