



# Equine-Assisted Therapy News

## From The Director's Desk ...



Fun was had by one and all at EAT's 5th Annual Trivia Night held March 4th at Andres West in Fenton.

Yummy food, fun and drink and lots of auction items to shop through as the night progressed. Thanks to Danielle Brantley, our Special Events Coordinator, for organizing another FUNd Raiser to bring in much of the necessary money to help EAT meet it's expenses in this tough economy. Another thanks to our volunteers who set tables, sold 50/50 tickets, gathered auction bids and generally made sure everyone had everything they needed. And last but not by any means least, thanks to all of you who came out, braving the storm, to laugh and play and support EAT! We are truly grateful!



Next up! EAT's 6th Annual Egg Hunt held at our Town and Country location in Longview Farm Park at 13525 Clayton Rd, this year on Saturday, April 16th with a rain date of April 23rd. Always the mark of Spring, this event is open to all 2-12 year old kids whose goal it is to find thousands of eggs, turn them in to our egg counters and collect a voucher that allows them to shop for toys and games at our EAT COUNTRY STORE. Registration begins at 11 am and the hunt at noon. Cost is \$10 per hunter. So bring your kids, grandkids, neighbors kids, nieces, nephews, troop, club or group to enjoy a fun day in the park and support a worthy cause!

♥ Ginni



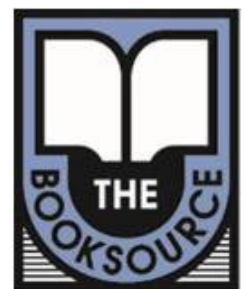
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## EAT was recently Highlighted in the March 2011 edition of The Booksource Newsletter : Charity of the Year



Sabrina Blaes

Brian Blaes, our Controller, recommended our charity of the year and has a close relationship with it's purpose. Equine-Assisted Therapy, Inc (EAT) is a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide horsemanship experiences to persons with mental, physical and psychological disabilities to enhance the quality and productivity of their lives. Health care professionals, teachers and parents see firsthand the many benefits of EAT. The physical benefits of improved balance, strength, circulation and flexibility are coupled with improvements in self confidence and esteem and improved social interaction. EAT has been instrumental in helping Brian's daughter, Sabrina, deal with the ever changing aspects of her disability with confidence and determination. When Sabrina is riding, she feels "normal" and can leave the burdens of her disability behind and be just a kid. The staff, instructors, volunteers and participants of EAT greatly appreciate the generous support of Booksource during this upcoming year.





# Equine-Assisted Therapy News

## "People Talk" . . .



Thanks to all of you who have shared your EAT experiences with your friends and families. We're hearing a lot of "I've heard about Equine-Assisted Therapy..." comments as we visit schools, clubs, Health Fairs and neighborhood merchants. Yay! Don't stop talking about us! We have events coming up, we always need more volunteers, and we have a huge indoor arena to erect which will need tons of support! Encourage your acquaintances to come on out to one of our upcoming volunteer training sessions and see for themselves what we're all about.

## Our Participant of the Month - Jason Palmer . . .



Meet Jason Palmer. Jason has been a long time participant in EAT, participating in this wonderful program for well over half his young life.

Jason has a rare genetic disorder and has cognitive delays, is non-verbal, and has low muscle tone. Through the dedicated efforts of many volunteers with EAT, Jason has been making slow but consistent progress in each of these areas.

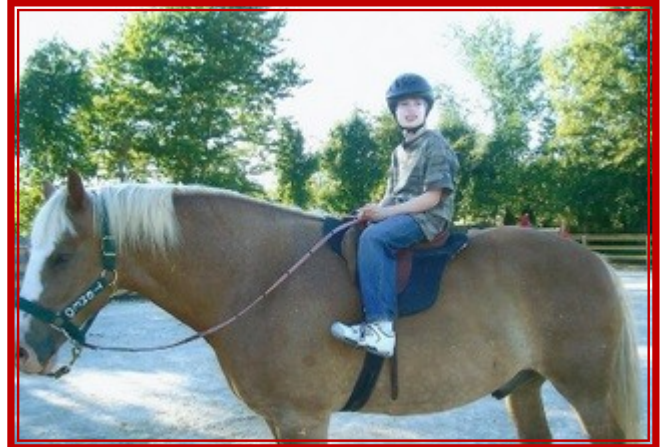
We heard about the program through a chance conversation with an ambassador (one of many ambassadors) who had read about the program. We headed over to Longview Park and met these beautiful four-legged ambassadors of the program. A quick mental comparison of Jason's 4 year old fragile body size to that of a horse meant overcoming a parent's protective instinct. But after observing a class session, we signed Jason up for a "trial session" which has now extended into 6 years.

At his first session, he needed less persuasion to get him on the horse than we had feared. However, his low muscle tone did not exactly make him sit like a John Wayne or a Ronald Reagan. In fact, the words "wet noodle" better described his saddle top posture. His side-walker volunteers had to constantly hold up his back. Next, his instructor tried a common trick and sat him backwards in the saddle. He sat upright right away! The look and smile he gave us was a mixture of "Hey Mom and Dad...look at me!" and "Sitting backwards isn't the way they do it in the movies." Over the next months his muscle tone quickly improved and he was sitting tall and straight (and forward) in the saddle!

Over the next few years, he graduated to what has become his favorite EAT class activity, the "class trot." Here, his 3 highly dedicated volunteers (two side walkers and lead) take Jason for a short trot. The result, for Jason, is a wonderful huge smile of satisfaction. His muscle tone and coordination has improved to the point where the side walkers no longer need to hold him in place—he is holding himself up straight and upright in the saddle all by himself.

Although it has been a long road with some hard work, Jason is now saying a "walk on" vocalization during most of his EAT sessions. Last year during one session, Jason is reported as saying the word "Jason" to the prompt of his written name!

We have indeed been blessed by so many wonderful EAT volunteers and many behind the scenes supporters. EAT is powered by a wonderful "volunteer-rich" team. While Jason may not be able to express his appreciation in words, his huge smile shows more joy and appreciation than you can imagine. Thanks to all the entire Equine-Assisted Therapy team!





# Equine-Assisted Therapy News



## Volunteer Spotlight . . . Vicki Waddell



One day while grocery shopping at Schnucks I saw a flyer for Equine-Assisted Therapy. This flyer was exactly what I was looking for in a volunteering program. I decided that volunteering for EAT was the right decision for me.

Not only did this program help children but it also included my love for working with horses.

It was the best of both worlds. Volunteering enlightens my life in a variety of ways. When I volunteer I see the change in each child's life and the joy that the horse is bringing them. It's great to witness firsthand how the children respond to horses and how the horses respond back. Each session brings more and more progress for the students and it's awesome to know that I am helping in some way. The joy that the horse brings to each child's smiling face is what truly has won my heart. Volunteering for EAT has brought new dimensions to my life which include: friendships, experiences, and excitement. I can't wait to see what the spring session brings and I am excited for what the future holds for the EAT program.

See you soon!

## We Love Our Volunteers !!!

## EAT Wants You ...



Are you a writer wannabe? We'd love your submissions for future editions to our EAT Newsletter. Articles must have something to do with your experience at EAT. It can be a poem, anecdote or full feature article. We'd love to hear from you!



Please send submissions to:

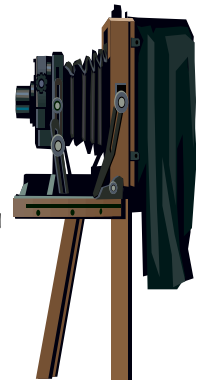
[ginni.hartke@equine-assistedtherapy.org](mailto:ginni.hartke@equine-assistedtherapy.org)

## Say Cheeeese . . .

### Attention Participants!!!

Get all gussied up and wear your brightest smiles for **Picture Day** at Equine-Assisted Therapy!

Professional photographer **Christine Brewer** will be taking pictures of you and your horse during your class time the week of **May 22<sup>nd</sup>** at our Wildwood location and **June 20<sup>th</sup>** at our Town & Country location.



No ordering or payment ahead of time Pictures will be available for purchase on Christines website:

[www.christinebrewer.zenfolio.com](http://www.christinebrewer.zenfolio.com)



## Meet "Sunny"

This is Sunny, a five year old palomino gelding donated by Craig & Eileen Palmer whose son, Jason, rides with Equine-Assisted Therapy.





# Equine-Assisted Therapy News

## ♥♥ Trivia Night Donations ♥♥

Equine-Assisted Therapy sends out a big thanks to those who made donations which helped to make our 2011 Trivia Night a huge success!

Affordable Plants & More

Alpine Shop

Ameristar Casino

Anheuser Busch InBev

Anna Maries Ice Cream

Biggies Restaurant

Bransons Americana Theater

Bransons Grand Country Music Hall

Bransons Hollywood Wax Museum

Bransons IMAX Theater

Bransons entertainer of the year -

Doug Gabriel

Brunswick Family Funtastic Value



Packages

Changs China Bistro

Chris' Pancake Restaurant

City Museum

Creve Coeur Camera

Dicky Bub

Discovery Center in Springfield

Drury Hotels

Eagle Springs Golf Course

Gaye Regan

Gateway Arch Riverboat Cruises

Golden Horseshoe

Goey Louey Goey Butter Cakes

Huggins Family, Sara & Kirsten, scratcher ticket items

Jefferson Bank

Judy Keller

Karen Huff - Spring Bulb Basket

Kraus Farms - lessons from Instructor, Chris Karus

Kristin Downey

Kreis' Restaurant



Lazy River Grill

Magic House

Malones Restaurant

Massage Envy- Sunset Hills

Meramec Caverns

Merbs Chocolates

Missouri Botanical Garden



Missouri History Museum  
Museum of Transportation  
On Your Toes Dance Studio  
Painted Pottery  
Panera Bread Company  
Patricia Turner

Raging Rivers  
S & J Collectibles  
Sam's Club  
(The) Schmidt Family  
Shedd Aquarium in Chicago  
Sheldon Theater  
Sherpherd of the Hills - Branson

Silver Dollar City  
Six Flags  
St Louis Bread Company  
St Louis Symphony Orchestra  
Steve Akre - a ride in his plane

Swing Around Fun Town  
Tiffany Martha  
Tower T  
Upper Limits Rock Climbing

Vicki Vogt  
Woodard Carpet Cleaners  
Yellowstone Cafe

Special thanks to Six Flags; When two tickets to Six Flags were stolen from our silent auction table at the Trivia Night Event, Six Flags went the extra mile by donating two more to the highest bidder! Thanks so much Six Flags!

## ♥♥ Meet Caryn Mundell ♥♥

Welcome to Caryn Mundell as Equine-Assisted Therapy's newest NARHA Certified Instructor! The certification process is not an easy one... not to mention very stressful... but Caryn came through it with flying colors and is ready to teach on opening day! Caryn, however, is NOT new to EAT. Caryn was there on opening day in 2004 and has been a treasured volunteer - in classes, at Fund Raisers, helping with facility maintenance, hauling horses, cleaning tack, you name it, Caryn never shies from a given task. EAT is blessed to have Caryn on board.





# Equine-Assisted Therapy News

## ♥♥ Thank You ... ♥♥



- Ω Bill Schmidt - ferrier
- Ω Ronn Baker - ferrier
- Ω Homestead Veterinary Hospital
- Ω St Louis Equine Veterinary Services - David Hunt
- Ω Keith Pey - matching gift through Wells Fargo
- Ω Cynthia Cooper - matching gift through Wells Fargo
- Ω Knights of Columbus - Christ Prince of Peace
- Ω St Louis Christmas Carols Association
- Ω AT&T matching gift donors - Karen Ernst, Carol Collins, Denise Hill, Kathleen Milton
- Ω Sara Patton from Meritage Stables for donating Gideon, the newest member of the EAT herd.
- Ω Russell & Tracy Goring
- Ω UBS Employee Giving Program
- Ω Tiffany Schroeder and Don & Todd Morton for their donations in honor of "Mom", Sally's, Nth anniversary of her 39th birthday.
- Ω Gaye Regan & Dee Brantley for joining me at Neuwoehner School in Town & Country at the Special Needs Fair
- Ω Fran Natoli for speaking with the Eureka 4H Club about all we do at Equine-Assisted Therapy
- Ω Mike Natoli for hours spent developing the site for our indoor arena at Wildwood
- Ω Mike, Melody and Scott Roberts for so hospitably hosting our EAT horses at their beautiful ranch over the winter

## ♥♥ Upcoming Events ...

### Volunteer Orientation

On April 2nd & 9th, Equine-Assisted Therapy will be holding mandatory volunteer training sessions at 9:00 & 1:00 at both the Town & Country and Wildwood locations.

We need everyone to come on out and learn the new procedures we brought back from our NAR-

HA conference in Denver. We hope to make things easier for you and provide more continuity for the therapy horses by having everyone on the same page of horse care.

Please call Terri at 314-971-0605 to let her know what day/time/location works best for you.

### Easter Egg Hunt

The EAT Annual Egg Hunt at Town & Country will be held on Saturday April 16th. Easter falls a little later this year so our chances of having a beautiful day for the egg hunt are even more improved. Registration begins at 11:00am and the hunt begins promptly at Noon. Bring your 2-10 year-old. kids, their friends, neighbors, nieces, nephews, grandkids, entire classes, clubs or troops! Cost will be \$10 per hunter as always - Lots of fun for everyone !

## ♥♥ Thanks Danielle !! ♥♥

Equine-Assisted Therapy sends a special "Thank-You" to Danielle Brantley, not only a NARHA Certified Instructor but also our Facility Director



for both the Town & Country and Wildwood locations. Danielle also does a fabulous job as the EAT Special Events Coordinator. We are truly grateful to her for always going the extra mile. Danielle not only gives an abundance of her time and energy,

her talents with a computer keyboard have contributed to the success of our many fund raising efforts. She takes on a wide variety of activities including but not limited to advertising on websites for people to come to events, buy/selling our horses, coordinating donations to our silent auctions, etc, etc, etc . . .





# Equine-Assisted Therapy News

## Equine Assisted Therapy - Contact Info

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Facility Director

Danielle Brantley

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Newsletter Editor : Keith Pey

visit our web-site: [www.equine-assistedtherapy.org](http://www.equine-assistedtherapy.org)

Would you like to help EAT save on postage and save a few trees to boot? Send us your email address to receive future Newsletters. If you love the Newsletters in black & white, imagine the possibilities in living color . . .

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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