

SOUNDS OF STIRRUPS 'N STRIDES

Quarterly Newsletter May 1, 2012

Volume 5 Issue #15

A Chat with Betty Gray

First & foremost I need to say “thank you” to all the volunteers, riders & families for all their wonderful Christmas gifts for our horses & the barn. Our horses all received new halters & lead ropes with nice brass name tags with our phone number on them & the horses that had fly masks & fly sheets on their wish lists received them also. We also found muck baskets, brooms, treats, fly spray etc. under the tree. Again, thank you all for caring so much for our wonderful horses & program, you are the best!

What a great winter session we have had! The weather has been extremely mild this winter which has allowed us to lose only 2 riding days this entire season & they were due to rain & not the cold!! Our riders keep surprising me with all their improvements & accomplishments. To just see their smiles & giggles is what makes it all so special, but also, our many riders that compete in the horse shows also make me very proud. Everyone works so hard to reach their goals & come home with that special ribbon.

We are planning to start a “capital campaign” for a covered arena & hopefully this dream will come true in the near future which would allow us to ride in the inclement, hot or cold weather. Anyone with ideas for this huge endeavor please let me know.

What a great fundraising cruise we had in February. We left out of Tampa & cruised to Cozumel & then on to Costa Maya on our 5 night adventure. Everyone who went had a wonderful time and it also helped bring in funds for the program. Avoya Travel & Sheri Mruz in Ocala were nice enough to put this cruise together for us. If you are planning on cruising next winter, or just need to have some “fun in the sun” please join our group, every stateroom we sell brings in money for Stirrups 'n Strides. I will have the dates & destination shortly.

With multiple, horse shows, and riding lessons & many new riders it has made for a very busy winter! Read all about the Challenge Show & Special Olympics & the upcoming shows in the newsletter.

I would like to welcome a new **Sponsor** to Stirrups 'n Strides “The Thoroughbred Farm Managers Assoc” has come on board with their monthly support. Thank you Farm Managers for all your help in making this program able to keep growing, you are very much appreciated.

Remember!! Stirrups 'n Strides has a face book page & I encourage you to go to face book, put in Stirrups 'n Strides Therapeutic Riding Center & when our page comes up click on “like”. This is a great way to keep in touch with what is going on at Stirrups 'n Strides. Hope to see your comments on face book.

Again, a big “Thank You” to everyone for making the winter season such a success. Our riders are excelling & having fun, & volunteers; you are the backbone of our program along with all our sponsors making it possible for us to provide these proven & invaluable services. We will have a 6 week summer program in July & August, so if you are around this summer, please sign up to help with our riders & to care for the horses.

Betty Gray

352-427-3569

CHALLENGE SHOW

The Challenge Show hosted by Stirrups 'n Strides & Bakas Equestrian Center on February 25th was a huge success again this year. With 22 riders from Stirrups 'n Strides & over 50 volunteers to help put the show on it was a very busy day. The Grand Oaks donated their wonderful facility in Weirsdale for us to have our show. They also, sponsored the breakfast for everyone with such delectables as strawberries, homemade muffins, plenty of coffee, hot chocolate, orange juice & more. Of course Dunkin Donuts was gracious again this year in donating 30 dozen donuts for breakfast also. With 61 riders & over 300 family members & volunteers from Florida & Georgia it was a very special day for everyone. A special thank you goes out to Stacey Spence & Jim Olson who spent a very long day with the judging duties. I also want to thank all the volunteers for taking their day to make this possible for the riders & to everyone who did a sponsorship for the show, without your support, we could not put this show on. Thank you, Thank you.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS AREA GAMES

We had 20 riders & 6 horses that made the trip to Area Games held at MTRA in Ocala on March 31st. Our riders did exceptionally well. Working out of the horse trailer with that many horses provides some challenges, but all went off without a hitch due to our great volunteers. We pitched our tent & with our fundraising efforts we provided breakfast & lunch for our riders, volunteers & families. Chef Lou cooked up hamburgers & hotdogs with all the trimmings & they were delicious! Off to State Special Olympics on May 4th-5th in Tampa. We have been allotted 11 spots for State Games which will be determined by a lottery type drawing from our 1st place winners at Area Games. Again, without such fantastic volunteers we could not do all we do for our riders, so thank you for everyone's help. Next year, the Area Games will be held at Stirrups 'n Strides.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS STATE GAMES

11 very excited riders headed to State Special Olympic Games in Tampa on May 20th. There were 110 athletes from around the State there to show off their skills and to dream of winning a medal. What a joy it was to watch our riders excel in Dressage, Working Trails and Western and English Equitation. Each rider was allowed to compete in a total of 2 classes each and out of the 21 classes they proudly brought home 5 Gold, 8 Silver and 3 Bronze medals. WOW! What an accomplishment. Congratulations to our riders, your hard work and determination made your dreams come true.

SIGNATURE SHOW SERIES

FUN, CHALLENGING, SELF WORTH, GROWTH, & ACCOMPLISHMENT: We have said this before & that is the reason we all work so hard to provide these shows for our riders. Once again Martha Delano is providing us classes in her show series for our riders to work towards High-Point Award's in the fall. Our 1st show was in April and we had 14 riders compete and our next one will be June 24th; we also will have one on September 16th & October 14th. This is a very early show, the riders are in the ring at 8:00 and we have 3 classes. Again, thank you to our volunteers who get up so early on a Sunday morning!!

SUMMER PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Where has the year gone? It seems like it has just flown by and summer is already here. We will end our fall and winter session on May 30th, we are taking the month of June off to give the horses some much needed rest and then we will have a 6 week session on **Tuesday** mornings starting on July 10th thru August 14th. We will only have 2 classes going on at the same time starting a 9:00. If you are interested in joining our summer

program please get with Betty at 352-427-3569. There will be limited space available. We are in need of volunteers for the summer also, so please sign up at the barn if you plan to come during the summer. Remember, volunteers are the backbone of the program and we couldn't provide this amazing program without you.

END OF THE YEAR PARTY

Our End of the Year Party will be held on **June 9th** at Stirrups 'n Strides. It is a pot luck lunch, so everyone please bring your favorite dish to share. Stirrups 'n Strides will provide the hamburgers, hotdogs and the drinks. Bring your bathing suit & cool off in the pool. Everyone always has a great time & this is our way of saying thank you for a great year. Everyone is invited, volunteers, riders and of course their families & friends. Sign up at the barn & let us know what you plan to bring or call Betty at 352-427-3569 to put your name on the list. Looking forward to seeing everyone at the party.

"SAVE THE DATE" "GOOD 'OL COUNTRY HOEDOWN"

Our second annual "Country Hoedown" will be held on December 1, 2012, please put it on your calendar now. We have a great line up of entertainment this year with our own Catherine Sears who just came in 1st place for the IMCA awards for best live performance! & also Deby Kelly coming all the way from Pennsylvania! Deby has a great voice; she must take after her late Aunt, Patsy Kline. We also have a professional MC to headline the show; save the date, you don't want to miss this great event. We also will be having a silent & Chinese auction with theme baskets. We need everyone to think of a theme & put together a basket for the auction. Last year's baskets were great, let's do it again this year & make it even better than last year!! Please contact Elaine Richter at: 352-620-5236 to reserve your tickets & to let her know what your theme basket will be. Again this year it will be held at the Ag Center auditorium next door to the Livestock Pavilion on 200A.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

May 30- Last day of fall/winter riding session
June 24th – Signature Show Series – Livestock Pavilion
June 15th-17th – Family Café Conference- Orlando
July 10th - Aug- 14th - 6 week summer riding session
Sept- 6th-9th- Summers End Horse Show
Sept – 15th – Volunteer Orientation
Sept – 25th – Fall/Winter riding session starts

Mission Statement

To provide therapeutic horseback riding and driving to anyone with physical, mental or emotional challenges, and to improve the quality of life for these individuals with the opportunity for emotional, educational and physical growth through horsemanship and competition.

OUR SPONSORS OUR "ANGELS"

Ocala Breeders Feed & Supply, Berrettini Feed, Seminole Feed, Mid West Hay, Cardinal Hill Farm (Norm Casse), North Marion Feed, Farrier, Jody Schaible, Farrier, Paul Bender, Ocala Equine Hospital (Robert Bloomer, DVM), Boomer Rowles,(Equine Dentist), Bryony Anderson (Ortho Bionomy), Mark Barrett (In Motion Productions), Dunkin Donuts, The Back Office (Dave Winters), Elgin Carelock (Diversified Event Productions), Quail Roost Foundation, Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation, Florida Thoroughbred Farm Managers Assoc.



4246 W. Hwy 318
Citra, Fl. 32113

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**Please accept my contribution to Stirrups 'n Strides Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc.
(a Not-For-Profit Organization)**

Name: _____

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**Please make checks payable to Stirrups 'n Strides) & send to 4246
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www.stirrupsnstrides.com & make a donation on pay pal.

**Contributions from this newsletter will be used to underwrite our
Scholarship program.**