



media release

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PONY CLUB MEMBERS ENJOY CLINIC FROM TEAM GB DRESSAGE STAR

Laura Bechtolsheimer hosts exclusive dressage clinic for Burghley Pony Club

Young riders from Burghley Pony Club have enjoyed an exclusive dressage clinic with triple World Equestrian Games silver medallist, Laura Bechtolsheimer.

Burghley Pony Club won the opportunity to work with Laura through the Animal Health Trust's **Pony Power** campaign.

For the last two years the AHT has been The Pony Club's charity of the year. In 2010, the AHT encouraged Pony Club Members to get involved and support its **Pony Power** campaign through fundraising initiatives. The Pony Club Branch or Centre which raised the most money for the AHT would win an exclusive dressage clinic with Laura.

Burghley Pony Club rose to the challenge and raised a staggering £1,700 for **Pony Power**. A large proportion of this was thanks to fourteen year old Burghley Pony Club Member, Lauren Burton. Lauren developed alopecia and decided to shave her rapidly disappearing hair to raise money for **Pony Power**. Thanks to Lauren's contribution of more than £1,000, and some enterprising photographic sales coordinated by keen amateur photographer and branch member Lisa Reid, aided

by several willing riders at Pony Club events, Burghley Pony Club scooped the once in a lifetime prize.

Laura Bechtolsheimer, said: "I'm really pleased to be able to support the **Pony Power** campaign because I really believe in the work of the AHT. Every horse and pony I've ever owned, or will ever own, has benefited in some way by the charity's work."

The dressage clinic, held at Burghley House in Stamford, enabled six groups of young riders to benefit from Laura's wealth of knowledge and experience. There was also the opportunity to chat and ask questions to Laura over lunch.

Robbie Reid, Burghley Pony Club DC, said: "We were so excited about Laura coming to teach us and she totally lived up to all of our expectations. She is such an inspiration to our budding dressage riders.

"We're very grateful to the AHT for giving us the opportunity to win the clinic and I'd urge all Pony Club Branches and Centres to get involved with the **Pony Power** campaign in 2011."

Laura, added: "It's been great to meet so many enthusiastic young riders. This is the first time I've taught Pony Club Members and I'm really impressed with the level of skill. Some of them are much better at dressage than I was at their age!"

The **Pony Power** campaign continues in 2011. This year Pony Club Members are able to win an exclusive eventing clinic with Lucy Wieggersma, and cross-country course designer, Eric Winter.

To give even more Members the opportunity to be in with winning the prize, the AHT is asking Branches and Centres to simply raise £100 for the **Pony Power** campaign in 2011.

Every Branch or Centre that raises, or exceeds, its £100 target will be entered in to a draw to win the eventing clinic! To be in with a chance of winning Branches or Centres need to pledge their support for the campaign on the **Pony Power Puissance Wall**.

To make you pledge or for more information on **Pony Power**, or to get involved, visit www.ponypower.org.uk

Ends

For further information, please contact:

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Photo:

A photo of Laura Bechtolshimer and members of Burghley Pony club in front of Burghley house is available on request from Farrah Stevens in the AHT press office

Additional notes:

- The **Animal Health Trust** is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. Visit our website at www.aht.org.uk
- **The Pony Club** is an international voluntary youth organisation for those interested in horses and ponies and riding. It is the largest association of riders in the world and has a membership exceeding 110,000. In the UK, there are more than 50,000 members.
- The aim of the **Pony Power** campaign is to let Pony Club (PC) Members and their families know that everything the AHT does for horses, improves their health and wellbeing and therefore gives them power. The AHT wants to let Members know that it is as passionate about their ponies as they are.
- More information on **Pony Power** can be found at www.ponypower.org.uk