

44 Ngapeke Road, RD 5  
Welcome Bay  
Tauranga 3175



Phone: (07) 544 1899  
Fax: (07) 544 1894  
E:  
manager@equestriantherapycentre.co.nz

## News Release

8<sup>th</sup> June 2010

For Immediate release

### Tauranga RDA Rider and Volunteer Win National Awards

Photocall: Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June, 10.30am at 44 Ngapeke Road, RD5, Welcome Bay, Tauranga.

Simon Bridges will be coming to Tauranga RDA Equestrian Therapy Centre this Saturday to present rider Emma Bennett (12) and Volunteer Martyn Chew (14) with national awards. Emma has won Rider of the Year from New Zealand Riding for the Disabled Association and Martyn has won Volunteer of the Year for outstanding commitment to an RDA. Emma and Martyn were in competition with 54 other RDA centres around the country to win these awards. Simon Bridges has already written Emma and Martyn letters to congratulate them and is coming to personally hand over their awards.

Emma's enthusiasm, determination and outstanding riding and horsemanship achievements were the reason why Tauranga RDA selected her as their national finalist for rider of the year. Emma has an intellectual disability, is on the autistic spectrum and has a range of medical conditions, the most dominant being a chronic complex cardiac condition. Emma has been riding at RDA Tauranga over the past year. Her enthusiasm in attending the sessions and her progress has been astounding.

Emma's mum Manu Bennett says, "As parents we are immensely proud of Emma's achievement, it shows that limitations we may inherently have doesn't have to hold us back from accomplishment. Credit goes to the hard work that all the team at RDA put in and of course, Emma's commitment to riding."

Martyn has been volunteering at RDA for almost two years and originally came as a client from CAMHS on a programme that the centre run to help improve self esteem in youth. Martyn enjoyed the course so much and it had such dramatic benefits for him that he decided to commit as a regular volunteer. During his time as a volunteer Martyn has been extremely hard working and dedicated and is a shining role model for other volunteers. He has also represented RDA on many occasions to talk about his personal journey with riding therapy. He has presented to service clubs, community groups, helped at shows and perhaps the most impressive was that he stood

up and talked to over 400 people at the Tauranga CIB annual charity luncheon which is one of the biggest fundraiser events of the year on the Western BOP calendar.

Tauranga RDA's CEO Kat Macmillan says, "I am so proud of Emma and Martyn for what they have achieved and boy do they deserve this. It's great for the centre too that our clients and volunteers are of such a high calibre that they are winning national awards. One of our strategic goals is to become a centre of excellence both nationally and internationally and we are well on the way to achieving this."

Friends of Tauranga RDA are invited to attend the award presentations at 10.30am on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 44 Ngapeke Road, RD5, Welcome Bay Tauranga.

ENDS

For more information contact Kat on: 0210 2392608, 07 5441899. E:

[manager@equestriantherapycentre.co.nz](mailto:manager@equestriantherapycentre.co.nz)

**R**iding **D**evelops **A**bility

[www.equestriantherapycentre.co.nz](http://www.equestriantherapycentre.co.nz)