

Thanks to the donation of a black Shetland Pony by Bruce Becker's Brush Creek Stables and the American Shetland Pony Club, the Black Stallion Literacy Foundation has a new Little Black pony for children to enjoy. Little Black poses with Arabian Nights trainer Shane Karson (left) and Vicki Anderson, the first grade coordinator for the Black Stallion Literacy Foundation, and Tim Henderson, (right) President of The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation. (Photo courtesy of JRPR)

Orlando, FL - A black Shetland Pony who closely resembles the pony Little Black in the Walter Farley book "Little Black, a Pony" has a new home with the Black Stallion Literacy Foundation at Arabian Nights in Orlando, Florida. Thanks to the donation of the pony by the American Shetland Pony Club (ASPC), thousands of children involved in the literacy program will have the chance to meet Little Black in person.



The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation has helped motivate hundreds of thousands of children to enjoy reading by connecting the magic of live horses with a classic hardcover book. The Foundation, named after "The Black Stallion" books by Walter Farley, was co-founded in 1999 by Mark Miller, owner of Arabian Nights Dinner Attraction in Orlando, Florida, and Walter Farley's son Tim Farley, with the idea that Arabian Nights and the Black Stallion could inspire children to stay interested in reading and have more successful lives.

"The Black Stallion Literacy Program is amazing. It really moved me to see how the kids reacted to meeting live ponies and horses," said Johnny Robb, Marketing Director for the ASPC, who was on hand at Arabian Nights for the delivery of the new Shetland. "I am really pleased that the American Shetland Pony Club was able to donate a Shetland Pony to the literacy foundation. The pony looks just like Little Black and he will have a positive impact on so many children because after they meet him they will definitely want to read the book about him."

Formerly named Brush Creek's Success, the new Little Black was donated by Bruce Becker of Brush Creek Stables in Arlington, Illinois. Becker is pleased that one of his ponies is an ambassador for the Shetland Pony breed. "I had been to the Arabian Nights show and really enjoyed it," Becker said. "Knowing that the pony is going to benefit the kids, and that he is getting a great home, made me happy to have the opportunity to donate a pony."

The pony, who the kids and trainers at Arabian Nights now call Little Black, is jet black just like the pony in the book. "His dad's name is Black Magic and his mom is also black, so it is no accident that he is black," Becker said, adding, "I've always been partial to black ponies."

Through the literacy foundation, first graders are given the book "Little Black, A Pony" when their school takes part in the program. The trainers at Arabian Nights then take the two horses from the book, Little Black and Big Red, to the school so the children can have an up-close and personal experience with the horses they are reading about. "The program that goes to the school is called the First Touch program and it really gets the kids to connect to what they are reading about," said Tim Henderson, President of The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation.

The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation has additional programs, including a Fourth Grade program in which students experience a live equine theater performance at Arabian Nights. The fourth graders are treated to a special appearance by Walter Farley's Black Stallion, but that doesn't mean they ever forget their first experience of meeting Little Black. Thanks to the American Shetland Pony Club, and a cute little black American Shetland Pony, the story of Little Black will live on for years to come.

For more information about The Black Stallion Literacy Foundation, including volunteering for the program, visit their website at [www.bsfp.org](http://www.bsfp.org). For more information on American Shetland Ponies, visit [www.shetlandminature.com](http://www.shetlandminature.com) <http://www.shetlandminature.com>.