



# Hoof and Hearts News Quarterly

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FIRST QUARTER, 2013

MARCH 31, 2013

## Hip, Hip Hooray for the United Way !

Faith Equestrian became a designated United Way agency prior to the latest United Way Campaign and are so excited to learn of what the impact on us will be.

On March 26th we were notified that the financial support we will receive as a result of the 2012 United Way Campaign will be \$13,450.76 for calendar year 2013. Of that total, \$6,000 was awarded through The Community Fund and through the Donor Designations we will receive \$7,450.76!

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Georgia Pacific Savannah Mill employees David M. Cornaire, Richard A. Maseda and Keith L. Zipperer; Georgia Ports Authority employees Jamie McCurry and David Partain; John T. McCutchen with The Savannah Bank and Jennifer L. Polk with

Garden City Elementary. We also had 28 anonymous donors.

We thank each and everyone of you that designated us to receive all or part of your United Way contribution and thank the United Way agency for their generous support of Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center.

These monies will go a long way in helping with our day-to-day operating costs and towards helping us achieve the dreams and plans for our future.

Many of you may already know but each year most employers in the Coastal Empire initiate a United Way campaign drive for all employees. With us now being a designated agency its important that we tell everyone we know about the importance of our mission here at Faith . . . Together we can watch those contributions grow and grow!

## Miss Royal Boyd . . You Will Forever Be Missed

Our beloved "Missy", who was highlighted in the December issue of this newsletter, unfortunately has passed.

Missy was a chestnut colored quarter horse, born on April 28, 1986. She came to FETC through a donation of Bonnie Gentry, the Center's founder. She was the first therapeutic horse here at Faith and served faithfully until her passing.

Plans are underway for a memorial service to be held at Faith Equestrian and a "sensory integration" trail ride is under construction on the property in her memory.

Many of our students began their experience here on Missy's back. She will forever be in our hearts and memories!

God Bless You Missy!



## Working with the children - Side walkers are guardian angels



Bonnie Gentry pictured above.

If you already work with the special needs population as a teacher, bus driver, or in any capacity you know how fulfilling it is to be with and help children with special challenges. At a therapeutic riding facility the challenges of volunteering are even more involved, challenging and fulfilling because of what you do and how you do it. Side walkers are an essential part of a therapeutic riding lesson. Without them, most children with a special challenge would not be able to participate in horse sports or horse assisted educational activities. A side walker is the supporting arm, *literally*, to a rider who has physical or mental challenges. A side walker's job is to watch the rider during a lesson. That is their focus, their only focus.

**Side walker definition** - A person who walks beside the horse next to the student's knee area while the student is mounted. They offer moral support as well as look out for the students balance (Seeing that they are not shifting too far over to one side or the other on the horses back). Their focus is on the student—not the horse.

In this edition of the Trainer's Corner, we will be discussing the "side walkers" job in detail. Everyone who comes to FETC

to volunteer must go through an orientation and training session. The orientation takes about 2 hours and includes a video, tour, and explanation of what is going on during the "get ready" hour before the first class starts on any given session day. After classes begin the new volunteers are encouraged to jump in and get their feet wet (figure of speech) with the assistance of a veteran volunteer beside them. The rubber hits the road when the instructor starts the class. The following are some tips to help you give your best as a side walker to "your" student.

When a class begins the instructor is the only one in the arena who should be talking, Why?

Reason #1- Because if side walkers are talking with each other about their day, etc., they are not focusing on the rider. This is a safety hazard. If you are distracted you may not hear the instructor call out instructions and/or you may not see your rider slipping in the saddle or losing a stirrup.

Reason #2-Talking among the side walkers is a distraction to the person riding, especially if the rider has mental delays, and also makes it hard for the rider to hear the instructor and follow the instructor's directions.

During a 30 minute lesson it can get tiring going around and around the arena for a side walker, so

here are some stay alert tips to follow:

1. Stay calm and quiet, listen to what the instructor is saying. Do not repeat what the instructor is saying to the student. Sometimes the instructor will ask you to say certain things to the rider or use hand-over-hand skills to help the rider understand a task. Wait for the instructor to tell you when to speak.

2. Pay attention to your rider's body language and balance at all times by watching them as they ride.

3. If the rider speaks to you, encourage them to be quiet and listen to the instructor by pointing to the instructor and redirecting the rider's attention to where they should be looking or what they should be doing.

4. Make mental notes of things you see the rider do good and/or bad during the lesson, then write them down on the side walker note sheet which is next to the volunteer hours log at the barn. This is important because you may see or hear something the instructor may miss and *everything* a rider says and does during a lesson is important to know for their progress notes.

The instructor usually will give you a task to do during the lesson to interact with the student. That is your time to add that special smile and word of encouragement. You, the side walker, are your students guardian angel more than you may realize ...keep up the good work and "Walk On"!

## Horse Camp—Four Years and Counting

Start making plans and spreading the word. Our fourth summer of conducting the 8 weeks of our biggest fundraiser is soon to begin!

On June 3, we will hold the first week's camp and are hopeful that this year will be as successful as last years.

Since its inception in 2010, we have grown substantially, primarily through word of mouth. Each week is filled with lots of hands-on experience with the horses, from grooming to riding, as well as some exceptional crafts related to their camp experience.

Some of the participants are repeat campers and some have advanced to horse leading and camp helpers!

Please tell those you know to go online at [www.faithetc.org](http://www.faithetc.org) and click on FETC Horse Camps to download the registration packet!

# Bonnie Receives a Much Deserved Award !

Bonnie Rachael is accustomed to smiles and tears of joy.

Of course, she's used to seeing them from other people, through the life-changing work of the non-profit organization she founded seven years ago, Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center.

But she was on the receiving end of the giving on the morning of May 28th, as the Effingham Sunrise Rotary Club surprised her with its "2013 Service Above Self" Award.

"Wow, I have never been so surprised in my entire life," Rachael said.

"I do it for the children," she said, "and for the love of God. This is His project, not mine."



**Billy Dasher presents Bonnie Rachael with the "2013 Service Above Self" award.**

The first step toward making Faith Equestrian a reality came in 1992, when Bonnie bought two horses and five acres of land in Guyton. It was a dream she had since she was a little girl.

Thank you Bonnie for having that dream and providing a service so greatly appreciated by the community. You truly are an inspiration to us all!

## Let's Meet - Sky

Hi there! My name is Sky. I am a 19 year old sorrel and white Paint I stand 16 hands tall and came to Faith Equestrian in May 2010.

Prior to my time at FETC I was a trail horse but am much happier here!

I am very patient and kind-hearted, as well as open-minded and easy going. Some say I don't have any dislikes!

One of my favorite things to do here at Faith is to play kick ball and if you really want a friend for life give me an oatmeal cream pie, they are my absolute favorite.

I am also Jackie Garman's project horse. She works with me on a regular basis to insure I cooperate with her and other riders!

I would love it if you'd choose to

sponsor me.. There are two levels of sponsorship. Just go to our website at [www.faithetc.org](http://www.faithetc.org) to learn more!



## Important Dates / Things to Remember

Civil War Experience—May 18th behind Fuller Chevrolet in Rincon, GA. Part of the proceeds will benefit FETC!

Sweetheart Raffle Tickets on sale! Package includes 2-night stay at Hyatt Savannah, Dinner for two at

Alligator Soul, Carriage Ride and \$150 cash. Total Package is worth \$600!!

There are a few spots still available for the July Horse Camp weeks. Don't delay, call 655-1480 to register!

Don't forget, we always need bottled water, Lexmark ink cartridges #28 and #29!





## Our Mission

Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization formed to:

- Offer equine assisted riding and educational activities for children and adults with all types of mental, physical and emotional challenges.
- Help build life skills, confidence, and self esteem in a family friendly social environment.
- Offer these activities without regard to race, color, creed or financial need.



### United Way Agency of the Coastal Empire

We are an agency of the United Way, listed in health and wellness !!

Please make Faith Equestrian Therapeutic Center YOUR designated charity when the United Way comes to your workplace during the United Way campaign. Support local community services through the United Way!

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Under Bonnie Rachael group or Faith Equestrian Page

## Volunteer Spotlight

We would like to recognize The Garman Family as our special volunteers for this issue.

As many of you know, Jackie is an integral part of the day to day operation. She is a weekday worker, a horse exerciser, was our craft teacher at last year's Horse Camps and has helped with the Special Olympic training and competition.

Jackie's husband, Scott, has done numerous electrical jobs for FETC and without him, we would certainly be in the dark!

Renee, their daughter, has been a weekday worker as well and has helped exercise the horses, helped with Horse Camp and the Special Olympics.

This amazing family also acts as a sponsor for FETC's only black horse,

"Shadow".

They also have a young son, Tyler, who has attended horse camp, takes riding lessons and loves "Cody"!



If you have a story suggestion, or request please email yours ideas to:

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