

**SOUNDS OF STIRRUPS 'N STRIDES**  
**Quarterly Newsletter December 2008**  
**Volume 1 Issue 5**

**A CHAT WITH BETTY GRAY**

It has been a very busy few months. Before I catch you up to date on everything that has been going on and what the future holds, let me wish each and everyone a very Merry Christmas and happiest of New Years. I know how busy you all are so I urge you to keep this Newsletter so you can refer to it from time to time to keep track of the up-coming events planned for Stirrups 'n Strides.

In August we attended the NARHA Region V Conference and put on a Driving Clinic Presentation. Stirrups 'n Strides is the only therapeutic riding center in Marion and Alachua Counties that has a certified driving program.

In September we took 5 riders to the Summers End Show and brought home many ribbons. We also concluded our 50/50 raffle and held a silent auction for Air-Tran tickets. This enabled us to raise \$1310 to help our riders go to Kansas City.

September 20<sup>th</sup> was our volunteer orientation which I am happy to say was very well attended. We began riding on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. On October 16<sup>th</sup> we began riding the exceptional student class from Belleview again. Due to financial cut backs by the school they are only able come once a month. It is a highlight of each month for the students and we are happy to provide this horse farm experience for them and hopefully when the economy turns around we will be able to see them more often.

October 25<sup>th</sup> was another great success for us. It was the Halloween Adventure Ride. Everyone had a wonderful time and we raised some money for our program as well. A special thanks to Maddy Graham who provided a simply terrifying haunted house and to Theresa Grimes and Bobbie Ciraco who did the adventure ride. We had 8 clowns that volunteered their services and were enjoyed by everyone. Rafael Valle riding Ivory Pal, the trick horse, amazed us with wonderful tricks, but I think the biggest hit of all was the volunteer costume contest that was won by Kathy Gray and Knickee. Knickee was a wonderful elephant being lead by Kathy the clown & Megan Pintok won the prize for bringing in the most money with her pledges. Everyone agreed we should make this an annual event.

November 20<sup>th</sup> saw Megan Cyr take the National Grand Championship at the UPHA Exceptional Challenge Cup and Krista Koch place in the top ten. We were thrilled and once again offer our congratulations.

November also found us in the midst of applying for a United Way Grant. This is a very difficult and taxing undertaking. We've learned a great deal and are just at the beginning of the process but we pray we will be successful as it means so much to our students and our facilities at which they ride.

Page #2 Betty Gray Column (continued)

Over 75 people came to celebrate Christmas at the Livestock Pavilion. Music and singing was provided by Volunteers Marianne and Bob Hughes with an assist from Board President Jim Olson. Magician Mike Carnavale once again awed and amazed all of us with his sleight of hand. The biggest hit of course was Santa Claus who arrived with gifts for everyone. A big Thank you to Beth Joens for all the Christmas party goodies she supplied.

Speaking of Christmas we took part in the Ocala Christmas parade on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all who participated particularly those who had to walk the whole distance and especially to our “pooper scoopers” Sandy Donaldson and Treesa Drury. Amigo pulled the wheelchair accessible carriage with Sarah Bloomer and Jim Olson on board and Zac Puckett and Brandon Koch keeping him in line. Krista Koch and Maddy Graham carried the banner and Lou Yaich and Beth Joens were sidewalkers. Did we have fun? That is the question!

As you can see it has been a successful start to our second year. Please continue to work with us and get your friends to join us so we can have an absolutely wonderful 2009. Thanks again for all of your help.

**Betty Gray**

### **WE HAVE NEW HORSES. WE NEED SPONSORS**

We've added new horses to the program. Ivy is an 8 year old Appaloosa Gelding; Amigo, a mini was brought on board to pull the carts and has quickly become a “favorite” around the barn. The latest addition is Gizmo an 18 year old quarter horse. Gizmo has worked in therapeutic riding for many years. A program in Clermont closed and we were asked to take Gizmo. He is gentle and makes an excellent addition for our stable. Once again we'd like to remind you that we need sponsors for these horses. The cost to sponsor a horse is \$2,000 a year and includes various mentions in Stirrups 'n Strides materials, a name plate on the barn stall and a flyer telling you all about your horse. It is ideal for a club or business. You can have pictures taken with your horse and use it in publicity materials. Please contact us if you have any questions or would like a speaker to come to your organization. A big Thank you goes out to Treesa Drury who has stepped up and sponsored Gizmo, this is Treesa's 2<sup>nd</sup> horse to sponsor, she also sponsors Briggsy.

### **A LETTER TO SANTA**

To all of our Santa's Helpers a quick reminder: As you finish up your Christmas Shopping remember Stirrups 'n Strides. We need office supplies items such as Printer Ink, (HP74 &75) Computer Paper; we need Brooms, Sponges, Toilet Paper and Paper Towels; we need horse supplies such as: Fly Spray, Show Sheen, Horse Shampoo and Tack Cleaning Supplies. And if you have a special in with Santa we need stalls mats storage/office building, Tractor with Bucket and Mower, a ¾ to 1 Ton Truck and Horse Trailer and a Riding Lawn Mower.

### **A VERY SPECIAL VOLUNTEER-----JODY SCHAIBLE**

Jody Schaible is the Farrier Extraordinaire for Stirrups 'n Strides. He has volunteered his time to work with therapy horses for the last 8 years. Betty Gray says, "Not only is he a superb blacksmith but he is always there for us no matter how busy he may be." Jody has been a Farrier for the last 10 years. His background is as an environmental scientist. He was looking for something different and began working on a farm where he became enamored with horses and the myriad of methods to help the horse by working on the feet. When asked if it was not back breaking work he said, no different from any other physical job you have to get in shape for it and then you can handle it. Jody is married and has two children a boy and a girl. His hobby is golf but he admits he doesn't get much time for it these days. Besides his own practice, his volunteer work and spending time with his family, he has just been appointed the resident Farrier for the University of Florida. We ask you to support Stirrups 'n Strides by calling Jody when you need a Farrier. If he is busy he has other blacksmiths who work with him. As a matter of fact you may see one of them around our barn on occasion. His name is Bill Hardin and Bill will be volunteering his time to assist Jody with our horses. If you need Jody's services please call him at 352-361-8031. He's the best and we are all grateful for what he does. You can show your gratitude by calling him when you need a farrier.

### **JOIN US AT THE REGION 5 CHALLENGE SHOW**

Stirrups 'n Strides is hosting the Region 5 Challenge Show at Continental Acres on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Therapeutic Riders come to compete from Florida throughout Florida and Georgia. It's a wonderful location and provides exciting competition. If you have never attended one make sure to join us this year at Weirsdale. This undertaking of course requires many volunteers. Please set the day aside and call Anita Gossett and let her know if you will be able to help. The other necessary item is money. We need sponsors. You can sponsor classes, Ribbons & Trophies, Volunteer Lunches, or Breakfast. Contact Betty Gray as soon as possible to let her know what you will sponsor.

### **CONTINENTAL ACRES BAKE SALE**

Mark your calendars. February 21<sup>st</sup> is a Stirrups 'n Strides Bake Sale at Continental Acres. This is a chance for us to make some needed funds. This weekend in February is the International Driving Competition sponsored by Gloria Austin's Antique Carriage Museum. It attracts hundreds of people from all over the world. We need your help to staff the bake sale booth and of course we need you to bake goodies to be sold. Let Anita Gossett know your availabilities.

## **NO RIDING DECEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup> THROUGH JANUARY 2<sup>ND</sup>**

Our Holiday Break will be from December 22<sup>nd</sup> through January 2<sup>nd</sup>. We will resume our regular class schedule on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **FUND RAISING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Theresa Grimes, chair of the Fund Raising Committee has been planning so many things it is hard to keep up with her. If all her efforts are to be successful keep up we must and that means volunteer hours from you. We have secured a booth at HITS where we will be able to tell our story, solicit sponsorships and ask for donations. The dates we need volunteers are February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 15<sup>th</sup>. Contact Anita Gossett or Theresa Grimes if you can help. These events tell our story and we have an excellent booth set-up thanks to Theresa. We have had successful presentations at The Florida Equine Institute Trade Show, The Florida Publicists Association, and the Florida Mortgage Association.

**“From Seats to Saddles”** begins in January. This is a huge special fund raising activity that will feature chairs for auction painted by local artists. The chairs will be on display throughout Marion County. The auction will take place in May. We are looking for local artists to participate in this event. We are asking them to capture the true essence of what makes Ocala/Marion County the pearl of Central Florida. No two chairs will be alike. Help us by donating chairs you may find at flea markets, garage sales or your attic. Recently while enjoying lunch at RED LOBSTER we told them about the upcoming fund raiser and they donated one of their wooden chairs right off the floor, our local WENDY’S also donated a chair.. If you have a chair to donate or if you are an artist and wish to paint a chair contact Theresa Grimes at 352-209-9073. Stay tuned for more exciting news about **“From Seats to Saddles”**.

### **S ‘n S TO HOST SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

Stirrups ‘n Strides will be the host for the Special Olympic Trials in March another big undertaking for us but a very prestigious one. So please stand ready and let Anita Gossett know if you can help as a leader, sidewalker, organizer or food seller.

### **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

- During an emergency stop all activity, stay calm and quiet
- Horse Leaders should stay with the horse and not let go of the lead
- Side Walkers should comfort the rider in their charge
- All should wait for the instructor to handle the situation
- Follow precisely the directions given by the instructor

## **SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS**

We would like to say an extra special thank you to Rose Blaine-Ruiz, the publisher of El Reportero Latino. She has consistently offered her assistance and been very generous in her coverage of our activities. If you get a chance pick up a copy of The Latin Reporter, December 5<sup>th</sup> issue. There is a wonderful article complete with pictures about our success in Kansas City at the UPHA Exceptional Challenge Cup Finals.

Tracy Schumer is another special lady who has donated many helpful items to us including worm medicine and saddle racks.

Other major contributors to Stirrups 'n Strides include: Ocala Breeders Feed and Supply; Seminole Feed Stores, Mid-West Hay; Ocala Equine Hospital; Cardinal Hill Farm (Norm Casse), Jody Schaible (Farrier) Camp Thomas (Equine Dentist); A+ Tax and Bookkeeping Center and the Copy Shoppe.

Please support all of these people as they support us.

## **IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER**

**December 22<sup>nd</sup> thru January 2<sup>nd</sup> No Riding**  
**January 3<sup>rd</sup> Riding Classes Resume**  
**January 17<sup>th</sup> Challenge Show**  
**January thru May From Seats to Saddles Fund Raiser**  
**February 21<sup>st</sup> Bake Sale at Continental Acres**  
**February 22<sup>nd</sup> HITS Booth**  
**March 1<sup>st</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> Hits Booth**  
**March Special Olympics**

## **IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO HAVE**

Betty Gray 352-427-3569  
Anita Gossett 352-817-6446  
Theresa Grimes 352-209-9073  
Stirrups 'n Strides 352-591-1042

## **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT**

If you want to lift yourself up,  
Lift up someone else

Booker T Washington