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Friendship more than just horsing around



Lindsey Jung, right, explains horse care to Little Sister Willow Market at the Shelby County Fair. Terry Pellman/Staff Photo

By Terry Pellman
Staff Writer

JACKSON CENTER - Working with and enjoying horses is nothing new to Lindsey Jung.

The 2008 graduate of Jackson Center High School grew up in a family that was enthusiastic about animals.

"I've been showing (horses) since I was 4," she said. "I was raised with them."

She said she has ridden horses since she was born. The family has always had everything from horses to a mule to guinea pigs, she said.

Now Jung's love for horses has been passed along to a young friend she met three years ago through the Big Buddies program at Jackson Center School. That was where she met Willow Market, now age 10, and the daughter of Randy and Charity Market of Jackson Center.

Jung found herself assisting Market with some various aspects of school life such as gym class and homework, and the two formed a bond that they wanted to continue after Jung graduated. Jung contacted the Big Brothers Big Sisters program, and the two were enrolled as an instant "match."

While the pair does the shopping and movie watching one would expect, their activity together centers around the care of and enjoyment of the graceful animals.

Jung said such mentoring relationships assist youngsters in building friendships.

For Market, it also has provided her with the opportunity to build confidence, as she initially found riding a horse was intimidating.

Market began learning to ride in November. She visits Jung twice a week to practice riding and take

part in feeding and care of the horse.

"Once she showed me a horse and taught me how to pet it, I really liked that," Market said. "The first day, I actually fell in love with the horse."

That reaction was not what she expected.

"I was shocked, but it was pretty fun," she said. "I was kind of scared."

Jung said Pebbles, the horse they are working with at the Shelby County Fair, is a gentle steed. She said that is partially due to the fact that Pebbles is 25 years old and was Jung's sister's show horse.

Jung said her family has 14 horses. Market said she knows the names of all.

Caring for a horse is work that results in having fun, Market said.

"I'm actually happy, because there's work and there's play," she said.

She helps to clean out stalls and with giving Pebbles a bath. Asked how the bathing of a horse is conducted, Market said, "Hose them ... then there's this magical soap," followed by rinsing and brushing to dry the animal.

Both said like other horses, Pebbles will have "mad" moods, sometimes due to the weather. One telltale sign of an equine bad mood is the position of the ears. They pointed to a picture taken of them with the horse on such a day, and said carrots can be used as a treat to reward a cooperative horse.

Both plan to work with horses the rest of their lives. Jung enrolled Market in the Trailriders 4-H club, the same one in which she had participated in her youth. The advisers for the club are Kathy Koppen, Rob Woodell and Jenny Woodell. Jung hopes to become a 4-H adviser and describes caring for horses as, "A lot of work, but it pays off." The busy Jung also works in modeling and sales of Mary Kay cosmetics. She resides in Anna.

Market is both eager for and anxious about her upcoming times in the show ring to come later in the fair week. She and Pebbles will do a walking program, musical freestyle, walk-trot, showmanship and fun show.*

Market has found the preparation to be somewhat hectic and pressurized. She has found she most enjoys the "showmanship" aspect. Like Jung, she loves animals in general. She plans to show both a horse and a dog at next year's fair.

* *Willow Market, 10, of Jackson Center, won champion musical free style first year and first place walk trot.*

