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President's Report

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as ETRA's newly appointed President effective October 2017. I began volunteering with ETRA in the fall of 2016 as a sidewalker. I could see early on how riding each week was a highlight for our riders but what I discovered was that it was also a highlight of my week. Over time I got to know our riders a little better and how rewarding it was to be a part of their experience. And don't get me started on the horses! I just love them.

We could not provide therapeutic riding to our community without the dedication of our Volunteers. Each one of them give their time and energy to assist our riders and the program and do it with commitment, dedication, joy and humor. They show up in all kinds of weather with smiles on and are ready and willing to help out where needed. Please know how much we and our Clients thank you.

ETRA's Instructor, Sheila Morrison, is a critical component to the success of our program. Her extensive knowledge of our riders' capabilities and needs, matching them to the appropriate horse/pony, and overseeing the therapeutic riding lessons are extremely impressive.

I would like to thank the ETRA Board of Directors who, in addition to their volunteer roles in the riding sessions, have generously taken on the added responsibility of ensuring ETRA runs as a viable organization. A special thank you to Gini Eder, our past President, for all her dedication and service.

Pyramid Stables is the venue ETRA uses to provide our service. They have been very supportive and responsive to our needs.

They continue to improve the condition of the arena, stables and riding trails as well as remaining vigilant on the quality of the horses/ponies they provide. Thank you to Jenny Payne and Howie Thomas.

I am happy to report that ETRA has just been recertified by CanTRA (Canadian Therapeutic Riding Association) for another five years, meeting their high standards for quality and safety.

Thank you to everyone for your contributions to ETRA's success.

—Merle Dulmadge, ETRA President



**Proud to be the recipient of
United Way Central & Northern
Vancouver Island funding**



**United Way
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Our Featured Rider

ETRA is grateful to our clients, their families and caregivers for sharing their stories.



Jonathan

Jonathan was first featured in our 2013 newsletter. We now show you how far he has progressed.

When my son Jonathan (Jono) started riding at ETRA at 4½ years old, he couldn't walk or communicate. Jonathan was born with CHARGE Syndrome — a complex sensory deprivation disorder along with complex medical symptoms. He has profound deafness, significant vision loss, a tracheostomy, a feeding tube due to swallowing difficulties and developmental delays. In the early days he had very poor balance, very low core strength and minimal coordination. He rode a small pony named Buddy who he wouldn't touch due to sensory aversion. He wasn't overly fond of horses or riding at the beginning.

He now rides Tulsa, a full size horse, sitting fully upright in the saddle with great posture which we attribute to the increased core strength from riding. He pets Tulsa, hangs onto her mane and feeds her treats of apples and carrots after his ride.

Jono's absolute favorite thing to do now is go to ETRA riding. It is the highlight of his



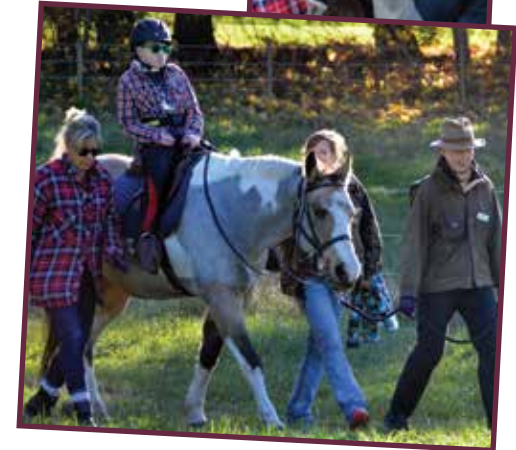
week! His favorite toys are horses and has been learning sign language and 'horse' was one of his first signs!

Friendships are also fostered, not only with the amazing horses but other kiddos that are benefitting from hippotherapy. ETRA's volunteers are also the invaluable backbone and integral part of the program. We are so grateful. They are always so genuinely happy to see him and look forward to working with him.

Although Jono has many challenges, he continues to persevere with an amazing spirit and curiosity of life. He has progressed and grown so much with help of his amazing nurse Marni Brown and the talented, patient and wonderful staff that have worked with him for the last 6 years!!

Thank you all for making this possible!!

Proud parent – Grace



In the words of our Volunteers...

We get more than we give every time we see one of the riders with a big smile and look of excitement on their face just before they get into the saddle.

– Ray D. & Cheryl Z.

I love helping our clients and seeing the positive results.

– Connie L.

I have become much more attuned and sensitive to the incredible people who live with challenges.

– Rosemarie D.

My Horses, My Students, My Teachers.



Over the years my horses and students have been my best teachers. Living with and training horses has been for me an education in goal setting, recognizing and developing athletic potential, managing stress, recognizing and understanding different ways of learning and teaching, particularly non-verbal ways, and recognizing, appreciating and above all respecting horses' sensitivities.

Training horses has also allowed me to feel and understand the vulnerability and fear horses experience when they are being ridden, and to develop strategies for horses and students to cope with it. It turns out the best way of alleviating a horse's fear is by teaching her to carry herself by using a steady, balanced seat to give coherent aids clearly and quietly.

Finally, I have learned from horses the importance of cultivating what may be considered the virtues of character: patience, courage, honesty, kindness, generosity, fairness, care, and the wisdom to know what we don't know. This last could be called humility, and as some of us know very well, horses excel at humbling humans.

Interestingly, I have learned these same lessons, and others, from my students, and in particular my therapeutic riding students. I have learned from them that while they are vulnerable and afraid, they are also incredibly brave (not to mention

trusting), that they are pleased by and proud of learning not only that they can sit on and control a horse, but also control themselves for the sake of the horse. I have learned from my students that if I give them time, perhaps a lot of time, to manage their own anxiety, if I repeat instructions often, and if I don't assume that slowness to respond is resistance to instruction, they will do their best to comply and will learn the lesson. And if they are resistant to instruction, then ignoring that resistance and moving on to something easier for them is a good if temporary alternative.

Another important lesson I have learned is that habits, physical and intellectual, are readily acquired, but exchanging one for another is as challenging as anything could be. Rewards for even the slightest change (response) help immensely. I see horses sigh when riders stroke them, I see riders relax when I "stroke" them. It is only when we are relaxed that real learning can take place.

All of the lessons I have learned from my horses and students have been positive. Yes, I have made mistakes and been humiliated along the way, but I have also learned that my horses and my therapeutic students are generous about giving me the benefit of the doubt as long as they perceive that at bottom I am still a student too.

Sheila Morrison – ETRA Instructor



ETRA Program Report

This year has been another successful one for ETRA's clients. The positive feedback from parents and caregivers shows evidence of how our clients have benefited both physically and mentally from our program. We welcomed some new clients to our program this year. At the end of the 2017 sessions there was high indication that most clients would be returning. However, we have a wait list to draw from if needed. After the CanTRA inspection in June we have updated the ETRA Policies. At the end of each session client and care giver/parents are issued a copy of the ETRA policies to read, sign and return.

Parents and caregivers of our clients enjoy the time that they share together while they watch the rides or walk along on trail rides when sunny weather allowed.

There have also been a couple of changes to the documents in the Welcome Packs. Included in the letter to clients and parent/caregivers we ask them to inform us if they know of anyone that would benefit from ETRA. The client profile form was revised to indicate any dietary restrictions, would be helpful for planning party time at the end of each session.

I have immensely enjoyed volunteering with ETRA and facing the challenges involved with the duties of this position of program coordinator. However, it is time for me to resign from the Board and ETRA at the end of the spring 2018 session.

All of the volunteers here at ETRA are amazing and helpful and I have so enjoyed getting to know every one of you. Thanks you Sheila for your continual patience and support.

–Patricia Thomson-Turner, Program Coordinator

Thank you Patricia, for your all your hard work as volunteer and Client Co-ordinator. You'll be missed.



Thank you Volunteers!



Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they have the heart

HOW OUR CLIENTS Benefit from Therapeutic Riding

Balance and Strength

The walking motion of the horse closely simulates a person's walking gait; gently and rhythmically moving the rider's body, riders show improvement in flexibility, balance and muscle strength.



Motor Skills

Games and activities require concentration and controlled movement.



Focus

Therapeutic riding can improve concentration, communication, problem solving and patience.



Socialization

Riders interact with each other, our volunteers and the horse itself increasing self-esteem and confidence.

Pyramid Stables and Farm Inc.

ETRA's home at Pyramid Stables has continually evolved and 2017 was no exception. This past year saw new paddocks, new gates and the addition of a very much improved concrete manure holding area. The indoor arena had a watering system installed and was refurbished last fall with the addition of many truckloads of new sand. A highlight this year was the Halloween horse show Pyramid hosted. It was a great opportunity to see the other side of our ETRA horses as they competed in both hunter and jumper divisions.

There were 2 additions to our program in 2017: Pixie is a pony who lives up to her name. She is slightly cheeky, likes to keep moving, and loves having a job to do. She has become quite a star. Zen is a large black Canadian. He's a very laid back guy who fits into our program perfectly. Sadly Chester and Prince were retired from ETRA at the end of the Fall session. They were both larger horses and their size will be very much missed from our program.

We look forward to 2018 which promises to be another great year at Pyramid. The owners, Jenny and Howie, as well as their staff, continue to be very approachable and responsive to our needs. The CanTRA inspection this year noted what a great facility we had at Pyramid. We agree! ETRA is very lucky to have found such a great home! – *Kathy Calder*

Four Star Waterworks Ltd generously donated the concrete catch basin, steel grate and drain pipes because of Pyramids involvement with ETRA. Thank you Leon of Four Star Waterworks!



ETRA's 27th Pledge Ride June 24, 2018

The Pledge Ride Changes

Over the past several years we have enjoyed the Pledge Ride on the wonderful trails surrounding Arbutus Meadows. The 2017 cancellation due to the extremely hot summer and closure of the trails has left ETRA to review the Pledge Ride timing.

We are pleased to announce that a decision has been made to change the September Pledge Ride venue from Arbutus Meadows in Nanoose Bay to June at the Coombs Fairground in Errington. Silver Spur Riding Club has invited us to join them for their annual event the weekend of June 23rd and 24th. The Club holds a Gymkhana (open to everyone with Horse Council status) on Saturday, June 23rd. **Our Pledge Ride will be Sunday, June 24th** and will essentially have the same format as in previous years. There is tons of parking, horse stalls and a great variety of trails for our use. At the completion of the ride we will have our sumptuous BBQ and many prizes.

We look forward to seeing you at ETRA's main fundraiser and thank you for your support.

**Please RSVP Pledge Ride participation to Lila
at lbi18@shaw.ca by May 31, 2018.**

**For more information on the Silver Spur Gymkhana June 23:
nancyanddany@shaw.ca or call 250-240-8406.**

And the Winner is....

Due to our cancelled 2017 Pledge Ride ETRA held a Fall Raffle. Congratulations to the winners of the Gift Cards: Frank A., Elisha L. and Alysha G. Thank you to all those who supported ETRA by purchasing tickets and supporting our great program.



Well Wishes Tom

Tom Roy started volunteering with ETRA in the spring of 1996 when we were still operating out of Arbutus Meadows. Over the years he has been both a sidewalker and horsehandler as well as serving several terms as President on the Board of Directors. In recent years he has been in charge of the hats and belts table where he took great pleasure in greeting the clients and helping them prepare for their ride. Tom has been a great ambassador for ETRA in the community and we wish him well in his retirement.



**ETRA is grateful
to the following for their
generous donations for our
Pledge Ride and Volunteer
Appreciation**

Black Goose Inn

Bocca Coffee

Bosley's Parksville

Brand Xpress Embroidery

Brechin Bowling Lanes

Dave Clough

Dive & Sea Sports

Dr. Bellamy Dentistry

Dr. King Dentistry

Flipside Hair Salon

Gini Eder

Green Rock Liquor Store

Joan Plant

JP Wallets

Jayne Remillard

Lefty's Foods Parksville

Lillybelle Locks Salon

Lobelia's Lair

Lone Pine Farms

Moksha Yoga

Nissan of Nanaimo

Petal & Kettle

Pharmasave Bowen Rd

Riptide Lagoon

Wags Doggy Day Care

5-Star Embroidery

Thank You Very Much

Inner City Signs

for our signs & name tags

Norm Mitton

*for all of our
tack requests & repairs*

***We appreciate your
contributions to ETRA***

Sponsors, Benefactors and Service Clubs in 2016/17

ETRA gratefully acknowledges the support of the following Sponsors, Benefactors and Service Clubs

SPONSORS & BENEFACTORS

Arbutus Meadows
Bridles and Bits
Buckerfield's Parksville
Maureen Buschhaus
Rob and Lorna Calderwood
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Karen Mullen

Parksville Beach Festival Society
PacificCare Family Enrichment Society
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Provincial Employees Community Services Fund
Pyramid Stables (Home of ETRA)
RBC Foundation
Recreation Foundation BC
Regional District of Nanaimo
Rogers Foundation
Seabreeze Riding Stable
Shar-Kare Parksville
Silverspur Horse Club
The Trading Post (Cassidy)
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SERVICE CLUBS

Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
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Lions Club
Hub City Lions Society Nanaimo
NanOOSE Bay
Parksville
Qualicum Bay

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Lantzville
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Branch 49 Mount Arrowsmith
Branch 76 Qualicum Beach
Branch 211 Bowser
Branch 256 Nanaimo
Branch 257 Lantzville
Royal Canadian Legion Ladies Auxiliary
Branch 49 Mount Arrowsmith
Branch 211 Bowser
Women of the Moose
Chapter 197 Nanaimo

Our sincere apologies if we have missed donors in this issue.

Fundraising Report for Fiscal Year 2016/17

	FY 2016	FY 2017	Increase/(Decrease)
In house fundraising	\$ 5,653.00	\$ 13,245.00	7,592.00
Grants	\$ 17,105.00	\$ 13,493.00	\$ (3,612.00)
Service Clubs	\$ 9100.00	\$ 9,050.00	\$ (50.00)
Other	\$ 12,257.00	\$ 9,029.00	\$ (3,228.00)
Total	\$ 44,115.00	\$ 44,817.00	\$ 702.00

A big Thank You goes out to everyone involved: board members, volunteers, supporters and sponsors.

ETRA
*appreciates
the generous
support of:*



United Way
Central & Northern
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**Rogers
Foundation**



**2017/2018 ETRA
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Past-president

Gini Eder

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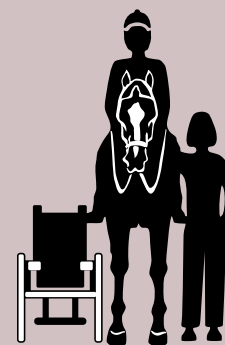
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created by ETRA volunteers.

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**Quality
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