



PEGASUS

HoofPrint

Riding for the Disabled of ACT(Inc.)

Term 2 July 2007

Well winter has surely hit with our horses now well rugged and many riders and volunteers calling in sick – except for those lucky few who took off for warmer climates before they caught any bugs!

This edition of HoofPrint highlights some of our recent activities – our Open Dressage Day, the recent Obstacle-a-thon and our Volunteer Week celebrations. We also have some exciting news on the fundraising front with “Pass the Hat Around for Pegasus”. This is a very simple (but hopefully high return!) fundraiser that you can help out with – even if you aren’t able to make a financial contribution yourself. Check out page 7 to find out more about how you can help us raise money to keep our programs operating. We also have our regular Herd Happenings with an update on some new horses

Finally I would like to add my own message of thanks to our hard working staff coaches – Jo and Debbie - who are working doubly hard whilst we try to secure a replacement for Kris. Losing our only full time staff member has placed added strain on them and they have certainly done a great job to cover all of our classes without having to cancel any riders. Thank you to you both!

*Becky Layton, Executive Officer*

## Congratulations Suzanne!



Volunteering ACT celebrate national volunteer week each year with the announcement of the ACT Volunteer of the Year. This year, another of our very deserving volunteers was nominated for an award – Suzanne Mitchell. Many long term volunteers will remember Suzanne from her days as a class volunteer. She spent many years assisting our riders in their lessons and was very sad, when due to declining hearing, she felt she needed to take on a different role. Luckily we are good at finding alternate jobs for volunteers and gratefully took up Suzanne’s offer to assist with office tasks. Suzanne now assists with management of rider and volunteer records, mailing out of HoofPrint and Christmas cards and also does our weekly banking for us. She also spent several years on our management committee, so she has certainly seen Pegasus from all angles. Deborah and Becky were delighted to attend the awards ceremony with Suzanne where she received her certificate of nomination. Well done and thank you very much for all your years of help, Suzanne!

## Dates for your diary

- **Term 3:** 6 Aug - 29 Sept
- **Term 4:** 15 Oct - 8 Dec
- **Volunteer Development Opportunities:**
  - Posture in Riding** – 24 July at 5.30 – 7 pm.
  - Teaching your Riders** – 3 August at 9.30 – 12pm. Please RSVP to Pegasus.
- **Family Days:** During normal class time in the week 3 Dec - 8 Dec
- **Pegasus Games Day:** 16 Sept
- **Pegasus Dressage Day:** 18 Nov
- **Pegasus Christmas Party and Volunteer Awards:** 8 Dec at 6pm



*Volunteers Ngaire, Lesley and Jenny with rider Ben and his horse Mandy*



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## Pegasus Events

### Obstacle-a-thon

In the week of 28 May – 2 June our riders and volunteers rugged up well and together with their trusty horses, negotiated the 2007 Pegasus Obstacle-a-thon. It was a great week with plenty of smiles and laughter. Many parents came along to watch the fun and games and commented on how well the riders and their brave horses did.

Check out the fun below!



*Feeding the lion*



*Going fishing*



*Posting the mail*



*At the gym*



*Shooting hoops*



*Crossing the hay bridge*

## Pegasus Open Dressage Day a great success

Way back in April (is it really that long since our last newsletter???) we let you know about our Pegasus Open Dressage Day. These events used to be a regular feature on the local equestrian calendar and a key fundraising event for Pegasus.

Recently, one of our relatively new volunteers and trainee coach – Jenny Campbell – offered to co-ordinate these events for us again.

Jenny did an outstanding job with over a hundred entries on the day. Everyone who attended was delighted to see the competitions back and many people were asking when the next event would be. Our thanks also goes to Brian Trigalone of Saddleworld in Phillip for his generous donation of prizes for the events.

Due to problems associated with running the event under Pegasus's insurance cover, we are now planning for National Capital Horse Trials Association to host the next event at Pegasus on 26 August, with all proceeds coming to Pegasus.



*Ready to go at the Dressage Day*



*Deb and Jo at the gear check*



*Sheltering from the rain while waiting for a test*

## Coaches Corner

### Carriage Driving Workshop a big winner

Nine volunteers and Trainee Whip (Carriage Driving Coach) Debbie Butt all participated in a recent carriage driving workshop, conducted by visiting Tasmanian Carriage Driving Assessor, Cathy Bantick. From all accounts it was great fun and a wonderful learning experience with Cathy providing a wealth of experience for participants to draw upon.

Debbie did an outstanding job throughout the workshop and completed all the necessary requirements to qualify as a Level 1 Whip. This now means that Debbie is qualified to conduct our own carriage driving program – adding a further activity for us to offer to our riders.

Max behaved beautifully (when does he not???) and seemed to enjoy his driving immensely, especially after a few adjustments were made to the carriage to balance it better and make his job easier.

Cathy also completed Max's accreditation and accredited our vehicle and the venue – so we are now officially a carriage driving centre as well as a riding centre.

Our sincere thanks goes to Cathy for the time, effort and energy she put into the workshop and the support that she provided to Debbie to get her qualification finalised..... and of course a HUGE congratulations to Debbie and Max for all their hard work.



*Debbie and Allegra at the reins!*

### From Kris' desk

So here I am sitting at my desk trying to think of what I want to share with all the people I miss so much. There's so much I'd like to tell you, but I can't write every little thing so I thought I'd focus on some of the differences I've noticed between working in a not-for-profit organisation and working in a government department.

When I got here on my first day I noticed my keyboard was broken. One of the little legs that props it up on an

angle was missing. So true to the form of somebody who's spent 10 years in not-for-profit (and somebody who's been known to fix a broken office chair with bailing twine) I propped it up with an eraser. I didn't think that was odd until somebody noticed me pulling the eraser out to use it and laughed at me. They then pointed out that all I had to do was ask, and within 3 hours I had a new keyboard!!

At a recent meeting, the Branch Manager announced that he has organised an air conditioning upgrade for our building. Because he can't expect his staff to work in anything less than a perfectly temperature-controlled environment! And here I was thinking how lucky I am to be clean, dry and relatively odour-free at the end of the day!!

A few days ago I caught myself thinking 'great. It's raining. Now I'm going to get wet.' My car was parked about 100m from the front doors!! (How quickly we forget...)

Because I've only usually been out in the rain at work with a hat and drizabone, I haven't owned an umbrella in years. It occurred to me while I was hurrying through the rain recently that I should buy one now. I hadn't yet because I didn't want to frighten any horses!! (duh)

At Pegasus I knew the names of over 200 people – all the volunteers, the riders and their teachers, as well as a number of parents. So why is it that when somebody says hi to me here I still have to whisper to the nearest person I know: "who was that?"

How come nobody here understands that I'm perfectly happy with my 2m desk by the window on the 2nd floor with a view of the lake? And that a 17" laptop monitor is perfectly acceptable? Why do they keep apologising for the poor accommodation and the wait on my laptop upgrade? Guy's, it's fine!!

So as you can imagine I'm finding the whole thing just a little amusing. It's so different here – the staff have such high expectations from their work environment, and are quite surprised that I truly feel no need to complain. Far from it – I feel lucky for everything I've got here!

Hmmm, OK, there could be a few improvements made to this environment. For starters, there's a distinct lack of horses. No squishy Queenie, no Cranky Sam, no naughty Duncan. Not even an unassuming and perfectly mannered Max. And I can't find the resident work cat anywhere! How on earth do they keep the mouse population down around here?? Not only that, but I haven't been able to make a single person smile the way my riders would. Admittedly I haven't tried tickling anybody with a feather duster yet – perhaps I'm speaking too soon... And there's no Deb to laugh with until we cry and can't stand up. It's not nearly so much fun when you do it by yourself, and people look at you funny.

Oh yeah, and I've been forced to buy an exercise machine...

Now don't get me wrong, I like my job. I'm warm, dry, clean and there are no flies. The people I work with are lovely and supportive, and I haven't picked up any poo for at least 6 weeks. But every so often I sit at my desk and close my eyes and think about Pegasus with a little smile on my face, and I miss you all.

Kris

## Two Horses

Just up the road from my home is a paddock with two horses in it. From a distance, each looks like every other horse. But, if you stop your car, or are walking by you will notice something quite amazing.

Looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has made a good home for him. This alone is amazing.

If nearby and listening, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the smaller horse in the field.

Attached to her halter is a small bell. It lets her blind friend know where she is, so that he can follow her.

As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see how she is always checking on him, and that he will listen for her bell and then slowly walk to where she is; trusting that she will not lead him astray. When she returns to the shelter of the stable each evening, she stops occasionally and looks back, making sure her friend isn't too far behind to hear the bell. Like the owner of these two horses, friends do not throw us away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges. Friends watch over us and even bring others into our lives to help us when we are in need. Some times we are the blind horse being guided by the little ringing bell or those who enter our lives. Other times we are the guide horse, helping others to see. Good friends are like this.....you don't always see them, but you know they are always there. Please listen for my bell and I will listen for yours.



Anonymous - Reprinted from RDAWA newsletter.

## Hippotherapy Workshop set for Nov 9 – 11

Pegasus is delighted to announce that we will be hosting a Hippotherapy workshop in early November. "Hippo what?" I hear you say.

The term hippotherapy literally means "treatment with the horse". Hippo comes from the Greek word 'hippos' meaning "horse".

In hippotherapy, the horse influences the client rather than the client influencing the horse. Conducted by specially trained physical and occupational therapists, this medical treatment is for clients with movement dysfunctions.

The client is positioned on, and actively responds to the movement of, the therapy horse. The therapist directs the movement of the horse, analyses the client's responses and adjusts the treatment accordingly. The end outcome is to improve the client's posture, balance, mobility and function.

The workshop will be presented by internationally renowned hippotherapist, Barb Heine, and Sally Francis will conduct a Horse Handler's workshop at the same time. Whilst you must be a qualified physio or OT to participate in the hippotherapy workshop, the horse handler's workshop will be open to any volunteers with sound handling skills. The workshop will teach advanced handling skills relevant to hippotherapy treatment sessions but will also assist you to better handle a horse for riders in our regular lessons.

We would love to have some of our experienced leaders get involved, particularly as we are planning to get our own hippotherapy program up and running in Term 4 and will need trained horse handlers to make this happen. So, if you are interested in participating in the workshop please let Becky know so that we can get registration information to you.

## Volunteer News

### Welcome to volunteering at Pegasus

Since the last HoofPrint edition, Pegasus has had a number of new volunteers join us, so...welcome to the beautiful Pegasus Farm! What an outlook – those gorgeous Brindabella ranges. We hope your volunteering experience is proving to be rewarding. Let us know how you're going. Remember, everyone, there is a Volunteer Suggestion Box sitting above the sign-in book, so if you have a comment or concern or suggestion, please let us know.

### National Volunteer Week celebration

During National Volunteer Week we had a fantastic evening on Thursday 17 May for the Volunteer Award Presentations. The evening started with drinks and

mingling, followed by Certificates of Appreciation presented to our volunteers by the President of the Pegasus Management Committee, Freddy von Reibnitz. We had three very interesting talks with the theme See the Change...Volunteering. Coming from different perspectives were Kate Ord (parent of a rider), Marianne Davidson (consulting physiotherapist), and Mike Crowe (veteran volunteer), all talking about their own experiences in how the work of volunteers creates positive change and development in both riders and volunteers. Fruit and cheese platters, snacks and CHOCOLATE MUD CAKE made it all the more fun.



### Volunteering opportunities

Pegasus Farm currently needs some Horehound weed chipped out around the paddocks, and the horses need their tack given a good clean. Would anyone like to assist in these tasks for ½ hour before or after your class?

If you would like to help, please talk to Deborah, Jo or Deb.

### Volunteer contact details

We are in the process of transferring your details from your Volunteer Form to a database but realise that some details may have changed. Over the coming months we would like to update this information and so will start to ask if you can verify details or perhaps fill in a new form. We would like to be able to keep in touch with everyone by way of an emailed newsletter or such, just to let you all know what's happening around the place.

### End of term coming up

Just reminding everyone that the end of term is on Saturday 7 July 2007. Then there are two weeks of school holidays, followed by 2 weeks of vacation for the horses. That means a return to classes in Term 3 from Tuesday 7 August. Mark it in your diaries!

## Volunteer Development Opportunities

As part of our commitment to our volunteers, Pegasus always offers some training and development sessions for volunteers during our mid year horses holidays. This year we will be offering the following sessions:

1. **Posture in Riding** – Tuesday 24 July, 5.30pm – 7.00pm

Our resident physio guru – Marianne Davidson from Therapy ACT – will be running this session about posture. She will focus on:

- What is 'correct' posture?
- How posture relates to a rider's position on the horse.
- How correct posture and core strength protect us, as riders and as volunteers (including some safe lifting techniques).

If you would like to learn more about how to help your riders to improve their posture, or just want to improve your own posture when working with riders and lifting, then this will be a great session for you!

2. **Teaching Your Riders** – Friday 3 August, 9.30am – 12noon

Have you ever felt frustrated that you can't help your riders learn the skills to ride? Do you wish you knew more about riding skills so that you can reinforce the coaches' instructions during a lesson?

Jo Skimin, with input from our other experienced coaches, will be running this practical session on the teaching of riding skills.

You will learn how to teach a rider:

- some basic riding aids
- to pick up, shorten or lengthen their reins
- to turn their horse
- to trot.

If you would like to attend either or both of these sessions please add your name to the list on the volunteer sign in table at Pegasus. There may be limited places, so get your name down early!

## Herd Happenings

And now for our regular update on who's who and who's new in the Pegasus herd.

### Bart

Bart is a new, very perky 14 hand high Bay pony with a lovely long black forelock. We recently purchased him after having him on a short trial and he looks very promising even though he is only 7 years old. He does not have a very strong education at this point, with only some trail riding experience under his girth. Our coaches and experienced leaders will be busy leading him in classes (without a rider at this stage), while he gets used to all our fun and games.

### Safari



Safari is another recent purchase. He is a 14.1 hand high grey pony. At ten years of age he has a bit more worldly experience than Bart, and is already working in a couple of classes. In his previous life he was a pony club horse and is very well known to one of our Thursday afternoon volunteers. When she met him for the first

time, Margaret Graham thought that he looked a bit familiar. It turned out that her daughter used to actually own him, so she was able to bring in some of his 'baby photos' for us to see. His most recent owner claimed him to be a percheron arab cross, but you would never know it to look at him.

### Bodie

Bodie is currently with us on trial, but is looking very promising. He is an oldie but a goodie and at 19 years of age absolutely nothing seems to phase him thus far in his trial. He is a 15.1 hand high bay stock horse, whose owner has offered him to us on loan as she takes a break from riding to look after her brand new twins and 2 year old child. Bodie hails from Cairns, so make sure you spare a thought for him as you enjoy the views of the snow on the Brindies when you are at Pegasus. Needless to say we have him rugged up nice and warm at night!

## Fundraising Update

### 'Pass the Hat Around' Fundraiser on the way

There is an exciting new fundraising project underway called 'Pass the Hat Around for Pegasus' which will piggy-back on Melbourne Cup parties and gatherings happening in different organisations and venues across Canberra. On Melbourne Cup Day these groups will be able to Pass the Hat Around for Pegasus, making this a fun, annual fundraising event for us. We hope to make it well-known and popular!

We have recently put together a little work team of a few volunteers who have offered to help out with this important fundraiser. This team will be helping to plan the event, organise the necessary promotional materials, get host packs out to hosts throughout Canberra and then finally and most importantly help to collect the money.

If you are interested in joining this small team to work on this project, please see Becky as soon as possible. And if you are planning a celebration for Melbourne Cup Day, then keep your eyes open for further information about how you can be a "Pass the Hat Around" Host and help us to raise money to keep our programs operating.

### Grant Updates

We are very pleased to announce some recent success with grant applications. We have recently received funding from Sport and Rec ACT to review our volunteer management program to ensure that it is accessible to people with a disability and also received funding to provide further education to our volunteer, staff and trainee coaches.

We were also successful in our submission to Healthpact for a sponsorship and will soon be attaching a 'Be Active' message to many of our activities. This is a well funded two year sponsorship that we hope will help to promote active lifestyles to our riders, volunteers and their families.

Our arena surface will also receive a much needed upgrade this year, with an announcement from the Department of Education that they will contribute funds towards this project. We are currently looking at water wise options, but hope to have this major project undertaken during the Christmas break.

Our volunteers haven't missed out either with a small grant provided by the Snow Foundation to allow us to buy a DVD player and a data projector for our volunteer and coach training sessions. Becky will also make good use of this equipment when she gives

promotional talks to community groups and funding bodies throughout Canberra.

So, needless to say, we would like to extend a very big thankyou to these and our other major funders for their ongoing support. Pegasus is a thriving community organisation and we are delighted at the community's support of our programs.

## Thanks to our supporters....

Pegasus simply could not continue to operate without the generous support of our community. We would like to thank the following donors who have assisted us since our last newsletter:

- Mark Patterson of Patterson's Rural Contracting
- Roy Amos
- Jack Laing of Bungendore Vet Hospital
- The Canberra Vet Hospital
- Ian Nielson and Associates
- Saddleworld
- Mallesons, Stephen and Jacques
- Canberra Mothercraft Society
- Sue Howieson
- Graham and Lyn Moss – in memory of their son Wesley.

I would also like to make a correction to the supporters list in the last edition. An acknowledgement was made to Robert Nott as a donor, however this donation was in fact sent in by Robert, on behalf of GHD.

## Pegasus Pillow Talk.....



