



Naples Therapeutic
Riding Center

Scene + Herd

APRIL 2019 NEWSLETTER



Executive Director Letter

BY MELISSA SARACINO
LAMONT



As many of you plan to head north or travel over the summer, our special event calendars slow, but don't worry, there are still a few opportunities to support NTRC before you leave!

We know we will see less of you for a bit, but couldn't let our volunteers leave without spreading love on you at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Awards Ceremony. In March, we hosted a "mag-neigh-ficent" hoedown-style dinner to show how much our volunteers mean to the staff, horses and participants. While we appreciate all of our volunteers, a few stand out as superstars. We honored Connie Sharpe with the Board Member Award for her time and energy serving faithfully on committees, assisting with events and guiding us with her gift of diplomacy. We honored Dottie and John Whipple with the Barn Dance Award for taking the reins of the wildly successful silent auction. Last, but certainly not least, we announced Ginny and Lee Schroeder as Volunteers of the Year and let you in on a little secret about a very special supporter, Nancy Wyckoff. You can read more about Nancy, Ginny and Lee in this issue of *Scene & Herd*.

Speaking of volunteers and events... every year, I get the pleasure of volunteering during the silent auction at the Naples Children & Education Foundation's wildly successful Naples Winter Wine Festival which NTRC has been blessed to be a beneficiary of for many years. This year, we received \$225,000 from the proceeds! Thanks to your generosity and to Lea Haven and her committee of volunteers, NTRC also raised \$23,500 for the retirement of our hardworking horses at the annual Hoof & Hike.

There are still plenty of ways to support NTRC in the coming months. We have volunteers still hard at work planning the Kentucky Derby Party on May 4th. We are also a beneficiary of the Swinging with Purpose™ 2nd Annual Liberty Mutual Invitational on May 5th and HFTP Florida Gulf Coast Chapter's 17th Annual Charity Golf Tournament on June 8th. Thank you in advance for your support of these upcoming events!

Your continued support helps our participants and programs thrive. For that, we are eternally grateful.

Tally Ho!

Donor Dollars at Work



“Equine therapy is a way to bring all the pieces that have been taught in treatment together and practice those skills in a safe environment.”

– Brenda Iliff,
Hazelden Betty
Ford Foundation

INNOVATIVE COLLABORATIONS UTILIZE HORSES IN ADDICTION TREATMENT

Through a collaboration with David Lawrence Center and Hazelden Betty Ford, addiction treatment providers are using the healing power of horses to enhance recovery. The innovative, equine-facilitated psychotherapy program, the first for NTRC, was created with David Lawrence Center five years ago.

This holistic, experiential form of therapy allows participants to work with our certified equine specialists and their addiction counselors to process feelings, thoughts and reactions using horse-related exercises. It allows individuals in residential treatment to travel to our beautiful campus and apply what they are learning in group.

Through the exercises, participants develop self-awareness, distress tolerance, an understanding of the importance of respect as well as a sense of unconditional positive regard and acceptance from our horses. One exercise includes creating obstacles that represent the participant's triggers to use their drug of choice. Participants are blindfolded and instructed to lead the horse through a “trust walk” over tough hurdles - an analogy for their recovery journey – allowing participants to get out of their heads and into their hearts and bodies.

The theory is that what is learned while interacting with the horse will translate to other relationships. The horses give immediate feedback through non-verbal cues that help participants better understand themselves.

The goal of using horses in addiction treatment is to explore an emotional connection to the principles of recovery. After weekly sessions, participants discuss and share insights about their behaviors back in group therapy.



“This program is an integral part of our holistic approach to treating the disease of addiction. It helps clients learn to develop trust and healthy relationships while setting boundaries.”

– Maggie Baldwin,
David Lawrence
Center

Meet a Rider

TACOMA TAUGHT VIOLET MINDFULNESS TO SUPPORT HER RECOVERY

I had a very difficult childhood. I lived in a constant state of anxiety over recurrent thoughts of my past trauma and worry about the future. I escaped my pain by staying busy. I was coping by not coping. But when I hurt my back and was prescribed pain medication, I wasn't able to work. I was home alone with my thoughts and all my issues came to the surface. I became addicted and my life spiraled out of control.

I finally surrendered and asked for help. While in treatment at DLC, I was able to participate in equine therapy. I was afraid at first. My heart was racing. I was nervous. But my horse, Tacoma, was so calm. Suddenly all of my anxieties just disappeared. Her overwhelming largeness and the activities to direct her through challenging exercises forced me to focus on one thing – the horse – for an hour.

Out of necessity, I was practicing mindfulness for the first time. I turned the worry switch off and the living switch on. And it just clicked. For the first time I realized I was enjoying something.

The more I got to know Tacoma, the closer we became. The interaction between us was amazing. I felt connected to her. I felt comforted, loved and safe. My therapist helped me realize there was so much more to life I wanted to experience. As I continue outpatient treatment, I am working hard to build a new life for myself using the lessons Tacoma taught me.



“Equine therapy taught me I could live minute by minute. My senses were back. I noticed the smells, the birds and little things about the horse. I'm grateful for the lessons Tacoma taught me.”

– Violet,
DLC client

The Scene at NTRC



Interested in bringing a group
to NTRC? Call (239) 596-2988





Donor Spotlight

NANCY WYCKOFF'S LAST DANCE

Nancy Wyckoff is a strong, independent woman with a passion for the arts and giving back. Having no children of her own, she has a soft spot for children's charities. She enjoyed a 35-year career in the Intimate Apparel industry where she traveled extensively in the US, Asia, and Europe for luxury retailers and manufacturers. When she wasn't traveling, she enjoyed riding and jumping horses.

When Nancy "retired" to Naples 20 years ago, she started a second career as a residential real estate agent. As a self-made, successful business woman, she began making her mark on the Naples community through her generosity of time and treasure working with charities such as Artis – Naples, David Lawrence Center, Latchkey League, Salvation Army, and Theatre Zone.



"I liked the fact that giving to NTRC also helped children from the charities I supported over the years through their many collaborative partners."

– Nancy Wyckoff

Nancy was introduced to the benefits of equine therapy six years ago when she was a guest of longtime NTRC supporter, Dawn Litchfield, at the Barn Dance. That night, Nancy feverishly raised her paddle and never put it down! She was "roped in" quickly to the mission and began raising money for the capital campaign and volunteering for the NTRC Corral. The new Tack Room bears her name.

LEAVING A LEGACY AT NAPLES THERAPUTIC RIDING CENTER

"Like dance did for me, equine therapy brings happiness and peace of mind. The movements of a dancer begin with balance and a strong core and that's what riders strengthen in lessons. Being able to see the joy on the participants' and parents' faces and the magic these horses bring to their lives, is very rewarding. Making this endowment gift was one of the best days of my life. It brings me a lot of joy knowing my life will have meaning after I am gone."

– Nancy Wyckoff

Nancy, now 77, has lived a full, active life. She fell in love with ballroom dancing later in life competing and winning in the US and Puerto Rico. She combined her love for dance and travel and enjoyed USA Dance cruises in the Caribbean and Europe. She joined Circumnavigators of Naples, and continued traveling the globe naming Greece, Italy and Paris among her favorite destinations.

When Nancy heard the news last year that she had Stage-4 pancreatic cancer, she was determined to fight and keep moving. She began the delicate dance of fighting the cancer head on and living each remaining day to the fullest – all while carefully planning the legacy she wants to leave behind. Despite her unknown future, she booked a cruise to Polynesia and New Zealand next year, just so she has something to look forward to through the rigorous chemotherapy treatments.

Finding a way to make a meaningful impact on the local community became an important decision she wanted to make while she was around to see its impact. Nancy chose to donate \$500,000 to NTRC! In honor of her generous gift, NTRC's first-ever endowment gift, the original red barn now bears her name. Before she takes her final bow, she is excited to see the sign unveiling and the smiles her gift will bring to so many.





Save the Date



Saturday, November 9, 2019

under the covered arena at
Naples Therapeutic Riding Center

Enjoy live music, dancing, tasty vittles, mechanical bull rides, pony pie bingo, barn tours and much more...

The Bootstrap Boogie Barn Dance benefits NTRC's therapeutic riding and other equine-assisted activities and therapy programs for children and adults with special needs.

For more information, please call 239-596-2988.

www.NaplesTherapeuticRidingCenter.org



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206 Ridge Drive, Naples FL 34108

NAPLESTHERAPEUTICRIDINGCENTER.ORG
info@ntrc.org (239) 596-2988

Save-The-Date KENTUCKY DERBY PARTY

MAY 4, 2019 | 4:00 PM
NTRC COVERED ARENA

Back by popular demand and better than ever!
Enjoy hors d'oeuvres, a Mint Julep and cash bar as we put the fun in fundraising! Bid on the horses and come dressed to win Best Hat (ladies) and Crazy Pants (gents).
Let's get down and Derby! Get tickets online.



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ABOUT NTRC

NTRC improves the lives of children and adults with special needs through therapeutic riding and equine-assisted programs. Volunteers and donors make it possible for NTRC to serve 700 participants each year. NTRC is funded by Naples Children & Education Foundation, The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, and private donations. NTRC is a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship Premier Accredited Center.

Volunteer Spotlight

DYNAMIC DUO, GINNY AND LEE SCHROEDER, NAMED VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR



High school sweethearts, Ginny and Lee Schroeder, have been married for 50 years. They have a love for each other, an adorable banter and a shared passion for the work they do at NTRC. This dynamic duo has volunteered 1,000 hours in the last two years and were named 2019 Volunteers of the Year.

When Ginny retired, she knew she needed something to do. Although she knew nothing about horses, she stopped by NTRC to check it out. She watched a lesson and visited with parents and staff. The rest is history. She said, "I was blown away. I was so impressed with the staff's dedication. I figured, where else can you see smiles and get hugs like that?"

When Lee, a law enforcement officer, retired not long after, he wanted to see what all the fuss was about. Growing up, he owned horses and worked at a barn. He volunteered with the Special Olympics, and was a School Resource Officer. NTRC was a perfect fit.

Ginny and Lee now commute from Fort Myers four days a week bringing smiles and sharing laughs with each other and NTRC participants. Lee brings his experience and a lot of love for children and horses (especially Red) to his role as a leader in riding lessons. Ginny prefers sidewalking and favors Majesty for his patience.

Ginny shared, "Children who couldn't walk are walking and who couldn't talk are talking. It's amazing to see the progress. I have fun every time I volunteer and we get exercise too!" Lee agrees, "This is the best use of my time. It's very rewarding."