Otterbein Equine Update

December 2007

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Freshman Equine Majors with their grooming projects.

Otterbein Welcomes Sheri Birmingham, DVM

Sheri (West) Birmingham, DVM, is a graduate of The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine and received her bachelor of science degree in Pre-Vet/Equine Science from Otterbein College. Prior to joining the faculty at Otterbein as assistant professor of Equine Science, she practiced veterinary medicine at an equine and small animal clinic. Her course offerings include Equine Anatomy and Physiology, Equine Nutrition, Forage Analysis, and Equine Care and Health Management.

Dr. Birmingham has a strong equine background, which began in her youth as a member of the United States Pony Club and continued at Otterbein, where she was a member of the equestrian team. While at OSU she was involved in equine elective courses, equine research and interned at various prestigious equine clinics such as San Luis Rey Equine Hospital, Alamo Pintado Equine Medical Center, Peninsula Equine Center, and Morris Equine Associates, Inc.

She is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Association, American Association of Equine Practitioners, Ohio Veterinary Medical Association, and is an active, licensed practitioner. By providing relief work at several veterinary offices, collaborating with outside veterinarians on research projects, and attending national veterinary conferences, Dr. Birmingham continues her education in equine science.

In her spare time, Sheri enjoys riding her horses and spending time with her husband, Bradd, her family, and her dog, Penny Lane.

Happy Holidays
I was very fortunate in being able to spend my winter quarter 2007 sabbatical leave at San Luis Rey Equine Hospital just north of San Diego. This excellent equine referral hospital serves California as well as several surrounding states. I saw many breeds represented, including several of the Budweiser Clydesdales, Tennessee Walkers, Quarter Horses, and some of the most valuable Thoroughbreds in the area. No matter what the dollar value was, all received the same attention and care. The practice is headed by six board-certified veterinarians, several graduate veterinarians fulfilling one year of internship, and many very talented registered veterinary technicians. The ICU provides 24 hour veterinary care. There is an isolation barn, a secluded orthopedics barn, a high speed treadmill for evaluation of poor performance, a diagnostic imaging center (includes digital normal/contrast radiography, CT scan and nuclear scintigraphy), an on-site lab, and a full service pharmacy. The hospital is known for its expertise in neurological disease, and the veterinarians routinely perform many orthopedic, soft tissue, and emergency colic surgeries.

I attended morning rounds, during which patient progress was reported, medication given, and discussion of the need for additional diagnostic testing and/or the revision of medication protocols elaborated. The general approach was the traditional SOAP: Subjective (bright, alert, depressed, etc.); Objective (temperature, pulse, respiration, capillary refill time, intestinal auscultation findings, etc.); Assessment (differential diagnoses, progress or regression, etc.); and Plan (additional diagnostic tests, medication/treatment changes, etc.). Remember that?

An absolutely darling 2-year-old donkey Lil Bud (rescue case) was diagnosed with a bladder stone, unusual at that age. Ultrasonography of the urinary tract revealed not only the stone but the absence of the right kidney! That is unusual, and could that have been partially responsible for the stone? The stone was removed surgically, and Lil Bud’s renal function was monitored for a few days until he was released back to his owners.

Although I found surgical procedures absolutely fascinating to watch, and they provided great photo opportunities, medical cases always seemed be the most challenging! The latter required ongoing investigations, much like a murder mystery. Diagnostic testing and response to treatments provided clues that led to tweaking of the treatments, further diagnostics, and a new set of questions to answer.

Secondary to oxygen deprivation during birth, this foal (below) arrived with his dam at 12 hours of age, seizuring and unable to stand or nurse. This condition, referred to as Hypoxic Ischemic Encephalopathy (HIE), made it necessary to provide 24/7 hands-on monitoring, mostly provided by volunteers working in 4 hour shifts. Because he would struggle to stand, even though weakness and incoordination made it impossible, we had to be ready to restrain him from making these futile attempts. We kept him on his heating pads, kept his IV fluid line, oxygen line, and nasogastric feeding tube untangled and in place, and made sure he was always clean and dry. He quickly learned that assisted standing meant it was time to urinate, after which he was happy to return to and flop back down on his heated bed. We were thrilled when he was finally able to drink milk replacer out of a bowl, and the NG tube could be removed.

It was such a wonderful and refreshing experience, and provided me with plenty of new information and photo journals to share with students.
New Equine Assisted Therapy Class Offers Roadmap

A little over a year ago, Holly Baker Jedlicka ’97, and a board of local equine enthusiasts, started a new organization called PBJ Connections, Inc. which was incorporated with the mission of offering equine assisted therapy services to at-risk youth and families from the Greater Columbus Area. In June, sessions commenced at the Otterbein College Equine Science Facility with a Pilot Program that offered two groups and several individual sessions throughout a six week time period. This successful program led to ongoing programming including individual, family, and group sessions that continue to serve clients who may benefit from the power of equine assisted therapy. Many of these sessions are offered at the Otterbein Equine Facility. As the field of animal assisted therapy grows, Otterbein hopes to offer a degree related to Equine Assisted Therapy in the future. This spring, Holly will be offering an introduction to this exciting new field of study. Below are her thoughts on this new adventure.

By Holly Jedlicka MSW, LSW

When I was approached about teaching a class covering equine assisted therapy this spring quarter I was thrilled. There are several reasons why I feel so strongly about offering this class and so excited about being the one to teach it.

I have taken a long journey to get where I am today, which is in the position of program director and co-founder of PBJ Connections, Inc., an equine assisted therapy program for at-risk youth. My journey began way back when I was sixteen years old and knew that I wanted to somehow give other kids the chance to experience horses, since they were such a powerful part of my life. Since then, I have driven down a very curvy career path. I would like for others to have a slightly straighter road.

I see students now facing the same struggles about how to turn their love of horses into a fulfilling career. The problem in the field of equine assisted therapy is that there is no “career path.” I hope to offer a token of insight into this road less traveled so that the future equine assisted therapy facilitators will have some sort of roadmap.

The other issue in the field is that there is very little empirical research. Those of us who are doing this work or those who have experienced the power of horses know that it works. Very few are explaining to the academic and professional population why and how it works. Creating an avenue of education and promoting research opportunities to the student population is extremely important to the professionalism of this field.

Lastly, many students are already looking for experiences in equine assisted therapy. This class will offer them the opportunity to ask questions, get answers, and even experience hands-on some of the methods and theories behind equine assisted therapy. Hopefully, at the end of this three credit-hour course, students will feel like they have a clearer idea of how to get from the dream to the reality, or even if the idea suits them at all.

www.pbjconnections.org

Watson Fondly Remembered

This past May we lost one of our most beloved and talented school horses to colic. Watson was 17 years old, and with us for two years. His donor, Carla Conkey, visited him regularly and was with him when he passed on at The Ohio State University Veterinary Hospital. Watson lived in the first stall at the barn and always happily greeted our visitors and students when they walked in. He will be sadly missed but fondly remembered.
Otterbein Equestrian Team Seniors

**Name:** Jess Forsyth  
**Hometown:** Springfield, Ohio  
**Major:** Equine Facility Management and Equine Administration  
**Offices Held/Years on the team:** Hunt Seat - 4 years; Dressage - 2 years  
**Best or Funniest IHSA experience:** The funniest IHSA experience was when all the teams got together at the Miami horse show to do the Soulja Boy dance. “SUPERMAN!!”

**Worst draw or worst ride at an IHSA event:** Although he wasn’t a bad draw, I rode Rocky (from Otterbein) three times in shows even though I had never ridden him in a lesson. That’s what I call ironic.

**Something you have learned or gained through IHSA:** IHSA was a great opportunity to make friends. I learned so much just from being on the teams. I met many of my closest friends at shows.

**Why someone would want to participate on the IHSA team at Otterbein:** The teams give you a great opportunity to challenge yourself and have a lot of fun!

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**Name:** Katie Borden  
**Hometown:** Columbus, Ohio  
**Major:** Equine Facility Management  
**Offices Held / Years on the team:** Hunt Seat - 4 years on team; vice president junior year, president senior year  
**Best or Funniest IHSA experience:** I drew my old horse for jumping both days at the Miami Show this year!

**Worst draw or worst ride at an IHSA event:** I drew my own horse at our home show and he threw me off into a mud puddle.

**Something you have learned or gained through IHSA:** No matter who your draw is or how nervous you are you have to be able to make the best of the situation.

**Why someone would want to participate on the IHSA team at Otterbein:** The team is smaller so most people get to show, and we have some of the nicest horses I’ve ever been able to ride.

**Plans after graduation:** Get a job and hopefully still have some time to show my young horse.  
**Something interesting or funny:** We went to walk the course at a show, and I ducked under the fence to the arena, tripped in the dirt, and fell flat on my face (in my show clothes and with my helmet on) in front of a ton of people. It must have been lucky though, because I won both my classes and was High Point Rider that day.

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**Name:** Heather Marshall  
**Hometown:** Lewis Center, Ohio  
**Major:** Equine Business and Facility Management  
**Offices held / Years on the team:** Hunt Seat 3 years  
**Best or Funniest IHSA experience:** At Miami when everyone started doing the Soulja Boy while it was being played over the loud speakers.

**Worst draw or worst ride at an IHSA event:** I drew my own horse at our home show and he threw me off into a mud puddle.

**Something you have learned or gained through IHSA:** No matter who your draw is or how nervous you are you have to be able to make the best of the situation.

**Why someone would want to participate on the IHSA team at Otterbein:** Being on the team has helped me build friendships as well as improving my riding and giving me loads of new experiences and knowledge.

**Plans after graduation:** I think I would like to move south, maybe North Carolina, and get a job managing a stable.  
**Something funny or interesting:** Make sure that your clothes fit before the morning of the horse show.

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**Name:** Kate Ryman  
**Hometown:** Belvidere, Illinois  
**Major/minor:** Equine Science Health Technology  
**Offices held / years on the team:** Dressage Team— 3 years; Event Team- 4 years (2 years as president)  
**Best or Funniest IDA or Event experience IDA:** Winning at the OC show on Ponder and pointing up!  
**Event Team:** Completing my first preliminary at Flying Cross with Rudy!

**Worst draw or worst ride at an IDA event:** Scout, the bucking bronco at Findlay

**Something you have learned or gained through IDA:** Dressage isn't so bad......
Why someone would want to participate on the IDA team at Otterbein: Because we do all kinds of fun things as a team, like going skiing or to a haunted house and it’s a great time to get to know other students who aren’t necessarily in your major or year.

Plans after graduation: Being a veterinary technician at an all equine facility

Anything else interesting or funny: Dressage team quote: “Filter!”

Name: Emily Shafer
Hometown: Fairport, NY
Major/Minor: Equine Facility Management, English Creative Writing
Offices held / years on the team: 4 years on hunt seat and dressage teams, 3 years on eventing team; current president of dressage team
Best or funniest IDA or Event experience IDA: Miami University’s horse show this past fall!
Worst draw or worst ride at an IDA event: Getting thrown off of Gozer in schooling at the University of Findlay!
Something you have learned or gained through IDA: You get what you’re given, so make the best of it.

Why someone would want to participate on the IDA team at Otterbein: It’s a great and unique experience...and no one does it like us

Plans after graduation: No idea so far...just to find a job I like and not live in a cardboard box!

Alumni Update

Name: Kimberly Snider
What year did you graduate from Otterbein College? 2001
What was your major? Equine Health Technology
What was your first job after graduation? Equine Surgery Technician at The OSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital.
What are you doing now? In the summer of 2003 I transferred over to the small animal side and took the position as the Columbus State Community College instructor. I oversee and instruct the technician students during their internship in Anesthesia, Surgery, and Medicine.
What do you like most about your job? I enjoy teaching the students and preparing them for their future in the Veterinary field.
How did Otterbein prepare you for your career? Otterbein prepared me for the leadership role that I now have with students and even though horses are not a major part of my everyday life the experience I had in the equine program was invaluable.
Where do you see yourself in five years? I hope to be continuing with my job at OSU, adding another member to my family and enjoying life. My husband, Mike, son Andrew and daughter Kaitlyn and I live in Westerville with our dog Noah.
How do you spend your free time? We enjoy cheering on the Buckeyes and spending time with family and friends.

Name: Stephanie Nogle
What year did you graduate from Otterbein College? 2007
What was your major? Equine Facility Management / Public Relations
What was your first job after graduation? Equine Director, YMCA Camp Tippecanoe
What are you doing now? Trying to decide what I want to do when I grow up.
What do you like most about your job? Sharing my passion for horses with kids - especially the ones who previously didn’t know or like horses. When a kid who has never seen a horse in real life goes on a trail ride and comes back beaming, saying that they want to come to horse camp next year - that’s so gratifying.
How did Otterbein prepare you for your career? I learned so much of the science side of the horses - the "why" behind what horse people do.
Where do you see yourself in five years? I would love to be involved with the equine publication industry.
How do you spend your free time? Hanging out with friends, designing various publications on my computer, and training my filly, Aurora, to name a few.
Tell us about your spouse/kids/pets: I have a chinchilla, a cat, and my baby, Aurora (Rori). All three came to camp with me over the summer, and it’s so amazing to have them with me. I’ve had Rori since she was only a couple of months old, and it’s been incredible watching her grow up and developing a bond with her. It’s also really neat to know that I could trust her with a child on her back at such a young age.
Please add anything else you would like to tell us. Horse camp is the most fun you can have in the summer. Not only do you get paid to play, but you get to share the joy of horses with so

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many children who would otherwise never experience these amazing animals. It's hard to find good instructors for camp, so if anyone is looking for a summer job or internship, feel free to contact me.

Name: Jennifer Stepancik

What year did you graduate from Otterbein College? 2003
What was your major? Equine Facility Management
What was your first job after graduation? Riding Instructor at Summerwind Stables in Chesterland, OH.
What are you doing now? Director of the Lesson program at Black Diamond Stables, the contract company that runs Oglebay Stables at Oglebay Resort, Wheeling, WV
What do you like most about your job? I love working with eager students, and watching them progress and grow as horsemen. I also have the opportunity to meet and work with people from all over the world.

How did Otterbein prepare you for your career? Otterbein helped me to develop the theory, communication skills, discipline, and confidence I need in this career. The knowledge of horsemanship and business skills gained at Otterbein have proven essential. My study at Otterbein also helped me to earn perfect scores in theory and riding skills on my Certified Horsemanship Association instructor's examination.
Where do you see yourself in five years? If I am still at Oglebay, I would like to expand the lesson program to include dressage schooling shows, clinics in a wide range of disciplines, and perhaps a training program for summer camp riding instructors. I would like to make an internship available in the coming years.

How do you spend your free time? When the rare occasion for free time does occur, I enjoy spending time with my own horses, family, and friends, team penning (a new adventure in horsemanship for me) and continuing my education when possible.

Tell us about your spouse/kids/pets: I have two horses Maestro (TB from Otterbein) and Rosewall Santon or “Pal” a Shetland pony cross that I obtained from my internship at Rosewall Farms. I also keep a guinea pig, turtle and hermit crab.