

2001 Father of the Year – Ken Eiler

Dear NWHC Board,

I would like to nominate my father as Father of the Year. My father has always encouraged me to put my best effort into everything. If I fail in a subject that I worked hard at, he shows no disappointment, but simply encourages me. This takes place almost all the time in horseback riding, school, golfing, etc. In riding, being the teenager that we all know and love, I am quick to brush him off and still focus on my horrible round. However, once my stubbornness reaches the back of my mind, I begin to appreciate the smile on my father's face. There have been times when I have wanted to quit, but my father would always say, "My daughter is not a quitter." And of course, I would believe him. There would be times where I would be so mad and wouldn't have a clue what I was talking about, but still he would change all my bad thoughts into good ones. My father has always been there for me in struggles and in times of need for encouragement.

My father works non-stop. I wake up before school and he's already working at his desk. While picking me up after school to take me to the barn, he most certainly will have one of his clients on the phone or will be checking his endless messages. Whenever I ask why we don't do something, or whenever I act like a spoiled little brat, he always gets me with, "Sarah, do I work for a living? Do you know why I work for a living? To pay for you." He never shows disappointment in spending all the precious hours of his life for me and I appreciate that to the fullest extent.

The one thing that makes people and friends stand in awe is the endless transportation my father provides for me. Luckily for me and for him, he can easily work in the car. One year at Bend, I forgot my show boots at home. Of course, I panicked like always, but my dad was there for me. He drove all the way back to Portland that day and brought me my boots by that night. He spent 9 hours driving that day just for me. I also play golf competitively. My father used to take me to dozens of tournaments in the summers. That was not an easy task when combined with the horse show schedule. He would take me to a tournament at 8 a.m. and after I finished at about 12:30, he would pick me up and drive me to Eugene, Bend, Monroe, Hood River or wherever the fences were set. Sometimes my father even drives me to shows when he doesn't have to. Recently when my highlights were especially blond, we drove all the way to Boring for a horse show, only to find out that the times Megan and Leslie were talking about were for the lesson schedule, not the horse show—that was actually the next weekend.

I also have a tendency to run a little bit late. I have gotten better, but I have to admit that I'm not the best. My dad is always willing to drive 20-30 mph over the limit to make me "feel" reassured that we are going to arrive on time. He is always willing, not always with great enthusiasm, but still willing to get me to my requested destination—wherever that may be.

I appreciate my father's positive attitude and encouragement, not only in horses but in all aspects of life. I acknowledge my father's hard work and devotion to making my dreams come true. And I appreciate the 100's of dollars spent on all the gas it takes to get me wherever my heart desires. Thank you and I love you!

Sincerely,
Ken Eiler's daughter Sarah