

Rosstar Superboy, A favorite Gelding Of Mine

By Nina Shaffer, winner of PAHA's 2010 *My Special Arabian* award.

Walk down any hallway at the Coatesville Senior High School during 2008 and ask any student what the first word that comes to mind is when you say the name Nina Shaffer, and I guarantee they will say "horses." Nobody, not even I can deny the fact that I'm obsessed, but I'm only obsessed over one, Rosstar Superboy. For my eighteenth birthday, I got a custom license plate that says "Suprboy." Superboy, the little bay gelding who washed out of halter classes, entered my life on March 29th, 1993, thanks to months of high phone bills on my mother's behalf.

Superboy and I have been inseparable ever since. Although my parents were said to be crazy buying a four year old horse for their three year old daughter, he has proved to be the best investment that they have ever made on my behalf. He has kept me out of all the things that most teenagers get involved in: underage drinking, partying, smoking, etcetera, and I am so grateful for it. I spend all of my money on him, so my Dad should really just stop asking where my paycheck just went!

Rosstar Superboy has taken me from the leadline and walk-trot days all the way to the Adult Amateur Owner To Ride classes successfully. Although broke professionally as a hunter pony, I have since trained Superboy without professional training to compete in showmanship, trail, halter, western pleasure, hunter pleasure, sport horse in hand and under saddle, dressage, and our favorite, funny costume! We have competed in the annual Pennsylvania Arabian Junior Amateur Games funny costume class seven times over the past decade and a half, and won five of the seven times. My Gammie sews all of our costumes by hand because, "She doesn't make anything that you can buy."

My wish has always been Superboy's command. When the bit changes, he knows his job and he does it well. Recently, his new love is paperchasing. I look forward to foxhunting him, as that is a new hobby I enjoy. Superboy hates puddles, but he went trucking through an entirely flooded ring at Dressage at Devon this year, because I SAID SO, myself dressed in all white! He did not take one bad step. I look forward to teaching him how to drive in the future.

Superboy and I qualified for the PA State 4-H Show six consecutive years. In 2007 we were eighth in the state and third in 2008, both out of twenty-three. Our third in the state is one of our biggest accomplishments in our seventeen years together, besides our second place ribbon from Devon.

The 2009 Mason Dixon Classic was our first A-Rated Horse Show in over ten years due to my parents' divorce. And there was little Superboy, getting his tack changed from hunter to western, western to hunter and back again. The Arabian breed shows diversity, sure, but how many twenty-one year old horses do you see allowing that? Superboy represents the breed through his good gaits, beautiful head and calm eye, but what sets him apart from others is his big heart and great mind. He has done nothing short of living up to his name, "SUPERBOY"! He would stop dead in his tracks when three year old Nina would fall off, but not just stand there, he'd nuzzle me to get back up and try again. That is why I love this quote, "All horses deserve, at least once in their lives, to be loved by a little girl," even though I am not such a "little girl" anymore.

