

le Arroyo Simi Equestrian Center. This all All Breed Show will feature youth and novice classes. Western, English, and halter, as well as jumping classes

and equitation will be available. For more information on the club or events, contact Lee at 660-3400 or visit them at <http://www.cvaha.org>.

USA Water Polo host families say farewell

Posted by Wayne Bean

Greetings loyal Ventura County Star YourNews readers. Our USA Men's Olympic Water Polo team left Conejo Valley on Saturday to travel to San Jose to go through team processing.

On Monday, the team caught a flight out of San Francisco for Beijing.

Many, many people and businesses have made it possible for our Olympians to stay focused by hosting players in their homes, feeding them and organizing fundraisers.

"The move to Thousand Oaks was by far the best thing that could have happened to USA Water Polo, said Head Coach Terry Schroeder. "The team has responded well, and the community welcomed the team with open arms."

Below are a couple of examples of Conejo Valley's contribution to a successful training camp.

Typical American generosity

In February of this year, a story was published seeking host families for the USA Men's Olympic Water Polo team.

The community response, with an outpouring of offers to provide assistance, was unbelievable to say the least.

As a result of this generosity all of the players were able to find lovely homes in Conejo Valley for the seven-month period, while focusing on their training. This is a demonstration of a community coming together when the need arises.

I have spoken to several players over the last few months as they prepare for one of the world's most difficult sports. Every one of them has expressed their appreciation to the hosting families. In fact, in some cases the players feel that they have been adopted.

All of the training and commitment to participate would be a bigger challenge without the true unsung heroes who opened their homes up to these athletes.

Charity begins at home

Martha Vincent and Billy Ridge responded to the news article requesting local families to offer lodging to the U.S. Olympic Water player. The players

needed homes and other assistance that allowed the team to remain focused on training for the Olympics, instead of worrying about where they would eat and sleep.

Vincent and Ridge went far beyond the basic request for supplying lodging to an athlete. They invited nine athletes to live in their home in Country Club Estates over the past three months.

"They made me feel like part of the family," said goal keeper Merrill Mosses.

The hosted players and Head Coach Terry Schroeder presented Martha with a signed team photo as a token of their appreciation for their support at restaurant team sponsor Jackie and Marco Gonzales' Willy's Smokehouse Bar & Grill. Jackie and Marco are so gracious that they bring food home from the restaurant for the other players.

— Visit <http://www.VenturaCountyStar.com/news/yournews/ym-conejo-valley> for the full article and to read more stories about the USA Water Polo team.