



July 2016

Grace Lake Ministries Newsletter

Rider Spotlight

SHAZAM!

What's YOUR Superpower? Gabriel, our featured Rider this edition, can now CLIMB TREES and RUN like other children!

Gabriel's strength and confidence levels have developed so much through the 4 years of therapeutic riding that he is overcoming other obstacles in his life as well. Everyone can see Gabriel's pure joy at being able to run and keep up with the other kids. Despite the warnings to his parents that his muscle tone would never develop, riding has done just that for him!



Trotting has to be Gabriel's favorite part of the sessions. He loves the sensory input of the horse and saddle as he trots. If he could trot through the entire lesson, he definitely would do so. He giggles so loud while he trots that you can hear him from across the arena and in the parent's waiting area. It makes his mom so happy to hear him enjoying his therapy.

As an experienced connoisseur of the Grace Lake therapists, Gabriel preferred Chip's fast, even trot. But, GUESS WHAT?! NOTHING brings the ear-to-ear grin like being able to control and maneuver his horse independently! Gabriel has worked hard through the years to graduate from needing a side walker each session. Onyx now faithfully carries him as he executes exercises designed to bring healing and hope to this PROUD rider.

Volunteer Spotlight



Tracy Matern is in the spotlight as one of our tirelessly dedicated Board Members. Her experience, time, and willingness to be a blessing are far more valuable than rubies in our hearts! If you haven't had the opportunity to meet Tracy, here's just a glimpse of what makes her so special to us. It's an honor to serve with her!

How long have you been involved as a Grace Lake Ministries Board Member? I've been a member of the Board since March of 2009.

In what way have you been blessed by your service with Grace Lake? I credit the wonderful people at Grace Lake for bringing me closer to Jesus and my God and for helping me grow in faith.

Do you think your time at Grace Lake will be a benefit to you in the future? If so, in what way? I have learned so much from working for Grace Lake's funding. I went from hating fundraising to actually enjoying it....well...some of it. I've learned sources of funding and grants. John Bailey of Executives in Action showed us how to strengthen our structure, prepare important documents, create information needed to apply for grants and have faith in ourselves and our mission. These are all things I can apply in the future.

Do you have an anecdote or story to share about your experience with Grace Lake Ministries? I was privileged to interview Ceci Poe about her son Chad and his journey with therapeutic riding. The challenges that Chad has overcome and continues to overcome with the help of his horse therapists is truly inspirational. He is the perfect example of how valuable therapeutic riding is to those with physical challenges.

What advice, encouragement, or inspiration would you share with a person (young or old) who is considering becoming a volunteer with us? Most of my work is behind the scenes but I envy those who work with our riders and horses. They are in the very unique position to witness the special bonds developed between rider and horse. They get to see the true miracles....those who walk after being wheelchair bound...those who talk for the first time...those who develop empathy for their horse friend when this had always been difficult. If they listen and watch, they will see some amazing things that they can carry with them for the rest of their lives.

What are your favorite hobbies / interests? I think camping and trailriding with my horses is the most fun you can ever have and most of my interests and non-profit work revolve around this interest. I also love to shoot and edit pictures and video, enjoy putting together scrapbooks and think genealogy leads to a fascination with history.

How long have you owned or worked with horses? I have always had the "horse gene". I wanted to see "forsies" when I was only 3. It was very expensive to own your own horses where I grew up so I saved all my baby-sitting money and allowance to take riding lessons at a local stable. I begged my mother to drop me off early and pick me up late so I could spend all day there.

Moving to Texas allowed me to buy my first horse at age 30 and I have been learning from them ever since. I really started learning when I acquired my challenging Tennessee Walker Moonshine in 2001 which led me to Parelli's Natural Horsemanship lessons. I credit these for really helping me understand how horses think and they gave me the tools to be more effective in a gentle way.

What additional information, story, or fun fact would you like to include? I am Past President (a Board position) of the Trinity Trail Preservation Assn., the Grand Co-Chairman for the Lake Ray Roberts Equestrian Trail Assn., the email administrator

for the Saddlebags North, on the Board of the Collin County AgriLife Lone Star Equine Council and on the Board of the Collin County Dutch Oven Group so life is never dull. I thank the Lord for my opportunity to serve.

Thank you for being a part of the Grace Lake family!

Each year generous supporters like you join us for the exciting annual North Texas Giving Day- this year it will be September 22 from 6 a.m. to midnight. Your generous support makes a meaningful difference to our community of people with disabilities and others in need of hope and healing.

As you know, Grace Lake is changing lives day by day by providing therapeutic horsemanship to our special needs riders in a Christian environment.

On September 22, 2016 (North Texas Giving Day), your \$100 gift will help us receive extra funds for our work in the community. Every gift of \$25 or more will go further with more than \$2.5 million dollars in bonus funds and prizes! By visiting, NorthTexasGivingDay.org, the online giving website for North Texas Giving Day, you make a difference with your gift to Grace Lake.

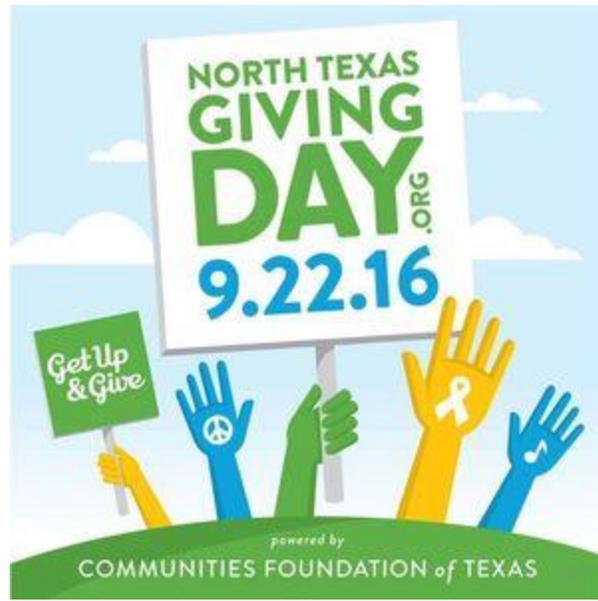
Here's the really exciting part: Every gift made through NorthTexasGivingDay.org on September 22 helps our chances of winning prizes throughout the day ranging from \$500 to \$5,000! With more than 90 total prizes being awarded throughout the day, our chances to maximize your gift are great!

All gifts you make to Grace Lake Therapeutic Horsemanship on September 22 will increase our impact by allowing us to continue to bring horses, hope and healing to those in need.

Make your gift on September 22 by visiting <https://northtexasgivingday.org/npo/grace-lake-therapeutic-horsemanship-program>

With your help, we WILL reach our \$12,000 fundraising goal on North Texas Giving Day!

Follow us on Facebook so you can share in the excitement of a day of giving and remember to give on September 22.



Dates to Remember:

- 7/9 Facilities Work Day (9am)**
- 8/13 Facilities Work Day (9am)**
- 8/20 New Volunteer Training**
- 8/20 Horse Handler I Training**
- 8/27 Horse Handler II Training**