



You can hear it. Right now American Quarter Horses are changing people's lives and their stories are being told the world over. Each year, the MD Barns Silver Spur Award honors an American Quarter Horse that profoundly touched someone just like you.

Are you listening?

The MD Barns Silver Spur Award honors those American Quarter Horses who have made a significant impact on the lives of others or who have been cast into the public spotlight through prominent accomplishments to help create a favorable perception of the breed.

Nominations for the 2008 MD Barns Silver Spur Award will be accepted August 1 - September 30. Voting on the top-five finalists will be conducted November 1 - December 31. Only AQHA members will be allowed to vote. Nominating materials will be available at www.aqha.com by August 1.

2007 SILVER SPUR WINNER

TIPPYS SUGAR BAR (AQHA ID [1662268](#))

Tippys Sugar Bar changes the lives of kids. In fact, "Tippy" has had such an impact she was nominated twice for the Silver Spur – once by a former rider and the other by the mother of a young boy who now sits tall in the saddle.

Sarah Johnson says her life changed 11 years ago when she met a big bay mare named Tippy. Sarah was born with half of her right arm and leg missing and only two fingers and a thumb on her left hand.

"I had undergone more surgeries in my first years of life than most people do in a lifetime," she said. "The looks people often gave me were obvious, even to a child, but Tippy didn't see my disfigurement and she was never judgmental.

Tippy became Sarah's friend, confidant and so much more.

"I grew up with her, and she became the legs I never had but always wanted. As our relationship grew and strengthened so did my confidence," Sarah said.

In the show pen, Tippy and Sarah earned the title of Reserve National Champion at the 2003 Exceptional Challenge Cup in Kansas City, Missouri. After a few years of showing together, the pair graduated to competitions not restricted to handicapped people and began to bring home many blue ribbons.

When Tippy turned 25, Sarah made the difficult and tearful decision to retire the mare and return her to her former home – a therapeutic school.

While Sarah thought she would never show again, she eventually found another show horse. Sarah was moving on, but Tippy was not. The senior mare didn't like retirement. She began losing weight along with her zest for life.

The spark from her eye was gone, the spring from her step had faded, and Sarah knew it was more than age that had her down.

Soon, Tippy would meet Stephen Orengo, who was born five weeks early and had his arm damaged during birth, and her magical powers would be unleashed again.

With Stephen on her back, Tippy was soon back to her old self, and the new team began collecting blue ribbons.

“Stephen really loves Tippy and has come out of his shell with horses,” said Stephen's mom Tammy.

Stephen's time riding Tippy has replaced the physical therapy he once needed for his arm.

Eight-year-old Stephen says Tippys Sugar Bar is the greatest horse ever and is the smartest horse ever and she really rocks.

Stephen loves the mare and showers her with treats such as apples and sugar cubes. Tippy enjoys the treats, but she loves the kids even more.

Owner Dee Staley explains: You don't give Tippy to a kid, you give the kid to Tippy, and Tippy takes care of all the rest.



Tippys Sugar Bar with Stephen Orengo (left) joined Tippy's former rider Sarah Johnson and her new mount at a show.