



Main Stay News

A Publication of Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program, Inc.

Giving Knows No Boundaries!

On December 27, 1999, a call came to Main Stay that we will never forget. It began with the simple words, "I am on your mailing list and I'm not sure how I got there ... I don't know anything about your program, is there someone there that can answer my questions?" Thirty minutes and many questions later, a complete stranger was pledging to send Main Stay \$30,000.00! Yes, that's correct, \$30,000.00! In an instant, our stranger on the phone had given us 30,000 reasons to celebrate the New Year! In an instant a total stranger became someone we will never forget! Mr. and Mrs. John

Sturm from Hanover, Illinois had made the largest single contribution in Main Stay's 13-year history. With Mr. Sturm's approval, we agreed to use the money to fund one of our toughest funding areas – salaries for our four part-time employees! Four days from the dawn of the new millennium, Main Stay had a fresh and incredible new beginning!

It should be easy to write about something so joyful and unbelievably wonderful, but it is also incredibly humbling and hard to do. The simple words of "thank you" seem woefully inadequate, but they are all that we have. Perhaps the words of Winston Churchill say it best, "*We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.*" In our eyes, the Sturms live a very good life indeed!

A Father's Outlook ... Rusty Foszcz

Each night, I sit and watch the 10 o'clock news with anxiety and concern. The stories I see often make me cry – Littleton, CO, Paducah, KY, Jonesboro, AK, first graders shooting first graders. I find myself asking why? When will it end? Why do kids do the things they do?

But every once and a while, something happens that renews me and gives me hope. Last March, that "something" appeared in the form of a 13-year-old young man by the name of Cody Behan. You see Cody was having a birthday – his 13th according to a note we received from his mother Joann. The Behan family had no direct connection to Main Stay. In fact, Joann Behan had just happened to pick up a Main Stay flyer a few weeks earlier and had left it lying around the house. Cody read the flyer and thought to himself how nice it would be to have his friends bring a donation to Main Stay instead of buying him a gift for his birthday. Thirteen of Cody's friends attended his party and Cody very generously sent us a check for \$140.00!

We were so impressed with Cody and his gift that we called the local paper and suggested they do a story about him. Everyone knows the amount of "negative press" regarding today's youth and here we had a chance to share some great news with our community! Unfortunately, the paper felt Cody's story wouldn't carry enough impact but they wanted to do a story about Main Stay. We found ourselves in the strange

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From the Director's Point of View ...

We have had an incredible spring at Main Stay! The generosity and goodwill of donors, volunteers and staff have proven once again that spring is a time of renewal. We tell the stories of Cody Behan and John Sturm – two donors with completely different giving abilities – but both had the ability to take our breath away and bring tears to our eyes.

These gifts of such overwhelming generosity, kindness and depth are not just financial gifts to Main Stay. To all of us involved with the daily operation, these gifts serve a much deeper meaning ... it is a renewed validation of the work done at Main Stay. People like Mr. and Mrs. Sturm and Cody Behan, remind us that others (even strangers) see our work as needing to be continued and are willing to support us in a big way. Such gifts inspire us, renew our spirits and give us hope that Main Stay will continue for years to come.

You see – it is rarely the amount of a gift that touches us so deeply. It is the belief that accompanies the gift. The price of following a dream can be great. To have people believe enough in our dream to give financially or of their time and expertise, is a very special gift. Main Stay continues to be blessed with gifts that warm our hearts and go beyond words ...

It is our simple hope that the kindness that is shared with us comes full circle and is returned ten fold to those who continue to believe in our dream!

Love and Good Wishes,

Sara

Board of Directors

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position of arguing against publicity for Main Stay and arguing for the good deeds shown by a very interesting young man. The paper insisted and ran a wonderful article about Main Stay on the front page. They included a paragraph about Cody inside the article, but the article dealt mainly with Main Stay and the services we provide. However, the article did bring us eight new ring volunteers who now know and understand the joy and honor of being a volunteer at Main Stay. How ironic that Cody's gift gave not only once, but twice! There is hope! Cody Behan is living proof that it's not the size of the gift, but the size of the heart that really matters ... Thank you, Cody. Your actions have given me strength and allow me to trust again.



More Angels

The Mental Health Resource League of McHenry County once again overwhelmed Main Stay with an incredibly generous grant. \$19,850.00 was awarded to Main Stay and will be used in several areas. The bulk of the funding will be used towards both full and partial scholarships for our students. (The \$15.00 fee charged to each student per lesson results in less than 20% of our total budget.) We are forever grateful to the League for their continued rider assistance. Stall mats and a sound system will also be purchased with a portion of the grant money. Perhaps the most exciting portion of the grant will be used to purchase a new horse for the program! We'll be naming that horse "Diddley" in honor of the League – as soon as we find that perfect horse!



Please remember to support the Resource League by shopping at Fair and Fall Diddley! It is the perfect opportunity to "shop 'til you drop" if you are so inclined! At both shows

you can find something for nearly everyone and some truly wonderful artwork and crafts.

Word is out that the League is also searching for new members and volunteers. ... They are an incredibly dynamic group of people and could use a few good men and women!

Richmond-Burton High School's Honor Society recently made Main Stay their charity of choice! A twist on beauty pageants called "The Mr. R-B" contest, had male high school students "strutting their stuff" for charity. Putting all vanity aside, the guys were auctioned off to the highest bidders! When all was said and done the Honor Society raised and donated \$700.00 to Main Stay! Proof once again that the youth of America has spirit and is working to make the world a better place.





Put on Your Leather – Get Ready to Ride



Main Stay is offering you the chance of a lifetime! We are raffling off a 1999 Custom Chopper! Tickets are only \$10.00 and only 3000 tickets will be sold. The drawing will be held Sunday, September 24th at the Rushmore Inn in Woodstock, Illinois. The bike can be seen at businesses in and around Woodstock. There is also a \$500.00 2nd prize and a \$300.00 3rd prize.

This could be your chance to finally ride with the “big boys” and still support a great cause!

Tickets can be purchased at the following locations:

- Main Stay – Richmond, IL
- Hartland Veterinary Clinic – Woodstock, IL
- Rushmore Inn – Woodstock, IL

Tickets can also be purchased by mail. Please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope along with your check or money order for \$10 for each ticket you wish to purchase to:

Chopper Raffle
Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program
6919 Keystone Road
Richmond, IL 60071

Upon receipt of your check, ticket(s) will be filled out and entered into the drawing. A verification stub will be sent via return mail providing you send a SASE.





STUDENT NEWS: *Not Just Pony Rides!*

We are literally back in the saddle (or surcingle) and life is looking good at the farm! Our students and volunteers returned with the usual hugs, smiles, giggles and high fives, making the winter blues

melt away. For the most part, riders seemed to pick up where they left off. Bodies were a little stiff and sometimes uncooperative, but that happens to all of us when we lay off our exercise program.

From a rider's perspective, the first few weeks of classes are spent reviewing safety rules, re-developing a strong riding position (and the strength to keep you in that position), remembering language and cues, and just getting things back in sync.

From an instructor's and therapist's perspective, the first few weeks are spent assessing the changes a student may have returned with - have they grown significantly, has there been a medication change, has school or work changed, have the horses changed? All these things impact a lesson and subsequently, the way a class is approached.

During the early weeks back, the student, the instructor and a therapist will put their heads together and map out goals (both long and short term) and work towards developing lesson plans that will help goals be realized.

Examples of student goals may include:

- Becoming an Independent Rider
- Learning to Post the Trot
- Shooting 10 Baskets in a Row
- Learning to Steer on Their Own
- Playing More Games

Examples of instructor and/or therapist goals may be:

- Developing Stronger Posture, Stamina and Reducing Muscle Spasticity
- Maintaining a Student's Focus for 5 Minutes
- Developing Consistent Cues (vocal, physical or eye gaze)
- Developing Reading and Math Skills Through Mounted Games
- Helping a Student Make Responsible Choices

Blending the student's goals with the instructors and therapists goals can sometimes test creativity and abilities. But that is what makes it magic! As the months tick by we will assess and reassess what is working and what is not. Changes and adaptations will be made. Perhaps a different piece of equipment is needed, a different horse, an addition or subtraction of a volunteer – something that will bring the student closer to their goals. There is no greater joy than watching a student meet and surpass a goal and perhaps:

- Ride "solo" the first time.
- Seeing them make the connection between a tug on a rein and their horse's response, knowing they are in control.
- Listening as a student rolls the dice, adds the numbers and then counts off his horses steps.
- Watching a student lift an impossibly heavy head because "riders must look where they are going."

... This is why we come to work everyday and leave with a smile on our face! *It is magic!*





Upcoming Events

September
18th, 19th & 20th

Jewel Shop & Share for Main Stay – any area Jewel Store! It doesn't get any easier folks. Just take the Shop & Share coupons with you on the posted days, shop, sign the coupon and Jewel does the rest! A portion of your total will be given to Main Stay!

Saturday
September 23rd

Ride 2000, Chain of Lakes State Park, Spring Grove, IL
Mount up and ride for Main Stay with the IQHA. Enjoy the beautiful scenery, good friends and help support Main Stay. Call the farm for details.

Sunday
September 24th

Custom Bike Drawing – Rushmore Inn, Woodstock, IL
Tickets will be sold until the final hour ... join us for a fun afternoon and we'll keep our fingers crossed for you!

Sunday
October 8th

The 13th Annual Bowlathon
Can't bowl? No excuse! The idea is to raise \$\$\$\$! Get pledges, have fun and laugh the afternoon away! Remember the biggest trophy we give is the gutterball award! Last year we raised \$20,000 – we'll need everyone's help to top that this year!

October
14th & 15th

Fall Diddley – Boone County Fairgrounds, Belvidere, IL
Start your holiday shopping early and get one of a kind artwork and crafts for family and friends. Support the MHRL and their wonderful efforts!

November
6th - 12th

NARHA Annual Conference & Meeting – Minneapolis, Minnesota



Shop & Share Identification Slip

0 8 3 1 3 5 7

Group Number

--	--	--	--	--

Store Number

--	--	--	--	--

Dollars

Cents

Group: Mainstay Therapeutic Riding Program

Your Shop and Share Days: September 18, 19, 20, 2000

Signature _____



Please sign this slip and turn it in to your checker when you shop. Participants can make purchases at any Jewel-Osco store on the dates above. Identification slips are not to be distributed in front of any Jewel-Osco store.

We Need You



Ring volunteers are urgently needed for Friday night sessions! Horse experience is a plus but not a necessity. Classes run from 4:00 to 8:00 – anytime you can share with us would be greatly appreciated!

Horse people we need you! We are finding ourselves needing experienced horse people to lead horses during classes, Monday thru Friday from 4:00 to 8:00 – are you available? We would also like to “revive” our barn management program and need experienced people to supervise barn activities (same time and days). Your life will change after meeting our students – guaranteed!

We are also seeking committee members to assist us in the following areas:

- Marketing and Publicity
- Fundraising
- Building and Grounds

Anyone with a few hours to share can find that giving a little can make a huge difference!

WISH LIST

- Committee Members
- Tradesmen
- Photographers
- Folding Chairs
- Banquet Tables
- Zimecterin Proof of Purchase Seals
- Hand Tools
- Cash Donations



*Main Stay
Therapeutic Riding
Program, Inc.*

6919 Keystone Road • Richmond, Illinois 60071

Name: _____

Address: _____

Contributions – _____

\$ 50 ___ \$ 100 ___ \$ 250 ___ \$ 500 ___ \$ 1,000 ___ Other ___

All contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Thank you very much for your support.

Check here to be removed from the Main Stay Mailing List.

The Main Stay News is a periodical publication of the Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program. Permission is granted to reprint articles and features provided proper credit is given.

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If you require additional copies of the newsletter, please contact:

Main Stay Therapeutic Program, Inc.
6919 Keystone Road
Richmond, Illinois 60071
(815) 653-9374

Thank you for making Main Stay your choice for a tax deductible charity.

For Our Student's' Convenience...



Mike Patterson tries out the new covered entrance that was added to provide shelter and a more direct entry into the riding area for our students. With all the rain we experienced this spring it was a huge hit!

Thanks!



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