



Thoughts from the Hay Barn

At the Sight of a Horse

At the sight of a horse... I am soothed.

After my spinal cord injury I became dependent on a powered-wheelchair. Sixteen years had passed since I rode; I grieved the loss of horses in my life and longed to be with them again. While at the Devon Horse Show I learned about Thorncroft and asked about the therapeutic riding program. The time had finally arrived to reunite with my long lost love.

Returning to the horse world instantly lifted my spirit. Just the sight of a horse gives me joy. Their beauty, power, grace, and freedom are mesmerizing and peaceful.

Thorncroft has been my source of hope and healing as I gained a renewed sense of purpose. Relating with horses, such magnificent animals, is profoundly rewarding to me. Proper bending around a circle, a correct response to a cue, an energetic walk, or seeing my horse's ears cocked forward, lets me know that my mount and I understand and speak each

other's language. It is both exhilarating and challenging to experience this connection and a celebratory accomplishment for our entire riding team.

Stretching and moving muscles that normally aren't used due to sitting in the wheelchair relaxes me. The forward motion of the horse feels as if I'm walking which challenges my balance and core strength. Not only does this restore me physically, it is refreshing to my mind as well.

As the recipient of a partial scholarship, I am able to continue riding at Thorncroft. With ever-increasing medical expenses, I am grateful that there are kind, caring people like those that care to support the farm and student riders like me. Without their support myself and so many other like me would not have the opportunity to experience the hope and natural healing power of horses. Your generosity is invaluable and truly appreciated.

Thank you kindly, Christine A. Del Paggio



Chris and Leibling in the Trail Class with volunteers Carol Risser and Brett Dolente

I'm a Winner!

Hi! My name is Katy Ivie. I have been a student at TEC for almost four years. I look forward to Tuesdays because I get to ride at Thorncroft! I have learned so much from my instructors. I started out with Sallie on Pie. She taught me the basics of post-trotting. Sallie is special because she gives great hugs and introduced me to Thorncroft. Then Emily taught me on Oscar. I competed in my first show with her by my side. Emily gave me a lucky horseshoe that I have hanging in my room. Claudia worked with me after Emily left. I continued to ride Oscar and also tried out Buddy, Blossom and Apache. Claudia and I loved to go on trail rides in the nice weather. Claudia taught me so well that I won my first blue ribbon in Trail at the Thorncroft Fall Show.

Carol has been teaching me for almost a year now. She taught me to ride my first big horse, Libby. However, I have been mostly riding Argus. He and I are very much alike. We are both ornery! I bring him treats and he always wants more. He even licked my arm! I am learning a lot about riding from Carol. She is an awesome instructor! We are working on cantering now. With Carol and Argus, I won a blue ribbon at Devon this year on my 10th birthday. It was an amazing experience. I love my Thorncroft family!



Katie shows her blue ribbon and trophy on her friend Argus

The Gift of Giving

A stable of 38 kind horses and ponies is the heart and soul of our work. Riders of all abilities come to us with different goals... to jump their first fence, take a trail ride at sunset or to reach out and touch the soft nose of a gentle giant: our horses make all of these dreams possible.

Our critters come to us by word of mouth... from dear friends, colleagues and neighbors that entrust us with their four legged family members, knowing that they will be warmly welcomed at Thorncroft and loved by many. Each year we are honored to be chosen as a second home for such amazing horses and ponies and cannot begin to express our gratitude for these priceless gifts. Join us as we welcome our latest arrivals!

Crackerjack: a gift from Jean Langdon, Buddy: a gift from Jenn Enderle, Roxy: a gift from Helen Naylor, Sparklin: a gift from Tom Kenney, Daisy: a gift from the Williams Family, Cordana Z: a gift from Kimberly Levin, Alice: a gift from the Clark Family and from southern Washington Bagel: a gift from Sue Shotwell. Bagel is also sponsored by the estate of Sarah and Toby Wolfberg.



Photo © Mary Hunt Davis



Maddie & Bagel wish Larry "Happy Birthday"

Did you know that 35% of our current budget of \$1,000,000 comes from friends like you?

When you receive your **United Way** campaign information please use our specific code **01160** and THORNCROFT for your gift this Fall.



The welcome change in our photography this month is thanks Mary Hunt Davis Photography of Malvern, Pa. Enjoy your visit of Thorncroft thru her lens. A special thank you "Babby" for the tour.

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Surprise!!!

Scan this with your smartphone for a special offer at Thorncroft.



Our Fall lesson program is filling up fast!

Call the office and sign up today. Our lesson program offers private and group lessons for riders on the flat or over fences. Riders of all abilities can work year round in the comfort of our indoor arena or go outside and enjoy the smells and colors of a Fall afternoon in the fields.



bits 'n pieces

thorncroft



A Major Becomes a Rider

My name is Terrence Evans. I am a graduate of North Carolina State University, where I was a member of the ROTC. This led to a twenty-year career in the Army, where I achieved the rank of Major. I completed three tours of duty overseas—one for Operation Desert Storm and two for Operation Iraqi Freedom. Each deployment required me to be away from home and family for a year's time. In addition to the stress of living in a combat zone, I also came to discover the added burden of reintegration—that is, the attempt to return to normal life afterwards. The mental tools required for survival in perilous situations, coupled with a life in concentrated isolation, make coming home an unexpected source of discomfort. I found this to be the case each time I returned, in markedly different ways.



After each tour, I experienced a variety of symptoms, both physical and psychological. I was subsequently diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, as well as other issues. As a commander, it was an unspoken expectation to hold my feelings at bay, for fear of piercing the image of invincibility. It would be years before I acknowledged that I needed help. Eventually I began to pursue several options, including medical intervention and talk therapy, but they provided little relief.



Terry with Saunders at Thorncroft

On one visit to the VA Hospital, my counselor, Mary Anne, asked if I would be interested in trying horse therapy.

I immediately said I was willing to give it a shot, although inwardly I wondered what horses had to do with healing people. My skepticism would soon give way to the discovery of a passion that has truly changed my life.

I joined Thorncroft's Equestrian Therapy program nearly two years ago. Over time, I gradually found myself gravitating toward

the majestic animals in my charge. Through them I have learned the power of patience, focus, concentration and trust. When one works with a horse, one has to be acutely aware of his mannerisms and mood—both to get him to do what you want




Photo © Mary Hunt Davis

him to do and to remain safe. As I spend time with the horses, I am singularly focused on them, blocking any other distractions. This gives each of us a sense of calm. These relationships have brought a serenity that I never knew before. I take that serenity back into the world beyond the stables, easily applying it to my work and personal relationships. More than one person in my life has commented that there is a significant change in me.

I am eternally grateful to the staff at Thorncroft for helping me to meet a need that I didn't even know I had.



My quality of life has improved by leaps and bounds since I joined the program. Where others dread Mondays, they are now my favorite day of the week because I am there. My sincere wish is that more people would support the Horses for Heroes program through donations to Thorncroft. 

Thank You!

Special thanks to the following friends for their generous gift to Thorncroft. We thank you for your gift, your friendship and most of all, your investment in a successful future for the Farm.

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Happenings

Fall and Winter 2011-2012

Where will YOU be this Fall? There are SO many great things to do this Fall... make sure you don't miss out on any of these. Put the Radnor Concours d'Elegance and Dressage at Devon on your calendar. Not only are they exciting events to attend but as the beneficiary of both you will be supporting your favorite charity... Thorncroft!

September 9, 10, 11: Join Thorncroft at The Radnor Hunt Concours d'Elegance for an invitational, world-class event featuring historic, classic and sports racing motor cars. Saturday night the Thorncroft Mainstreamers will greet guests arriving in black-tie for a festive evening. The Team will perform their drill to music on the historic lawns of the Hunt Club. For ticket information: www.radnorconcours.org

Sept. 27 - Oct. 2: Dressage at Devon, CDI-W/Y/J has been the premier North American equestrian event since 1975. It combines world class dressage competition and the world's largest open breed show with the international Fall Festival shops and special activities for the entire family. The Mainstreamers will perform on Saturday. Thorncroft is honored to have been the sole beneficiary of this prestigious event since 1991. Call ahead to volunteer, purchase reserved seating or to sponsor this world class event. www.dressageatdevon.org or www.thorncroft.org.



Oct. 15: Maire's Fall Horse Show, a fun low key horse show for riders with special needs; experience your first competition or hone your skills for the big Show in the Spring... The Handicapped Riders Division of the Devon Horse Show!

March 31, 2012: The 27th Annual Thorncroft Victory Gallop at Hyatt at the Bellevue. Reserve the date on your calendar now for our fabulous dinner-dance and silent auction. Philadelphia favorite Chico's Vibe is providing the music again this year so bring your dancing shoes!

Future events to be announced: Watch our website for our ever changing calendar of events.

In the Aisle at Sunrise

It's 6:00am, the sun is rising and the barn is coming alive. Larry is filling water buckets and Saunders is starting to bring in the horses. It is the most peaceful time of the day. One by one our horses and ponies slowly walk up from the lower meadows; in the morning light it's a beautiful sight to see.

The feed cart rolls down the aisle... horses nicker waiting for their breakfast... is it my turn? Some of the campers have arrived early and are walking quietly thru the barn. In the hush of the morning they whisper between themselves and to the horses... "Maggie you are so beautiful, Libby you are my favorite horse in the world, Oscar thank you for teaching me how to canter".

Thorncroft is a community and a way of life for people young and old with and without special needs. We offer you our horses, our staff and 70 acres of beautiful Chester County farm land. We teach riding to students of all abilities but of greatest importance we teach a peaceful, non judgmental and accepting way of being. We invite you to take a moment to visit and enjoy first hand the sights, sounds and activities of Thorncroft.

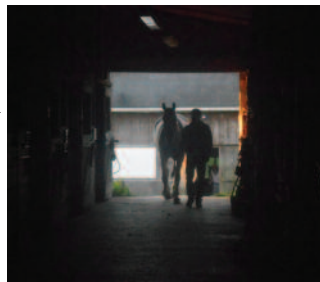


Photo: Betsy Arnfield

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