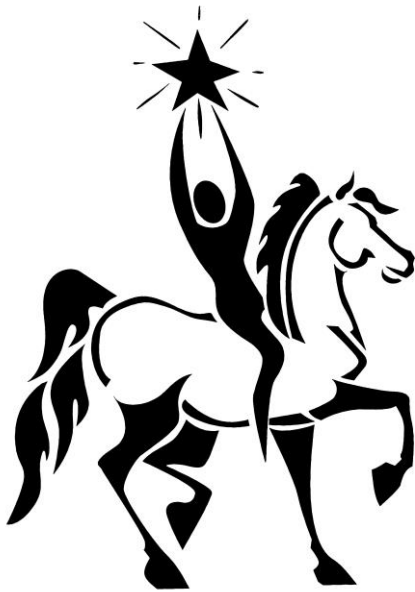


Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Inc.

Newsletter

Winter 2011



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Therapeutic Equestrian Center (TEC)

**537 Northampton Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
413-532-1462**

**info@equestriantherapy.org
www.equestriantherapy.org**

President's Message

What a year! A fantastic "Future Begins Here", a series of super fund raising dinners, a new electrical system and cooling equipment in the arena, a great riding year for all participants plus a super Horse Show; overcame a hurricane, an earthquake and a tornado followed by 14 inches of snow in October to make 2011 the best year - and possibly the most challenging year yet for TEC.

A great vote of thanks to all who have joined in celebrating and coordinating the events which keep the program alive and vibrant.

We are particularly grateful to all who have renewed their support for Friends of TEC for the 2012 year and to the new supporters who have joined them. Their help eases concerns for TEC's ability to accommodate all of those children in 2012 that are presently on TEC's waiting lists. If you are not a current supporter and if your holiday gift giving will include a donation to an agency which is concerned with children's needs, we hope that you will include TEC in those wonderful plans.

To all of you, to our membership and to all those who attended, "Future", dinners or the Horse Show, your TEC Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteers extends a huge thank you and wishes for the happiest and healthiest of holiday seasons.

Sue Ellen Panitch, President

The Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Inc. (TEC) is a private 501(c)(3) organization incorporated in 1984 dedicated to providing physical, learning and recreational opportunities to special needs children and adults.

TEC is governed by a Board of Directors and managed by the Executive Director.

President

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Vice President

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Secretary

Gordon Alexander

Treasurer

Timothy Deshaies

Board of Directors

Dr. John Cowley

Amy Craven

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Thomas Wilson

Executive Director

Judith Zedonis

Barn Manager

Nora Britton

Instructors

Nora Britton

Karen Dahmke

Nancy Karp

Newsletter Editor

Judy Zedonis



PATH
INTERNATIONAL

Professional Association of Therapeutic
Horsemanship International

— MEMBER —

Director's Ramblings

TEC's Horse Show for 2011 was once again a huge success. Luck was with us and Saturday, October 22nd was a beautiful fall day. Over forty riders participated during the day. The first class was at 10 AM and the last class ended about 4:30 PM. It was a long day but well worth the effort. TEC's volunteers did their part to make sure all of our riders had a great time. I can't say it enough, our organization relies on the generosity of our volunteers to make our program possible. Without volunteers willing to dedicate their time and energy to the program TEC could not exist.

There were some added surprises this year.

Special Thanks to Barb Willard & Pete McLoughlin of Stillwater Stables for bringing their team of beautiful Shire Draft Horses, Flo & Buddy, to our event in the morning.

The afternoon classes were treated to the surprise appearance of two beautiful Paso Fino horses from Nuestras Raices (www.nuestra-raices.org) in Holyoke. Thanks to Danny and Star, and Manny and Surprise for introducing all of us at TEC to the rare and beautiful horses that area national treasure of Puerto Rico.

Many thanks to Cecile Ploran who once again provided the luncheon for our show. A delicious buffet from Hamel's Restaurant was available throughout the day.

It was truly a magical day, for those of you who missed it, we will do it again next year. Hope you can attend!

The following weekend was quite different the snow storm on Oct 29th knocked down trees and power lines at Jericho. Power was not restored for 9 days. TEC did not sustain any real damage but we did have to cancel classes until power and phone service was restored. Things have pretty much returned to normal as we approach the Holidays and TEC's winter break. Classes will end before Christmas and resume Mid January.

Wishing you all many joyful hours spent with family, friends and loved ones. Happy Holidays!

Judy,
*Executive Director/
Newsletter Editor*

A Parent's Story

I was never a parent who set out looking for the miracle to cure autism. I know that this neurological disorder affects how the child processes the world and that there is no magic pill that is going to change this experience for him. It has always been my conviction that God makes a child the way he is meant to be and that we, as parents, are here to help our child get through life and be a successful member of society.

No child is broken and needs to be fixed. Each child is himself. Furthermore, after fifteen years of teaching, I know that there is no such thing as "normal".

Early on, when my son was diagnosed with autism, I had heard about horse therapy and quickly dismissed it. Then this past summer I was offered horse back therapy for physical therapy over the summer from the Granby School District. In my mind, using a horse for this type of therapy made sense but I had lingering concerns. My son is aggressive with animals and I feared how he might act towards a horse but I figured I would give it a shot. When the time came, I expected that he would not want to do the therapy but, much to my surprise, he got up on the horse the first day. He became calm, focused and able to control his body. He did not mind the physical therapy and seemed to be at one with the animal. Much to my surprise, he was gentle with the horse and not aggressive at all.

Over the summer, he looked forward to being with his horse Lacy and enjoyed the activities they did together. No matter how his week was, he was always able to connect with his horse. It seemed to give him something that he could control in a world in which he struggled to understand the many unwritten rules everyone else seemed to know. At the end of therapy sessions, he was calm and seemed to be more organized – as if he was getting the stimulus he needed from the motion of the horse.

This Fall he was in his first competition at TEC. Afterwards, he showed everyone his ribbon. To understand the significance of this, one has to know that he is not interested in anything relating to sports or competition especially if it involves socializing. But he loved that Horse Show Day and he could not have been more proud of himself.

I think I can understand the miracle that people observe with children with autism participating in horse therapy. It is the connection that they have with the animal, the calming nature that it creates and the bond that we all hope they will learn to share with other people.

As an educator, I can observe the connection that is made and the confidence that it gives the child. Riding has set rules for safety. Unlike most of their life, the horse can be controlled. It is the type of structure that they crave in the world but which is so hard for them to find.

I look forward to the one hour a week of the world the way my son would like it with his horse Lacy (or Nugget if Lacy is taking a break). It allows me to give my child something that he needs and it renews my hope for his own kind of normal.

by Patricia Kasulinous, parent



Cecile Ploran: Honored at Harvest Dinner

A fabulous combination of food and wine pairings paired up to make for a fabulous, sold out fund raiser for TEC on November 7th at the restaurant Eighty Jarvis.

Working with the Eighty Jarvis Chef Nicholas Aldrich and Sous Chef Nick Hayes and United Distributors Representative Mike Brunelle, owner Jeff Aldrich designed an elegant Harvest Dinner and supported the small silent auction which accompanied the meal with Eighty Jarvis Gift certificates where Mr. Brunelle added a magnum of wine. Staff and guests had such a great time that to Mr. Aldrich's question addressed to all, "Do you want to do it again next year?", there was a resounding "YES!!!" So watch your newsletter for information for Harvest Dinner 2012 and book early!

The evening was the perfect venue for the TEC Board of Directors to present Honorary Board Member Cecile Ploran with the new silver TEC intaglio medallion by James Sutter to which Mr. Sutter had added Mrs. Ploran's birthstone at the TEC Logo star. It was inscribed "for all you do". Mrs. Ploran has been on the TEC Board for eight years. She gives the Luncheon served at the children's annual horse show each fall TEC, does the wonderful baskets featured by TEC at The Future Begins Here and other TEC events and is responsible for major work at the TEC arena. If TEC is likened to "Cinderella", she is indeed our Godmother!



The Therapeutic Equestrian Center Newsletter

2nd Annual OpaOpa TEC Fundraiser

Get out your 2012 calendars and mark January 23rd for the Second Annual Outrageous Party Activity at OPA OPA in Southampton where TEC supporters and friends will gather for a Monday evening of food and festivities to benefit TEC's Programs of riding therapy for children.

Starting at 6:30, with no cover charge, guests will be able to enjoy beverage service by local celebrity bar tenders, order off the menu and enjoy a casual post holiday evening. In addition, guests will have a chance to bid on both a bar auction and items at a small silent auction.

This could be the perfect opportunity to fill in on the gifts, you didn't get at the holidays!!!

TEC Board member Dr. John Cowley is in charge of the event. Look for more information on the TEC website. TEC will also e-mail information to members who have furnished their e-mail addresses to the TEC office.

Congratulation to Heather Davis,

TEC volunteer, in her title role in Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Sorcerer", a comic operetta presented by Valley Light Opera this November. She is currently in their production of *Annie*, which opens in January. Don't miss it!

TEC Horse Show 2011 - Our Horses and their riders

Check out our website for more pictures



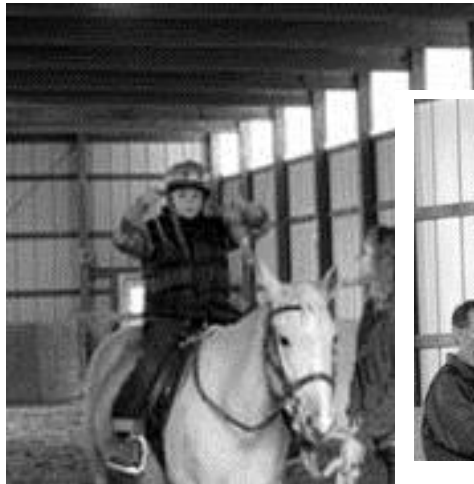
Luna



Lacey



Baxter



Nugget



Layla



Cinder



Gizmo

TEC Calendar of Events

Dec 18th: Holiday Celebration TEC & Jericho

Jan 17th: Start of TEC's Session #1 for 2012

Jan 23rd: 2nd Annual OpaOpa Fundraiser

May 6th: "Future Begins Here" Holyoke Mall

For more info Call TEC at 413-532-1462

Watch for More Special Events To be Announced

How Can You Help TEC?

Our Therapeutic riding program provides a tremendous amount of benefit to individuals with disabilities. But the care of the horses and facility makes the program quite costly to operate. You can make a difference in many ways.

Sponsor a rider

Sponsor a horse

Support TEC's Fundraising events

United Way for TEC: The Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Inc. is a qualified 501(c)(3) Agency. TEC qualifies as a designated receiver of donations through the United Way.

Florence Savings Bank Customers' Choice Community Grants Program: Each year, Florence Savings Bank donates to local, non-profit organizations. FSB customers have the opportunity to cast a ballot to decide where the money will go. Please cast your vote for TEC. This annual program runs from Jan 1st to Dec 31st.

We've also joined MissionFish - Ebay's charitable giving program, so you can support TEC while buying or selling on EBay

If you are interested in making a contribution to help support TEC please contact the office at 413-532-1462 or info@equestriantherapy.org. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

We do need and appreciate your help.

TEC Class Schedule

Jan/Feb 2012 – Session #1

Monday:

Jan 23 to Feb 27, 2012 – 5 week session (no class 2/20)
Groups at; 4:00 PM, 5:00 PM & 6:00 PM

Tuesday:

Jan 17 to Feb 28, 2012 – 6 week session (no class 2/21)
Groups at; 9:30, 10:30, 11:30AM, & 12:30PM

Wednesday:

Jan 18 to Feb 29, 2012 - 6 week session (no class 2/22)
Groups at; 4:00 PM, 5:00 PM & 6:00 PM

Thursday:

Jan 19 to Mar 1, 2012 – 6 week session (no class 2/23)
Groups at; 4:00 PM, 5:00 PM & 6:00 PM

Friday:

Jan 20 to Mar 2, 2012 – 6 week session (no class 2/24)
Groups at; 4:00 PM, 5:00 PM & 6:00 PM

Session #2 will start in March

TEC – Cancellation Policy

Jan & Feb weather can be unpredictable. Remember TEC follows the same schedule for cancellations as the Holyoke School system. If Holyoke schools are closed due to bad weather TEC will cancel classes. TEC will also cancel because of extreme cold.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call TEC at 413-532-1462 to find out if classes have been cancelled. If we are unavailable to answer the phone there will be a message on the answering machine at TEC with that information.

TEC WISH LIST

*Hay, Bagged Shavings,
Corner Feed Tubs, Water Buckets,
Cat Food (dry) & Kitty Litter,
Cleaning Products, Garbage Bags,
Hot & Cold Cups,
Keurig coffee, tea or hot chocolate,
Kleenex, Paper Towels, Toilet Paper,
Gift Certificates to:
Feed Stores; Tack Shops;
Office Supply Stores & Hardware Stores,
Snacks & Drinks for the volunteers & riders*