

Silver Spur Horse Award Finalists

Only one American Quarter Horse will win the 2006 MD Barns Silver Spur Award. Which horse will it be?

The Silver Spur Award was created to recognize American Quarter Horses that have enriched the lives of humans through outstanding acts. Here are the five finalists chosen from a large number of entries featured on the American Quarter Horse Association's website. Check out the March 2007 issue of Horse Illustrated magazine for more scoop on these endearing equines and their incredible stories. Then [CLICK HERE](#) to find out which of these horses is still in the running for the MD Barns Silver Spur Award and vote for your favorite.

Panama Sun This handsome red dun resides at the U.S. Army's Smith Lake Stables adjacent to Fort Bragg, N.C., where he serves two very important roles. First, he's a favorite mount in the riding academy, both as a trusty school horse and as a member of an equestrian summer camp. Second, he trains U.S. Army Special Forces soldiers for mounted duties. Although originally trained as a show horse, Panamas Sun suffered a traumatic injury that left his hindquarters scarred. He has a physical flaw, but his heart more than makes up for it.

Smokin On A Star "Smoky is the light of my life," says Frank Green Jr., who lives in Georgia with Smokin on a Star. But Green is not in the best of health. A Vietnam War veteran, he has uncontrollable seizures. Still he rides, only because his trusty mare has the uncanny ability to sense when he's about to black out. She'll stop on the trail and rebalance her stance to prevent him from toppling out of the saddle. If he does slip off, Smoky stands guard over him until he awakens.

Temecula Toy Boy This bay gelding lost his right eye when he was young, and now he helps his diminutive 13-year-old owner cope with her own health issues. You see, Tara Carlson has kidney disease, but she's determined to ride, so she was paired up with 10-year-old Temecula Toy Boy and together they are a sensation. Tara and Toy won numerous awards in reining, and are known on the show circuit, "as the little girl on the one-eyed horse." But thanks to Toy, his young rider doesn't think about her illness. Together, they can overcome any obstacle.

Miss Chamaco Pine This 18-year-old dark bay mare calls Ohio home, where she works as a therapeutic mount with children. She's not the epitome of conformation perfection or glamour, but she transcends her limitations and inspires her patients. Sessions with Miss Chamaco Pine mean smiles all around for the kids under her watchful tutelage.

Nitro Up This little red mare is a beloved member of the Hanson family in Minnesota, which means she's an excellent multi-tasker: Nitro Up is a competitive ranch horse for dad, and an equine babysitter for the Hanson kids, especially 12-year-old Joe, who is autistic. No matter who's riding her or what the job requirement, Nitro Up loves the whole Hanson clan, and they feel the same about her. "She's definitely family."