



The Freedom Hills Connection

Rider Connection & Highlights



Ben showing his equestrian skills on Blondie!

J.T. on Nina, he says his favorite horse is Apple and he loves vaulting!



WHAT WE DO: For the physically and mentally challenged, riding a horse can play a significant role in their rehabilitation. Clients are stimulated psychologically and physically by riding. The warmth and motion of the horse will benefit little used muscles, and in many cases decrease muscle spasms. For the emotionally challenged, the partnership of the horse and rider can offer a whole new aspect of life, creating confidence and self-esteem. Aside from the many benefits, riding is fun! The horse provides the sturdy legs to take the rider as far as the imagination allows. A great opportunity to meet new people, animals and play games all while participating in a very safety oriented unique therapy.

Vicki Van Beek has been riding with Freedom Hills for a year and a half. Through the program, she has participated in many shows including Devon, Les Autre; part of the Special Olympics and in an able bodied Arabian Show at Fair Hill. Through these opportunities, Vicki has come to love showing, and is always ready for an opportunity to show off her skills. In her riding she excels and it allows her to feel successful at her accomplishments.



“Vickie has come to love showing, and is always ready for an opportunity to show off her skills.”

Freedom Hills—About Us

Article Contributors:

Shirley Van Beek
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Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program

Freedom Hills is a non-profit 501(c)3 therapeutic riding program that has been serving the community since 1982. This program is open to any physically, mentally and/or emotionally challenged individual in the Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania tri-state area. As a non-profit organization, Freedom Hills exists through the efforts of volunteers, donations, fund raisers, and sponsors. Freedom Hills does not turn anyone away due to financial difficulties.

Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program

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We're on the web!
www.freedomhills.org

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Renée Sherrard-Luther, B.S.E.S.
NARHA Advanced Instructor
American Riding Instructor, Certified Level II
Centered Riding, Certified Level III
Parelli Certified

In Memory Of Rosemarie Linton

Mom loved people. She was never happier than when she had a house full of people, the more the merrier. Whatever she had was always shared no matter what. She had a saying which everyone knew – “the first time you come here you’re a guest, after that you are family”. She was always there to patch up a barn boo boo and the kids remembered her gentle care afterwards. Mom had that special way of totally listening no matter what the problem, big or small, and no one was ever told they were too big to sit on her lap. She was there to give you that big hug you needed even if you didn’t know you needed it”.

With such a kind and warm heart, it’s no wonder Rosemarie was there at the start of the therapeutic riding program. Rosemarie was the beloved mother of both of the Freedom Hills riding instructors, Robyn and Renee and a family member/friend to so many

involved with the program. Rosemarie contributed much to the Freedom Hills Program. Her belief in the program provided the ground floor for building Freedom Hills, offering her property, handling start up expenses and giving her time to help make Freedom Hills a successful program. Rosemarie often wore many hats to support the program. She was a secretary, sidewalker/leader, hay truck driver and much more. Everyone was welcome into her home in turn creating a large family for Freedom Hills.

“As hard as it is right now – I believe she is still here with us and every person who she met was a little bit better just for having known her”.

She will always be remembered with love and be forever with us in our thoughts and prayers!



September 13, 1927— October 11, 2004

Freedom Hills Events

MAY 14th & 15th

Freedom Hills Annual Ride-A-Thon

The soft whiny of the horses awoke us at daybreak to another beautiful day at Fair Hill. The stables at Fair Hill were filled with excited horses and owners on the weekend of May 13th through the 15th.

For three fun-filled days riders and horses enjoyed relaxing rides with fellow horsemen while raising money for Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Center. These horse enthusiasts enjoyed good companionship, wonderful riding facilities and the assurance of providing assistance to an excellent cause. Good companionship can be found easily among horsemen. The charity ride enables horse owners to form bonds with others that have their shared interests. Many friendships have been formed and maintained through meeting at these continued rides. Through the experience of meeting others we can grow as horsemen ourselves.

Not only was their excellent companionship but beautiful riding facilities as well. Fair Hill Natural Resource Center boasts 5,000 acres of trails. These trails have varied terrain which can appeal to all types and levels of riders. The trails taken by the ride showcased these varied terrains. The scenery of the ride enhanced the calm and reflective mood of the ride.

The facilities enhanced the ride but the true rallying force behind the ride was the cause it promoted. The charity ride benefits Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Center and this year \$3305.40 was raised. A special thank you to Jackie Rineer who brought in over \$600.00 in sponsors. This center caters to those with mental and physical limitations. Without these contributions the center would not be able to provide the services it does.

The charity ride is truly an unique experience. It allows new friendships to grow and old ones to be renewed. The ride is two days of beautiful scenery, wonderful people and promotion of a good cause. Hope to see more people next year! Happy Trails!

**Tickets Available Now!
Win a Stubben Seigfield
All Purpose Saddle
Donated by
Bit of Britain
\$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00**



Freedom Hills needs you!

Volunteer

We are always in need of volunteers. If you can show up I guarantee we can find a job for you to do! Please contact us for additional information as volunteers are needed now!

Donate or Sponsor

Although Freedom Hills never turns anyone away due to financial reasons, we do need donations or sponsors to cover the costs. There are so many different ways you can donate. Payroll deductions to United Way listing Freedom Hills as your designated charity, sponsor a rider or adopt a horse to list some. Our annual auction is our largest fundraiser and we are always in need of items to be donated.

Come to a Work Day

Each quarter we have a work day to take care of things around the farm. This is when we can really use people who have carpentry, electrical or just willing to work skills! Check our upcoming events page for next scheduled work day.

Everyone is welcome at Freedom Hills!

Mark your Calendars!!!

Dates to remember!

August 15-Auction Committee Meeting, Rising Sun Library 5:30pm, volunteers welcome

October 8-Thorncroft Horse Show

October 29-Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Horse Show

February 25, 2006-Auction & Dinner

May 20 & 21, 2006-Ride A-Thon

Day at the Farm—TBA

Volunteers needed for all!!!

Stay informed on new events at
www.freedomhills.org

Rolling Hills Ranch Programs

Rolling Hills Ranch Day Camp

July 18-22nd

Aug. 1-5th

Aug. 8-12th

9am to 3pm

\$200.00 week

Have a summer to remember!

Riding Lessons * Bible Adventure

Hiking * Water Games * Crafts

Special Needs Kids Welcome!

Rolling Hills Ranch LLC.

**Private & Group Riding
Lessons**

**Beginners through Advanced
4-H Pony Club Opportunities
Classes in Natural Horsemanship
Summer Day Camps
Boarding and Leasing Available**

Call: 410-378-3817

**55 Rolling Hills Ranch Lane
Port Deposit, Maryland 21904
Website: www.freedomhills.org**



Advanced Riding Camp

July 5th thru 8th - Cost \$225.00

Emphasis on Dressage, Cross County & Jumping.
Rider must be able to walk, trot & canter.

Please contact:

Renee Sherrard-Luther, B.S.E.S.

NARHA Advanced Instructor

American Riding Instructor Certified, Level 11

Centered Riding Certified, Level 11

Parelli Certified

410-378-3817

Freedom Hills Support & Sponsors

Our hearts and our thanks goes out to those who sponsor and support Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program!!!



We care about horses.

Thank you Bit of Britain for donating the Stubben Seigfried Saddle for the raffle! Get your tickets now for Octobers draw!



Please forgive us if we have forgotten to mention anyone that has supported or donated to Freedom Hills, We are so very grateful for all our sponsors!!!

A special thank you to Artie Johnston for his support!
Thank you to all our sponsors in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Delaware for your continued support!

JP Animal Supply
Hilferty Construction
Delaware Community Foundation
Thoroughbred Charities of America

Support Freedom Hills and join the Country Care Program!

Whenever anyone purchases items online on the www. CountrySupply.com website, please use our code: fhtrp and you will be supporting us at the Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program, Country Supply will be donating 5% of your purchases back to us.

WE ARE PARTICIPATING IN THE COUNTRY CARE PROGRAM



Shop at the Country Supply website:

www.countrysupply.com

and they will donate a percentage of your purchases! Simply enter our Care Code when you complete your order.



Our Care Code: fhtrp

The Mill of Bel Air Club
Donation Program

Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program has joined in a partnership with The Mill of Bel Air. Every time you make a purchase at the Mill, mention that you are a friend of the Freedom Hills Riding Program. A percentage of the entire purchase will be credited to our account which we will be able to use for fundraising purposes. The Mill has three locations:

The Mill of Bel Air
424 North Main Street
Bel Air, MD 21014
(410)838-6111

The Mill of Whiteford
2422 Whiteford Road
Whiteford, MD 21160
(410)452-8177

The Mill of Black Horse
4551 Norrisville Road
White Hall, MD 21161
(410)692-2200

or visit them at their website www.themillofbelair.com

Thoroughbred Charities of America - Devoted Service Award

Thoroughbred Charities of America was awarded a "Devoted Service Award" for their outstanding devotion, dedication and support at the Freedom Hill's 2005 auction. TCA has been a major supporter of Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program for many years. Their support has allowed the program to grow and provide therapy to so many.



Welcome to Freedom Hills!
CHUNKY MONKEY



FREEDOM HILLS Wish List

Items Needed

Computer Desk
Filing Cabinet
Storage Racks
Washing Machine
Dryer
Work Boots Teen-age Sizes 14-18
Tack
Hay & Straw
Feed

Congratulations.. to all Devon & Thorncroft Horse Show Winners!!!!

Lane McAlister Fund of the Delaware Community Foundation

We were pleased to announce that Freedom Hills was the recipient of a first year grant for \$15,000.00 from the Lane McAlister Fund of the Delaware Community Foundation. The intent of the fund is to award grants to "organizations that work for the benefit of animals, or that work with animals for the benefit of the elderly, disabled or disadvantaged persons."

DCF awarded \$205,000 to 14 organizations with missions matching their criteria. We will be applying with DCF for the 2005 2nd year grant of \$25,000.00 to continue to meet the needs of our riders.

From the Horse's Mouth

The horses at Freedom Hills have something to tell you... not only do they love their caretakers and riders, but they really give extra neighs to those who contribute to the

program through United Way (how do you think they get their HAY?!). If you are interested in contributing a portion of your pay check through United Way,



HAY EVERYONE!

please call or email us to find out how.



Rider Connection & Highlights Cont'd...

Our Rider's Talk!!!

I suffered an attack of Transverse Myelitis (TM) in the summer of 2001. The result of TM left me with various neurological problems in the spine, including the inability to walk without mechanical aids. Continuous physical therapy since that time has helped greatly. Progress has been measured in terms of small changes in distance walked, or weight lifted. Such changes accrue over time and results are achieved. However, I have never undertaken a new physical activity since the onset of TM.

I certainly would not have guessed horse back riding to be a possible new activity! And without instructors trained in therapeutic riding, it would not be. I am lucky to have someone who understands my short term limitations and how to move past those obstacles in a safe manner.

Equine Therapy is more than just "riding a horse". I had never ridden a horse before, so having someone capable of teaching me to relax during that first lesson was crucial. It was not until a few lessons later that I learned just how important a relaxed, balanced position when riding is so very important. I am glad I started learning proper form at the outset.

Two recent lessons stand out in

my mind. The first happened when my five year old daughter was given a lesson at the same time I was in the ring. I rarely get to do many outdoor physical activities with her. Riding side by side with her was truly special and I hope she will continue learning to ride. However, five year olds like to set their own direction, so time will tell.

The second lesson that stands out was my first trail ride. I haven't been in the woods or splashed across a stream in many years. Just being outside, far from parking lots, and working with my horse was wonderful. Seeing a deer, and experiencing my first "start" (!), was great. Fortunately, my instructor waited until my trunk strength had increased to the point where these were pleasant experiences and not painful ones!

These two lessons stand out in my mind as milestones that I quickly achieved. The long term benefits of Equine Therapy will take time to realize. Once the body has undergone the basic rebuilding possible after suffering the effects of TM, the results of motor-neuron damage and the consequent loss of physical skills is recovered by proper repetitive actions. Riding is an excellent therapy that provides these repetitive actions.

One of the results of TM is increased muscle tone - stiffness of the muscles. A properly trained rider will learn to obtain a feeling of balance by relaxing the eyes, neck, shoulders, hips, and ankles. I can feel the muscles loosening and working with the horse when riding. I am learning to apply these skills to everyday activities such as walking and am starting to see results.

It is rare to see a therapy provide results so quickly, but few therapies work in the same fashion. My physical therapist has flatly refused to provide hour-long piggy back rides! Perhaps this is why he too endorses equine therapy. No one can predict the complete benefits I will receive from riding, however the results I have already received and excitement of meeting a new challenge make equine therapy very worthwhile.

- Mike Porter
Mike@UDel.EDU



All About the Auction!



Medieval Dinner & Auction

Court Jesters, Ladies in Waiting, Queen Elizabeth and even Robin Hood showed up for the Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Auction. When entering the Minker Banquet Hall in Perryville, MD you were stepping into the great room of a medieval castle lined with beautiful banners. Jousting costumes and food a plenty!

Our guests nibbled on crab balls, cheese platters and a scrumptious array of other hors d'oeuvres while bidding on the silent auction items. There was something for everyone from ski trips, bed and breakfast accommodations, tickets for trips and events, horse and pet care products, theme gift baskets, a

variety of beautiful artwork by local and famous artists, some prints and some originals. After a wonderful meal of Chicken Marsala and delicious cheesecake, Norman and Carol Hunter, auctioneers from Hunters Sale Barn started the serious bidding. Some items took us back in time to the Medieval Days of Feasts and Tournaments and others to the present with the latest in car care and detailing.

The 200 people in attendance had the opportunity to bid on the many items offered this year. We also offered an opportunity to purchase wish list items. Dr. Lee's famous table made up of Mary Betty Drobish, Dr. John Lee, Dr.

Jane Fassinger, Mary Alice Malone, among others donated \$2000.00 towards a new pony, Chunky Monkey. Dr. Robert and Dr. Susan Gell not only donated a dinner for six at their lovely home but also purchased many items from the wish list such as a water tank for the horse trailer and clippers for spiffing the horses and ponies up for Horse Shows.

Thank you to our many sponsors and all those that support Freedom Hills as \$18,186.00 was raised so our riders with mental, physical and emotional disabilities may continue to enjoy therapy on our horses at Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program.



Thank you to all our volunteers that worked so hard to make this evening such a success!

Court Jesters, Robin Hood and even Queen Elizabeth herself attended!

It is rumored the next auction ...



will be a Roaring good Time!

Freedom Hills Therapeutic Riding Program

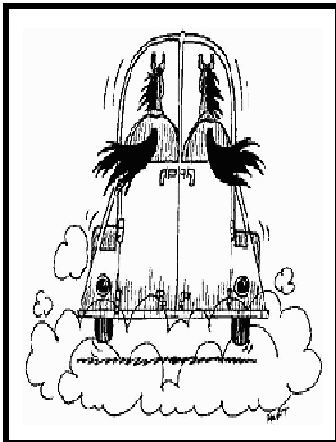
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Who we serve:

HELP... We need
your articles.
Please email or
call us if you
would like to
contribute or
advertise!

Listed are some of the disabilities that Freedom Hills is qualified to work with:

Down Syndrome
Emotional Disabilities
Learning Disabilities
Physical Disabilities
Multiple Sclerosis
Deaf, Blind, Mute
Paraplegic
Cerebral Palsy
Muscular Dystrophy
Alzheimer's Disease
Huntington's Chorea
Mentally Challenged
Head Trauma
Quadriplegic
Amputee
Fibromyalgia
"At Risk" Individuals
Autism
ADHD
PTSD



I Saw A Child

*I saw a child who couldn't walk,
Sit on a horse, laugh and talk.
Then ride it through a field of daisies
And yet he could not walk unaided.
I saw a child, no legs below,
sit on a horse and make it go
though woods of green
and places he had never been
to sit and stare,
except from a chair
I saw a child who could only crawl
mount a horse and sit up tall.
Put it through degrees of paces
and laugh at the wonder on our faces.
I saw a child born into strife,
take up and hold the reins of life
and that same child, I heard him say,
Thank God for showing me the way...*

John Anthony Davies