



Equine Assisted Therapy **EAT NEWS**



314-971-0605 | info@eatherapy.org | www.eatherapy.org

Dec 2020

Letter from Lulu

Hello EAT Family and Friends,

What a year 2020 turned out to be! Who would have thought we would be dealing with the uncertainty of the COVID pandemic for nearly a year? Thankfully, after being closed for almost 12 weeks, we were able to start up and continue operating to help all those we can through horse therapy.

Our team members, instructors, and volunteers have gone above and beyond by teaching in masks and adjusting to new schedules. Our riders have been such troopers through all of this! I cannot thank everyone enough for your patience, understanding and willingness to be open to all of the changes we all have had to make in order to safely succeed throughout this pandemic.

Looking forward to 2021, our hopes are to keep everyone safe and riding while still trying to navigate our way through COVID. I feel, like a big family, if we have gotten through this together, we can get through anything!

Thank you all for another year of allowing us to be a part of your family. I wish all of you a wonderful holiday season and a healthy and happy New Year.

Walk on,
Lulu Bogolin

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Horse of the Year

OBI-WAN KENOBI

Obi-Wan Kenobi, affectionately called Obi, was voted our 2020 horse of the year. Obi is a 14-year-old, palomino quarter horse gelding who is registered with the American Quarter Horse Association. We believe Obi was a western pleasure horse prior to coming to EAT about 8 years ago. He came to us after he suffered a hoof injury and his owner could no longer care for him. After being nursed back to health with the help of our vet and farrier, Obi has proved to be a wonderful addition to our herd.

At EAT, Obi is known for his incredibly calm, laid back demeanor and his slow and steady walk. He is very patient and knows how to take care of his riders. He is a pro at lining up at the mounting ramp and stands like a statue when the use of our lift is need to mount or dismount a rider. Obi is a favorite among riders, volunteers, and instructors!

When Obi is not in class, he can be found in the pasture often at the hay bale, laying in the sun, or grazing with his friends Chewie and Dusty.



EAT's Christmas Wish Tree

Our Christmas tree this year was surrounded with lots of generous donations from our wonderful volunteers and rider families. Thank you for all the donations!!

Volunteer Spotlight

Kris Meserole

Kris first learned about EAT from friend, riding partner, and co-worker Denise Bertrand who was volunteering at EAT. It was her strong belief in EAT's mission and her love of horses that led her to become an EAT volunteer in August of 2018. Kris is currently a horse leader and side walker in the Monday morning classes and the Thursday evening classes as well as helping on other days when she can.

"I started with horses as soon as I could ask for a pony for Christmas" Kris says. She has always ridden English starting as a hunter/jumper and English pleasure where she grew up in Vermont. She took a break from horses during college and graduate school but returned to horse ownership within a few years of moving to St. Louis in 1982. Kris and her Holsteiner/Thoroughbred cross, Friar, trained and competed to 3rd level dressage.

Outside of EAT, Kris also volunteers at the Humane Society of Missouri (HSMO) as an educator where she assists in education programs with the youth of St. Louis communities. Kris is now retired from being a middle school math and science teacher and a previous 22-year career at Monsanto as a Technical Specialist. "My son, Erik (27) and daughter Kelly (24) are my life's true blessings along with my 33-year marriage with my husband, Brad." Her dogs Piper, Star, and Ridgy are a big part of her daily activities with walks, hikes, and visits to the dog park. Her cats Moxy and Smokey spend most of their days sleeping but are her everyday reminders to "take each day as it comes and to enjoy the simple things in life".

"What I like best about volunteering at EAT is a hard question to answer." Kris says she enjoys watching the riders she's assisted progress and the joy that so many of them share through their smiles. She also takes so much pleasure in being around the horses and taking in the smells of a horse farm.

Kris's advice to new EAT volunteers is to give it a committed try for one full session of classes. "I believe this would allow them to witness and be rewarded with a rider's accomplishments as well as make new friendships with instructors and other volunteers."

Kris and her horse Friar



Kris and her husband Brad



Kris's children Erik and Kelly



Kris's dogs Piper, Star, and Ridgy



Instructor Spotlight

Holly Pieper



**Holly and her favorite
EAT horse, Magic**



**Holly and her husband,
Gary**



**Holly's children,
Kyle and Dana**



Holly's puppy Olli

Holly is a St. Louis native. She graduated from Webster Groves High School and got her Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Southeast Missouri State University. She retired from Edward Jones in 2015. Her and her husband Gary have two children, Dana (27) and Kyle (25). They still live in the St. Louis area with their 90lb puppy named Olli.

Holly's family had a couple horses when she was a teenager. They just rode for fun, not taking lessons or going to shows. "We would get on the horses and disappear into the woods for hours. It was wonderful!" Holly says.

Holly found out about EAT from a neighbor and said "it sounded perfect because I love horses and have always loved children". After volunteering for a few months, it was suggested that she become an instructor. After not riding for 35 years, she started riding 3-4 days a week in preparation for the PATH certification. "It was hard work but so worth it." She passed her PATH certification to become a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor in May of 2018 and earned a second certification through SpiritHorse in September 2019.

Holly says "I love everything about EAT. Our support staff has organized things so well. Our volunteers are THE BEST! We have such a nice herd of horses, and last but not least, our riders are so much fun to work with. It is such a rewarding job to have and I feel blessed to have it."

Outside of EAT, Holly enjoys knitting, making T-shirt quilts, and taking care of her puppy Olli.

Equine Wellness Retreat



Our first ever Equine Wellness Retreat was held October 17th and 18th. We collaborated with LaSalle Retreat Center to provide 8 mothers of children with special abilities some much needed rest and relaxation. Each mom got 4 meals, a night of uninterrupted sleep, and a basket full of wonderful goodies donated by local businesses. There was no cost to the moms because all spots were sponsored by local businesses.

These mothers got to relax, mingle with each other, and spend some quality time with our horses! They learned how our amazing horses help not only their kiddos, but all of us as well. They even got to enjoy a trail ride with their new 1200lb best friend.

Additional retreats are being planned for next year! Ask us how you can sponsor or support a very deserving parent. If you or someone you know is interested in attending, contact us to get on the waiting list for future retreats.

Thank you to all volunteers and donors who made this possible!

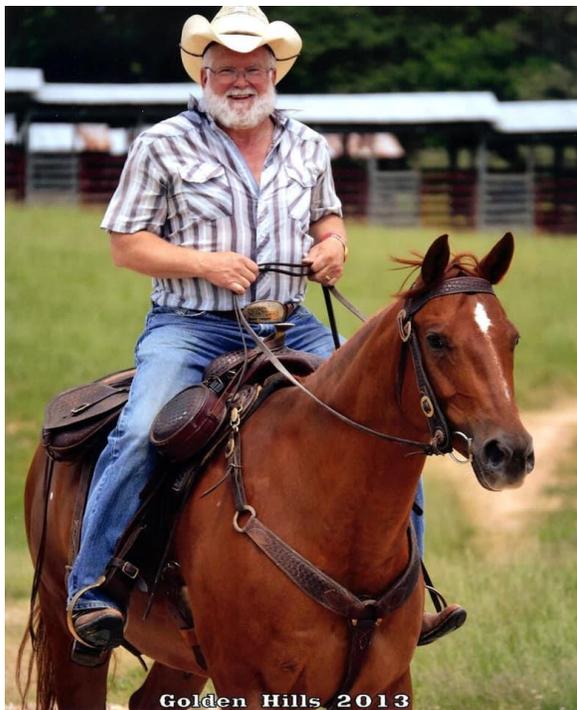


2020 EAT Online Raffle

In lieu of our annual Hoedown fundraiser, we did an online raffle to supplement some of the funds that this large event brings in.

At the beginning of October, we raffled off a private lesson at EATherapy, a beautiful Haflinger canvas print, a photography session with Higher Focus Photography, and a trip to Table Rock Lake.

We want to thank everyone who purchased raffle tickets and donated the prizes! Congratulations to the winners of these wonderful prizes!



Thank you, Cal, for all the lives you have touched. Not just those at Equine Assisted Therapy, but each person you have met.

Cal, a former board member, donated his beloved horse, PeeWee (now Poco), to EAT in August. We know Cal will be watching over us from above.

Thank you to all who donated to Equine Assisted Therapy in honor of Cal.

Thank You Thank You

We cannot thank everyone enough for the incredible support you have given us through this difficult year. We are looking forward to a great 2021 and are extremely grateful to each and every one of you for helping us to continue to change lives.

Special Thanks To:

- Mary McManemin – Sponsorship of Obi
- Gaye Reagan – Providing wet cat food
- Grace Cochran – donation for horse care
- Adam Roach – Private Love Like Lenore fundraiser for EAT
- Continued donations of disinfectant spray and wipes from volunteers and participants
- Giving Tuesday Donors
- Liz Johnson – multiple saddle donations
- Maggie Crowe – Sponsorship of Buddy
- Allison Merriman – Sponsorship of Dokka, Chewie, and Magic
- Sophia Schnapp – Sponsorship of Obi
- Elco Chevrolet – 2020 Sponsor
- Fletcher 2020 Sponsor
- William S Kallaos Foundation
- Midwest Special Needs Trust
- Dick Scheffel Family Charitable Foundation

Thank You!

More Ways to Donate

~Check out our Adopt-a-Horse program on our website – eatherapy.org/donate

~EAT online merchandise store
eatstore.itemorder.com/sale
(Quick link at bottom of our website)

~Go to smile.amazon.com and select Equine-Assisted Therapy as your charity of choice, Amazon donates 0.5% of your eligible purchase cost back to us

~ *All donations are tax-deductible*

