

Home of Therapeutic Riding, Inc.



SUMMER 2011

Thanks to Our Friends at Michigan International Speedway!

After some careful equine consideration, some walking around, and an apple or two, Maizy picked **Abby Austin** to attend Michigan International Speedway Kids Day on June 17th. What an amazing day for one of our TRI riders! We'll let **Lyndsay Austin** (Abby's mom) take it from here.

Dear TRI, MIS (Michigan International Speedway) and GFS (Gordon Food Service),

*I want to thank you all for an AWESOME time on June 17th. I had no idea what I was in for but as soon as we entered MIS I knew it was going to be unbelievable. All the employees who work for MIS were extremely helpful in directing us where we needed to go to get to the suite. As we walked around the track it was so amazing and I thought, "What we have been missing?" As we were up watching the practice, **Jeff from GFS** (we were in the GFS suite) approached us and asked "Is one of you girls Abby?" He then took us into the suite and introduced our other two hosts. They were so friendly and fantastic with the kids that in no time we felt like we were at home. As the other kids started coming in, they kept letting us know what fun activities the day was going to bring. To our surprise, they had a whole day planned for the kids.*

One of the surprises was the ARCA drivers took time out to come and meet the kids and sign autographs. To see the faces of 11 kids (not to mention the parents and grandparents) in AWE was awesome. As the ARCA drivers left, they said they had yet another surprise for us. The drivers decided that no matter who won the race, they wanted all of us in the Winner's Circle to participate in the celebration. You know that got everyone more pumped up.



Abby Austin and Charlotte Hanley celebrate in the Winner's Circle

*As the NASCAR practices were about to end and the ARCA race was about to start, GFS handed out goodie bags for all the kids more and more smiles.... After we had eaten a great meal, the surprises kept coming. Three NASCAR drivers stopped by to pump them up again. To see these drivers go out of their way for these kids was absolutely amazing. It was an honor for me to be there and share this excellent day with all the kids and their families. As the races began, you could feel the energy in the suite. After about 85 laps we were ready to line up to go into the Winner's Circle. To be able to share the excitement with the winner- **Ty Dillon**-*

The Harold and Kay Peplau Therapeutic Riding Center

Board of Directors

Jody Glancy Scott
President

Jake Haas
Vice President

Marcia Mullen
Treasurer

Sally Grace
Secretary

Directors

Carrie Ashton
Nan Couyoumjian
Mark Holloway
Mike Hommel
Jackie Martin- ex officio
Bruce Robinson
Jan Vescelius - ex officio
Bill Wood

Staff

Jan Vescelius
Director
Program Director
Head Instructor

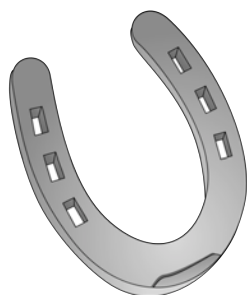
Tracy Boyle
Office Manager
Volunteer Coordinator

Jennifer Beyer
Instructor

Linda Bolton
Instructor

Jessica Moore
Instructor

Jeremy Sintic
Barn Manager



Maizy choosing MIS winner

was something we will never forget.

There are no words to express how wonderful the day was not only for me but for Abby, her friend, my Mom and all the other children and their families.

**THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU
YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU**

- *To GFS for inviting us into your suite and to the staff who were unbelievable, so caring and loving. You can feel the compassion they had for each child that was there. A special thanks to Jeff who shared his amazing knowledge of racing and for all the wonderful things he does to brighten the lives of so many children.*
- *To MIS for caring so much about the children and making dreams come true. Your staff is amazing.*
- *To TRI: you have been a true inspiration to me and Abby. Abby has found her calling for*

horses and I know as she gets older she will continue to help other people with special needs. I am honored to be a part of the TRI family.

- *Oh, how could I forget MAIZY for picking Abby..... You will get extra treats.*

Again a heartfelt "Thank You" to all involved for making our incredible day one we will never forget. We are now all NASCAR fans!!

Sincerely,

Lyndsay Austin, mother to Abby

TRI would also like to thank MIS Cares for adopting Maizy for the 2011 "Racing Season". To learn more about our Adopt-A-Horse program, please see the article on page 5.



Emily Lickman looking cool and comfortable as she rides her horse Fable with her helper Carrie Ashton

Memo to the Herd:

Start training for TRI-FECTA!! Since Miko is new to the herd, we'll have to bring him up to speed on this race.

What is TRI-FECTA? TRI-FECTA is TRI's largest fundraiser designated exclusively for operating funds. It stands for "TRI providing riders with Fun, Excitement, Challenge, and Therapeutic Adventure". This campaign supports the care and feeding of our fabulous equine staff.

Since rider fees only make up 26% of our budget, the balance of our costs is met through the generous donations of our community of friends, families, co-workers, neighbors, and even strangers. This fundraiser is special because our riders and volunteers are the driving force behind it.

During the first week of Fall Session, all of the riders and volunteers will receive their campaign packets. Of course, anyone can participate! Call the office at 734-677-0303 or email us at therapeuticriding@earthlink.net and a packet will be prepared for you.

This is a race! Each donation is placed as a "bet" on a horse. Each week, donations are turned in and the horses' positions in the race are announced. This becomes very competitive as everyone is trying to put their favorite horse into first place. There are also weekly prizes for the riders and volunteers that have collected the most "bets" (dollars raised). This is called "diving into the muck bucket". We have buckets (yes, clean muck buckets) filled with prizes for adults and children and the winner of the week "dives in" to choose their prize.

"Bets" can be placed in a variety of ways: Cash, checks, or online at our website therapeuticridinginc.org using a PayPal account or a credit card. Riders and volunteers get very creative in their quest for more "bets" for their favorite horse. Some send emails to everyone in their address book. Others go door to door, collect bottles and cans, host a dinner, have a garage sale, or call all of their friends and family. Why not post info to either a Facebook or Twitter account? It is also possible to ask an employer or a business to offer a matching donation.

The campaign crosses the Finish Line on Saturday, October 15. A "Winner's Circle" party is being planned for Sunday, October 23rd where prizes will be presented to the riders and volunteers who collected the largest number of "bets" and the

highest dollar amount of “bets”. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category.

So, Miko, that is how it works. You should start training for this race now. The competition is strong! Past winners Sigbjorn, B Smiley, Hey Dobbs, Star, and Fable are still bragging about the spa day they received after their wins.

Everyone get ready!! Plan your strategy!! May the best horse win – and remember, the real winners will be the extraordinary riders of TRI.

A Loud Whinny of Thanks!

TRI could not exist without our wonderful and generous donors. Every year we rely on your financial support to make it possible for our riders to experience the joy of horseback riding. In this newsletter, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to some very special donors in the Equestrian - \$1,000 - \$4,999 - category.

- **Harold and Kay Peplau**, the generous namesakes of our new home, donated an additional \$500 to purchase “Miko”, our newest equine staff member.
- **The Allstate Foundation** became our newest supporters in March with a \$1,000 donation.
- **The Kiwanis Club of Ann Arbor** made this the tenth year they have supported TRI with a \$1,082 grant to purchase safety equipment for our horses and riders.
- **Ruth Schekter and Bill Zirinsky** donated \$1,500 to our Kentucky Derby party in honor of Sam and Juliana Zirinsky.
- **Comerica Bank** donated \$1,500 to help underwrite the cost of our annual Derby Party.
- **Gretchen Gardner and Josh Pokempner** continued their generous support of our

program and riders with a \$4,000 to be used “wherever it is needed most.”

- Longtime supporters **The Speckhard-Knight Charitable Foundation** donated \$5,000 to our annual Helping Hands campaign.

Several donors made In Kind donations in the Equestrian category.

- **Dr. James Romine, DVM, of Saline Veterinary Service**, has taken care of our horses for many years and each year donates thousands of dollars of his services.
- **DJ Martin, of Martin’s Home Center** in Tecumseh, Michigan donated all the furniture in our observation room so our riders and families can sit in comfort and watch lessons going on.
- **Joel Greenisen** helps us keep our farm looking clean and tidy with his very generous donations of two tractors (one with a snow plow blade), a bush hog, and a drag harrow.

Thank you to **all** our wonderful donors. Without you, TRI would not exist and our riders would miss out on this very special experience.

TRI Trivia Test

(Answers on page 11)

1. **Who was the winner of the 2011 Kentucky Derby?**
2. **How many years have our longest serving volunteers been with us?**
3. **What is the address for our new website?**
4. **Which rider has been with us since 1986?**
5. **What does the abbreviation H4H stand for?**



Nick Leoni and Rick Collman celebrate the end of another great riding lesson

Adopt-A-Horse

Are you looking for a special way to support TRI? Perhaps you've always wanted a horse but that darn landlord won't let you keep one in the laundry room? We have the solution for you. You can **Adopt-a-Horse** here at TRI. We will send you a photo of your adopted horse along with his or her bio, your name will be displayed on your horse's stall door as well as appearing on our website and in our newsletter, and, best of all, we will handle ALL the stall cleaning duties. Our horses are available for adoption for a donation of \$5,000 per year, payable in either one payment or in monthly installments. Check out our website at <http://therapeuticridinginc.org> for information about all of our horses and to pick the one you would like to adopt.

For 2011, **B Smiley** has been adopted by the **J.F. Ervin Foundation**, **Ruth Glancy** and an

anonymous foundation have adopted **Ella**, **Maizy** has been adopted by **MIS Cares**, **Art Van Furniture** has adopted **Sigbjorn** and an anonymous donor is adopting **April**. Still available for adoption are: **Dakota**, **Hey Dobbs**, **Fable** and **Miko**. **Star** and **Robbie** are retired so have chosen not to be adopted. I heard them discussing Florida and golfing over the paddock fence the other day!

For more information, or to discuss adopting a horse for yourself or in honor of a special person or occasion, please contact us at 734-677-0303 or by email at therapeuticriding@earthlink.net.

“What About You” Walk

Want to race too and help your favorite TRI horse pull ahead in our TRI-FECTA fundraiser? Sign up now to walk or run at the third annual “What About You” Walk Saturday, September 24th at Gallup Park in Ann Arbor. This family friendly event supports organizations that are improving our community and 100% of the pledges are dispersed to the donor designated organization. Plus as a participating non-profit we will also raise awareness of the bigger race going on at the new Harold and Kay Peplau Therapeutic Riding Center to be the best of the best at what we do! For details, call our TRI/What About You Walk event coordinator, **Gail Nicklowitz** at (734) 665-3597 or send her an email gailnicklowitz@yahoo.com.





We're not sure how, but some of the horses have gotten onto Facebook and set up a page for TRI. No telling what they'll put up there, so check it out by "Liking us" at <http://www.facebook.com/therapeutic.riding.inc>.

Horses for Heroes 2011

The 2011 Horses for Heroes program is off to a strong start this year with four wounded combat veterans riding in their first session of the year.

This program partners injured riders with other **OEF/OIF (Operation Enduring Freedom/ Operation Iraqi Freedom)** veterans as volunteer side walkers, leaders, and assistants. The benefits of a peer-to-peer support system are beneficial for both rider and volunteer.

The **VA Ann Arbor Healthcare System (VAAHS)** has two employees who are also volunteering as sidewalkers and horse leaders. All potential volunteers (both employees and rider/volunteers) successfully completed a hands-on orientation to ensure that riders have safe and progressive riding experiences.

VAAHS's Polytrauma Team, primarily serving severely injured OEF/OIF veterans with head injuries and other traumas, initiated a partnership with Therapeutic Riding, Inc. in 2010 and we conducted our first session last summer. The program follows the PATH Intl. (formerly NARHA) guidelines for a Horses for Heroes program to provide equine assisted activities for wounded service personnel and veterans. Equine assisted activities have been shown to improve muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, motor development, and emotional well-being.

With the new **Harold and Kay Peplau Therapeutic Riding Center** amenities, our veterans can gather not only to ride, volunteer, and groom and tack but to also sit and visit with each other and TRI staff. One veteran comes in

early to tack and groom her horse; another comes to help TRI staff prepare the remaining horses for their classes.

The mission to assist veterans by providing leadership and guidance for equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) has been a resounding success. Veterans of any age can benefit from the program and by being involved with horses.

If you would like to support this program financially, or if you would like to volunteer with our veterans, please contact the TRI office at 734-677-0303.

My heartfelt thanks go out to all who have made this wonderful program a resounding success.

Jan Vescelius - Director



Thanks Bill Boitos for the wonderful Horses for Heroes name badges.



MEET OUR RIDERS – Laurie Moore

We want you to meet one of our many riders, to learn what TRI means to her, and to hear how important it is in her life. Every donation we receive helps to make it possible for us to provide Laurie and all our riders with an amazing experience.



Laurie Moore on her horse Fable, with her mother Janet Moore and her leader Ashley McLaughlin.

*Laurie Moore has been riding at TRI since September 1986. This makes her the rider who has been with us the longest! I asked her to share with us some of her thoughts and memories about her 25 years with TRI and here they are, as told to her mother, **Janet Moore**.*

I have Cerebral Palsy, which means there was a lack of oxygen at my birth. My doctors didn't think I would live through the night. (hmm, guess I showed them!) I had been riding in the mid-80's when I lived in Grand Rapids. When I moved here and heard that there was a TR program available in Ann Arbor, I was very excited and wanted to join.

When I first started riding, I had someone sit behind me because my balance was not good. Now I sit all by myself, with just a little assistance from my sidewalkers. My sidewalkers took great care of me one time when a cat walked by a door as I was passing and my horse spooked. They did a great job of holding on to me and keeping me safe while the leader calmed my horse down.

I remember riding in many stables with TRI that didn't have an indoor riding arena. We never knew what the weather would be like at the stable. TRI's new barn is like the best hotel for horses compared to some of the earlier barns where we rode.

I like to ride because it makes me feel like I do not have CP. I feel free when I am on the horse. I LOVE RIDING AT TRI!

Our thanks to Laurie and Janet for 25 wonderful years together. We have enjoyed getting to know the entire Moore family and are honored to have them as part of our TRI family.

Summer 2011 VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Carrie Ashton and Dave Jessen with our longest serving equine staff member, Star. Not pictured: Marcia Mullen – she was busy getting ready for the Derby Party. But we have a great photo of her with the Derby Party article.

This newsletter, our Volunteer Spotlight falls on a very special group of people. It is rare that a volunteer organization has a volunteer who stays for more than ten years. TRI is especially honored to have not one, but seven stalwart souls who have been with us since 1999, for twelve wonderful years! We wanted to honor all seven of them so you could join us in thanking them for their many years of support and service to our riders.

There must have been something in the air in 1999. How else do you explain why seven of our new volunteers that year have decided to stay with us for twelve years? **Carrie Ashton, Dave Jessen, Ann McCarren, Marcia Mullen, Marina Seeman, Rusty Towers** and one lovely person who wishes to remain anonymous, all joined us that year and remain with us today.

In this issue we will introduce you to Carrie, Dave, and Marcia. Our Fall Newsletter will spotlight Ann, Marina and Rusty.

It would be hard to tell you what day you should come if you wanted to meet Carrie, Dave, or

Marcia. Or maybe it would be very easy. ANY DAY! If they are not here on their “regular” volunteer shifts, they may be here subbing, serving on our Board of Directors, assisting with special events, or doing one of the hundreds of things they do to support our program, riders, and staff. When I asked them to tell me what they did when not at TRI, Dave said, “Actually, there have been weeks when I’ve been at TRI more than at home. But since I am retired, it’s OK.” Carrie estimates that she has walked over 1,100 miles while volunteering in the arena – and that doesn’t count all the running around she does before, in between, and after classes!

Carrie is our Class Coordinator on Saturday mornings and manages to keep approximately 20 riders, 20 volunteers, ten horses, and two instructors happy and organized each week (it doesn’t hurt that she makes AWESOME coffee!) When not keeping us organized, she is Global Visitors Coordinator for the U of M Medical School. This means she is in charge of all the housing, visas, orientation, and scheduling for students, scholars, and dignitaries from other countries that come to study and visit at the medical school.

Dave volunteers with us on Tuesday mornings, Thursday evenings, and on Fridays with our Horses for Heroes program, and whenever we need him to sub on any of the other class times as well! As he mentioned, he is retired after spending 35 years with the Bell System. “I subsequently trained with Bell Labs to launch the first wireless telephone system in the United States in Chicago back in 1983.” (*Um, Dave, so YOU are partially to blame for the wireless phone craziness? I need to talk to you about my cell phone bill!!*)

Marcia serves as one of our Tack Coordinators, grooming and tacking our horses and getting them dressed and ready for classes. She also is on our Board of Directors, keeping a close eye on our

financial situation in her role as Treasurer. Marcia has recently launched her own event decorating business. I think we need to take some credit for that venture as she has been getting a LOT of practice here doing the planning and decorating for our Run For The Roses Gala (our Kentucky Derby party), our Groundbreaking Celebration, our Grand Opening, our Open House....

What makes three such different people volunteer each week, and often multiple times each week, for twelve years? I asked each one to share with us why TRI has become such an important part of their lives.

Carrie: Why have I stayed? Love. Love for the whole program. Riders and their families, fellow volunteers, staff, and horses. To leave would be like putting down a book halfway through. I want to see our riders continue to enjoy and make progress. The little miracles that happen each week keep me wanting to see that next level and that next great moment.

When I drive onto the property, all of my problems and stresses are left out on the road. It is amazing how few of those problems are still there when I leave at the end of class. Being a part of TRI is therapeutic for the volunteers as well as the riders. It refocuses priorities on to what is truly important.

I have a hard time picking just one story to explain why TRI means so much to me. Perhaps it's **Franco's** awesome smile. It inspires me every Saturday. When he first started at TRI at age 4 or 5 we had to stop and rest 4 times during class. We'd make it fun, though. We packed finger puppets and other toys to make those rests entertaining. Poor Star was a veritable grocery cart of activities to do during rest time! As time went by, those rests were fewer and fewer. We don't rest at all these days (he is 9 now). In fact, he wants to go FAST! He wants to trot. He wants a lot of ACTION! He plays jokes on his

sidewalkers and tries to "bop" **Gail (Nicklowitz)**, his horse leader.



Franco celebrating another great lesson on his pony, Star, with his sidewalker, Carrie Ashton

Dave: There is a sense of fulfillment and reward that I get every time I leave TRI after a class. From the friendliness of the other volunteers which creates a feeling of extended family, to all the smiles and wonderful attitudes of each and every rider. I've been very blessed throughout my life, and my volunteering is a way I can give back in a small way to those wonderful riders who need our help. As for my special memory, well the memory that comes to mind first (and one that I won't soon forget) happened just before we finished the last session at the old barn. I was the lone side walker for a rider on **Ella**. (Note – Ella is our 17 hand Percheron draft horse mare!) This rider was doing very well and at times could be off lead rope. However, when we trotted I would put an arm on his leg and the leader would attach the lead rope. Miss Ella didn't want to trot that night, so **Jan** (the instructor) asked the rider to give her (Ella, not Jan!) a kick. The rider hauled off and, with both heels, kicked very hard. Ella lurched forward (with me holding on to the rider and the saddle for dear life) and lifted me right off

of the ground. The leader did exactly what she'd been taught, and kept Ella under control, while I did what I was taught and stayed with my rider... Whew! Everyone was OK, and when the dust settled, Jan told the rider that next time we would use maybe a *little* less heel...



The Three Musketeers – Dave Jessen, Bryan Sweitzer on Sigbjorn, and Chris Donoghue with leader Hayley Hoffman

Marcia: I stay for the love, the smiles and the small (and large!) victories! I have two favorite memories. My first is turning **Sigbjorn** into a zebra. OK, let me explain. The horses like to dress up for Halloween – who says humans should have all the fun! Sigbjorn decided he wanted to be a zebra. So he and I worked it out that I would come each evening and paint his zebra stripes on him. He looked so convincing that it caused a small problem. See, he was turned out in the front paddock in between classes and people kept pulling off the road to ask us when we got a zebra for our program! If the therapeutic riding stuff doesn't work out, he is all set to be a zoo zebra. My second favorite memory is all the fun I have planning the Kentucky Derby events.

They are a lot of work, but such a great experience. Read the article on page 11 to hear all about this year's event.



Marcia Mullen at our 2011 Kentucky Derby gala

As you can see, Carrie, Dave, and Marcia are three very special people. We are so fortunate to have them as part of the TRI family and are truly grateful to them for their commitment to TRI and our riders. If you see one of them out at the barn, please take a moment to thank them for all they do.

Don't forget – the next issue of the newsletter will introduce the other three members of the 1999 cohort, Ann, Marina, and Rusty.

Calling all Insomniacs!

Our 2010 990 and Audited Financials are now available on our website.

OK, I'm being a little facetious – these documents are very important and give you a view of how carefully we handle the money entrusted to us by our wonderful donors. Our CPA firm, Yeo and

Yeo, has audited our 2010 financials and generated our 2010 990. We want to make all this information easily accessible to you so we have placed it on our website on the **Donations** page. Now, if it should ALSO help you with any sleep issues, well, we'll call that a bonus!

TRI Trivia Test Answers

1. Animal Kingdom
2. 12 amazing years of wonderful support and service
3. Trick question! The address hasn't changed – <http://therapeuticridinginc.org> – we've just improved it, added new content, and made some very special additions. Check it out!
4. Laurie Moore has been riding with TRI for 25 years!
5. Horses for Heroes – TRI's riding program for injured veterans



Board Member Nan Couyoumjian shows off her Derby colors

TRI Supporters Run for the Roses

On May 7, 2011, TRI sponsored its second annual Run for the Roses benefit gala. The event was held at the Travis Pointe Country Club here in Ann Arbor. Donations received at the gala will help support the many programs we offer. The evening's festivities included a live telecast of the race, a four course meal and bar service, and the official "Derby Pie" ® flown in from Louisville for dessert!



Rusty Towers, Sonya Nematollahi, Mastaneh Maybody, and Jan Vescelius show of their Derby finery

Ladies were decked out in their finest and fanciest Derby hats and a raffle was held with prize money awarded based on the actual race results. "Animal Kingdom" was the winner and so was TRI. It was a wonderful evening! Thank you to everyone who attended this year's gala and showed your (racing) colors in support of TRI. Our special thanks to TRI rider **Mastaneh Maybody** for gracing the podium and sharing her TRI story. And a heartfelt round of applause for our Board Member **Marcia Mullen** for breeding, foaling and training this filly of an event into a real Champion! Marcia is already hard at work planning next year's event. We hope to see you there.

THE HAROLD AND KAY PEPLAU THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER

Therapeutic Riding, Inc.
3425 East Morgan Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

2 0 1 1 S P R I N G N E W S L E T T E R

Contact Information:

3425 East Morgan Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

New phone number:
734.677.0303

Email:
therapeuticriding@earthlink.net

Website:
www.therapeuticridinginc.org

