



MAIN STAY

A PUBLICATION OF MAIN STAY
THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM, INC.

www.mstrp.org

News

FALL 2011

WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM HER FRIENDS

Meet an amazing young lady, Jessica, who started as a Main Stay volunteer and is now a Main Stay rider after discovering she had Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare form of cancer that affects the spine. This talented 16 year old has been with the program since she met the volunteer age requirement and it quickly became apparent that Jess was a well-rounded horsewoman capable of sidewalking, grooming, and leading. As a rider herself, competing in jumping and cross country events, she loves being in the barn. She would ask her mom, Cindy, each week if they could leave a little earlier to come to the farm and soon she was out there for five hours every Friday night. As Cindy said, "she couldn't get enough of the place!"

Jess and her family's world changed on December 8, 2010, when after spending months trying to determine why she was having back pain, she was finally diagnosed with cancer. From the beginning, Jess has stated that no matter what happened she wanted to continue to be able to ride. She knew that even if she was permanently paralyzed she still wanted to be with horses. Fellow Friday night teen volunteers and barn friends Grace and Stu jumped at the chance to help make this wish come true for Jess. As soon as she had the strength, Jess was back in the barn at Main Stay – this time riding. She felt a little nervous that first day as a rider, her body had changed so much she wasn't sure how capable she would be. With Stu and Grace by her side offering physical and emotional support, she had a fantastic lesson as fear turned to accomplishment. Jess continues to improve

each time she rides needing only minimal assistance now. Riding has helped her in many ways, both physically and emotionally. One of the most exciting benefits seems to be that Jess's muscles in her legs are stronger and more activated and she is able to flex her right ankle for a period of time after riding. This movement is needed to help her improve her walking and for playing the piano, another one of Jess' loves.



It's been wonderful for both Jess and everyone at the program, especially the Friday night crew, to have her back at the farm. She loves being able to brush Cowboy and be with her barn friends. Jess' mom still gets emotional when she thinks about the support the family has received from their friends, both 2-legged and 4-legged, at Main Stay. Many of the volunteers and staff visited Jess in the hospital and are thrilled to see her progress. Currently, an anonymous donor is paying for Jess's lessons – a generous gift as her medical bills continue to grow as she recently just finished almost a year of chemotherapy treatments. With at least another year of rehab ahead for Jess, we know she'll continue to inspire all of us. Jess's mom summed it up best – "Main Stay is such a good place and a great community".

All of us at Main Stay couldn't agree more and we are honored to be able to teach and learn from everyone who comes through our door.



*Top photo: Jess with Grace & Stu
Bottom photo: Jess and Cowboy share a special moment.*

WELCOME ABOARD



close to 20 years, first as a Quality Control Chemist (yes, a chemist!) and then as a department head. Gloria has also been on the board of the Spring Grove Horse

Main Stay is pleased to introduce you to the newest member of our board of directors, Gloria Kraft. Gloria has been riding at Main Stay for 8 years. She brings a wealth of business expertise along with extensive board experience. Gloria was with the Gillette Company for

Show Committee and is still actively involved with planning the shows. In addition, she was also the First Vice President with the Paddock Estates Homeowners Association. Gloria is currently a member of the Richmond Senior Transportation Board which works to meet the transportation needs of seniors and disabled individuals in Richmond and Burton Townships. On top of all this, this busy lady also has an internet business with her husband Tom. 1st Class Horse (1stclasshorse.com) is an online directory for consumers looking for equestrian-related products/businesses in Illinois and Wisconsin. Here's what Gloria had to say about joining the Main Stay board, "I look forward to aiding Main Stay in their quest to expand and help more individuals from the disabled community." We look forward to that too and to working with you Gloria!

FROM MY DESK

What a busy summer and fall we've had! We hosted a week long open house in September. Thank you to all that attended our *Fall Festival of Friends*—I know it's tough to break away from daily responsibilities. It was great to catch up with friends I hadn't seen in a while and to make some new ones. The open house also afforded me the opportunity to spend some time out in the barn rather than being trapped behind my desk. It was wonderful to speak with students and their families and to hear how riding at Main Stay has improved their lives.

Parents shared stories of students learning to ride their bike for the first time and how riding at Main Stay helped their child achieve that goal with improved balance and increased confidence. Volunteers that work with some of our at-risk groups shared how moved and inspired they are by the transformation of these kids during the time they are at Main Stay and interacting with the horses. I had the opportunity to see for myself, the tremendous strides that riders have made over the course of the season—those that started with three volunteers that are now independent and only need one volunteer. I heard our seniors group reminisce about earlier times in their lives and see their faces light up when they walked into the barn and were greeted by our warm and welcoming team of volunteers.

It was also a terrific reminder of how many people it takes to make Main Stay the place that it is and the meaningful effect that each and every one of you has on our students and their families. From your gifts of time to your financial support, we couldn't do it without you.

As we approach our year-end fundraising appeal, we hope that we can count on your continued support—you will be making such a difference in our students' and their families lives.

On behalf of our riders, our staff and board of directors, thank you so very much for making Main Stay a place where individuals, no matter what their challenge might be, can reach their full potential.

Happy Fall!
-Loriann

GIVING OUR RIDERS A LEG UP

Main Stay was blessed again this year to receive a grant from the Mental Health Resource League of McHenry County. Each year, this tireless group of dedicated volunteers sponsors two craft fairs, Fair Diddley and Fall Diddley, from which the proceeds benefit non-profit agencies in McHenry County. MHRL has given out more than \$4 million in grants since its inception. This year Main Stay received funding for student scholarships and a much needed plow for our UTV. We are so very grateful for the League's long-standing and continued support. If you're interested in getting involved with MHRL, visit <http://mhrl.org>.

Real generosity towards the future lies in giving all to the present.-Albert Camus

DID YOU HEAR – IT WAS A SUCCESS!

A Night in the Museum was Main Stay's theme for our annual Black Tie and Blue Jean event. With your help the evening was a great success. Our guests were treated to cocktails and appetizers in the little known, but fascinating museum at Donley's Wild West Town. It's home to a grand collection of Thomas Edison phonographs and inventions plus a vast array of western memorabilia. Much of it is specific to our area and Randy Donley knows the story behind every piece (check it out)!

Under the artistic direction of Jo Williams and Joanie Rowe the museum theme carried forward into the banquet room. A bevy of opportunity awaited our guests – from throwing dice at the roulette table, and trying your poker face at Blackjack, to having your photo taken as faces in the "American Gothic" or next to a buffalo ~ *complete with head gear and fire arms* as part of the pioneer spirit! Denny Diamond and the Family Jewels were on stage performing their personal magic throughout the evening.

Our guests truly rose to the occasion with the most important part of the evening and helped us raise much needed funds during the silent, live and reverse auctions! You warmed our hearts as your hands raised quickly and often – especially during our first attempt at a reverse auction, where people bid to keep our doors open with scholarship and lesson funding. The response to the taped video messages by students, parents and a volunteer

were so warming that I still hear the voice of the speaker and see the hands in the darkened room responding to the auctioneer's call. Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who played a part in our evening's success!

We tip our hats to our very talented committee members, the volunteers who worked the evening, our special guest "dealers" and generous donors, for helping create a magical evening for Main Stay! Special shout outs to: Joanie Rowe and glue gun specialist, Bettelee Redding, they out performed in the centerpiece category once again and to Jo Williams for re-creating a stunning American Gothic!

Thank you, thank you and thank you!

*Ann Henslee
Committee Chair*



Guests enjoy cocktails in the museum.

Please mark your calendar for our celebration of Main Stay's 25th year on May 4, 2012

REACH FOR IT AND IT WILL BE YOURS



Congratulations to instructor Lori Cohen, who is now a Certified Advanced-level Therapeutic Riding Instructor. PATH International (formerly NARHA) offers several levels of certification for instructors: registered, advanced and master. After months of preparation, a written exam and two grueling days of on-site testing that included teaching (various levels of challenged and able-bodied riders) and riding skills, Lori was awarded her Advanced-level certification. Way to go Lori!

MAIN STAY WISH LIST

Paper/plastic cups
(no styrofoam, please)
Paper Towels
Septic-safe Toilet Paper
Laser Copier Paper
Dry Cat Food
Kleenex
Disinfecting Wipes
Hand Soap
Office Supply gift cards



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



We have Disney's "Give a day get a day" volunteer program to thank for bringing us volunteer, Jean O'Brien. Jean had always wanted to volunteer at a therapeutic riding center, and when she came across Main Stay as a place to volunteer to get a free day at Disney, she knew

the time was right. Disney's program only required 8 hours of volunteer time, but those eight hours hooked Jean. Two years, and many, many, many 8 hours later and Jean is still with us and we couldn't imagine Main Stay without her!

Jean volunteers in the ring on Mondays and Fridays and we can always count on her to fill in if we have a last minute cancellation. Not only does she volunteer her time to groom the horses and sidewalk with students, but she also helps at fundraising events. Jean is always looking to learn more about our horses, students, and program, but one of the best things that she gives to Main Stay is her wonderful smile when she walks in the barn.

Jean shared what she most enjoys about Main Stay, "I love working with the students and horses. The courage that everyone at Main Stay has is truly remarkable. I love what Main Stay does and what they stand for: helping all to be their best." Jean also feels a very special connection to the program. Her brother, who was mentally challenged, was sadly killed in a car crash by a drunk driver. She had always hoped there was a place like Main Stay for him. Jean feels a special connection with one of Main Stay's students who reminds her of her brother. She said the moment she met the student she felt her brother speaking to her, and every week she gets a smile from him that warms her heart.

When Jean is not at Main Stay she enjoys bowling, gardening, reading and, of course, Mickey Mouse and all of his Disney friends! She also loves spending time with her thirteen grandchildren, son, daughter and two step daughters and husband John.

With so many volunteer opportunities available, we are so grateful that Jean chose Main Stay when she was looking for a place to give her time. Jean, thank you for all you do for Main Stay's horses, students, and staff.

AND THE WINNER IS...

Main Stay board member and long-time volunteer, Joan Castell, has been named PATH International's Region 7 2011 Volunteer of Year. She has been an integral part of the Main Stay program for more than 20 years. Joan is most deserving of this award for many, many reasons. From volunteering in the ring to grooming horses to exercising horses to assisting with events to fundraising to most recently becoming a member of our Board of Directors, Joan has done it all.

After winning the regional award, Joan will now be in the running for the National Volunteer of the Year award which will be announced in November at PATH International's annual conference in Lexington, KY. We'll be cheering her on, but no matter the outcome, the real winner is Main Stay which has been lucky enough to benefit from Joan's many gifts.



Joan leads Buck with student Carrie S. and fellow volunteers, Karen B. and Rexayne S.

GOING GREEN, SAVING GREEN

Main Stay would like to offer our readers the opportunity to receive an electronic newsletter which will reduce paper waste and save money. If you'd like to begin receiving the newsletter via email, please email us at info@mstrp.org. Thanks for helping us do our part to preserve the earth and our (your) funds!

BY LEARNING YOU WILL TEACH, BY TEACHING YOU WILL LEARN

Lori Cohen



It was one of those grey days in early spring and I was feeling stuck in disappointment over an unsuccessful attempt to accomplish an educational goal for myself. I kept replaying the experience through my mind--wishing I had done it this way or remembered to have demonstrated that. The constant reel of failure in my mind was unfair and relentless torture. When I arrived at Main Stay, I took a deep breath and cleared my mind so that I could focus on my job and be “present” for my students.

My student had arrived, but she was refusing to get out of the car. I went to see if I could help. In the past when this happened, I had been able to convince her that she

would feel better if she came in to ride. On this drizzly, grey day the task seemed almost insurmountable.

After attempting the normal tactics, she still wouldn't get out of the car and kept repeating, “No, no thank you”! She kept talking about a bad situation that had happened many years before. Her mom shared with me that she often got stuck on past experiences that she perceived as threatening.

I asked her mother to leave us alone in the car. I climbed into the driver's seat and proceeded to talk about how to “let go” of past experiences. I told her that the experience was over and energy spent worrying or feeling angry was useless and unproductive. All of a sudden, it dawned on me that the words I was speaking to her were the words I should have been saying to myself.

I turned to her and thanked her from the bottom of my heart for helping me see exactly what I was trying to teach her! She looked at me with a smile and said, “you're welcome!” She then opened her car door putting on her helmet as she walked to where her horse was waiting. I walked a few steps behind with a slow smile stretching across my lips and it occurred to me, my student had taught me! She helped me see what I was doing to sabotage my own sense of self. I helped her and she helped me.

I became the student that day, with a most important life lesson reviewed and learned. My student and I had created a partnership, not unlike the feeling of partnership that is formed on the back of a horse, a harmony of give and take, one learning from the other. I will never forget the feeling that overcame me that grey afternoon.

HOOFIN' IT FOR MAIN STAY

In April, Main Stay students and families, volunteers, staff, board members and friends braved the cold and rain to participate in the Human Race, a 5k run/walk sponsored by the Volunteer Center of McHenry County. The event, the first of its kind held in McHenry County, benefitted participating agencies. Thanks to all of you who participated or pledged funds—you raised more than \$7,000 for Main Stay! Congratulations to Main Stay's very own Rusty Foszcz for winning the top Individual Fundraising Award and designating Main Stay as the recipient of his \$250 prize. Special thanks to Main Stay Board member, Michelle Runion for coordinating the event for Main Stay. Mark your calendars for next year's race on April 15. For more information visit <http://www.facebook.com/mchumanrace>.



Student, Desi and friend celebrate their finish.

MAIN STAY RIDERS CHALLENGE RIDEATHON 2011

Riders at Main Stay completed a three-week adventure in August while raising funds for the program. Riding 'Round the World was this year's rideathon theme as students "travelled" to three different destinations, Mongolia, France and Hawaii, to learn about horses in different cultures. Each week riders earned stamps in their "passports" after completing activities and challenges related to the country or state. In Mongolia, riders learned about the nomadic people and their deep, mutual respect for horses along with one of their favorite national activities, cross country horse racing. Dressage, one of the Olympic equestrian sports, was the focus in week two while learning about France. The rideathon ended in Hawaii where our riders became Hawaiian cowboys or paniolos.

A big thank you to our riders for raising more than \$7,000 for Main Stay's student scholarship fund! Congratulations to Jenny Bradford, Gloria Kraft, and Sarah Hamm, who raised the most funds. They were awarded prizes

generously donated by various merchants. Many thanks to our Rideathon committee members Joan Castell, Rexayne Walker-Steadman, Jean O'Brien, Belinda Bockman and Jean Maraist for creating the rideathon packets, posters and class materials and for securing the prizes.



Kudos to our top money maker, Jenny Bradford and her family!

MEET KIWI & PEPSI

We're pleased to introduce you to two of the newest members of our equine staff, Kiwi and Pepsi. Purchased with funds from the Mary E. Gardner Foundation, Pepsi and Kiwi are both former reining horses.



Kiwi is a 17 year old, petite bay mare. Prior to joining Main Stay, Kiwi was most recently used as a brood mare. She has incredibly smooth gaits and is a kind, gentle soul.



Pepsi is a 15 year old Appaloosa gelding. He's a laid-back, cool dude with a "been there, done that" attitude. We hope that they will be part of our team for years to come. If you stop by to see them, be sure to bring carrots!

STUDENTS & HORSES & TRACTORS, OH MY!

Main Stay was the recipient of a very generous grant from the Mary E. Gardner Foundation which they awarded during their spring grant-making cycle. The foundation granted our request for a new tractor to replace our old one that had become obsolete along with a grant to purchase horses. On top of this, they also provided funding for spring and summer programming for Head Start, The Child Advocacy Center for McHenry County, AND a group of at-risk teens from the Lake County Mental Health Department. We are so very grateful for their significant and continued support—my oh my, oh my!



Above: Spring session of HeadStart.



Right: Our shiny new tractor.



CLOSING THOUGHTS

“Really – you do all that from the top of the horse?”
 “I can’t believe how beautiful it is here.” “Wow, I’ve heard and read about you for years – but I had no idea!”
 “It’s simply amazing.” “This is sooooo cool!” “I wouldn’t be able to do that, but look at that little girl go!” “This is so good – it’s making me cry.” “Even though we drive out from Chicago each week – we wouldn’t miss it for the world!” Those are just a few of the great things I heard during our open house week... Yes!

In a world filled with negativity – Main Stay remains a place of possibility and YES! Even though we recognize the work involved in the “struggle” we see it as a means to success and every step is worth it. Making the long trip up the ramp with a walker to greet your horse – Yes - worth it! Struggling to use a voice that takes every ounce of breath in you to make your horse go – Yes - worth it! Finding a way to control your horse and stay even with your partner while riding a complex pattern – Yes - worth it! Overcoming fear, trust and lack of self-worth to find new friends with four legs or two – Yes - worth it! Coming to volunteer after a long, “crabby” day at work – Yes - worth it! Going out to catch a muddy horse or feed in the rain to make a student’s day – YES - worth it! Coming up with one more fabulous fundraising idea or writing one more letter of inquiry – Yes - worth it! Your gift when you wonder if it really matters – YES - worth it!!

I thank all of you for the contributions you make to keep Main Stay the special place of Yes that it is... without you saying YES – we’re simply, not here. Knowing how many people are hurting and how many times you’re asked to give, not only by us, but by so many worthy groups... makes us even more grateful for each time you say Yes! From the bottom of my heart and for those who help carry on this dream – you make a huge difference here for our students and their families! Your time, energy and commitment to see them reach “past” their goals is one of the greatest gifts I get to witness! As often as possible, I take the chance to stand still for a moment and just “take it in” - it is simply amazing what you do for others!

So I encourage each of you to: 1) Take this moment and thank yourself - give yourself credit for making the world a better place – you are doing that through Main Stay!
 2) Take the time to come out and join us alongside the rail – soak it all up – it will be payback for your efforts.
 3) Continue to say Yes to living a life steeped in possibility – it truly is in within our making!

With Much Love and Great Gratitude –
 Sara

P.S. Remember...you don't need an open house to come visit – just call and we'll be happy to give you a tour!

YES! I want to help support equine-related therapy at Main Stay.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Gift Amount \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

- Please designate my gift to the area of greatest need.
- I'd like to support a horse through a monthly gift of \$50 to the *Stable Angel Club*
- I'd like to support a rider through a monthly gift of \$50 to the *Therapy Angel Club*
- I would like information on providing a Bequest to Main Stay.

VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER

Acct # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

“Thank You” for your support. Your gift is tax-deductible as provided by law.

ANNUAL GIVING CLUBS

Leg-Up Club	\$1-\$99
Bronze Stirrup Club	\$100-\$249
Silver Stirrup Club	\$250-\$499
Gold Stirrup Club	\$500-\$999
Platinum Stirrup Club	\$1,000-\$4,999
Grand Prix Club	\$5,000+



Please return to:
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 6919 Keystone Rd.
 Richmond, IL 60071



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Horses Healing Humans – One Life at a Time

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program to provide individualized equine related therapeutic activities to people with physical, developmental, social, and emotional disabilities, in McHenry and surrounding counties.

Main Stay Therapeutic Riding Program enriches the lives of our clients in a caring, safe, and challenging environment that will enable them to reach their highest potential.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Office Administrator

CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS

Lori Cohen
Patti Lessard
Marc Crandall

Main Stay is a registered 501(c)3
with no federal or state funding.



NARHA IS NOW PATH INTERNATIONAL

The professional organization through which Main Stay is accredited, NARHA, has a new name: the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.). PATH Intl. was chosen because it better expresses the scope of the 42-year-old organization whose 6,300 therapy horses and 3,500 instructors serve 42,000 children and adults with physical, mental and psychological challenges at 800+ member centers around the world.



Main Stay is proud to be a premier accredited center of PATH Intl. We have been offering programs to a wide range of clients for the past several years including those with physical, developmental, and social challenges in addition to seniors, at risk teens, and victims of sexual abuse. We are grateful that a new name has been chosen that will acknowledge the many ways horses can help enrich lives.

WISHES GRANTED

Once again, our friends from the McHenry County Community Foundation granted two of our wishes. First, Main Stay received a donor directed grant for instructor continuing education from the Lewis Family Fund. In order to maintain their certification through PATH Intl., our instructors are required to attend 20 hours of continuing education each year. Thanks to the Lewis Family, the Main Stay instructors will be attending the PATH Intl. conference in Kentucky in November where they will participate in many workshop opportunities. The MCCF Foundation also awarded us with a check for new database software that will help us manage information for our many volunteers, donors and students.

***A big thank you to MCCF
and the Lewis Family Fund.***



facebook.com/horseshealhumans