



the Lovelane Post

Lovelane Special Needs Horseback Riding Program, Inc. Summer 2008

→ Saturday, September 20, 2008 ←
 4:00-9:30pm
 Broad Oak Farm, 7 Burgess Lane, Dedham, MA
 Featuring **MARSHALL TUCKER BAND AND FRENCH LICK**

For tickets and information call 781-259-1177 x22 or www.lovelane.org/hoedown



State Fair COOK-OFF

- Ming Tsai
of Blue Ginger
- Seth & Angela Raynor
of Boarding House and The Pearl
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and Amanda Lydon
of Straight Wharf
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of Summer Shack

LOVELANE
 Special Needs Horseback Riding Program, Inc.
 40 Baker Bridge Road, Lincoln, MA 01773

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20th Anniversary

This year Lovelane celebrates its 20th year of providing therapeutic riding instruction to students. With this milestone we become one of only 15 riding centers nationwide to achieve this distinction.

inside . . .

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"In riding a horse, we borrow freedom"

Helen Thompson 1943

about lovelane

Our mission is to provide high-quality therapeutic horseback riding in a fun, supportive environment to achieve occupational, physical, speech, cognitive and other therapeutic gains focusing on children with special needs.

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www.lovelane.org

Visit us online to learn more about Lovelane and upcoming events.

Lovelane is a 501(c)3, non-profit organization.
Member of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA)

The Lovelane Post is published annually for friends and supporters of Lovelane.

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a letter from debby

program director



I cannot reflect on our 20th anniversary without feeling an overwhelming sense of gratitude. The story of Lovelane is really a story of everything that is great, generous and inspiring in people. It is the story of these qualities in the instructors who teach here; the volunteers who give their hearts and their time; the donors who support us; and most significantly the children who ride here.

I can still vividly recall the frustration I felt as I painstakingly searched for a new home for the five person program that I needed to relocate from a facility that was being torn down. After a year-long, door-to-door, barn-to-barn search, I took a chance and stopped by a barn on Lovelane Road in Weston. I was welcomed, incredibly not only by the barn owners, but also the barn manager, Elsie Rodney. Today, Elsie, with all her experience, wisdom and "horse sense", is the backbone of our program, training our horses and teaching our instructors.

Shortly after meeting Elsie, an article appeared in the local paper which brought me my first volunteer, Tammy Hemmingway. In addition to assisting me with everything I did back then, Tammy was instrumental in helping me get Lovelane registered as an official non-profit organization. She remained a dedicated and loyal volunteer

for 15 years until a move to New Jersey took her away. Today, we have a fleet of 135 volunteers, without whom this program could not exist.

Even after 20 years, I am continually amazed at what I have come to call our "Lovelane Karma." We seem to attract exactly the right person with exactly the right skill, energy, or generosity at exactly the right time. Finding the barn on Lovelane Road; meeting and working with Elsie; Tammy finding her way to us; these are just the first examples of this special Karma. Over the years, we've had donors with no personal motive, no special needs child, step up and make significant contributions. We've had grandparents and parents who challenged us to think forward and envision our state-of-the-art barn. We've had board members with the know-how and time to assist us as we moved into our new barn and nearly doubled the size of our program. We have had so many individuals with the expertise we needed seemingly drop from the sky, and help us ensure that Lovelane is the best it can be.

Of course, I ask myself - *why? How are we so lucky? What brings this Karma?*

I can answer that question with the same confidence I knew 20 years ago. It is our riders. These challenged children bring with them an energy and spirit that, when paired with a horse and allowed to shine, are like a magnet. They attract all the generous donors, devoted volunteers, and the talented staff. They are our "Lovelane Karma."

I want to thank everyone for their part in Lovelane's development and success.

Lovelane, along with all our students, instructors and volunteers, has added a beauty and depth to my life that has been a true gift. I know that I could wish for nothing more for Lovelane for the next 20 years than to continue to do what Lovelane does best - make a difference in the world one child at time. •

mavee . . .



My daughter, Maeve, was diagnosed with Spastic Quadriplegia, Cerebral Palsy at five months of age. Her condition causes her to have low tone throughout her trunk and neck and mixed tone in her legs and arms. Maeve began riding at Lovelane this past fall. She is now two years old and in such a short period of time, she has made great progress in her head and neck control as well as her sense of strength and balance. She loves riding that great old horse, Sebby! We are so grateful for all the staff and volunteers that work at this amazing organization and work directly with Maeve. We cannot thank you enough for your amazing support and encouragement!

Kara Flack, Maeve's Mom



Horse Illustration
by Evan

One special thing that Lovelane provides for Delaney is an extra-curricular activity of her very own. She can share her riding with others, just as they share about soccer or ballet.

Erica Supple, Lovelane Parent

a lovelane reflection • • •



20 years ago my family was struggling. I mean the days were incredibly long and the nights were full of worry over the future months and years with our son. We didn't know exactly what we'd have with Josh who lived with Cerebral Palsy, quadriplegia, and a host of cognitive delays. Most specialists seemed to barrage us with lists of what our son couldn't do. We were pretty hopeful people by nature, but I admit, at times we wondered if Josh would have much of a place in this world.



We had heard about adaptive horseback riding and hippotherapy, but back then even finding someone to educate us was difficult. We hoped to find someone who would just talk to us and tell us if Josh would be a candidate for horseback riding. This was a starting point for us – if Josh could do this, then what next? Somewhat like detectives, we set out to find a program in our area. After two months of sleuthing, I found Debby and she met us on Lovelane Road in Weston. She talked to us for about two minutes and then had me hand Josh up to her on Echo.

Perhaps we take some of the miracles of Lovelane for granted after years of riding, but in that first lesson something happened to my wife and me. In those moments, seeds were sown to give our son a good life and a future. In a simple ride around a ring, with his head being held up by Debby's hand, a two year old boy gained possibilities. It confirmed that dreams like windsurfing or swimming were possible. We thought that perhaps we weren't the only ones who could envision him using a walker or having conversations with others, or being a part of some other sports. Most of all, we felt that we weren't going to be the only ones who got the "it" of our son. Other people would enjoy him, like him, and perhaps even grow to love him.

**In a simple ride
around a ring, with
his head being held
up by Debby's hand,
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I know that was only a riding lesson and now this program still offers what seems to be a simple, straight forward adaptive horseback program. Obviously, we believe Lovelane is so much more. In the 20 years Josh has ridden here, he, like hundreds of others, has gained so much. He has definitely advanced physically and cognitively. Because of Lovelane, other therapies, and work-outs, Josh can walk

just holding one of my hands. This is quite a feat for someone with quadriplegia! Much like Lovelane, we feel like we're just getting started. We are excited about his horseback riding and to see his trunk control, tone, weight bearing, speech, and cognition improve more and more in the years ahead.

The lessons have changed with his gains and he is challenged with new innovations each week at the ring. But this program is, and always has been, the spring board for so many of the accomplishments which Josh and our family have reached. This is a community and home for so many people – students and staff. While schools and workplace, friends and family may change, this program will be here as a constant in our children's lives. Lovelane helps parents and children believe in a future. This creative and caring staff is to be commended for making each session remarkable and for giving us all reason to be hopeful.

Thank you Debby for taking us and so many others on and giving us 20 years of quality instruction and care. •

Ross Lilley, Lovelane Parent



"The kids build their motor skills and feel good about their bodies, all while having fun and learning to enjoy and appreciate music and movement." *Rebecca Stevenson, Lovelane Parent*

"I love to ride and spend time with the horses. It's been very special learning how to take care of the horses. Helping out in the barn makes me feel good." *Megan Gallant, Lovelane Student*

our new programs . . .



Movement Class

In September 2007, Lovelane began offering a weekly creative movement class to its students. The class provides a supplemental experience to enhance the benefits of Lovelane's core therapeutic riding program by offering a different medium

by which to explore movement and body awareness. The 45-minute class is taught by music and dance instructor Tom Krusinski (BA, Psychology, minor, Elementary Education.) Krusinski, who trained in New York and Boston at Jacob's Pillow, Harvard Summer Dance and Naropa Institute, teaches at many nursery and elementary schools throughout Massachusetts.

The class uses music, games and dance moves to build body knowledge in an atmosphere of joyful self-expression. This fun and active class allows students to work on small and large motor movements; spatial awareness; social skills; cooperation; and self-confidence. The class includes students with a wide range of special needs.

Last fall, Lovelane also began offering a barn management class for the first time. A huge success, the 10-week, "off-the-horse" class is designed to have kids physically, mentally and socially get involved with peers, horses and Lovelane staff; while learning about barn management skills, chores and basic aspects of horse care.

Barn Management Class



The one-and-a-half hour class is offered two days a week, with three to four students, ranging in age from eight to 22, participating in each class. Each student chooses three horses and then are taught chores necessary to care for the horses including feeding and cleaning their stalls. The students work independently and as teams. They learn to

follow a schedule and a "to-do" list of chores, ultimately helping them to learn about time management and team work, while beginning to develop a work ethic. All these skill can be transferred outside of the barn that will help prepare these students for the future.



Vaulting

Interactive vaulting is a group activity for individuals of any age who are ambulatory and cognitively capable of following directions. When vaulting, students perform exercises or maintain positions on the back of a moving horse. Vaulting encourages communication and cooperation, while at the same time increasing balance, strength, coordination and confidence.

In the vaulting setting, an instructor lunges a horse while students take turns performing exercises on the horse. Students who are

waiting for their turn on the horse play games and practice positions on the vaulting barrel. Goals for the lesson can be based on the strengths and needs of each student or designed to encourage working as a group. Fun games and movement exercises are integrated into the lesson. Students with learning disabilities, ADHD, or social weaknesses are just some of the individuals who we have seen benefit from participation in interactive vaulting.

Interactive vaulting provides an energetic atmosphere that enables students to develop greater awareness of the horse and themselves. Interactive vaulting is becoming a regular offering at Lovelane, with five-day vaulting camps being offered this summer and multiple sessions scheduled for the fall and winter.

"The students really enjoy the relaxed setting and the chance to socialize with their peers while at the same time experiencing a real sense of accomplishment at the end of each class."

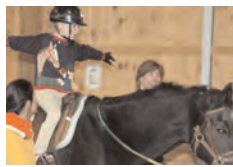
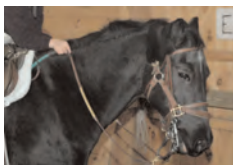
Kevin Eardley, NARHA Instructor and Lovelane Program Assistant

"I just love being around the horses and the people. The horses all have their own personality and I get to know them all. Just being a part of the everyday life at Lovelane and the lives of the horses is a really big deal to me."

Danielle Levesque, Lovelane Student

a special thanks . . .

A special thanks to Dover Saddlery, Mary and David Powers for literally putting our riders in the saddle with the donation of 10 new saddles.



Riding at Lovelane has always been a preferred activity for Evan and we are grateful to all the staff over the years that have made this a wonderful experience for him and our family. *-Susan Sutherland, Lovelane Parent*

mo-ments . . .



Meadowlands Momentum was a much loved, "steady-eddy" lesson horse for Lovelane since 1996. He was also an accomplished driving and show horse in his younger years.

Linnea, age 3 or 4 was riding Mo. She had not been riding for very long and her trunk stability was not that great. Suddenly, with absolutely no warning there was a HUGE crash of thunder. Mo went about three feet straight up in the air, spun 180 degrees and came back down to the ground. He somehow managed to freeze instead of spooking. You could see him thinking, "Nope, I can't bolt with this little one on my back."

It was an amazing example of the exceptional care and intelligence with which Mo approached his work with the kids. He was a unique and wonderful horse.

Robin Slaby Smith, Lovelane Parent

I was leading Mo a few weeks ago. We were ambling down the trail, when suddenly two large black labs came charging down. They were barking and displaying aggressive body language. Mo was trembling in fear, but did not even flinch, knowing he had someone on his back he needed to protect. He was a real pro, one of the staples of the barn. He will be sorely missed.

Denise Ghazey, Lovelane Volunteer

Mo and I were in love because when my lesson was over he gave me a kiss and a hug. The teacher and the volunteers always said that Mo listened to me and not to them. When I rode him I kept saying GO MO GO for him to keep on going. Every Thursday, Mo always asked for a peppermint. When I rode another horse, he would get mad at me. Mo and I always had fun. I miss him so much.

Katie Farmer, Lovelane Student



calendar of events

2008 . . .

Fidelity Jumper Classic
Silver Oak Equestrian Center
Hampton Falls, NH
September 6, 2008

Hoedown III
Broad Oak Farm
Dedham, MA
September 20, 2008

2009 . . .

Lovelane Student Horseshow
October 18, 2008

Hearts for Heroes Valentine Gala
February, 2009

Susan McDaniels Run 4 Love
May, 2009

how you can help

email us at mail@lovelane.org
or call (781) 259-1177 x22

Owning and operating a therapeutic horseback riding facility is expensive. Tuition covers less than half our budget, so we rely on many volunteers, plus grants, fundraising events and donations to meet our operating costs.

You can help secure Lovelane's success with a donation of money, property, goods or services. Or, you can help by volunteering your time.

Lovelane is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Your gift is tax-deductable to the fullest extent of the law.

Make a Donation

- \$50 provides one week of grain for all 12 horses
- \$100 provides one fully-funded lesson for one child
- \$250 provides one month of farrier (hoof trimming and horse shoes) for one horse
- \$750 provides six months of trail maintenance
- \$1000 provides average tuition assistance for one student for a semester
- \$2500 provides a year of hay, grain and bedding for one horse
- \$5000 provides a full-year scholarship for one student

If you would like to help support the kids at Lovelane, you can make a donation online at www.lovelane.org

Volunteer
For more information about volunteering, call Lisa at 781.259.1177, ext 26.

2007 annual fund drive • • •

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