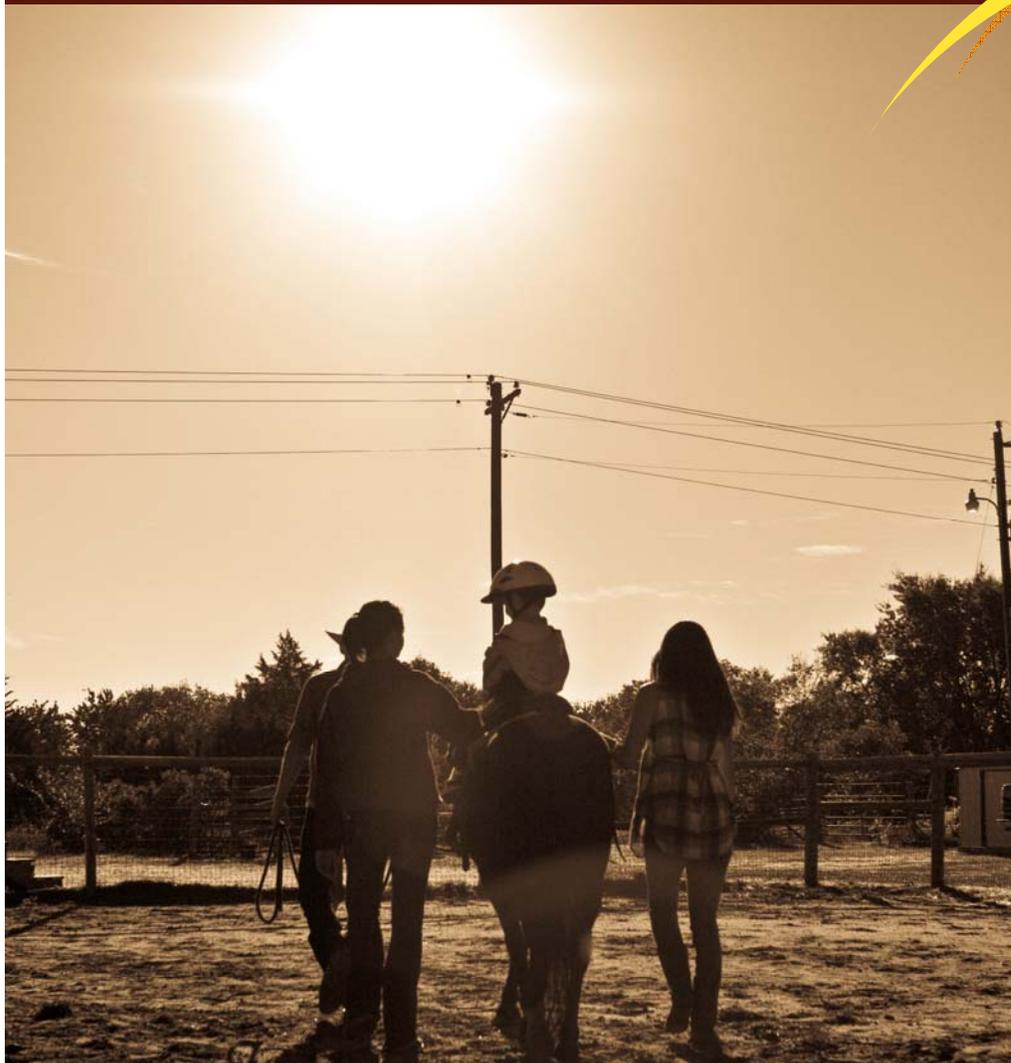


Grace Lake Ministries

Therapeutic Horsemanship

WINTER 2011



Thank You to Our Community

Grace Lake Ministries has been surrounded by an amazing group of people, each with different talents and resources. People are donating time, services, money, much needed items and sharing their God-given gifts. I feel overwhelmingly blessed to see the generosity and kindness of God's versatile people. It is the overflowing support of our community that enables us to pour forth God's hope and healing to those in need.

I am often asked by riders on scholarship how we are funded and how we can provide our services free of charge. I wish I could adequately express in words God's divine provision. Through Grace Lake, I have had the privilege of experiencing having nothing and seeing God provide for the needs that only He was aware of.

We have grown past the point of merely getting by to a place that feels so abundant. I look forward to our future of partnership with our community. What a blessing to have need and get to see God's people in action.

Thank you for being a part of our community.

Sincerely,
Holly Robinson,
Executive Director
Grace Lake Ministries

A sneak peek:

Our Community Comes Together P.1
Barn Buddies Reach out with Love P.2
Learning to Talk to Bear P.3
Menagerie Grows by the Trailerful P.4
...and more!

Our Community Comes Together

The grounds look spiffier, but Grace Lake Ministries got more than a facelift over the summer. In August, Daron Hauptrief and volunteers from First Baptist Church of Melissa transformed the Grace Lake Ministries storage unit into an office, built a new mounting ramp/block and put up two storage buildings donated by Lowes! This hard work of the volunteers was made possible because of generous support from:

- Daron Hauptrief, who shared his gifts of designing, planning and managing the four-day project
- Siobhan Pederson and KDM Marketing, who donated a storage building
- Betty Walthall and First Baptist Church of Melissa, who donated the materials for the mounting ramp/block as well as the materials for the foundation of two storage buildings
- Ted and Kathleen Robinson and Vere Shelton, who made generous donations for supplies for the office project
- Kyle Robinson and Richardson Logic Control, who donated and installed the supplies for telephone and Internet access
- Pamela Simpson, who painted the walls and floor of the office and donated items for painting
- David Parker and Universal Display and Fixture Company, who installed and donated the custom made laminate desk and shelves in the office

Thank you, Lord, for bringing all of these resources together at just the right time! It was an amazing process to witness!

Volunteers Make Fundraiser a Success

Trinity Trails Preservation Association, in collaboration with the American Competitive Trail Horse Association, yielded more than \$3,600 in donations during a May 29 fundraiser for Grace Lake Ministries. More than 60 riders and nearly 50 volunteers participated in the event!

Grace Lake sends a special "thank you" to Suzanne Creel and Tracy Matern of TTPA and to Melanie Stewart and Ceci Poe for their fantastic culinary skills the donation of breakfast and lunch.

We also wish to thank:

- Robert Liner for his entertaining presentation on Natural Horsemanship.
- Nancy Golden of Golden Cross Ranch for donating the use of her trail obstacles and a portion of the ranch's sales proceeds in the month of June.

- Lone Star Porta Potty for donating a Porta Potty for the event.

Our second annual Competitive Trail Challenge Fundraiser, scheduled for May 28, 2011 at Lake Lavon, will feature our infamous barbeque lunch and a delightful silent auction. Collection for silent auction items will begin in January. **Mark your calendars and save the date!**



Barn Buddies Reach Out with Love

Barn Buddies is a God-inspired program at Grace Lake designed to teach hurting people about God's love through the capable hands of volunteers and the horses they love. We will serve families with foster children, families with autistic children, families who are homeless, women who have experienced domestic violence and other groups of people in need of horses, hope, and healing. Visitors who come to Grace Lake for Barn Buddies will rotate between four stations: Bible study and sharing, horseback riding, barn management and equestrian skills practice, which includes grooming, saddling, leading, haltering and bridling a horse. Parents can work with children on developing that day's skill. A professional instructor will teach riding skills to the children while parents fellowship with one another.

Barn Buddies is an opportunity to share God's word in a tangible way and experience it through the patience and gentleness of our horses. People who are hurting often avoid church settings. Families who have children with behavior problems and special

needs often do not attend church because their children don't fit into the program. Some of our participants say that Grace Lake is their church. At Barn Buddies, we begin each class with group prayer and later have a 20-minute time of Bible study and sharing. Barn Buddies gives families an opportunity to serve, help others and give back. Children with special needs are often not expected to give back, yet we are all designed by God to serve others. Giving back is a part of healing. Children often love to clean manure, especially with Mom and Dad. They also have opportunities to clean tack, sweep the barn and rake sticks and hay.

Barn Buddies focuses on keeping families together, serving and learning as the team that God designed them to be. Barn Buddies also allows parents to support each other through fellowship, a key component to wellness when family life is stressful. Barn Buddies teaches families about one of God's beautiful creations: horses. People have a need to connect with nature. We are

NARHA-Certified Instructor Joins Grace Lake

Grace Lake Ministries is excited to welcome our new NARHA-certified instructor, Krista Aguilar. Krista has 10 years of experience as a riding instructor, and her involvement with horses can be traced back to her childhood. She is the daughter of missionaries and was born and raised in Brazil. Krista bought her first horse at age 14 and found an instant connection. Krista studied Equine Science at a vocational college in California then worked as a missionary with a rodeo ministry for five years. She later opened a riding school in Brazil, where a friend introduced her to the benefits of therapeutic riding. Krista became certified as a therapeutic riding instructor in Brazil and came to Texas in 2005. She received her NARHA certification through Equest. Please stop by and welcome Krista. She will be teaching lessons at Grace Lake on Tuesdays and Thursdays.





Fujitsu Fundraiser is a Slam Dunk

Fujitsu raised almost \$3,000 to benefit Grace Lake Ministries! On Oct. 7, Fujitsu employees participated in a Fair Game Dunk Tank fundraiser and an online donation program. Fujitsu matched the amount raised and donated 100 percent of the proceeds to Grace Lake Ministries.

How did Fujitsu find out about Grace Lake Ministries? Darren Stevenson, a long time volunteer at Grace Lake,

wrote an article for the company's internal newsletter about volunteering at Grace Lake. Doug Moore, Senior Vice President, Sales, Marketing and Services at Fujitsu, took an interest in our program and decided to hold a fundraiser.

Thank you Darren Stevenson, Doug Moore and Fujitsu employees for your generosity!

Learning to Talk to Bear

One day last July, a little boy and his mother stood together in their back yard, and released a group of bright red, white and blue balloons. As the balloons drifted up into the sunny sky, mother and son embraced each other and shared thoughts of love and remembrance for the husband and father they'd lost three years earlier. Although "Daniel" cried for his father, the occasion was also a celebration, not only of love for the departed, but of Daniel's newfound ability to release his emotions and communicate about the grief and confusion he'd previously kept buried. Until that time, Daniel had been virtually unable to express his sorrow or explain his feelings.

Daniel's growing pride in himself and the remarkable progress he's made coping with Sensory Integration Dysfunction have come from a year of therapeutic riding and therapy organized by Grace Lake.

Both his mother and grandmother agree Daniel's come a long way. When he first

joined the therapeutic riding program, he was getting into a lot of trouble at the elementary school he attends, was disrespectful to his mom, and having trouble communicating with others. As a result of his behavioral difficulties, it was hard for him to make friends and interact positively with people around him. His mom was at a loss to know what to do; when she brought her boy to Grace Lake, she had already experienced great frustration with other behavioral health professionals and little success in identifying the cause of the problem. Holly was able to guide Daniel's mother to resources that helped get him an accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment with an occupational therapist, in addition to his participation in the therapeutic riding program.

Daniel has learned, in his own words, "to talk to Bear," the horse he's been working



- ...to Debbie Durham of *Kid's Discovery* at First Baptist Church of Melissa for conducting an auction which netted over \$500 for Grace Lake.
- ...to Lone Star Porta Potty for providing a wheelchair accessible porta potty and regular cleaning services.
- ...to John Creel of Lattimore Concrete for generously donating loads of sand used in stalls, arena and paddock areas.
- ...to Karen Crump for donating through the AT&T United Way Employee Giving Campaign.
- ...to Horse Sponsors Bill and Melanie Stewart, and Bill and Vere Shelton.
- ...to Brent and Liz Strange for the use of their horses Butterscotch and Grace, and their beautiful 230 acres for trail riding.

BARN BUDDIES *Continued from page 2*

designed by God to control animals, and it is empowering to realize that God-given ability.

Barn Buddies provides families with the opportunity to serve, learn about God, be together in nature, learn about horses and fellowship with other families in a similar situation. Let's face it, we became involved with Grace Lake to connect. Barn Buddies provides the opportunity to connect with God, your family, nature, horses and others with similar needs. What a wonderful combination!

Menagerie Grows by the Trailerful

Hoss and Booger have come to live on our 5-acre farm here inside the city limits of Weatherford, Texas. We have a tree-line creek on the east and the west of the barnyard as well as another tree-lined creek in the back pasture on the north. Our 8-year-old granddaughter was bouncing like a kangaroo when we pulled into the yard with our precious cargo of horses. This was a dream fulfilled for her. We learned quickly that Hoss is the boss and Booger is the follower. They drink lots of water, and since we have been so richly blessed with rain this year, they still have grass to eat. My husband takes very good care of them and feeds them horse pellets and hay each day. I think

they might be getting a bit lazy though, because we have been too busy for our two grandchildren who live a short distance from us to even ride, but we hope we will soon get into a regular routine. Hoss and Booger have a dorrpher ram named Rambo; his wives, Shag and Big Mama; three red hens, a black bantam hen named Black Eagle and a rooster named Chickie who live here with them. There is also a part-Pyrenees named Princess and a smart-Alec Chihuahua named Petyca that live here.

Sincerely,

Paula and Tilmon Bonner

Gentle "Thunder" Gallops into Our Hearts

Please join us in welcoming Thunder, our new 10-year-old black pony donated by Ted and Kathleen Robinson. We are so excited to have Thunder join Grace Lake with the other therapy horses. Thunder was previously used as a Junior Rodeo horse, and his calm nature enabled him to be used by all the kiddos that didn't have a horse. Thunder's curiosity, friendliness and accepting nature makes him a perfect therapy horse. He is quickly becoming accustomed to his new duties.



"The Horse is God's Gift to Mankind"
—Arabian Proverb

A special "Thank you" to Dr. David Fazzino and Dr. Cindy Fazzino of Cold Springs Animal Hospital for generously donating veterinary services!

TALKING TO BEAR *Continued from page 3*

with at Grace Lake. Bear's helped him to understand boundaries, choices, and consequences. As a result he's better able to relate to others and express himself, which creates a growing sense of self-esteem. As a result, others at school, church, and in Daniel's family are noticing the improvement and progress he's making, and his mom is at last confident that he is receiving the right kind of therapy.

Daniel's story is a wonderful example of how an equine partner can bring fresh hope and healing to a child in need of support through a difficult period of adjustment, or in learning to meet behavioral challenges. We're looking forward to seeing Daniel make continued progress over the coming years.

Grace Lake Ministries

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