

# Los Altos Hills

Cover photo by ©Alden Corrigan Media

50th Anniversary  
Menlo Charity Horse Show:  
August 9-14



## Lindsay Archer and Eta Beta Di San Patrignano

**FINE ART IN  
THE PARK  
AUGUST 13-14**

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Menlo Charity Horse Show co-founders Nan Chapman, Betsy Glikbarg, Nancy Parker, Jane Yates, and Nancy Robinson. ©Alden Corrigan Media.

# 50TH ANNIVERSARY MENLO CHARITY HORSE SHOW: AUGUST 9-14

By David Marin

The Menlo Charity Horse Show, open to the public with tickets available at the gate, is back after a two-year hiatus, with dozens of local volunteers excited about putting on a great show.

My daughter and I attended a few years ago, watching horses that could jump over her and riders as young as nine years old aiming for the sky with every jump, a remarkable skill resulting from years of practice. While the riders are cautious and calculating, the horses seem to just enjoy jumping.

I met founder Betsy Glikbarg on her Atherton porch back then after hearing from everyone that I had to meet Betsy. I did have to meet Betsy, to feel the pulse of the show, an energy that flowed through her. We had a delightful conversation, but, since she told me the show was about the riders and horses, she only allowed me to add one thing about her to the article I was preparing: As a youngster she rode horses on the beach in San Francisco...

There's something magical about horses, a unique combination of grace and power, so much larger and stronger than people, but happy to take us along for the ride. I had a Shetland pony when I was seven, and later a Pinto living in a pasture a few blocks from home, a reliable and friendly trail rider. It's hard to imagine him jumping six feet into the air, almost like surfing the wind. When I see a horse trotting, mane flowing, it's like they know we enjoy watching, every step a show.

While the nonprofit Menlo Charity Horse Show has the feel of a friends and neighbors gathering, in 2012 it was designated a Heritage Competition by the United States Equestrian Federation, one of only 33 designated Heritage Competitions to receive that designation out of about 2,000 recognized shows. You'll see neighbors jumping horses, and you'll see world class competitors.

The Menlo, as locals call it, began as a one-day show in 1970. For many years, including this one, proceeds are donated to the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, based in Palo Alto, but helping people all over the Bay Area with programs, classes, helping kids in schools, and folks with vision challenges, made all the more difficult in recent years. To date, the show has donated nearly \$7 million to Vista Center. They also appreciate the help of volunteers, see [www.vistacenter.org](http://www.vistacenter.org).

Tickets to the show are \$10 for a day, or \$35 for the week. You can park nearby, walk to the gates, and get your tickets there. There are many local vendors, artists, and food options.

Volunteers are welcome. Many families volunteer together. No horse jumping experience required. For more information, please visit [www.menlocharityhorseshow.org](http://www.menlocharityhorseshow.org).

Continued >>>



Riders like Guy Thomas on Jonkheer Z compete over four days. ©Alden Corrigan Media.

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Juno and Peter Szalay. Photo provided by Juno Szalay.

**Message from a Volunteer:**

My Menlo Charity Horse Show story began when I was asked if I could help drive golf carts to ferry the sponsors and guests between parked cars and the Showgrounds. I think everyone on the committee has driven a golf cart at least once - it is the right of passage to the committee. By the following year, I was pregnant with my first daughter and thought I was off the committee. But horse show co-founder Betsy Glikbarg assured me I would have a place and found me a job working with sponsors leading up to the show. That was 20++ years ago!

Now I have two daughters, Lily and Grace, who volunteer with me and are indispensable! I am responsible for the Sponsor Tent, which I equate to organizing an enormous wedding reception each day for a week - complete with food, drinks, live entertainment, centerpieces, and everything else that comes with hosting a large crowd for several days. My daughters cover all of the tasks from food service to set up and tear down to impromptu babysitting and barn tours.

We have close to 100 Sponsors each with a table seating eight guests so you can imagine the support a group that large requires. Although things can get hectic checking in during busy times like lunch and cocktail hour, I enjoy meeting the people - hearing their stories and learning why they love Menlo like we do.

One of my favorite memories is guiding visually impaired volunteers to speak with the sponsors. Everyone has a tale to tell and it makes what we are doing here all worth the effort. Anyone who has been around horses has that one special horse who changes everything. For us, it is the sponsors who are the lifeblood of this show, changing lives at the Vista Center. The community effort involved to put this event together and the social rewards during the show are what make us human.

Glancing at the event, some may think it is only a week-long commitment. For us, we have feet on the ground from the moment the last jump rail is put into storage and tent guidelines are brought down. We are always trying to make the next year super special. With a two-year hiatus before finally celebrating our 50th Anniversary, we are definitely pulling out all of the stops under the Tent. In addition to the world class Hunter Derby and the crowd favorite Horse and Hound event, I have some surprises in the works, so please visit us during the week! You will find Juno, Lily, and Grace under the big top Tuesday, August 9th through Sunday August 14th.

**Los Altos resident Juno Szalay**



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Lily and Grace at the horse show. Photo provided by Juno Szalay.

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