



Southern Delaware Therapeutic and Recreational Horseback Riding, Inc.

Riding Forward!

Fall 2010

SDTRHR Seeking New Home to Meet Expenses

Supporters, SDTRHR desperately needs your help and ingenuity in identifying new sources of financial support for our therapeutic riding program. SDTRHR is struggling to meet its monthly expenses because contributions have been decreasing at the same time as costs are holding steady or increasing.

SDTRHR's board members are pursuing all options to obtain needed income in the short term while seeking a long-term solution in the form of a new and more economical location for the program. In the first nine months of 2010, SDTRHR received only two-thirds of the income we received over the same period in 2009. Grant income and direct public support fell off 68% and 31% respectively. The 13th Annual Beach Ride and Walk charity event brought in only 2/3 the proceeds it has historically brought to SDTRHR.

On the expense side, board (\$1,350 monthly) and overall care (farrier, veterinarian, etc.) of our three talented therapy horses is our largest expense. Unfortunately, these expenses do not decrease in times of economic recession!

We have been very fortunate to provide our services from Kershaw Acres, which is a beautiful facility where our riders love

to come and our horses receive top-notch care. Karen Kershaw has worked with SDTRHR to make space available and affordable for us. However, it has meant providing our services from a temporary home that has now lasted 3 years. Due to the tough economic times, we started paying a \$50 weekly arena rental fee at the beginning of 2010. One Saturday during most months, a horse show is held at the facility which inhibits us from holding lessons that day and diminishes our income. For all these reasons, we are actively seeking a stable or land on which we can operate more economically by providing self-care to our horses and expand our services to children and adults with disabilities in Southern Delaware. We want to add a Horses for Heroes component to serve veterans with disabilities in our community.

President, Georgia Truitt and Vice President, Kelly Boyer have been giving interviews to the media regarding our urgent need, but so far no appropriate location has been identified. We have continued our active local fundraising efforts. The board has launched a new effort to identify possible sources of grants. We are hopeful the program will be put on sound footing in the future, and are focusing our energies on meeting the immediate urgent need for income. We welcome any support or suggestions from you!!

Featured Rider ~ Alyssa Hudson

Our featured rider is Alyssa Hudson. Alyssa is 8 years old and is in third grade at East Millsboro Elementary School. Alyssa has cerebral palsy and has been riding at SDTRHR for 3 years.

Instructor, Georgia Truitt is happy with Alyssa's progress, "Alyssa's posture on the horse as well as her balance have really improved in the last 6 months. She sits up straight and steers through cones and over poles and the bridge. Alyssa is a very brave and an extremely determined rider. She wants to 'go fast' (trot), go outside, and play horsketball in every lesson. Sometimes it is hard to squeeze it all in!"

When asked what she likes best about riding at SDTRHR, Alyssa says "I like riding fast and going over the bridge. Lucy is my favorite horse and I think riding her outside is a lot of fun!"



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Alyssa's mom, Jessica, says that Alyssa has enjoyed real benefits from riding. "Her posture has improved; it's great to see her sitting so tall and straight. In addition, horseback riding has given her something to be proud of. Alyssa has always had a very determined and independent spirit. This fosters that feeling and is a testament that she is capable of so many wonderful things! When riding, Alyssa is able to use both arms to steer, gives commands to the horse in a loud voice, and never stops smiling!"

In addition to riding, Alyssa enjoys spending time with her family, especially her grandparents, wrestling with her brothers Lucas and Tyler, and going out to eat at her favorite restaurants. She has a lot of friends at school and has wonderful teachers who always encourage her. When she is home, Alyssa spends time riding her bike, watching movies, and playing games on the computer.

Please Welcome SDTRHR New Riders

Brady, Aundonia and Sarah C. !

Miki Mathe, Featured Volunteer

SDTRHR is proud to feature one of our priceless volunteers: Miki Mathe. We are very lucky to have Miki as a volunteer! His love for the horses really shows, especially with the ladies (the mares LOVE Miki!). Miki also has a great relationship with all the riders and loves to talk sports and share a good laugh with them Here is Miki's story.

~ My wife and I moved to Milton from Hockessin, Delaware, where I worked at DuPont for over 41 years. I have always been an active person with many hobbies. I enjoy fishing, hunting, wood carving, gardening, and spending time with my six grandchildren, who range in age from 8 months to 11 years.

~ I used to ride a motorcycle, but when we moved to southern Delaware, I found a wonderful place to ride horses (Singletree Stables in Seaford), which replaced my motorcycle. I enjoy not only the riding but also handling and caring for the horses. When I heard about SDTRHR, I knew that I

just had to get involved.

~ Being a volunteer at SDTRHR is one of the most rewarding things I do. It is so awesome to see the change that takes place with the riders after they get on the horse. Once mounted and moving, they experience joy and excitement, which they each express differently. It's just priceless. And the horses also seem to know that they carry special cargo. I'm pleased that in some small way I contribute to giving the riders that positive experience.~



In Loving Memory of Karen Ritter

Sadly, SDTRHR lost a great friend and huge supporter this past October – Karen Ritter. She is the mother of Sarah Ritter who began riding with the program approximately five years ago. Not only did Karen support Sarah's riding, but she also contributed greatly to SDTRHR. Karen was the volunteer who created the doggy/kitty bag sales that raised thousands of dollars for the SDTRHR. Karen also offered her assistance in many other areas. She helped to revise the SDTRHR brochure and organized the pictures for the spring beach ride. Karen was the power source for a lot of behind the scenes work for SDTRHR. Plus, we will sadly miss her smile and sense of humor! We greatly appreciate everything Karen and her family have contributed to the program. We offer our deepest sympathies to her loved ones. We are also very grateful and touched that her family suggested donations go to SDTRHR in lieu of flowers. SDTRHR truly appreciates the donations made in Karen's name from these friends: Teresa Geaney, Joseph and Anita Williams and West Branch Valley Assoc. of Realtors, Inc. We will miss you, Karen.

Welcome Lucy to SDTRHR's Family!!!

After months of searching and trying out horses from Chadd's Ford, PA to Delmar, DE, SDTRHR has found our latest four-legged therapist...Lucy! Lucy is a beautiful chestnut Quarter Horse mare. She is 14 years old and just the right size for most of our riders and side-walkers. Lucy knows her stuff! She has an impressive show background in both English and Western disciplines where she won a lot of ribbons. Lucy is also a very fast learner! She is already great with the ramp, horseketball, sidewalkers and the other unusual things she has had to adapt to in the therapeutic environment.

Unfortunately, Lucy was not donated. Lucy's owner is allowing SDTRHR to pay for her over time; we could use your help to help us pay for Lucy.



Thank you to all of the people who contacted us about donating potential horses and for those who allowed us to try them. We received more than 20 calls and went and rode several very nice horses. The qualities required in a potential therapy horse are hard to find. We hope Lucy will enjoy being a part of the SDTRHR family for many years to

Skip Finds New Home

Whimsical Horse Rescue helped us find a new home for Skip with a family of 5 in Princess Anne, Maryland, including a dad, mom, girl, boy and a gelding. We are so happy she has a new loving home!



SDTRHR Riders Strut Their Stuff

Pride, encouragement, joy and teamwork were in abundance at SDTRHR's horse show on Saturday, November 20! Thirteen riders showed off their riding skills by competing in horsemanship, sitting and posting trot, cone-weaving and horsketball classes. Congratulations to: Alex Layton, Alyssa Hudson, Andrew Townsley, Joey Peet, Angelia Barnes, Aundenia Nason, Sasha Hudson, Sarah Comeau, Sarah Ritter, Haley VonRitchie, Olivia Davidson, Josh Parker and Anna Stroup. Dorothy Dayton did an awesome job judging. Thanks to First State Awards for donating ribbons and thanks to the Davidson family for donating donuts, coffee and hot chocolate on such short notice. Thanks to all of the volunteers for donating their time to help make the show fun and successful! Thanks to Kelly and Pete Boyer for bringing handsome Ranger!



Donors' Corner

A big thank you to our recent donors!

- Melissa Reed of Hey Good Looking Salon and staff donated the proceeds of 4 hours' services at the salon - \$356! See picture on our Web site.
- A \$2,340 Christopher Reeves Foundation grant in July of 2010-a HUGE thanks to Laurie Vonasek for submitting the grant application!
- A \$500 grant from the Rehoboth Sunrise Rotary in August 2010.
- Nicola Pizza donated \$119.75 from our non-profit night. Thanks to everyone who came out to support us!
- SDTRHR raised \$1,400 at our annual yard sale at Donut Connection in August. Thanks to all who donated items for sale and helped with set-up and sales.
- Blue Hen Homeowners Assoc. donated \$75.
- And finally, thanks to all who participated in SDTRHR's 13th Annual Beach Ride & Walk!

Help Our Supporters Help Us!

Visit SDTRHR's Tree at Grotto's Grand Slam Through January 2!



Thanks to Leigh Nagy and Alice Minor of Minor Bird in Milford for sponsoring and decorating a tree at **Grotto's Grand Slam** for SDTRHR. It includes decorations with each of our rider's names on them. The tree that receives the most donations at each location will receive an additional \$250! So, please visit & tell your friends and family to stop in and make a donation!

Shop at the **Blooming Boutique** in Lewes between 5 and 7 pm on Saturday, December 11, and they will donate 25% of your purchases! No flyer needed.



Dine at **Friendly's** in Rehoboth between 5 and 8 pm on Thursday, December 16, and a portion of the proceeds will go to benefit SDTRHR! No flyer needed.

In Memory of Eileen T. "Bugsy" Hanna

Although we at SDTRHR did not have the privilege of knowing Eileen, the loss felt by her family and friends in her passing is palpable. Eileen clearly loved life and understood the power of the horse to impact lives! She competed in barrel racing and for the past nine years she ranked in the top ten of the First Frontier Pro-Rodeo Circuit finals in Harrisburg. Throughout her courageous battle with cancer and treatment, she continued working, mentoring children, riding and competing. SDTRHR sends sincere condolences to Eileen's family and friends, and gratefully acknowledges the very generous contributions made to SDTRHR in her name by: Paula Smith, Douglas & Linda Twyford, Maclean Macleod, Sharon Jack, Judy and Nick Saldi, Steven & Denise Obee, Mary Joan & Joseph Denisco, Rita Capelle, James & Patricia Jack, Kate, Michael, Nora and Evelyn Conroy and the Radowicz Family.



Photo courtesy of E.L. Scofield

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