



MAIN STAY

A PUBLICATION OF MAIN STAY
THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM, INC.

www.mstrp.org

News

WINTER 2010

Broadening Our Horizons

Jean Maraist, OTR/L

Over the last several years, Main Stay has been steadily expanding our programming. We now offer equine assisted activities to a wide range of individuals and groups as young as three and as old as ninety-three! The barn is buzzing with activity both morning and night as we meet the needs of a wide variety of clients. They include our traditional therapeutic riding students as well as sessions with other social service agencies in a group format. Head Start, psychosocial groups for troubled teens and seniors from Family Alliance, an agency in Woodstock that provides services to individuals with dementia, are just a few of the new clients we serve. Older students from Sedom Center have also been out to learn job readiness skills – and there's always work that needs to be done at the farm.

Our horses provide a unique opportunity to serve clients in many different capacities. Goals are wide-ranging – physical, social, emotional (all areas included in our mission statement) can be addressed when a participant comes to the farm. Our therapeutic riding students may spend the majority of their time riding, but other groups are working with the horses on the ground and learning a wide range of skills including grooming and leading. Interacting with the horses teaches people about themselves and how they project themselves to others. The horses are also just plain fun to be with! The creativity of our instructors continues to grow as they expand their knowledge base within this powerful aspect of equine assisted activities. Our clients' varied accomplishments at the farm continue to amaze and inspire all of us. We look forward to sharing the special therapeutic gifts of our equines with more and more people in our community. ✨



Maggie shares a laugh with a Family Alliance participant



A Head Start student enjoys a ride at Main Stay

One Step at a Time = \$\$

Riders, their families and volunteers helped bolster our Horse Purchase Fund by raising \$5,000 during our first ever Rideathon! The Rideathon, held during regularly scheduled class time, allowed everyone to participate in fun, riding-related activities for three weeks. Riders or their volunteers wore pedometers to track the distance “traveled” over the three weeks. Our grand total was over 65,000 steps - that’s over 20 miles!

The top three student winners were Jamie W., Pete B., and Delaney B. These go-getters were given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills at our Family Fun Day held in July and received a rousing round of applause for their hard work. Volunteers Grace J. and Lindsey G. were our top volunteer contributors donating not only their time in the ring, but in fundraising for Main Stay. Thanks to everyone who participated. We couldn’t operate an equine program without our wonderful horses and your donations will allow us to purchase new horses as needed to keep our herd healthy and strong. This year we hope to involve other riding groups and clubs in the area to make the Rideathon even bigger and better. ✨



Supporter, Dennis Ryan congratulates winner, Jamie W.

From My Desk

Hello Old and New Friends,

In December, I joined (actually re-joined) Main Stay as Executive Director. Maybe some of you will remember me—I was Main Stay’s Executive Director from 2000 to 2002. Although I left this role to pursue some other employment opportunities, Main Stay was never far from my heart and I continued to volunteer at various fundraising events and for special projects. When the opportunity arose for me to return to Main Stay, I jumped at the chance to once again, do something I loved on a full-time basis.

Even though I remained involved peripherally, I was completely unprepared for the changes that have taken place over the past several years. Main Stay is a VERY, VERY busy place! Similar to when I was with Main Stay before, we still have evening classes Monday-Friday. However, in addition to the evening schedule, classes begin as early as 10 a.m. Tuesday-Friday and we have classes on Saturday from nine in the morning to one in the afternoon. This year, our winter riding season began in January – WOW!

Before I left Main Stay, I remember having many conversations with board members about trying to find the funding to add more classes. We dreamed of the day when we would be able to offer classes throughout the day (not just evenings) and on Saturday. And today it’s a reality—all thanks to the support of many, many generous people.

And while there have been so many changes, many things remain the same: our devoted staff that works tirelessly teaching students, caring for the horses, making sure paperwork is in order and that funding continues; our dedicated volunteers who are always ready to lend a hand and who without we couldn’t operate; our generous donors who make it possible for us to continue and to grow; and our committed board who deals with the not-so-fun, but oh-so-important business issues.

I’m really looking forward to reconnecting with those of you I haven’t seen in a while and meeting those I don’t know yet.

Hope to see you around the farm.
Loriann

In riding a horse we borrow freedom. ~Helen Thomson



A Horse is a Horse

Roxie Elliott-Crandall

Welcome to our newest team members! After an extensive search we're happy to welcome FIVE new horses to Main Stay.

Maggie is a 13 year old Haflinger/Quarter Horse cross. She's already a star and her picture was in the Chicago Tribune article featuring Family Alliance and Main Stay. She is a favorite with the seniors and the little ones with the Head Start program. We are grateful to Lana Hartgraves for donating Maggie to Main Stay.



Maggie



Cowboy

to all who meet him. We have Main Stay volunteer, Dave Griffith, to thank for bringing us Cowboy. Cowboy was Dave's long-time companion and trail horse. He has so very generously loaned him to the program and will resume ownership when it is time for Cowboy to retire. We are truly grateful to Dave for sharing his wonderful horse with our students.

Sammie is a 9 year old sorrel and white paint mare we purchased this summer using funds from the grant supported Horse Fund. Her friendly personality, smooth gaits and easy going attitude sold us on her immediately. Her beautiful markings and mane have really caught the attention of all who meet her. We all think Sammie will prove to be a favorite at Main Stay.



Sammie & Cassa



Gunner

We have our students to thank for the two latest additions. Both Gunner and Cassa were purchased with the money raised from last year's Rideathon and they could be a matched pair. Gunner is a 13 year old draft cross bay gelding. Mike D. was one of the first students to ride Gunner and likened his smooth gates to "sitting in an easy chair". Cassa is a 4 year old draft cross bay mare. Cassa came to us from the Hooved Animal Humane Society. This sweet girl was a carriage horse in Chicago in her previous life, but is taking to being ridden under saddle like she's done it all her life.

Cowboy is a 19 year old sorrel and white paint gelding. He is one handsome boy and is a favorite with both our volunteers and riders. His gentle and patient personality makes him a joy

Be sure to stop by and meet them all – and don't forget the carrots! ✨

Field Trip to Minnesota

Lori Cohen

This past October, I had the opportunity to attend a workshop on the impact horses can have on troubled individuals. The workshop was held in Minnesota and sponsored by MNLINC (Minnesota Linking Individuals, Nature and Critters). The 2-day protocol was inspired and taught by authors, Tanya Welsch, MSW, LGSW and Molly DePrekel, MA LP, CEFIP-MH. The 8-hour days flew by as the group learned how to integrate their work utilizing the detailed lesson plans.

Most of the workshop involved ground work with the horses, which included leading exercises, round pen work and TTouch work (Linda Tellington-Jones). Ground work engages participants in a much different way than riding. Although

Continued on page 4...



Main Stay instructors Jean, Sara, Roxie and Marc attended the NARHA National Conference in Fort Worth, TX.

Hey, Marc – that is not a horse and that's no bull!

From Carousels to Rocking Horses

Ann Henslee

Last year during a time of doubt and uncertainty, Main Stay plunged in with faith and brought beautiful carousel horses to the downtown business district of Woodstock. After a year of planning and dreaming of the event, we had no idea that everyone's world would be shaken with a recession felt 'round the globe. Somehow with determination and gratitude our 'angels' prevailed and our project would end up bringing joy not only to Main Stay, but to the untold number of people who visited the Square and witnessed their beauty all summer long.

Fifty four designs were submitted and 26 were selected to grace the city and brighten lives. While the artists completed their designs, websites were created, a scavenger hunt was designed, sponsors were solicited, events were planned, brochures were printed, horses were moved to and fro and photo shoots were organized. Horses of a Different Color was launched!

The City of Woodstock was very gracious and helped by providing a space where artists could work, and the public could watch as pure white, fiberglass forms were turned into one of a kind pieces of art! Woodstock Public Works also helped us move and mount the horses to their homes for the summer viewing.

After a summer of being adored, stroked, photographed and loved, the herd was rounded up after Labor Day and taken to Donley's Wild West Steakhouse, where (after being "groomed" by their artists) the horses were auctioned off. After all was done, more than \$60,000 was raised! Main Stay is truly grateful to the event sponsors, artists, buyers, volunteers and the community for embracing this project and for making it such a tremendous success!



Plans are underway to bring such wonderful joy and beautiful artwork again to the public! This year artists will be working with rocking horses permanently mounted to a toy chest. The size is close to last year's form at 4'x4'. The name of the project this year is *Rock On* – and we hope you'll all support this fun and extraordinary project. Our huge success last year was due to so many people getting involved – from posting pictures on websites and Facebook, to the amazingly

generous sponsors up front, general donors throughout the summer and people who purchased these beautiful horses at the end. We know times are still hard – but we hope you can find some way to help us bring this project to life. Details can be found on our website – www.mstrp.org. – check us out! ✨

Thanks to Sara Foszcz, Ann Henslee and Susan Gullotto for being the committee that drove this project to its success.

They, along with everyone at Main Stay, send a huge thanks once again to everyone who helped last year and are already doing so again this year!

You're helping us stay strong – and our student's thank you again and again!

...Field Trip to Minnesota Continued

the participants do ride, it isn't until the 18th or 19th session. The program's focus is on the relationship between the horse and person and transferring the lessons into life skills. Overall, the weekend provided me with new and exciting ways to incorporate the work into working with Main Stay's teen groups. I look forward to using this information in my next teen group. ✨

I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder. ~G.K. Chesterton

Keeping Us Warm & Dry

Ann Henslee

Last summer during the Horses of a Different Color project, I received many phone calls with many different questions. One of those was from a woman by the name of Chris Lemke, who was enchanted with all the carousel horses around the Woodstock Square. She had been introduced to them through the pictures she had seen on the website via a posting by a local realtor. She called to ask if she could bid on one of the horses prior to the auction.

Unbeknown to us, was the fact that Chris was with The Mary Gardner Foundation. After our conversation she did some research on Main Stay and then called back to suggest that Main Stay submit a grant to the Foundation (which specializes in youth programs in McHenry County). We jumped on it and wrote a grant supporting arguments for grants in the amount of \$5,000, \$10,000 or \$15,000. Following Chris's suggestion, we also included information regarding our need for insulation in the indoor arena which cost more than double the highest grant we'd been encouraged to write. I asked if the foundation would consider assist us by partially funding this ambitious project. As with all grants, we followed the rules, got it in on time, and kept our fingers crossed praying we would receive a \$5,000.00 grant as our first request.

On Thursday, August 20, in the middle of the afternoon, my phone rang. It was Chris. She was very excited. She announced that The Mary Gardner Foundation had just awarded Main Stay funding for the entire insulation project! I couldn't believe my ears. She had to repeat it for me as it took my breath away!



Thanks to the Mary Gardner Foundation, our riding season started on Jan. 19 this year!

So, while we were sorry that our riding season came to such an abrupt end last year to begin construction - our arena now has a new leak-free roof AND insulation which has allowed us to extend our riding season. Our heartfelt thanks to Chris Lemke and the Mary Gardner Foundation for coming to our rescue, keeping us warm, dry and *making us very, very grateful!* ✨

A Hero Among Us

At some point in time, the chances are many of us have been the recipient of Sara Foszcz' thoughtfulness and compassion—from her gracious thank you notes expounding on what we did for Main Stay (no matter how big or small), to words of encouragement when we've needed them most, to not accepting "no" when "yes" is the right answer.

Rarely is Sara on the receiving end – nor does she expect to be -- which is why it was so incredibly gratifying that this year Chicago Magazine named Sara as one of the top 2009 Chicagoans.

Each year the magazine recognizes an elite group of people for their significant contributions to noteworthy causes. Sara was recognized in the January issue for founding Main Stay. She was among 6 individuals acknowledged by the



Sara and Woody as featured in Chicago Magazine

magazine including architect Grahm Balkany, Grammy winning musician Ramsey Lewis, Sam Harris (founder of the Illinois Holocaust Museum in Skokie), and Annette and Ronald Holt (founders of Purpose Over Pain).

The group was recognized at a January luncheon at the Four Seasons in Chicago. Honorees received a check for \$1000 for the charity of their choice from the Chicago Tribune Foundation. Of course Main Stay was Sara's choice, and we are truly grateful to the Foundation.

Congratulations Sara and thank you for all you've done (and continue to do) for Main Stay. You've always been "special" to us—and we're proud to see that Chicago Magazine thinks so too! ✨

Volunteer Spotlight

Danielle McKenna



Two of Main Stay's most dedicated volunteers live within a mile of the farm and also happen to be next door neighbors-- JoAnn Lee and Darlene Jones.

JoAnn began volunteering in 2000 after she saw the "Volunteers needed" sign while walking her dogs at Glacial Park. I asked JoAnn what she enjoys most about Main

Stay and she responded, "The smile on the student's faces. I just love going there and seeing my students every week." JoAnn is very faithful to her students; she has been with the same student for over eight years. Even if her student moves to a different time slot, JoAnn rearranges her schedule to accommodate the switch. JoAnn not only gives her time side walking for classes, she also devotes much of her time to other Main Stay events. She is a faithful Fair and Fall Diddley volunteer and participated in the Bowlathon every year.

JoAnn has a son and daughter and recently welcomed her first grandchild, to the family. She has a dog named Dananimal whom she calls her, "ever faithful companion." Dananimal was named after her favorite Bears player Dan Hampton. Besides

being a huge supporter of Main Stay she is also a devoted Bears, Blackhawks and Cubs fan.

We have JoAnn to thank for bringing Darlene to Main Stay in 2002. Long time neighbors, JoAnn shared her love of Main Stay with Darlene and she's been volunteering ever since. Darlene shares what she enjoys most about Main Stay, "I enjoy seeing the student's improvements and how they've grown every season. I enjoy the relationships I have made over the years with the parents, students and other volunteers." Darlene is a dedicated ring volunteer and has only missed ONE class in seven years-- WOW!! She, too, volunteers each year at Fair and Fall Diddley and bowled in Main Stay's Bowlathon. In the summer Darlene always shares fresh vegetables from her garden with everyone in the barn - thanks, Darlene!

Darlene is also very proud of her grandson Marine Sergeant Russell E. Jones Jr., a graduate of Richmond Burton High School. He left for Afghanistan in November. We wish him a safe and speedy return home.

Main Stay is truly honored to have both of these ladies in our family. The time they give both in and out of the ring is priceless. We hope you know how much we appreciate all you give and do. Your compassion, support and love for Main Stay are incredible, and we cannot thank you enough for all you do. ✨

On Solid Ground

It's often said, "it's who you know" and that certainly was true for Main Stay last May. Lois Petska has been with Main Stay as a ring volunteer for several years. During that time she'd been parking in our volunteer lot, getting her sparkling, white vehicle, dirty every spring, fall and rainy day at Main Stay. Last spring someone must have had enough with our mud, because her husband Harvey called and asked "What's up with the volunteer parking lot?" A.K.A. - Why can't you do something about the mud for your dedicated volunteers? We told Harvey we'd gotten several bids for paving the parking lot and had written several grants for the project over a period of several years, only to come up empty handed every time. Harvey quietly said, "Let me talk to a few people and see what I can do."

Less than a week later Harvey had promises from Gary Rabine Sr. of Rabine and Sons Asphalt & Paving, Super Trucking and Peter Baker & Sons to solve the long standing problems with our grass parking lot. Even better, they committed to making us a solid, "green" parking lot that would be permeable and made from recycled products! Within a month the old grass lot had been excavated, clean fill brought in, compacted, leveled and processed for the finish product of recycled, crushed asphalt. Harvey had not only developed our "dream team", he personally spent many, long days giving up paid time to make our project come true!

Gary Rabine very generously donated his crew, a huge number of trucks, his time and paving expertise to make sure the job would last a lifetime and prepared the material to be able to withstand all

future building jobs! Peter Baker & Sons donated the recycled asphalt from a paving job just a mile or so, down the road.

We owe a debt of gratitude to both companies and the men who graciously shared their valuable time and talents with us. To Harvey and Lois, we owe much more - they shared our vision, reached out beyond their comfort zones on our behalf and turned an eyesore and menace into a clean, dry solid piece of beauty! Who would think a parking lot could be so special - ask anyone of our volunteers, board or staff member that has gotten stuck - it can be and is!

Huge thanks to Harvey and his dream team of friends for giving our volunteers a parking lot worthy of their valuable dedication! ✨





Closing Thoughts

Dear Friends,

What a year, what a year, what a year... I am so filled with gratitude and humbled by the support Main Stay has received in 2009. Old friends and long time supporters stepped up in a big way and many new friends threw open their hearts to Main Stay.

The students of Main Stay were the lucky recipients of your kindness and caring. Your gifts helped us reach a remarkably diverse group of people this year. You also helped us serve a record breaking number of people due to your incredible generosity. So many people opened their hearts, engaged their hands and shared gifts with us, we are humbled and grateful. A new driveway that is mud free and solid welcomes the incredible crew of volunteers that make the program possible each day. This winter we started classes in January with the wonderful new insulation (and roof) making riding possible, perhaps even comfortable. Horses of a Different Color grace gardens, business entrances and homes. This was made possible by talented artists,

generous sponsors and the wonderful folks who took them home. Friends dealt cards and poked fun at themselves – all the while helping us raise those much needed funds. So many, answered so many calls for help with a resounding Yes – thank you!

As we look forward to this year and all the opportunity it will bring, we reflect back on a year filled with joy. Pat yourself on the back and get a hug from someone (I'll do it myself when I see you) for bringing joy to every one of our students, their families and "our family". You said "yes" and you made a world of difference in our world – thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

Thank you for making a year of worry, end on a note of grace, happiness and enduring hope – you are our gift! ✨

*Love and Thanks,
Sara*

Welcome - Welcome!

On December 1st Loriann Dowell officially took over the reins as Main Stay's Executive Director!

Loriann has been involved with Main Stay for over 10 years and we are thrilled to have her back in the office, helping us shape our program's future! Her background is diverse and she brings a host of talents to the table including; being the CFO for one of the largest marketing firms in Chicago, non-profit experience, management skills, board/volunteer experience and horse experience. She graciously donated 3 months of salary and time to ensure that she was a good fit for the organization – who does that? Only someone who is willing and able to make a commitment to a program she is sincerely dedicated to making better – thank you Loriann! We are looking forward to seeing what the future holds for both you and Main Stay!

YES! I want to help support equine-related therapy at Main Stay.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Gift Amount \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

Please designate my gift to the area of greatest need.

I'd like to support a horse through a monthly gift of \$50 to the *Stable Angel Club*

I'd like to support a rider through a monthly gift of \$50 to the *Therapy Angel Club*

I would like information on providing a Bequest to Main Stay.

VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

Acct # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

"Thank You" for your support. Your gift is tax-deductible as provided by law.

ANNUAL GIVING CLUBS

Leg-Up Club	\$1-\$99
Bronze Stirrup Club	\$100-\$249
Silver Stirrup Club	\$250-\$499
Gold Stirrup Club	\$500-\$999
Platinum Stirrup Club	\$1,000-\$4,999
Grand Prix Club	\$5,000+



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Horses Healing Humans – One Life at a Time!

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program to provide individualized equine related therapeutic activities to people with physical, developmental, social, and emotional disabilities, in McHenry and surrounding counties.

Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program enriches the lives of our clients in a caring, safe, and challenging environment that will enable them to reach their highest potential.

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Patti Lessard

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Students & volunteers gathered at MCC in December to celebrate the end of another great riding season