



AMANDA WOOTEN of Supply gets cozy with Indian Summer on the mare's birthday Friday. Amanda is the daughter of Juanita Bellows of Supply.



INDIAN SUMMER works every day, is in great health and has a sweet disposition. Here, she's ridden by Sara Suda of Honolulu, Hawaii, granddaughter of Bud and Chance Scramont of Sunset Beach. Grooming Indian Summer are (from left) Amanda Wooten, Jennifer Hills of Myrtle Beach and Joshua Smith, son of Steve and Teresa Smith of Hickman's Crossroads.

## Still Hot To Trot

### 30-Year-Old Mare Continues To Earn Her Keep—Even On Her Birthday

BY LYNN CARLSON

When a lady reaches a certain age, she generally prefers that not too much of a fuss be made over her birthdays—especially when her age is evenly divisible by 10.

This past Friday, the beautiful three-quarter Arabian mare Indian Summer turned 30 and marked the occasion as she does every other day—working with children and adults of an equestrian bent.

"Indian," as the children in day camp at Farwinds Stables call her, is a fixture at the Thomasboro stables, having been in the care of owner Lynn Petch for more than 28 years. "She is used every day in lessons," said Petch, who compares the mare to "The Horse With Silver Shoes," from a children's story about a magical horse who grants the wishes of deserving children.

"We should all hope to end our days having played such a role in so many lives as this priceless old mare and her companion professional school horses," Petch added. "There's been one in the life of every horseman or horsewoman in the world."

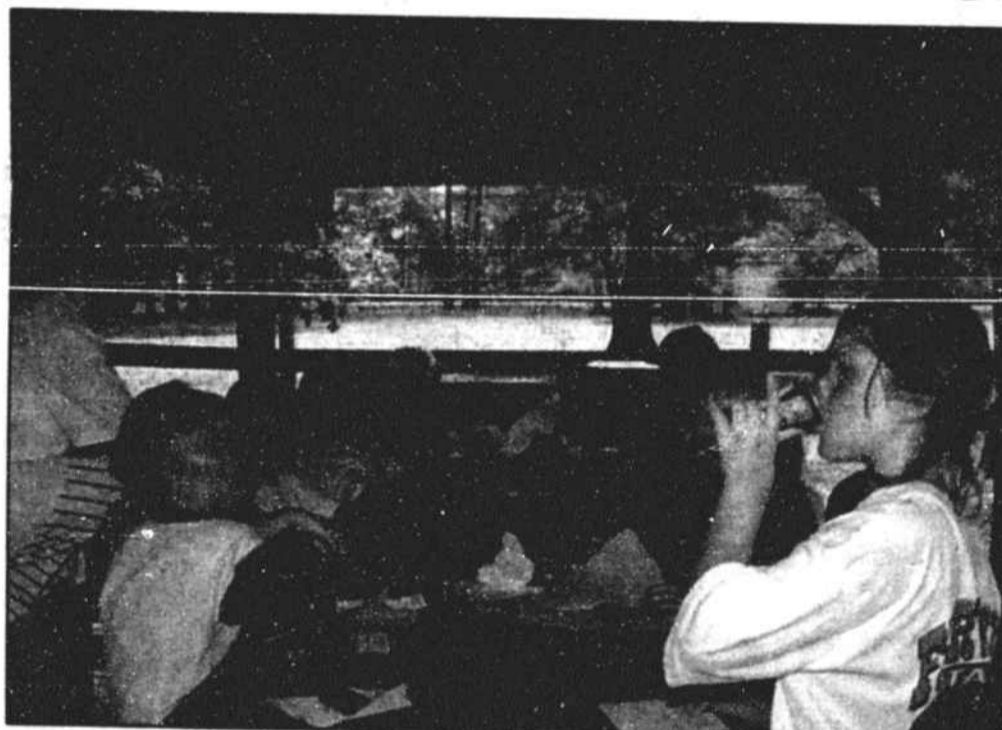
A horse is considered aged at 20, and few are used regularly past 30. So-called "senior horses" make up about 10 percent of the U.S. horse population, according to a Purina Mills manager who recently identified and recognized 2,000 senior horses in a nationwide search for the best-loved older horses.

"They're often calmer and more predictable than younger horses and make great companions for children, the physically challenged and inexperienced riders," said Purina's John Hamilton.

Petch didn't know about the search or she surely would have entered her beloved Indian. But the prize—a year's supply of Equine Senior Horse Feed—would have been unnecessary for the old mare had she won. She still has all her teeth.

"She is never sick, so maybe she'll be in the running next year," Petch said.

On this milestone birthday, Indian Summer is working the day camp beat, circling the ring for two midsummer morning hours with 6- and 7-year-olds on her back and at her side. She wears a tiara of leaves the little



BIRTHDAY CAKES and soft drinks are enjoyed by riding students and their counselors in honor of a beloved old chestnut mare.

girls have fashioned in her honor.

"I bought her at 20 months and trained her to ride, the first Arabian horse I had owned," Petch said. "I sold her to Margo Woodin of Mebane, who left her with us and in our care at Pine Knoll Stables in Durham."

"Students leased and showed her, qualifying her for the Nationals (the annual U.S.

championship Arabian horse show) several times. This was during the very earlier surge in popularity of this breed in North Carolina, in the '60s and '70s.

"In 1973, Ms. Woodin offered her to us, but we felt we couldn't afford her at the time since we had just moved to Brunswick County. A former student in Durham bought

her and took her to the Nationals, in effect placing top 20 in her breed in two categories."

Indian Summer came to be owned by the first Brunswick County student of Petch and husband Richard. When that student, Sarah Williamson (then Sarah Stanaland), "took up more adventurous pursuits on horseback," as Petch puts it, the family gave Indian Summer to the Petches in 1978 "at token cost with a promise on our part that Sarah's little sister Elizabeth would have a lifetime supply of riding lessons."

The horse been there ever since. Petch said she learned long ago that constantly buying and selling horses made her feel "like a movie star who's had ten husbands." She stopped all that trading and Indian Summer became a member of the family for good. "She'll die here," Petch says matter-of-factly.

That day seems far away on a steamy but beautiful July morning under a canopy of trees with the sounds of the Highway 17 four-laning project barely audible in the distance.

Sara Suda rides Indian for the first hour, followed by Joshua Smith. Other children fawn over the old girl, brushing her still-silky coat and singing the birthday song. Indian Summer takes it without a trace of annoyance, every bit the grand dame of the place.

The mare takes to her stall after the lesson, oblivious to the noisy Twinkies-and-soda party the children are having over in the picnic shelter. Not a bad life, indeed.



LYNN PETCH has cared for or owned Indian Summer for 28 of the mare's 30 years.

## Cetacean Awareness Program Seeking Dolphin-Counters For Census

Cetacean Awareness Programs, a group studying bottlenose dolphins along the North Carolina coast since 1989, is planning North Carolina's largest "dolphin watch" to date this Saturday, July 9.

"Day of the Dolphin" is the project name that involves public volunteers in an effort to learn more about the dolphins that inhabit areas of the Tar Heel coastline.

Cetacean Awareness Programs has con-

ducted 20 dolphin sighting events along the North Carolina Coast during the past five years. The "Day of the Dolphin" project helps scientists and educators generate data about local dolphin populations and creates further awareness about dolphins.

The North Carolina dolphin watch is coordinated with simultaneous efforts involving seven other East Coast states. On Saturday, volunteer teams will line the

beaches from New Jersey to Florida in an effort to count dolphins as part of a dolphin census organized by the Atlantic Dolphin Research Cooperative in an attempt to assess the dolphin population along the Atlantic coast.

The North Carolina study area includes the beaches from Shallotte Inlet north to Beaufort Inlet, approximately 100 miles of coastline.

To participate in the North Carolina dolphin watch, volunteers must attend an orientation meeting July 8. Those interested in counting dolphins at Holden, Long or Yaupon beaches should attend the meeting at Morton Hall on the UNC-Wilmington campus at 7 p.m. Friday.

For more information or to pre-register, call Cetacean Awareness Programs at (910)458-4700.

## The Two Colorful Tulip Shell Types

BY BILL FAVER

Some of the most colorful shells found on the Brunswick County beaches are the two tulip shells we occasionally

find along the high tide line. The larger of the two, the Tulip Shell or "True Tulip" carries the scientific name *Fasciolaria tulipa*. The smaller, which is more abundant, is the Banded Tulip, *Fasciolaria hunteria*.

Both tulips have strong, thick shells.

They are spindle-shaped, like the Florida Horse Conch, which is a member of the same family of shells. The True Tulip is smooth except for several narrow spiral grooves below the opening where the surface is wrinkled. The Banded Tulip is

entirely smooth. In size, the True Tulip is larger, growing to 10 inches long and 4 inches wide. The Banded Tulip is much smaller, about 3 inches long and more than 1 1/2 inches wide.

The True Tulip can vary in color from pinkish-gray to orange-red with brown spots and broken spiral bands of a brownish color. The Banded Tulip can be cream to bluish-greenish-gray to orange-brown with widely separated, thin brown unbroken spiral bands. The animal inside the Banded Tulip is black with white speckles and the operculum used to seal the animal inside the shell is horny and brown.

Both species live in grassy and sandy bottoms from the low tide line to well offshore and in sounds and bays. Range of both is from North Carolina to Florida and to Texas and in the West Indies. The Banded Tulip is found also in the Bahamas and Yucatan.

Egg capsules are formed from a pore in the foot of the female. Several dozen eggs are placed in each capsule and the capsules are attached to a rock or a shell. Most of the eggs are unfertilized and become food for the young snails when they hatch after about a month.

Both species are aggressive predators in the sea community. Slow and deliberate in their movements, the tulips feed on other snails and some bivalves. They, in turn, are eaten by the Florida Horse Conch.

The best time to find good specimens of the tulips is following rough seas after a storm. Look for them along the high tide line or just at the water's edge when the tide is out.

Live shells should be returned to the sea. You may want to keep one in some sea water for a day or two to see if it will emerge from the shell and then return it to its habitat.



TULIP SHELLS are among the most colorful shells we find.