



# Notes from the Farm

Three Gaits, Inc ▪ Therapeutic Horsemanship Center ▪ [www.3gaits.org](http://www.3gaits.org)

December 2013

## Celebrating 30 Years

Three Gaits was founded in 1983 by Gail Brown and Lorrie Renker with two horses and eight riders. 30 years later, 15 horses and more than 200 riders participate each year along with more than 400 volunteers and a small but dedicated staff.



On November 2, 2013, this milestone year for Three Gaits was celebrated during "A Night to Remember" -- an elegant evening held at the Legend at Bergamont Golf and Country Club in Oregon. The event was emceed by NBC 15 morning show anchor Christine Bellport and featured carriage rides and a silent auction.

Thank you to our close friends, families, volunteers, riders, donors, and staff for making our 30th Anniversary celebration so special. We hope it truly was A Night to Remember for all!

## Check Us Out on Facebook

Get updates about life on the farm at Three Gaits like this cute photo of Marcus (with cones hanging on his ears) posted on Facebook earlier this year.



Visit [www.facebook.com/ThreeGaits](http://www.facebook.com/ThreeGaits) and give us your "Like"!

## One Rider's Story

Our annual Student Horse Show "Riders, Ribbons and Horseplay" is the highlight of summer for many riders, volunteers and staff.

On August 11, 2013, family and friends came out to see Three Gaits' Riders showcase skills they have learned and worked so hard to develop. The presentation of ribbons at the end of each class brought big smiles and cheers from the crowd.

For one parent, the Student Show is meaningful because you see students having fun, it's not therapy to them. "They just enjoy riding horses, showing what they can do. They don't even care what color ribbon they receive, that's the best part" says Jim. Jim's daughter Jackie has been riding at Three Gaits since 2008.

Jackie's physical therapist in the Sun Prairie School District knew Jackie loved horses and she recommended Three Gaits. Jackie went from reading horse books and watching movies about horses to riding real horses.

Jackie started Hippotherapy classes when she was 5 years old and it had a positive impact. "There is a real improvement in Jackie's trunk muscles and she's started to use her legs more" says Jim. In addition to physical improvements such as agility and balance, he reports Jackie is more talkative and confident.

"Ownership is a big thing...she's doing something other kids her age aren't doing" says Jim. Other kids are really interested in what Jackie does at Three Gaits. Jackie has done school projects, bringing a saddle, reins, helmet and gloves and sharing with her classmates how each item is used. She even showed a video of her riding a horse.



Jackie riding Emma at the Student Show



Jackie is all smiles riding Emma

(Story cont'd on back)

## One Rider's Story *(Cont'd from front)*

Two years ago Jackie began taking therapeutic riding lessons. "Riding in group lessons with other students has been beneficial" says Jim. "She has really grown these past two years." Jackie especially likes to ride Emma, Mercedes and Beau.



*Evie and Jackie*

During a recent Tuesday night lesson, Jackie rode Emma in a relay race. Jackie partnered with Evie and the two girls worked together, deciding how they'd take turns to complete each leg of the relay.

Jackie started out the relay by riding in two-point position (one of her favorite activities), which helps to develop balance and control with your legs.

Jackie shortened her reins, lifted her seat out of the saddle, and steadied herself with her hands on

Emma's neck as she successfully walked Emma through a pattern in two-point. Other parts of the relay that night included trotting and following written instructions. At the end of the class Jackie said "This was so much fun!" and she looked forward to riding Emma again.



*Jackie riding Emma (on right) with Evie riding Gambler along with their volunteer teams at a Tuesday night lesson*

Now 11 years old, an important goal for Jackie is being as independent as possible with her horse. One thing she's working on is mounting without assistance, lifting her leg over the saddle by herself.

Jackie enjoys Three Gaits and wants to keep coming out every week. "Jackie will make sure her helmet is in the car along with an apple or carrots (for her horse) before we head to Three Gaits" says Jim. Jackie looks forward to giving her horse a treat at the end of each class. And her favorite thing about Three Gaits? "Hanging out with my friends and the horses" says Jackie.



*Dena Duncan with Mercedes and a young fan at the Mallards Game*

## Take Me Out To The Ball Game

We teamed up with our local minor league baseball team, the Madison Mallards, on June 21, 2013 for a fun way to support Three Gaits during "agriculture night."

Our sweet program horse Mercedes was at the front entrance to greet people as they arrived at the game. Mercedes attracted a lot of attention and she provided a great opportunity to talk with people about Three Gaits.

The baseball game started with Three Gaits riders John and Katie throwing the ceremonial first pitch. A short video about Three Gaits was played on the "big screen" during the 7th inning. Mallards fans enjoyed the zany on-field antics during the game. It was definitely a great night!



*Ellie with her new foal Wrianna*

## Baby Born at Three Gaits

A precious new foal was born at Three Gaits on June 8, 2013.

Executive Director Dena Duncan's horse Ellie lived at Three Gaits during her pregnancy and birth of her new baby girl Wrianna.

It was fun to see Ellie and Wrianna spend the summer frolicking around at Three Gaits! Wrianna grew up fast. We were sad to see her leave in October to continue her training at another farm.



*John and Katie getting ready to throw the first pitch at the Mallards Game*