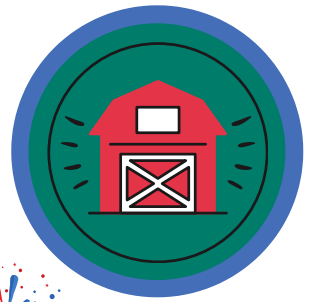




# ATRC OF THE MONTH:

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE FAMILIES, FOLLOWERS, AND SUPPORTERS  
OF ALBANY THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER.



**“IN RIDING A HORSE WE BORROW FREEDOM.”**



-HELEN THOMPSON-



In a March 20th, 2019 article entitled, “‘Borrowing Freedom’ as a Horseback Rider With Cerebral Palsy”, written by Kelsey Highsted, the physically disabled author said it was difficult to find a sport in which she could participate. At age 4, she became “hooked” on riding after a friend let her sit on her horse. Her parents put her in lessons and soon noticed the positive effects it had on her physical and mental health. She said, “[the] barn...became my second home and a place where I was accepted... [and] on an even playing field, so to speak. My peers and coaches didn’t see me as just a disabled girl who liked horses, but as a horseback rider who dealt with the challenges of cerebral palsy. As a person who finds walking and getting around a challenge, being able to get on a 1200 pound animal I trust and ride freely with no walking stick or walker is a pretty amazing feeling. My parents always said, ‘You sit taller in a saddle than you do in a regular chair’. Not only have I gained freedom but also independence, life skills, lifelong friends I treasure, amazing opportunities and most importantly improved physical and mental health. I have been dealing with anxiety for a few years, and when I ride my anxiety seems to disappear as well as the invisible barriers CP puts up. I have gained confidence in myself and my abilities from participating in this sport.”

<https://themighty.com/2019/03/horseback-riding-cerebral-palsy/>



JULY  
AT THE FARM:



- 1-BORROWING FREEDOM
- 2-VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH
- 2-NEWS 10 ABC COVERAGE
- 2-JOHNNY'S FARM STAND
- 3-CELEBRATING 40 YEARS
- 4-HEAR YE! HEAR YE!
- 5-A BLAST FROM OUR PAST
- 6-SHOUT OUTS



## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH:



Kathy started volunteering for us as a sidewalker during the summer of 2020. She is always supportive of her riders as well as ATRC's fundraising efforts. She recently dedicated an entire week to hanging out, one-on-one, with a rider for our summer camp. She was so sweet and patient with the rider, making sure all of her needs were met. We are so grateful to have her on our team!

*To get to know Kathy a little better, we asked her a few questions...*

### 1. What is your favorite part about volunteering at ATRC?

My favorite part of volunteering at ATRC is working with the amazing people and wonderful horses. Every lesson is a new experience that always leaves me with a great feeling of accomplishment and contribution to what ATRC is all about. It was especially enjoyable to spend a week at Riding Camp with a delightful young lady!

### 2. If you could meet your hero, who would it be and why?

Christine Lehman is my hero for founding ATRC 40 years ago. She put her heart and soul into this organization that continues to make a difference in the lives of many individuals.

### 3. Why do you volunteer at ATRC?

I have always loved horses and helping people. Volunteering at a therapeutic riding program is something that I've wanted to do for many years. Retirement and ATRC have given me that opportunity which is a blessing in my life!



*"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."*

- MARJORIE MOORE -

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!



## Did You Catch Us On The News?

News 10 ABC recently aired a segment, "Horse Heroes", featuring Miss Taylor, Miss Lauren & Miss Kate. The segment included a testimonial by parent, Andrea Abatto Kowaleski, along with video footage of our riders/participants Heidi, Jenna, Kayla & Sophia and cameo appearances by volunteers Mindy Scott & Samir El-Sawaf. You can watch the two minute segment by going to:

<https://www.news10.com/10-in-toga/horse-heroes/>



## Feed The Pig.



Our new porcine friend, Johnny Cash the potbelly pig, needs our help to get in shape! Pigs do well on a diet of fruits & vegetables! So, Miss Kate is taking him off grain for now and is going to try something new! If anyone has old fruits or vegetables (berries, bananas, corn, squashes, grapes, melons, lettuce) they would like to donate to Johnny, Miss Kate has set up "Johnny's Farm Stand" with a bucket for donations in the main barn!





# Celebrating Forty Years

## OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION



IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD!



WE HAD SUCH A GREAT TURNOUT & TRULY APPRECIATE THE EFFORTS OF ALL THOSE WHO HELPED TO MAKE OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION A HUGE SUCCESS! WE RAISED \$2,616!



SPECIAL THANKS TO: EMILY HATHAWAY & BRIAN HUNTLEY FOR THE TABLES, TENTS & CORNHOLE GAMES; KELLY MAGNUSON FOR HELPING ORGANIZE, SET UP & CLEAN UP; HEIDI ZAHNLEUTER FOR PARKING LOT MANAGEMENT; COLETTE CIFOR FOR RUNNING OUR WELCOME TABLE; ROBIN FERENDZO FOR THE PRINTED SIGNS & MATERIALS & POPCORN MACHINE; TAMARA GRISELL FOR HER FACE PAINTING SKILLS; JANET FITZGERALD FOR CREATING MAGICAL BALLOON ART; DEVON BLACKWOOD & THE FOLK-GROUP FEATURING BILL, WAYNE & STAN FOR SHARING THEIR MUSICAL TALENTS; VINNY FOR PROVIDING THE SOUND EQUIPMENT; CHRISTIAN CAPUTO PHOTOGRAPHY FOR CAPTURING SOME SWEET & MEMORABLE MOMENTS FOR US; HILDRETH CATERING FOR THE FOOD; KATIE CURTIN & MARKET 32 FOR PROVIDING THE CAKE; PAUL ALOY, CHESHIRE HORSE OF SARATOGA, KATIE CURTIN, KIM DECKER, LISA DELSIGNORE, EQUINE CLINIC AT OAKENCROFT, JOE GUY, BRIAN & KELLY HUNTLEY, JOHN & BARB RIEGEL (ADDIE'S ARMY), & MINDY SCOTT FOR THEIR SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS; KELLY HUNTLEY FOR RUNNING THE AUCTION; EMILY HATHAWAY FOR RUNNING THE TACK SALE; JOE GUY, DR. CARLIN JONES & MINDY SCOTT FOR GUIDING FACILITY TOURS.







# Hear Ye! Hear Ye!



Albany County Legislator Dustin Reidy is at Albany Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc.



Yesterday at 4:37 PM · Altamont · 🌐

I attended the Albany Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc. open house and 40th Anniversary celebration this afternoon - I was proud to present their staff and volunteers with a proclamation recognizing their service to our community and congratulating the center on it's 40th anniversary.

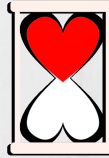
Thank you ATRC team on a wonderful afternoon and here is to your next 40 years!

## FORGIVE US FOR TOOTING OUR OWN HORN!

ALBANY COUNTY LEGISLATOR, DUSTIN REIDY, STOPPED BY OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION ON SATURDAY, JULY 24TH, TO CONGRATULATE US ON OUR 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY. HE PRESENTED US WITH A PROCLAMATION FROM THE ALBANY COUNTY LEGISLATURE RECOGNIZING OUR EXEMPLARY PROGRAM, ENDURING PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE, AND OUR STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO OUR MISSION TO PROVIDE, PROMOTE, AND ENCOURAGE THE BENEFITS OF EQUINE THERAPY TO A DIVERSE POPULATION, CITING A DIRECT CORRELATION TO THE EFFORTS OF OUR DEDICATED STAFF WHOSE UNCOMPROMISING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE AND COMMITMENT ARE UNPARALLELED!







# Frankie & Louise



## A BLAST FROM OUR PAST

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN CAPUTO PHOTOGRAPHY)

By Marian J. Meyers  
Staff Writer

A 7-year-old child who had never spoken and was unable to grasp with his hands leads a horse by a rope, and then orders the animal to back up. Another child, who was unable to sit in a saddle for more than five or 10 minutes, can now maintain her balance for half an hour as she puts her horse through paces.

These accomplishments, common enough for most people, do not come easily for the physically, emotionally and mentally handicapped children and adults enrolled in the Albany Therapeutic Riding Center in Voorheesville. But they do come for the 20 to 25 students who have riding lessons here about once a week.

In operation for a year and incorporated last January, the non-profit organization belongs to the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association and is run by 25 volunteers.

Students, who range in age from 4 to the late 30s, learn horsemanship while receiving physical therapy under the guidance of riding instructor Christine Lehman. The nearby Sunrise Stables, which Lehman's parents own, provide the horses and equipment.

The students at the riding center suffer from a variety of disabilities — they are blind, paralyzed, retarded, autistic or the victims of Down's syndrome, polio, cerebral palsy. About two-thirds are under 20 years of age.

"The course is very individually geared for each student," explained Joan G. Brooks, a member of the board of directors and treasurer of the center. "It's a recognized form of physical therapy."

According to Brooks, the motion of riding works the muscles, so students benefit from working the horse as well as from exercises built into the program. Along with learning to reign, sit in a saddle and command a horse, the students also do some barn work if they are able.

"It gives them a sense of accomplishment, which is very hard for a handicapped person to develop," Brooks said. "The student develops a sense of control and accomplishment."

Each lesson costs \$17, but the fee is not always paid by the rider's family. Donations and payments from health insurance agencies sometimes defray the expense.

According to Brooks, the center's goal is to eventually provide free lessons to all students. The center has applied for a tax-exempt status, she explained, and hopes to get businesses to sponsor riders.

Riding therapy began in Europe after Liz Hartel, a polio victim, won a silver medal in dressage at the 1952 Olympic Games in Helsinki, Finland. But it was not until the mid-1960s that therapeutic horsemanship made its appearance in the United States. Since that time, however, more than 140 centers have opened in the United States and Canada.

Most of the people who run these centers are volunteers, and not all of them are horse-lovers. Three volunteers are needed for each lesson at the Voorheesville riding center, Brooks said — a leader and one for each side of the horse.

More volunteers are needed, she said. Those interested should call the riding center at 765-2022.



ONE OF CHRIS LEHMAN'S VERY FIRST RIDERS FROM BACK IN 1981, FRANCES "FRANKIE" STEPNOWSKI AND HER SISTER, LOUISE, STOPPED BY FOR A VISIT DURING OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION! THEY GAVE US NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS THEY HAD SAVED FROM 40 YEARS AGO. FRANKIE IS PICTURED WITH CHRIS IN THE BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO. HOW COOL IS THAT?!







Send a 'Shout Out' to someone special!  
For a \$10 donation your message and photo will appear in our monthly newsletter!  
For more information or to submit an entry contact Miss Taylor.



## Celebrating July!



July 3rd  
Happy 6th Birthday to Dusty's Pal, Lillie



July 15th  
Happy 23rd Birthday, Tanner



July 25th  
Happy 26th Birthday, Jane

## *Happy 4th of July!*

