

## 2002 Mother of the Year – Barbara Baker

Dear OHJA,

My mother is a very strong person. She and my father were divorced when I was two and ever since then, they have worked together to make my horse dreams come true. When I go to shows, she uses her vacation time to make sure she can come to watch me. She always makes sure my clothes are clean and ready for me to pack before I leave.

At the beginning of this show season, my mom was re-diagnosed with a serious illness. She had surgery before the Mother's Day show and went through radiation therapy for two months after the scars healed. During Hood River, Brawleys and the Country Classic shows, my mom would drop me off in the morning at the show and head back to Portland for her 15 minutes of treatment and then come back to the show to make sure she would get to see me ride. As she is a very private person, I know that this sharing is difficult for her.

This is not the only obstacle my mom hurdled this summer. Because of job opportunities, my mom went back to college to get the degree she never finished. She would bring her laptop to the shows and work on papers when she had the time. She not only finished and got her degree, but she did so with a 4.0 GPA. I am amazed that she was able to finish her degree, find a new job and deal with her disease all at the same time.

The most amazing thing is she also found time to be with me at the shows and support my riding and me. She seems to think of me and not so much herself. I am proud to say that she is doing well and is 100% healthy.

For all she has overcome this year, I want to let her know how proud I am of her and how much I appreciate everything she does for me. Please choose my mom, Barbara Baker, for the 2002 Mother of the Year.

Ali Runyan