

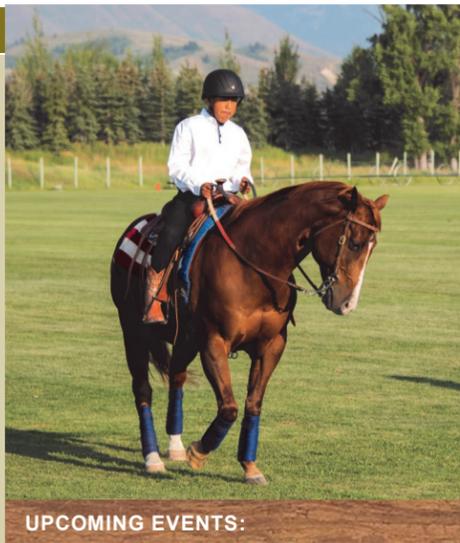


Healing With Horses

PO BOX 415  
TETON VILLAGE, WY 83025  
307-733-1374 PH 307-732-0212 FAX  
WWW.JHTRA.ORG

# BITS & PIECES

*In Loving Memory of  
Monica Bell*



**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**GIVING TUESDAY**

A global day dedicated to giving back.  
*Tuesday, November 28, 2017*

**C-V WINTER SESSION**

C-V students participate in a 4-week equine learning class

**STOMPING THE DIVOTS 2018**

Mark your calendars:  
*Saturday, August 4, 2018!*

OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE HEALING WITH HORSES THROUGH EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPEUTIC AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES WITH DISABILITIES, REGARDLESS OF ECONOMIC STATUS.

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# monica bell

AN INCREDIBLE WOMAN, A COURAGEOUS JOURNEY

Arena. She felt the love and support of the staff and volunteers and saw firsthand what it means to be a rider at JHTRA. Over that summer 'Team Monica' worked hard as she rebuilt core strength and balance. That weekly session on Dakota and then later with Charlie Brown was the highlight of her week. A second hemorrhage in September 2016 set her back, but after only 85 days in the hospital she returned to Jackson and JHTRA.

In August, Monica was selected as the 2017 Brad Swett Memorial Rider of the Year. It was obvious to all that had the pleasure of knowing her that she embodied everything the

*It was obvious to all who had the pleasure of knowing her that she embodied everything the award stood for: strength, determination and, above all, unbelievable courage.*

award stood for: strength, determination and above all, unbelievable courage. When most people would give up, Monica tried harder and smiled brighter. Regardless of the enormity of the challenge faced, she bravely persevered. Her tenacious spirit shone through even during the darkest of days, proving to the world that defeat was not in her vocabulary.

October 16<sup>th</sup> marked Monica's final ride around the JHTRA arena; and it is a moment that will forever be in our hearts. Having set a goal to ride independently only a few short weeks prior, Monica accomplished what in the beginning seemed like a distant dream. First removing one

sidewalker, and then both, and finally her horse leader, Monica became one with the horse she so dearly loved. She confidently picked up her reins, steering Charlie Brown around the arena and in and out of cones and obstacles. After completing the course, Monica proudly halted Charlie and let out a loud squeal of excitement and accomplishment. With tear-filled eyes and hearts bursting with pride, Team Monica let out squeals of their own. The Tetons in the background and the sun hanging high in the afternoon sky, it was as if the day was made especially for Monica and her moment of glory.

Less than a week after that prideful ride, Monica's journey ended. Surrounded by loving family and her number one fan and head of Team Monica, her husband Bob, Monica passed away peacefully after suffering a third brain hemorrhage.

To say it was an honor and a privilege to be a part of this incredible woman's courageous journey is an understatement. She has touched our lives beyond measure, teaching us to value the important things and never to take our health and happiness for granted. She was our ray of sunshine, our fan, and our friend.

To our beloved volunteer turned rider, it is with heaviest of hearts that we say farewell. Team Monica will ride on in our hearts forever.



## OUR YEAR AT A glance

2017 was an eventful year at Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding Association. Tumultuous weather, downed power lines, and flooding aside, the year that began in catastrophe quickly transitioned to one of joy, excitement, and growth. We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our many donors, volunteers, riders, and board members who made the following possible:

- **30 new riders** participated in our program
- **2,017 hours** of equine-assisted services were provided
- **47 Teton County School District** participants
- First year to provide lessons to **summer school** students
- Hosted a Veteran ride in **Grand Teton National Park**
- **18 weekly rides** for local Veterans.
- **Five horse shows and events**
- 8 adults from Aspire attended a **3-day intensive clinic**, sponsored by Solera.
- Thanks to a grant from **The Cairn Foundation**, 3 therapeutic horses joined the JHTRA family.
- **Most successful** Stomping the Divots to date!

## GENEROSITY FROM THE community

Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding Association is extremely fortunate to be a part of such a generous and philanthropic community. In recognizing the important work we do, individuals and groups throughout Teton Valley offer their time, talents and resources to ensure our organization's success. Among them are:

- **Dean's Pest Control**
- **Luke Lundy of Diamond L Trucking**
- **Hugh**
- **Steve Kitto of Liquid Hardware**
- **Doug Ayers**

These standout individuals generously provide their services at no cost to the organization, allowing JHTRA to contribute greater funds to program development, equine care, and quality assurance. We are tremendously grateful for their commitment to JHTRA and the community in which we live.

*Monica was a long-time supporter of the JHTRA Scholarship Program, helping to ensure that every rider had the opportunity to participate regardless of their ability to pay. In lieu of flowers, it was Monica's request that donations be made to her favorite therapy providers. This is just one more way in which she continues to make a difference.*

♥ *Monica Bell Memorial Scholarship Fund*

CALL TODAY TO LEARN MORE:

**307-733-1374**





# elsie hall

## RIDER TURNED MENTOR

Elsie Hall became a rider at JHTRA at age 6. She rode for three full seasons before graduating from the program and taking lessons elsewhere. After experiencing a traumatic fall, Elsie returned to JHTRA where she found comfort in the safety of her lessons and the knowledge of her instructors.

Elsie started off as a rank beginner and has wonderful memories of developing her balance and riding skills, including a memorable first canter in the JHTRA arena. The program has been a constant throughout her childhood, helping support her growth not only as a rider, but for her independence and self-advocacy.

Elsie is viewed by all as a natural rider, with a beautiful seat and perfect positioning. Becoming an independent rider, however, was not an easy feat. Living with a visual impairment (idiopathic bilateral optic nerve atrophy), Elsie's vestibular system is severely impacted and thus her balance. Nevertheless, this young girl never complained and her constant hard work and determination paved way to a lifelong passion of horseback riding.

But Elsie is passionate about more than just horses.

Helping others appears to be a passion of equal caliber in Elsie's life. As a young girl, Elsie and her mother would volunteer at JHTRA. Not old enough to volunteer in lessons, Elsie would instead muck stalls, scrub mats, and clean grooming buckets. As she has grown and matured, her tasks have evolved.

Today, Elsie serves as a student mentor for a new rider at JHTRA. The role came about after Nealy Angell, Program Director, witnessed Elsie in action. She states "I have been watching Elsie grow and blossom into this amazing young woman for many years. Each lesson she impressed me more and more with her kind demeanor, leadership qualities, impeccable riding, and the way in which she carried herself. Earlier in the season, I witnessed Elsie fall off her horse. This is a scary situation for the most seasoned rider. The way in which she handled herself with such grace showed me that she is able to handle the toughest of situations with poise. I knew right then that my rider needed an Elsie-role-model in her life."

Elsie donated her time weekly to help support a fellow peer. She acted wise and mature beyond her years, thinking carefully about how to phrase her



words and how to react to difficult situations. Angell commented "The first day, it was apparent that Elsie was a natural leader and teacher. Regardless of the rider's reactions, Elsie continued to encourage her while being a gentle friend. For the first time, I saw the rider become motivated to be successful in the saddle and not let anything trip her up. As if overnight, she became this strong and assertive rider. Something I had not seen before. I attribute this to Elsie."

Elsie has approached her life and her mentor role much like she has her riding: with beauty, poise, and patience. We are so proud of her and the lives she is helping to improve—ours included.

## THANK YOU horse sponsors

**Dakota:** Fran & Bob Biolchini, Sr.

**Josh:** Susan & Joe Moore

**Drey:** Kristin & Brad Nielson

**Charlie Brown:** Ronai & Dudley White; Liz & Bruce Bowen

**Little Man:** Ronai & Dudley White

**Taco:** Melissa & Tim Kelly

**Rosco:** Toby Biolchini

**Dobe:** Olsen Fenwick & Paul von Gontard

**Beau:** Jane & Al Hilde

**Henry:** Yvonne Martin & Jason Dewey

**Duke:** William E. Weiss Foundation

**Buckwheat:** Betti Deutsch

**Captain:** Jennifer Truman

**New horse fund:** Cairn Foundation, Gloria & Kyle Geffre, & Toby Biolchini

## VOLUNTEER appreciation

To fulfill our riders' needs, we rely on a team of dedicated volunteers. Volunteers play an instrumental role in the provision of services, helping to assist riders by ensuring their safety during the riding lesson.

It is these dedicated and compassionate individuals that truly make JHTRA a family. They pour their hearts and souls into every lesson, developing relationships with our riders that go far beyond their roles as sidewalkers and horse leaders. We are forever grateful for the time, love and energy they put forth every day at the arena and look forward to their return when classes resume in the spring.

# 3,523

 TOTAL HOURS DONATED

### 2017 VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Volunteer of the Year:**  
**Joanie Zelnio**

**Rookie of the Year:**  
**Jazy Manoukian**

**DeDe McDonald Award:**  
**Lauren Harris**

**Robin Lightner Award:**  
**Rhonda Ashton**

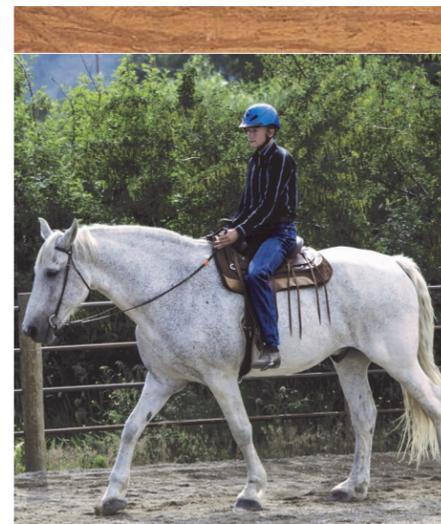
**Elaine Infanger Award:**  
**Brad Goering**

**Sunny Dawn Petersen Award:**  
**Ronai White**

**Ronai White Stomping the Divots:**  
**Briana Lee**

**Humanitarian Award:**  
**Holik Family; Bobbie & Tom Laughlin; Snake River Ranch; Barb & Richard Pack**

**Unsung Hero Award:**  
**Jim Russell**



Brendan Burke started riding with JHTRA at the age of three. It was JHTRA Founder and physical therapist, DeDe McDonald, who recommended the program to Brendan's family. He has been a part of the program ever since—he is now 18.

For the first year, Brendan said very little to his instructor or the horses. But, as his mother recalls, he would recite "walk on" and "whoa" on the drive home. In the years that followed, Brendan began to gain confidence and found his voice at the arena. According to his parents, "Although the program is a physical sport, Brendan gained a lot of therapy from the social atmosphere throughout the years. Getting to

# brendan burke

## GIVING BACK THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

know the trainers and staff as well as other riders from year to year helped him to be social and outgoing."

In his 15 years with the program, Brendan has taken advantage of nearly every JHTRA opportunity, including: Special Olympics, parades, horse shows, horsemanship programs, and more. His love for horses also led him to seek external offerings, including a horse camp in Dubois and helping to break wild Mustangs in Idaho.

Given his overwhelming involvement in JHTRA, it was no surprise when 15-year-old Brendan showed interest in volunteering. It all began when he was given the opportunity to decide what the students in his class were going to learn. His mother suggests, "I think from that experience he got it in his mind that he could help others learn to ride. He wanted everyone to enjoy riding class and he wanted to make that happen." The following summer, Brendan began volunteering for the first time.

Whether at JHTRA or elsewhere, it is frequently noted by all who witness Brendan that in addition to being a natural horseman, he is an exceptional volunteer. According to Samantha Boyer, Volunteer Coordinator,

"Brendan has set such an inspiring example, not only as a rider and volunteer but as a genuine and caring person. His willingness to help at special events, muck stalls and clean mounting areas is not only very appreciated but an incredible reflection of his character."

Through riding and volunteering, Brendan has blossomed from a shy little boy into a confident young man. Program Director, Nealy Angell says "The biggest growth I've seen from Brendan is his self-confidence. He walks into JHTRA holding his head high and proud to be here as a volunteer and rider. He discovered his gift in helping others under JHTRA's roof. I believe that he will continue to serve in this type of role throughout his life."

This sentiment is reiterated by his parents, who state "We feel his opportunity to have experienced both riding and volunteering at JHTRA has helped him to develop his love of helping others. In addition to volunteering at JHTRA, Brendan works with kids at Colter Elementary School, the Rec Center Kids Club, and Joy Summer Camp."

**Brendan has set such an inspiring example, not only as a rider and volunteer but as a genuine and caring person.**



## HONORING OUR MILITARY veterans

It was a dreary day in Teton Valley, but the rain was not going to get in the way. Veterans from across the nation, along with their spouses and children, had traveled far and wide to participate in JHTRA's Veterans' Ride, just one of the activities included in their week-long session with Honoring Our Veterans (H.O.V). It was the first time in JHTRA's long-term relationship with H.O.V that family members were involved in the ride.

While the trip to Jackson was a first for many of the spouses and children, it was like "coming home" for the group of seven servicemen; for the trip was a reunion of the men that had bonded while participating in a H.O.V session just years prior. The strong connection that developed during that session instigated Sandy Sandberg—H.O.V Executive Director—and Tom Laughlin—hunt guide—to reunite the men, this time with their families. And, years later, the bond was still palpable.

Together with Tom Laughlin of Granite Creek Ranch, JHTRA led the veterans and their families on two memorable rides through Grand Teton National Park. During the adult ride, stories of the veterans' experiences and traumas were shared as the trail wended through thick sage brush, with laughter and awes of the spectacular scenery filling the gaps.

Stories were also shared during the children's ride. This time, stories of what it was like living with a parent who was wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan. For many of these kids, it was the first time they were able to truly relate to their peers.

All of us at JHTRA feel fortunate to have been a part of such a powerful ride, and to have been able to give just a little back to the veterans and their families that have sacrificed so much for our country.

# Aspire

## ASPIRATION summit

In late September, eight individuals from Massachusetts General Hospital's Aspire program visited Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding Association for the third annual "Aspiration Summit." A highly successful, therapeutically-based program, Aspire helps individuals on the autism spectrum achieve their full potential.

This three-day intensive clinic, sponsored by Solera's LIFT (Life is Full of Transformation) program, included both mounted and unmounted activities designed to provide a transformational experience for participants to help them develop important skills they need to reach their personal aspirations.

Over the first two days of the clinic, riders received in-depth instruction from JHTRA's highly knowledgeable instructors in order to develop the skills necessary

to successfully complete a trail ride (direct reining, halting, two-point position, and trail etiquette). Various stations provided participants exposure to all aspects of the horse, including safety, grooming, health and wellness, and mannerisms. Farrier Tony Schroeder also joined us for an in-depth exploration of the science of the hoof.

In the beginning, simply getting on the horse was a challenge in itself for many. But participants pushed through their fears and by day three completed a two-hour trail ride through Grand Teton National Park. We are so proud of the skills they gained to not only become successful riders, but to overcome obstacles in the real-world!



## STOMPING THE DIVOTS for a cause

The Jackson Hole Therapeutic Riding Association Board of Directors and staff would like to thank each and every person who attended and contributed to the 15th annual Stomping the Divots fundraiser at the Melody Ranch polo fields. Your enthusiastic support at this event raised nearly two-thirds of our annual revenue, a very significant contribution that enriches the lives of every rider we serve. To our sponsors, auction donors, polo players, demonstration riders, and volunteers whose efforts and generosity led the way to a very successful event, we extend a heartfelt thank you.

### WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING DONORS FOR MAKING OUR AUCTION A SUCCESS:

- |  |                                    |                                     |   |
|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|
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## BE THE DIFFERENCE YOU WANT TO SEE IN THIS WORLD.

The fees our riders pay cover only 10% of expenses. Your generous gift will allow us to continue providing exceptional, life-enhancing services at an affordable price.

PLEASE CONSIDER A YEAR-END GIFT.

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[jhtra.org](http://jhtra.org)