

EQUI-ED

Equines and Education

Using the therapeutic power of the horse to enrich the lives of individuals with disabilities.

Together We Can Do So Much

By Maxine Freitas

"Equi-Ed is an amazing program that changes lives. There's a sense of pride that I carry with me all week knowing that I get a chance to be a part of something truly amazing."

*-Dreamer,
Sign Language
Interpreter SRJC,
Equi-Ed Volunteer*



Vaulting moves practiced for barrel competition prepare vaulters for work on the horse. Maddy and Carl practice tandem vaulting while coached by Max and assistant, Sade.

"Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much." ~Helen Keller

There might not be another statement that better expresses the spirit of Equi-Ed. **Horses**, volunteers, staff, students, and families have come together throughout this past year to keep the mission and the magic of Equi-Ed thriving. Here's a glimpse into the journey we made together in 2011:

We started out the year with our own Liberty Vaulters team training for the Barrel Festival in March at the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy in Woodside, Calif. Hana, Carl, and Maddy performed exceptionally well in

the compulsories and did a dynamite "pirate" freestyle.

In March, we found out we would need to move off the property at Loch Haven by August. This prompted a six month search for a new facility.

Our facility search culminated in our being able to move to Camp Silvano in Calistoga. Here we have a big 12 stall barn along with access to pastures and two arenas. Having a covered arena allows us, for the first time in 19 years, to be able to offer a full winter lesson session.

Moving Equi-Ed was a monumental task,

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Together We Can Do So Much

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not only the physical moving of equipment and horses, but also prepping the new property for our arrival. This would never have happened without the incredible work on the part of Audy, Ted, Tom, Larry, Bill, Cyndi, Sade, Wes, Leslie, Tammy, Bev, Lorna, Carol, and so many other volunteers and staff.

Equi-Ed gets out into the community as often as possible and this year we had information tables at Santa Rosa Wednesday Night Market, Autism Speaks Walk in Windsor, Dressage In the Wine Country, and the Vineyard Classic sponsored by the Northern California Driving Club.

May brought the return of the Human Race, aptly representing Equi-Ed were Board of Directors member, Shirley, along with volunteers Jessica and Ally.



(l-r) Jessica, Shirley, and Ally at the Human Race.

Equi-Ed hosted our yearly Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH Intl.) instructor certification, and this year, two of Equi-Ed's instructor's in training, Sade and Diane, became certified instructors!

Within weeks of arriving at Camp Silvano, it was time for Equi-Ed's 10th Annual Ride-A-Thon. With the theme of *Race for Equi-Ed*, retired jockey and



Equi-Ed horses Little Bit, Penny, and Cisco check out their new digs at Camp Silvano.

volunteer, Ted, gave the students a jockey's view into racing and then led students out to the "race track" to run the mile. Our highest earning jockeys were Jane, Alyssa, and Max, and Bugsy was the highest earning horse.

In October, we held our annual Fall Festival Celebration and our first Halloween Horse Show!! Both were a celebration of student achievements and dedication to their sport of riding, driving, and/or vaulting. Many thanks go to the volunteers who assist these students on a daily basis in their lessons, and, of course, to our instructors whose goals are always to provide the most safe, challenging and fun lessons!

Together we can do so much... Thank you everyone who has given so much in so many ways.



Volunteer and former jockey, Ted (r), shows students the correct racing position.

Veterans Make a WAVE at Equi-Ed

Equi-Ed's Wounded American Veterans Equestrian (WAVE) project is off and trotting! WAVE uses therapeutic carriage driving to make improvements in balance, posture, coordination, and emotional well-being. Equi-Ed's pilot program started this Fall with two veterans participating in our first four week session. This privately funded project took a lot of time to fundraise, plan, and coordinate and we are excited to finally offer it to our students.

Our student drivers are challenged with multi-tasking, sequencing, and communicating as a team, in addition to learning about safety, horses, and the unique set of skills necessary to drive. Equi-Ed strives to create a safe venue for veterans to socialize with other participants, staff, volunteers, and horses, and where new relationships are fostered while engaging in this fun and exciting sport.

A special thanks to everyone involved in making this come to fruition, including therapeutic driving

By Audy Macdonald



WAVE participant and service veteran, Michelle, driving a cones course at the end of the four week session.

instructor Corie Brooks, her Morgan mare Jazz, volunteers Kasey, Liz, Don, and Audy, participating veterans Larry and Michelle, and the many donations received including those from the Northern California Driving Club, Laura Keister, and those made in memory of Buz Keister.

Two Awards for Two Exceptional Equi-Ed Instructors

By Sheila McCarthy

Equi-Ed Founder and Executive Director **Maxine Freitas** has won the 2011 Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH Intl.) **Region II Instructor of the Year Award!** There are 11 regions in the U.S. and Region II consists of California, Nevada and Hawaii. PATH Int'l states: "Instructors invest time and energy in training and continuously developing their skills as professionals in the equine-assisted activities and therapies indus-



Max and Tooley

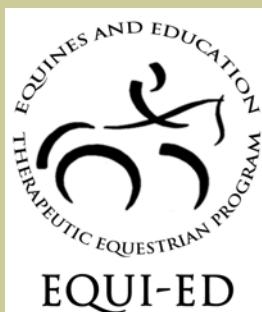
try. They spend hours in the sun and cold weather, in dusty barns and arenas coaxing participants, horses, leaders, and side-walkers to appreciate with them the power of the horse."



Corie and Jazz

Equi-Ed is also very excited to announce that Driving Instructor **Corie Brooks** is the recipient of the **Sis Gould Driving Recognition Award**. This award is given to individuals who have exemplified outstanding dedication to the development and promotion of driving for individuals with disabilities.

Congratulations, Max and Corie!



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Equi-Ed's Horses Make Their Holiday Wish List

By Sheila McCarthy

The Equi-Ed horses have been making a list and checking it twice for what they hope Santa will bring them this holiday season. They may have been a little overly optimistic, but hey — you never know!

Bugsy is already so thankful for everything that he has, but there are a few more things that he wouldn't mind having this holiday season: Oxbendazole wormers (18 for the year for me and my friends), pelleted wood bedding and pine shavings, fencing materials-t-posts and covers, and a monthly sponsorship.

As Jazz was out taking some students for a drive, she had lots of time to put together her holiday wish list: work crew for a fence repair day, tack cleaning supplies to keep my harness clean and in good repair, and a small copy machine.

Rojo's been a very good horse this year and rounded out his holiday wish list with: oat/alfalfa cubes, 4-two-sided shelters, and a monthly sponsorship.

Tooeey thought long and hard about what he wants this holiday season: LMF brand senior feed for horses, sponsor a student through the Pegasus Scholarship Program, and a monthly sponsorship.

As a big, stout draft cross, Belle could easily throw her weight around to get what she wants, but instead she is asking very nicely for: Ivermectin wormers (18 for the year for me and my friends), plastic manure forks, tractor, and a monthly sponsorship.

Pogo's holiday wish list may be the most ambitious of them all, but she is



Pogo wishes everyone a happy holiday season!

always thinking big! Her list includes: mini carrots (she is a mini after all), postage, an arena drag, 36-4X6 rubber stall mats, and a donor to purchase the Camp Silvano property and donate or provide a long-term lease to Equi-Ed.

After much thought Penny came up with the following holiday wish list: Tipperary helmets, a small portable office building, and a monthly sponsorship.

See the horse's full holiday wish list on Equi-Ed's Facebook page at:

<http://goo.gl/dTV7E>

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