



2008 Lengthening our Stride



Annual Ticket 2 Ride Fundraiser Dinner

Mark your Calendar!

The annual Ticket 2 Ride Fundraiser featuring a “*Nite at the Races*” will be held March 1st at the Casper Petroleum Club.

The nights’ events will feature a cash bar at 6:30 then dinner at 7:00.

Karol will report on the past year’s accomplishments.

Betting, which will be done with the use of “Horse Bucks” on previ-

ously recorded races will start at 8:30. Prizes may be purchased with those horse buck winnings.

Door prizes will be awarded and there will be a silent auction.

Tickets to the event are \$50 per person or \$75 per couple. Table sponsorships are available for \$300 for a table of 8 and \$375 for a table of 10.

Last year’s event seated 100 people. Tickets were sold out early. This year’s venue will seat ap-

proximately 175.

Tickets may be purchased at All That Yarn, Moss’

Saddles, Boots & Tack, from arena advisory committee members or you may call Karol at 267-7416.

For information and further developments on the event go to www.reach4astar.org.



Advisory Committee Begins Strategic Planning

Members of the Advisory committee met in January with Facilitator Ryan Moffat from the Casper Star Tribune to begin Strategic Planning to insure the future of Reach 4A Star Riding Academy.

The areas discussed were session

fees, fundraising, grand writing and the implementation of programs for which services could be billed.

A committee has been set up to pursue federal, state and private grants.

Programs for which we eventually hope to bill include occupational therapy, equine facilitated psychotherapy, recreation therapy and physical therapy.

The session fee schedules were reviewed with an eye toward possible changes. These changes would be the first in three years.

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- Casper Scores at Special Olympics
- Runge Baxter—Volunteer Coordinator
- Notes on the Christmas Party
- “Liberation” bronze nets \$7500
- Calendar of events

Karol's Korral

I hope everyone is staying warm this winter. I am looking forward to spring. I am sure that it won't come fast enough and when it gets here I won't believe how fast it snuck up on me.

Last year was a big year for us as we served 112 different riders and our horse herd seems to keep growing. There are so many people to thank for helping to make 2007 a success: all the volunteers and instructors, the riders and their parents/guardians/staff, and the Casper community.

A special thanks goes out to I-REACH 2 Inc. (our parent company), Hiser Arabian Farms for the donation of a horse to raffle and to United Way of Natrona County for accepting us as a partner agency this year. Mariah's Kids continued to support us with offering scholarship opportunities for families who have children with autism and their siblings. The Wheeler

Foundation also supported us with a \$2500 donation and we had two stall sponsors, Gene and Rox Monterastelli and Greg Lance, as well as a horse sponsor, Robert and Terri Narotzky.

The Wyoming Arabian Horse Association has taken us on as their pet project and has provided crews for cleaning up the pastures, clipping and trimming the horses, as well as being venue director and judges for the Special Olympics Fall Tournament.

There are so many to thank that I can't list everyone individually, but if you get this newsletter then it is probably because you have helped us in some way and I thank you for that.

I will mention another who did a lot for us last year that will be very exciting for this year. Lyle at Stateline Architect No. 7, and the engineers he works with, have donated all of their

services to design the addition that we are planning on starting this spring. With a commitment from McMurry construction to donate the material to enclose the addition, I think we are close to starting this project. If you or someone you know, might be interested and have the expertise to help finish the inside, please contact me.

With all the snow and wind this winter, I can tell you that my entire crew is looking forward to having indoor plumbing someday. Besides a construction project, we have lots of new things starting this year. Be sure to read the rest of the newsletter for details and I look forward to seeing you all again soon.

Karol Santistevan

Arena Director

Casper Team Scores At Special Olympics



Special Olympics Fall games, held October 17, 18 & 19th was the culmination of the season for many riders from Reach 4A Star Riding Academy.

The theme of the event was a Hawaiian Luau.

A total of 92 riders participated in the Equestrian Events. Of this number, 36 athletes and 10 unified partners came from Reach 4A Star Riding Academy. This was the largest team at the competition.

The events were held over two days at the indoor Arena at the Fairgrounds.

Riders from Jackson, Worland, Cheyenne and Sheridan competed in events such as English and Western Equitation, Western Riding, Dressage, Drill Team and Trail.

In the Drill team competition Reach

4A Star had six teams competing.

Since the theme of the competition was Hawaiian, teams wore grass skirts, shorts and swimming suits over their jeans and some of the horses dressed the part too, wearing lays, beach towels and bandanas.

Myriah S. and Jade B. dressed as pirates and performed a pas de deux to the music from "Pirates of the Caribbean."

Many of the volunteers who come to the arena took time off work and helped out at the competition. Additional volunteers came from the COTA program at Casper College and Casper schools were out on Friday producing even more volunteers.

Hiser Farms lent Reach 4A Star two horses and sent horse handlers along to help.

Thank you volunteers and Judges

A special thanks to Cleo Waters, volunteering through Special Olympics Wyoming, who took on the huge job of Venue Director with very short notice

Erin Schroeder and Ruth Uptain served as event judges

Marjorie Pope, Lynn Jackson and Donna Chladek served as ring stewards.



Introducing “Horses for Heroes”

**“I Will Never
Leave a Fallen
Comrade”**

Imagine you have returned from Iraq after serving in the US military. Imagine how the future must look if you have lost a limb, are suffering from a head injury or are fighting the pains and depression that must come with post traumatic stress disorder. Where could you turn?

One option is to an equine partner - and to make it even better, have some of your soldier friends there for support.

The “*Horses for Heroes*” program began as an experiment involving the 1st Cavalry Division Horse Detachment of Ft Hood, TX and patients from Brooks Army Medical Center. ROCK (Ride on Center for Kids), Georgetown, TX was approached by the medical center to host the program because of NARHA’s exceptional reputation for therapeutic riding programs.

Soldiers involved noticed improved core

strength, better balance and mood enhancement.

Involving other vets as horse leaders and side walkers is a crucial aspect of the program. The reports state it was very empowering for the riders and a healing experience for all who participated in the experiment.

Then the Walter Reed Army hospital became involved when NARHA advanced instructor and Navy retiree Mary Jo Beckman requested use of the Caisson horses from Arlington National Cemetery (which are used for ceremonial purposes) for such a program in Virginia. There physical therapists documented the results of the program.

The Veterans Administration has since been working with NARHA to reach a memorandum of understanding intended to produce funding for vets to benefit from this program nationwide. Acceptance of this memorandum hopefully will allow for services to many other vets.

United Veterans Council Sponsors Open House

**The next bit
of good luck
is that this
program is
coming to
Casper**



Early in January Karol and Leigh attended a meeting of the United Veterans Council of Natrona County. At this meeting they expressed the intention that the riding center start a “*Horses for Heroes*” program in Casper. After explaining how the program works and the benefits it could bring to our local vets they asked the Council for its support.

At this meeting Karol expressed her special interest in this project as her brother had recently served in and returned from Iraq. She also expressed her interest in directing a mounted vets drill team.

The kind, insightful gentlemen of the Veterans Council stepped up with a check for \$1000 and an note saying, “Thank you for your help with our vets.”

It should be us who thank not only the Veterans Council but those many veterans who have served this country.

**For more info go to
www.narha.org and click on
the “Horses for Heroes” logo.**

Plan to come and join us!

The commitment to the “*Horses for Heroes*” program came when the arena instructors returned after the National NARHA Convention Anaheim during November.

Calls were made to the VA hospital in Cheyenne. Kristi Ruben, a Recreation Therapist at the hospital jumped right on board. Over the Thanksgiving weekend Kristi came to Casper, checked out the arena and made plans with staff to bring vets to Casper, thus giving birth to the idea of an open house over Memorial Day Weekend.

Plans for the event are progressing. Vets in the community have volunteered their help and their horses. Plans are in place to provide training for the volunteer veterans and the equine partners they may provide prior to the open house..

Additionally, plans for the day include a roping clinic, a farrier demonstration and a performance by the *Shooting Stars Drill Team*.

Range Baxter on... Center accreditation The volunteer program

This is the
top level of
accreditation
through
NARHA...

Reach 4 A Star Riding Academy has two announcements regarding the volunteer program.

As we have stated, R4AS is greatly appreciative for all our wonderful volunteers. Without them we wouldn't be able to provide services to our riders who receive such joy from their lessons.

R4AS is undertaking the process of becoming a NARHA Premiere Accredited Center. This is the top level of accreditation through NARHA and we view this accreditation with great regard. We look forward to delivering an even higher standard of programming as a result of going through this process.

As a result many of the policies and procedures which directly effect the volunteer program at R4AS are under review. We have been making changes to our volunteer handbook and our training and su-

pervision processes. R4AS knows that these changes will improve not only the riders experience but the volunteers as well. We ask that our previous volunteers be open to these changes and give us their valuable feedback.

March 15 is the date scheduled for a volunteer meeting to review the new material. A letter will be sent out to our previous volunteers regarding time and location. Other trainings will be scheduled for this spring and throughout the year. We will also be making training video's which will be available for review at the riding academy.

Lastly, we would like to announce that Runge Baxter has volunteered to be the Volunteer Coordinator at R4AS. She will be responsible for all aspects of the volunteer program, including (but is not limited to) volunteer training, coordination, recruiting, and management. Any questions related to volunteerism can now be directed to her via email at volunteer@reach4astar.org.

For more information of premiere center accreditation please visit www.narha.org

The Reach 4A Star Horse Report

As of last report the Reach 4A Star Herd numbered 22. Since that time **Blue** has gone back to his home. He developed a neurological condition which made his hind end weak and in danger of a fall. His new job is as a colt sitter back with the Groses'.

Kelly Anderson brought her dapple grey mare Amazing Grace "**Gracie**" to live at the Center. Gracie is 9 years old and 15.1 hands high. She was a good sized girl upon arriving at the center but has slimmed down a little. And she was happy to see her herd mates Monorah and Shalom. Kelly is in high school and promises to volunteer at the center.

Lena, who had developed what we thought were tooth problems last fall is now spending time at Doctor Marble's Place. She is being treated for an infection in one of her eyes.. Time will tell if she can come back to the center in the spring.

Notes on the Christmas Party

Reach 4 a Star's Christmas Party was held December 9th at the Casper Country Club. Approximately 130 people attended.

A buffet was provided and attendees got to see themselves in a slide show of the year's activities.

Awards were given out by the instructors to each of the riders. There was a silent auction as well as raffles for a play tractor for the boys and a tea set for the girls.

This wonderful party was hosted by Dr. David and "Miss Runge" Baxter. **We thank them so much for the wonderful time.**

"*Liberation*" bronze brings \$7500

Sculptor Chris Navarro has reported the sale of a "Liberation" bronze for \$7500.00 at an auction at the Whispering Hope Ranch in Payson, Arizona.

The bronze was initially created for Reach 4 A Star Riding Academy. It portrays a young girl on the back of a horse who has left her wheelchair behind. Copies of the bronze are available through R4AS at a cost of \$1500.00

KELLI REESE...Rider of the Year

MOST IMPROVED

Receiving the “*Most Improved Rider of the Year*” award is truly an honor. I wish I had a picture of my face when my name was called! It means so much to me.

Two years ago I didn’t know who I was, what I wanted. Reach 4 A Star changed that. I have learned so much in such a short time. I learned about the horse; the body language, the pecking order, their movements, what they like and don’t like, but most of all I learned horses have a way of healing people. They secretly pasted on to me their wisdom, giving me an inner peace I didn’t even notice it until later.

At the academy, I learned that horses give riders their

freedom. Helping with the lessons is a reward: just to see the riders smile. Side walking or horse handling makes me feel great and has taught me a great deal about responsibility. It’s wonderful to see that every rider has improved in one way or another.

Thank you to everyone and every horse who has helped and guided me with their time, encouragement, patience and understanding.

ON LOSING A FRIEND

After Goldie passed away, I hoped to see no more horses perish. I never imagined that it that would be my own.

Her name was “HF Perfect Charly”. She was a pure-bred grey Arabian. I only knew her for a short period of time but she brought me

the happiest, proudest, most worried and frustrated moments of my life. I met her last August. She became mine on my seventeenth birthday. I’ll never forget the feeling. She took me on my first trail ride and she taught me about the precision of Dressage.

Sadly, Charly passed away on Christmas Eve. The cause for her death isn’t really known: perhaps it was an aneurysm.

Charly was easy to love and she gave me a lot. She was crazy about treats and she let everyone know it! It was obvious she hated being in the arena alone.

Her face lingers in my mind. She would get so excited and she showed everyone what it was to

be “Arabian.” She could be lazy or stubborn too, but she was just teaching me about persistence. Soon we had grown from two strangers to best friends. That’s the feeling I intend to keep. I try not to think of her death but only as she lived and that has made it easier to accept. I’m glad Charly came into my life and I do miss her, I am also sure she would be okay with me getting another horse.

I think about the people who have helped with this loss. Karol, Leigh, Erin, the Hisers, Julie, Runge, Courtney, and the Bults are a few. I’m sorry if I forgot anyone, but thanks again.

I can’t wait to see everyone in the spring when classes start and I hope to see familiar faces!

Year End letter brings good response!

Shortly before the end of the year Karol and her advisory board sent out a letter suggesting those who could use a year end tax deduction could certainly find a good use for their dollars at the Reach 4 a Star Riding Academy.

The response was wonderful. We thank these folks for their kind donations.

Jean Schroeder

Ricky Kennedy & Mary Crockett

Gayle Schnorenberg

Bob & Carman Dolen

Dennis Stoval

Jon Wolfe

Diane Werner

Rick Mason

Lou Taubert Ranch Outfitters

DJ Skovgard

Nix Signs

Friends of Craig Thomas

Moss Saddle Boots & Tack

Jerry Spaulding

Sandy & Julie Andrew

Jan Proper

Circle C Resources

Mary & Jerry Manes

David Weinrich

Tom & Laurie Reese

Chris Boston (NowCap)

Sinclair Refining Company

Katti Pattison

IBEW Local #322

NARHA Conference

Karol, Runge, Julie and Leigh each spent several days in Anaheim, California during November attending the NARHA National Conference.

Each attended workshops of their choice on topics such as “Recruiting, Training & Retraining Your Volunteers”, “Improving Your Teaching Skills” and “Establishing Consistent Practice in Handling Therapy Horses”

A “Horse Expo” was held at newly constructed Shea Center where the attendees participated in additional equine events.

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Calendar of Events

NITE AT THE RACES

March 1st, 6:30 pm
Casper Petroleum Club

Volunteer training
March 15th
At the arena
9:00 am

**Blue Envelope
Health Fair**
Casper Events Center
March 29th
8:00 am—4:00 pm

**CLASSES
START
APRIL 1ST**



Horses for Heroes
Open House
May 24th
10:00
At the Arena

