

RIDING HIGH!

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM
CHESAPEAKE THERAPEUTIC RIDING



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A RIDERS' STORY - CHARLOTTE



Charlotte was born in April 2006, with an undiagnosed syndrome. She has significantly low muscle tone, microcephaly and a seizure disorder. At two, Charlotte began therapeutic riding lessons at CTR. When she started, she was standing with support, but had not made much progress with motor skills.

Now, seven months later, Charlotte is taking some steps with support, kneels really well, and can maintain quadruped position for about a minute. She has also begun using her legs to hold on to me when I carry her on my hip. It was such a surprise when she starting doing these new things. Charlotte takes part in many therapeutic activities each week, so we know they all work together to help her progress. As one of Charlotte's PT commented recently, her posture is really wonderful and she credited the therapeutic riding for this. We are glad that CTR is part of Charlotte's therapy team. — *Erin Welch*

HORSING AROUND - VICTOR

Victorious Valentino ("Victor") is a registered Quarter Horse gelding. He came to CTR as a gift from Carla Perri when his show career ended — he has Navicular Syndrome, an ailment in horses affecting the heels of the front hooves. Carla wanted him to have a good job that was less strenuous, and yet keep him fit and active. She also knew that his great attitude, willingness and patience would suit him well to become a therapeutic riding horse. Though Victor's sense of humor and playfulness shines through regularly, he is "rock solid" when it comes to working with our riders and volunteers. Victor is the tallest horse in the herd at 16.2 hands and he is also the youngest - he will be 8 years old in March. Welcome to the herd!



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By the way

Two additional "new" horses were donated and joined us since the move to Tuckaway: Sally and Captain. We will feature them in future editions!

BETH COLE NAMED 2008 INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR NARHA REGION TWO



Each year, NARHA centers all over North America nominate an instructor of the year. Our region contains Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Washington, DC. There are scores of centers and *hundreds* of instructors!

On November 1st at NARHA's annual international convention in Hartford, CT, Beth was presented with the Instructor of the Year award for our region. Seven other instructors were similarly honored from other regions, out of the 1000+ therapeutic riding instructors in North America.

Beth has been involved in therapeutic riding for over twenty years, and is currently CTR's head instructor. Some of her students have been riding with her for over 10 years! But that was not enough... She has mentored several new instructors through the arduous 2-year process to become certified by NARHA, she has developed and presents training courses for volunteers, schools and trains horses, and is an

active rider herself. Beth is also a certified by EAGALA (Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Assoc.) as an Equine Specialist facilitating Equine Assisted Learning experiences. All this and Beth loves to muck stalls, care for the herd and share her love of horses with everyone she meets.

We are proud and fortunate to have such a knowledgeable, sharing and caring professional on our team! Congratulations Beth!

A SAMPLE OF CTR'S SPONSORS—THANKS TO ALL!

We have been very fortunate this year in attracting funding from various corporations and foundations, as well as individuals. Grants and gifts are one lifeline in our ability to carry out our healing mission.

CTR received funding from **The Wiessner Foundation** this year to purchase dressage saddles, bridles, safety stirrups and leathers, as well as other equipment essential to support therapeutic riding. We were able to buy an

additional surcingle for our riders who do not have strong trunk control or balance. The combination of the surcingle and pad allows the warmth of the horse to relax stiff muscles while the walking gait of the horse is similar to the walking gait of a person, allowing the rider to experience mobility in a unique manner.

Carla Perri of Perri's Leather helped us stretch our funding even farther by selling us our new tack at

wholesale prices, thereby allowing CTR to maximize the funding.

Soon there will be large piles of stone dust to reestablish pathways for people and horses, as well as level all the stalls. The **Vulcan Co.** has donated literally tons of fine stone to accomplish this important task.

Applebee's in Bel Air – We had a beautiful day and lots of energetic volunteers to help

with our Summer Car Wash. We raised \$810 to help with our move to Tuckaway Farm. They also supplied catered dishes for our holiday party! We continue to encourage everyone to patronize the Applebee's in Bel Air and make sure you tip well as these good folks have always stepped up to support CTR

Finally, we are grateful to all who contributed the \$1700 needed to finish the stall refurbishment project.

THE BOARDWALK— JEAN SEILER

Jean Seiler, R.N., joined CTR's board of directors this fall. She is the Program Coordinator for the Heart Aware Program at St. Joseph's Medical Center and a weekend Nursing Supervisor at Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital.

She earned her B.S. in Psychology at Towson State University and is currently pursuing her Masters in

Nonprofit Management at the College of Notre Dame.

A lifelong horsewoman, Jean continues to ride in Harford County's fox hunting country. In 2007, she was actively involved with the Washington County Humane Society in the biggest horse rescue ever in the state of Maryland. One of the ponies rescued, Roxi (at

left), now resides at Jean's farm.

"It has been said that 'in riding a horse we borrow freedom', which represents to me the overall mission of therapeutic riding. CTR is an opportunity to share my understanding of the



positive impact of horses in our lives."

Welcome to the Board and to CTR!

BEL AIR LIONS SUPPORT CTR - AND VICE VERSA



Cathy Schmidt was the evening speaker recently at a Bel Air Lions Club meeting. The officers graciously made a donation to the CTR operations fund — and asked for help! Doug Dewitt asked if CTR would be interested in donating the use of a horse trailer for the inaugural offering of holiday wreaths for their Annual Christmas Tree Sale. This event is the biggest fund raiser the Lions Club holds each year. We said, "Sure!"

Pictured are Pete Arnold (l) and Bob Grue (r).

FUTURE LINK LINKS UP WITH CTR

In September, CTR became a site for Harford County Public School's *Future Link Program*. Future Link provides real work experience as volunteers for people with special needs between the ages of 19 and 21.

Kara (at top) and Terry come four days

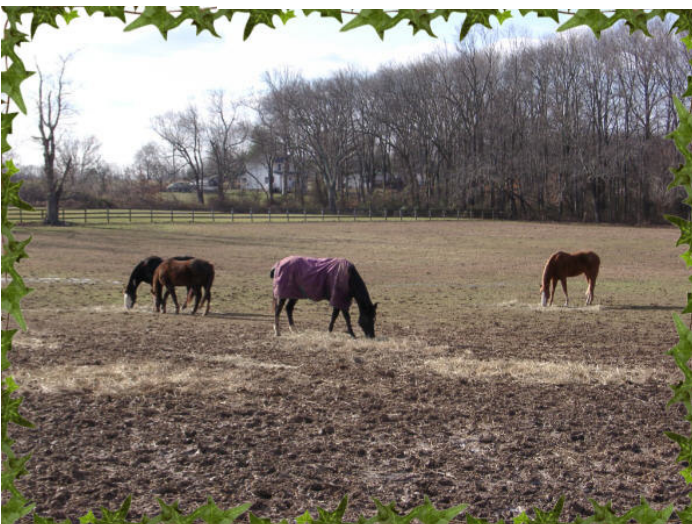
a week with their job coaches for approximately 1 ½ hours to provide horse keeping services for CTR's herd (mucking stalls, cleaning and filling buckets, dropping hay and setting up evening feed).

Since starting their volunteer work at CTR, they have im-

proved their reading and math skills, as well as developed their ability to prioritize and make decisions. Teamwork and social skills are a priority in working at CTR because the horses depend on Kara and Terry for helping to maintain their clean and healthy home.



PHOTO GALLERY—RIDE ON!



MORE PHOTOS! BOOTS ON!



SO MANY EASY WAYS TO DONATE....

There are so many ways to give to CTR *without even having to write a check:*



iGive - Thank you to the over 20 people who signed up so far for iGive! As seen on our website and in past issues of our newsletter, you can donate to CTR just by *shopping on line* — through www.iGive.com. The stores listed give a percentage of your purchase to your listed cause. Take a minute and sign up today - it is very easy!

Combined Federal Campaign - **Attention all federal employees:** please keep CTR in mind when you choose the charitable organizations to receive your contributions through the Combined Federal Campaign in 2009. CTR is an approved organization with the Chesapeake Bay Area CFC (Code #54429).

The Mill of Bel Air - The next time you visit The Mill of Bel Air, make sure you sign up and become a Club Member for CTR. The Mill will donate 1% of your purchase when you mention that you are a CTR Club Member. We purchase the majority of our supplies there including bedding and feed for the herd. They are located in Bel Air, Black Horse, Hereford and Whiteford.

United Way – All employees of companies who are encouraged to give to the United Way can donate all or a portion to CTR! Please contact your HR Department for details. Encourage your friends and relatives to consider CTR as well.

BJ's Wholesale Club – membership renewal and new memberships. For every new membership and renewal, CTR earned \$5. Whether your membership was about to expire or not, an additional 15 months were added to your membership *for the price of twelve* . CTR was able to raise \$110 in August 2008. Another fund raiser will be held in February 2009 for those who didn't get a chance to participate in the last one.

HOOFBEATS AT TUCKAWAY



It's been a while since our last newsletter, but then again, I've had my hands full with seeing a dream come to fruition. How many people get to say that they are living their dream? I feel like the luckiest person on earth. I have always found solace in horses and now I get to work with them daily in a therapeutic setting.

As 2008 winds down and we look forward to 2009, I express my gratitude and deep appreciation to those who have invested their time, talent and treasure in CTR. I count my blessings every day for the people who help make

our therapeutic riding program a dynamic, safe and non-judgmental place to learn and grow for our riders, their families, our volunteers and me.

As this year comes to a close, I can't help but think of how *hope* has played such a big role in CTR moving to the next level. Two words, "little hope," can mean so many different things depending on the context of communication. Little hope can mean something terrible for someone in dire circumstances. Little hope can also mean that there may be an opportunity for something better if everything comes together in a positive way. Little Hope can be a bedraggled, half-dead kitten found on the side of the road and rescued. The phrase could mean both negative and positive.

To me, hope is what gets me out of bed every morning before the alarm goes off. Hope helps me take each challenge and triumph in stride, knowing that I have the support of wonderful people and horses. Hope allows me to see the joy in our riders' eyes and see the love of their families almost every day. Even a *little* hope is better than no hope at all.

My hope is a joyous and fulfilling new year for everyone! Living the dream...

Cathy

SHARING GIFTS TO
ENCOURAGE HEALING
AND CELEBRATE LIFE



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WE'RE ON THE WEB!!!

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WHY WE ARE HERE, DOING WHAT WE DO....

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding, Inc. is dedicated to providing a unique healing and fun experience. Through the kindness of our horses and volunteers, CTR's riders and families can find hope, growth and compassion.

We are committed to provide the best encounter possible in a healing and loving environment. Our activities are carefully designed to challenge, draw out and encourage our riders, their families, and even our volunteers. Our aim is to cultivate self esteem and a sense of accomplishment all around.

Our equine teammates are schooled in the nuances of their job as a therapeutic mount. They love their work, and can provide us with insights beyond our expectations.

ALTHOUGH MANY AFFLICTIONS CAN NOT BE "CURED," NEARLY ANYONE MAY BE HEALED.

IT IS OUR PLEDGE TO DO OUR VERY BEST.

ET CETERA

Hope

Hope, as we named her, was found by Amy Mangold, our instructor in training, November 13, 2008, on the side of the road just as darkness was falling. Her little eyes glowed as the headlights of passing cars sped by. She was so cold, wet and dirty that she probably wouldn't have made it through the night. Her pupils were dilated and she couldn't stop shivering. We cleaned her up as best we could and wrapped her in dry towels before tucking her into a cardboard box to keep warm. We rubbed her emaciated body to help stimulate circulation and gave her some food and water. She had a severe respiratory infection that made breathing difficult and her cornea and iris are fused in her right eye from infection or trauma. We started her on antibiotics and eye drops and with a few regular meals, she has perked up considerably, gained weight and is now the *Ambassador* in the Tack House. She is a "one kitten wrecking ball" and plays with anything she can get her little paws on. She loves to be picked up and held. It just goes to show, with a Little Hope....



Tuckaway Farm

CTR moved into Tuckaway Farm on September 1, during Labor Day weekend. We had many angels help us with the move, hauling tack trunks, tack, brushes and horses to our new home. Everyone stayed and helped to organize and clean everything too. Over the past few months, we have been able to organize the tack house and barn so that everything is labeled and easy to find. Thank you to everyone who helped out on that holiday weekend and in the subsequent months to make our transition into our new farm go smoothly—especially owners Rhonda and Bucky Kidd who made it all possible.

What's Happening at CTR???

The first lesson/activity session of 2009 begins the week of January 11th!!

Volunteers are needed more than ever as the programs expand — volunteer training opportunities will be announced as scheduled in the next few weeks.

Red Cross Training (first aid and CPR) specifically for CTR will be held at the Level Fire Co., February 14th. If you are interested in attending let us know. (Cost to us is \$60 for both trainings.)

Visit our web site for the latest updates and info!! Happy New Year....