

SOUNDS OF STIRRUPS 'N STRIDES

Quarterly Newsletter September 2010

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A Chat with Betty Gray

It is hard to believe that summer riding has come to an end and we are about to begin our Fall Season. Orientation for new and returning volunteers is September 18th and riding begins September 28th. Check out the sign up information detailed later on in this newsletter. We did a limited amount of riding on Tuesdays during the summer. I wish to thank the volunteers who came not only to help our students but to groom the horses, clean the barn and maintain the facility. Speaking of the barn, The Youth Group of the United Methodist Church of Ocala generously donated their time to paint and repair our barn. They worked hard for four days and the barn looks great. Jim Olson along with other volunteers also finished repairing and painting the office/storage building. So we are in good order to begin the Fall Season.

In June I attended the Family Café Conference at Disney World in Orlando. I was one of the presenters and my workshop was standing room only. This three day conference is extremely beneficial. It lets everyone know what is available in Florida for disabled children and adults. Over 9,000 people attended this year. If you would like more information about the conference for next year go to www.familycafe.net or you can call them at 1-888-309-café.

Be sure to check the list of up coming events at the end of this newsletter. We have a very busy fall and we need everyone's help. Our yard sale is Saturday, October 23rd. We need help to set up on the 22nd as well as the day of the sale. We also need help in collecting sale items. We will take everything but clothes or computers. Horse items sell well but I remember the fight that almost broke out last year over a youth bed!

In June we attended the Marion Saddle Club Show. Sixteen of our riders competed to work on their high point award for the end of the year.

Pat Treckman and I have been working on finding new ways to obtain grant funding. We recently applied to the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. We will hear about it in December. As we all realize the economy is not good and that makes it even worse for non-profits. Several of our funding sources have either been cut severely or have dried up completely. So please pay attention to all the fund raisers we have scheduled in the next few months and participate as much as you can. Also please check out our sponsor list and patronize them as often as possible.

We will be taking riders to Kansas City again this year in November. This will be the 10th year to make this wonderful trip where our riders compete for the National Championship title against riders from around the country.

One final thought—it would help us a great deal if you have an e-mail address for you to share it with us. It saves us money and keeps you in the loop. Please send them to me as soon as you can.

We welcome all our new & returning volunteers, you are the backbone of the program & hope you have a very rewarding experience while at Stirrups 'n Strides.

Thanks for all your help and I look forward to a great Fall Season for Stirrups 'n Strides.

Betty Gray

FROM SEATS TO SADDLES

Theresa Grimes has once again been putting together our most spectacular fund raiser. The event will take place November 1st through the 6th. If you would like to finish and paint a chair we still have some available and a milk jug as well. We definitely need you to help work the event which will take place during Mall hours at the Paddock Mall in front of Belks. The products are quite remarkable so be sure to tell your friends to stop by and make a bid or two.

HORSE SPONSORSHIP

Our horses continue to do themselves proud. They need your help. You can sponsor a horse for \$2,000 a year. This gives you barn signage, announcements in the newsletter and of course a picture with your horse. Another idea is to talk to any of the clubs you may belong to. The club can have fund raisers for the horse and come and have a picture taken with the members.

GOLF TOURNAMENT OCTOBER 9TH

Jim Olson not only helped Theresa Grimes sand and prepare chairs for the Seats to Saddles fund raiser but in his spare time he has been organizing a Golf Tournament along with Laney McMcGivern as an additional fundraiser for us. It will be held at Rainbow's End Golf Club on Saturday October 9th. We need sponsors if this is to be a success! You will receive lots of publicity and at the same time help put smiles on the faces of our students. There are packages available at \$500, \$250, \$150, and \$100. For more information call Jim Olson at 352-861-7185 or Betty Gray at 352-427-3569.

HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL WILL HAUNT "LAKE WEIR" ONCE AGAIN

Maddy Graham will once again repeat her most successful Halloween Fun House. Those that attended are still talking about last year's event and Maddy assures us she has even a bigger and scarier one for this year. The dates are Friday & Saturday October 29th & 30th. All the fun begins at 5 pm at the Florida Carriage Museum. If you need directions or more information give us a call at 352-427-3569. Maddy has also just accepted the position of Barn Manager for Stirrups 'n Strides.

FUND RAISER CRUISE

We set sail on January 30th 2011 for a seven night cruise of a life time on the "Freedom of the Seas". There is still time to sign up for a wonderful time and also to help S'N S raise some badly needed funds. The ship leaves from Port Canaveral. The first stop is at Cococay, Bahamas and then to St. Thomas and St. Maarten. For more information please contact Ridgemont Travel at 757-345-3335.

SPORTSABILITY

We will again this year attend Sportsability at the Ed Croskey Center on Martin Luther King Blvd. in Ocala. This is an event available to people with disabilities. This event showcases various activities including water sports and horseback riding. Last year we rode 50 people. We also will have a booth inside the gym to tell everyone about our program. The big day is Friday, October 1st. Activities begin at 10 am. If you are interested in volunteering for Sportsability please let Betty know.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Our annual Christmas Party will be Monday Evening on December 6th. We will be in the Ag Center's new building on Jacksonville Road or 200A. Bring a dish and join your friends, volunteers and students for a fun evening. Ham, turkey and drinks will be furnished. Santa Claus has promised to stop by.

QUESTION FOR JIM OLSON

Q: Is it possible for adults and children with disabilities to learn to drive a horse in harness?

A: Anyone can learn to drive and we have several clients who do so on a regular basis. As you can imagine we cannot use side walkers or leaders with a horse in harness, so the teacher is always in the cart with the student. We have a wheel chair ready cart for students with more difficult issues. The cart is designed for a smaller horse and our miniature horse, Amigo fits the bill. The cart has a ramp so we can push the wheel chair in and fasten it in place. We have 5 other horses that we drive. In order to have a fail safe system of driving, we use two sets of reins. The client uses one set and the instructor uses the other. At the present time our youngest driver is 5 years old, and our oldest driver won't tell me her age.

MEET EXTRODINARY VOLUNTEER MARIANNE HUGHES

Marianne Hughes and her husband Bob came to the Ocala area three years ago. It was a most fortunate move for S'NS. The people at her church mentioned our therapeutic riding center and Marianne was immediately intrigued. She says she has always loved horses but never before had the opportunity to work with or communicate with them. Remarkably, despite the fact that Marianne is blind she quickly learned not only to ride but to groom a horse. Her accomplishments have been many and she is currently working with Kathy Gray on a drill team event. Beepers are placed in the corners of the arena so Marianne knows how to guide her horse. Marianne quickly became almost a fixture at S'NS whether sweeping out the barn or helping new volunteers and students become acquainted with our program. Marianne says her favorite thing at S'NS is twofold. One is her satisfaction received when she touches a horse and grooms the coat and cleans the hooves. Number two is the friendship that these activities provide with each horse with which she works. When asked what the most difficult thing was for her, she replied it was the limitations that her blindness imposes upon her. She realizes that there are certain activities that are unsafe for her. Her consolation is in trying to do the best she can with the challenges she can accomplish.

Bob Hughes is a volunteer at S'NS as well and most often can be found harnessing, driving or spotting our cart horses. He and Marianne have been married 50 years come February and he is very supportive of her in whatever she decides to conquer. They have three children, a son and twin daughters and two granddaughters and one grandson. Marianne has been a musician for most of her life. She says music is her therapy. Bob also supports her guitar playing with his harmonica. Oh yes there is one other member of the family we have yet to mention—Sammy. Sammy is Marianne's seeing eye dog that has guided her for 9 ½ years.

Marianne wishes others with disabilities to know that there usually is a way to circumvent limitations or barriers. She believes that you need to discover what you can do and do it while remembering the heart of the word disabled is ABLE. Thank you Marianne you are one of the most ABLE people we know.

A CHAT WITH JODY SCHAIBLE

Q: How do you tend a puncture wound in a horse's hoof?

A: The first thing to remember is do not pull the object out. I had a horse, one time that had stepped on a piece of barbed wire. The wire was a long piece that had worked its way up into the leg of the horse. When pulled out it not only did further tissue damage but left residue of rust in the leg. Most often it is best to have it surgically removed. A nail or piece of wood could hit an artery and if you jerk it out the horse could suffer a great loss of blood. The first thing to do is to circle the item with a marker pen. Should the item fall out before the vet arrives this will serve as a marker for him. Next pack up the foot putting clean cotton around the wound then carefully wrap it. Get a vet to access the situation. Usually an x-ray will be taken to determine the seriousness of the wound and how best to treat it.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER!

September 18th is orientation for both new and returning volunteers. The time is from 8:30 am to 12 noon. The new volunteer form is on our web-site at www.stirrupsnstrides.com . Please try to print it out and bring it filled in with you on September 18th. Volunteer forms are needed from each person every year. Please confirm your attendance for orientation by either e-mailing Anita at agossett1embarqmail.com or call her at 352-817-6446.

September 28th is the first day of riding on Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

OTHER DATES OF INTEREST

- September 19th – Marion Saddle Club Show
- October 1st – Sportsability
- October 9th – Golf Tournament
- October 17th – Marion Saddle Club Show
- October 23rd – Yard Sale at S'N S
- October 29th & 30th – Halloween Festival
- November 1—6th From Seats to Saddles Fund Raiser
- December 6th—Monday Evening Christmas Party
- January 30th – Fundraising Cruise

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 /Dunkin Donuts / Tommy's Bar-B-Que/ Seminole Feed / Mid West Hay Kesmarc Rehab Center/ Cardinal Hill Farm (Norm Casse) / Farriers: Jody Schaible & Billy Bishop / Ocala Equine Hospital (Robert Bloomer, DVM) / North Marion Feed / Quail Roost Foundation



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Betty Gray (Executive Director)

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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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Address:

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Donation of: \$ _____

(Please make checks payable to Stirrups 'n Strides) & send to 4246 W. Hwy 318, Citra, FL. 32113

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