



The Shea Center is dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs.

ELIZABETH AND TREVOR HILGEMAN:

Their Smiles Say it All

Elizabeth Hilgeman has a world of expression in her smile. The slightest frown communicates inquisitiveness at her daddy's gentle teasing, a wide-eyed look of joy when her horse Tasha walks happily forward and a laugh as she hears the click and sees the flash of a camera taking her picture.

"I love coming to The Shea Center," says Elizabeth's dad Chris. "I get to see my daughter succeed in a setting that focuses on her strengths."

Chris and Jennifer Hilgeman know a lot about strength and hope. When their daughter Elizabeth was



Klein Family Challenge Touches Lives

On September 15, 2007, Jenny and Bill Klein gave The J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center a \$1 million gift and issued an \$850,000 matching challenge to fund the Klein Family Education & Therapy Building. This extraordinary gift and challenge was met at the end of 2007 raising more than \$2.7 million to fund the building and leaving less than \$2.5 million left to project completion. In celebration of their vision and generosity, the Klein Family received notes and photos from many families and more than 260 contributors who matched their tremendous gift.

"The Shea Center has provided more than therapy for our daughter. It has given Kara a place to call her own. While her sisters have their special talents, special interests and fulfilling hobbies, Kara has The Shea Center! It's more than therapy; it's more than a hobby or special interest. It's her place, a place she would call her home away from home." — The Greens



born seven years ago, she spent four months in the intensive care unit. Born with massive brain injury, she eventually gained strength to go home, but sadly, her twin sister never left the hospital.

CONTINUED PAGE 5

CONTINUED PAGE 4

Summer 2008

In this issue

- Klein Family Challenge
- The Hilgeman Story
- New Board Members
- Volunteer Program Update & Spotlights
- Around the Barn-Gracie
- Summer Sessions
- Shea Center Events

Message from the Board Chairs



SUSIE ROOF PT 2006-2007

We experienced tremendous change and accomplished many things during these two years. We broke ground on the equestrian phase of our building project and experienced several dynamic changes in our programming to meet an ever growing need for our services. It was an incredible time of change and I am honored to work with such a dynamic group of staff, board members and donors. Thank you for making the past two years truly spectacular; the rewards are in the joy and smiles on the faces of our clients and families.



PETER KIESECKER 2008-2009

Looking to the future is looking back to the leadership and support that helped us to arrive where we are today. I am excited to accept the role of board chair and hope to continue to foster the welcome and accepted environment that our clients and families experience. I am proud to be part of the Center's drive to become a world-class facility in therapeutic riding and creating a support organization to the families of riders. I extend a special thanks to our chair people from the past several years – Janet Deacon, Jon Fosheim, Kathryn Langston, Susie Roof, Mark Aldrich, Jack Godard and Dave Ritchie. You have each left a mark on the Center that continues its mission to be a viable and important part of the community.

Message from the Executive Director



DANA BUTLER-MOBURG

"What you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others." Pericles

Never forget that each one of you – staff, donors, volunteers and board members have not only helped The Shea Center create this new physical environment that is ever evolving here, but you change lives. All we hope to do, all we ever want to do, is live up to the mission of the Center – "Improve the lives of people with disabilities through therapeutic horse-related programs." The year 2007 marked my tenth year with The Shea Center. Thank you for making these past ten years, and what is to come, truly a gift in the lives we are able to change together.

Welcome to the Board!

The Shea Center for Therapeutic Riding recently welcomed Steve Howard and Renee Ritchie to its board of directors.

Steve Howard is a tax attorney and CPA. He serves as a shareholder and president of the Irvine-based law firm The Busch Firm. Howard is Vice Chair of the Democratic Foundation of Orange County and also volunteers with the Trabuco Canyon Little League.

Renee Ritchie is a life-long equestrian and has previously served on the boards of the Las Vaqueras Women's Riding Group and JSerra High School. She is on the Open Space Committee in San Juan Capistrano, the City's Community Trails Committee and is passionate about preserving San Juan Capistrano's natural ambiance, heritage and equestrian lifestyle.



The J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center 2007 and 2008 Board of Directors

2008 Officers and Executive Committee

Peter Kiesecker – Board Chair
Dennis Gage – Vice Chair, Planning
Marcia Jager – Secretary
Steve Stambaugh – Treasurer
Susie Roof PT – Immediate Past Board Chair

2007 Officers and Executive Committee

Susie Roof PT – Board Chair
Dennis Gage – Vice Chair, Planning
Marcia Jager – Secretary
Roger Morgan – Treasurer
Peter Kiesecker – Vice Chair, Development
Mark Aldrich – Past Board Chair
Jenny Klein – Human Resources Advisor
Janet Deacon – Past Board Chair

Members at Large

*Gilbert Aguirre
Mark Aldrich
*Larry Bill
Joan Cvengros
Janet Deacon
*Jon Fosheim
Steve Howard
*Jenny Klein
*Nancy Lewis
David Luvisa
*Debbie Martin
Roger Morgan
Monica Parr
*Hank Rams
*J.R. Raub
*Renee Ritchie
*Jill Schriber
*Steve Stambaugh
Kevin Walker

**Denotes member at large for both 2007 and 2008.*

Ex-officio

Fran Joswick, Founder
Jack Godard, Past Chair

Executive Staff

Dana Butler-Moburg
Executive Director
David Stearns
Chief Operating Officer



Volunteers

Chris Gamble: Above and Beyond



Chris Gamble is one of The Shea Center's newer volunteers, but you'd never know it if you see him working around the facility or with therapy clients; he appears to have been doing this work for his entire life. With his warm, laid-back style, Chris creates strong bonds with the Center's therapy clients and even adjusts his schedule to accommodate a client's change in schedule.

He goes above and beyond his scheduled lesson work. Chris helps with special events, fundraising and maintenance of the Shea facility. Always interested in broadening his knowledge to be more effective as a Center volunteer, Chris attends the monthly continuing education series and took an instructor certification class to be a more active participant in his lessons.

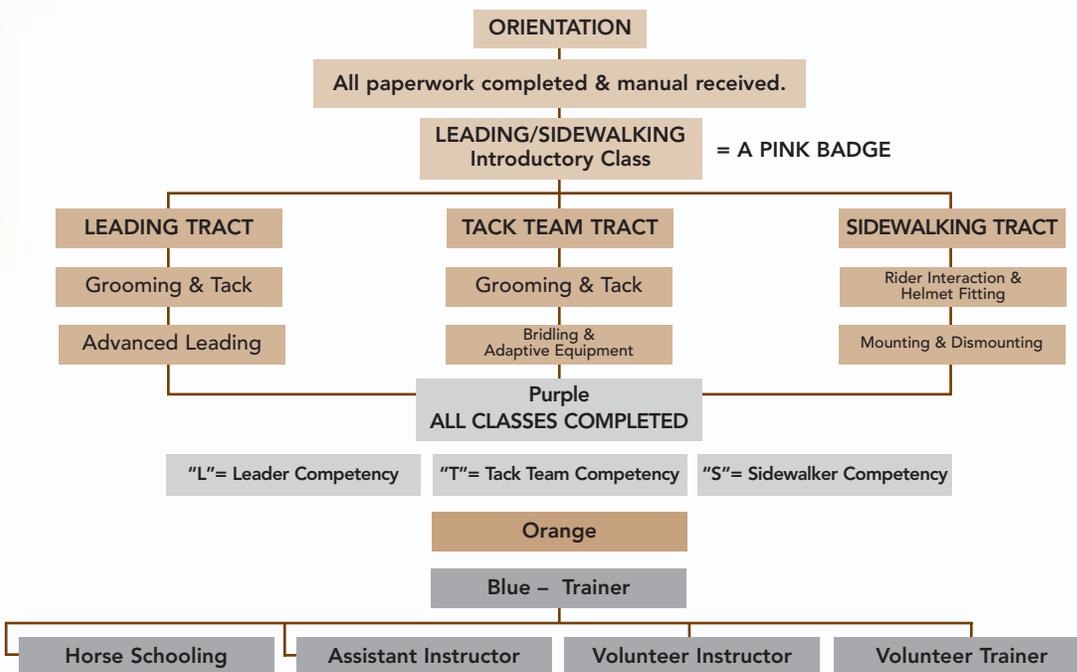
Chris was recognized as *The Shea Center's 2007 Volunteer of the Year* in recognition for his tremendous service and dedication.



The newly developed Shea Center volunteer training system is here!

These enhancements to the new volunteer training program were implemented to ensure the safety of our program participants and volunteers. This comprehensive volunteer training program is now offered in all subjects in lesson volunteerism and a newly created badge system gives a visual acknowledgement of a volunteer's level of training.

Below is the new flow chart of the complete volunteer process:



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Dixie Sparks

It was Dixie Sparks' daughter Jennifer who recruited her to volunteer for The Shea Center's therapeutic riding programs back in 1995. Jennifer previously worked in Colorado at a therapeutic riding center and was on staff at The Shea Center for a short time in the mid 1990's.

Thirteen years later, Jennifer is back in Colorado, and Dixie has become one of The Shea Center's most valued volunteers. Dixie can be found at the Center at least three times a week as a leader or sidewalker. In addition to assisting with lessons, she shares her knowledge by training and educating new volunteers on a regular basis.

Volunteering at The Shea Center combines Dixie's love of both children and horses and she wouldn't trade the experience for anything in the world.

For a time, these riders are just like any other. Kara and her peers feel the wind against their cheeks... They are free from the every day strappings...

KLEIN FAMILY CHALLENGE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Dear Klein Family,

Our daughter Kara is 23 years-old and has been a rider at The Shea Center for over 20 years. During this time, much has changed at the Center and much has changed in our daughter. Kara was diagnosed at birth with severe cerebral palsy. She still has no speech; she is non-ambulatory and needs assistance with all of her self-help skills. Still, she is one of the greatest people we know. Kara has a playful sense of humor, a positive disposition and she softens the hearts of others just by being herself.

Kara rides her (assigned) horse Notabene every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. and Maggie is her wonderful and encouraging teacher/coach. One of our best friends Debbie is her side-walker volunteer and keeps Kara safe each time she rides. Riding at The Shea Center is the best part of Kara's day; no it's the best part of her week.

Kara was given a copy of *The Run* by the artist, Joni Earikson Tada. It's a pencil sketching of a running stallion. The artist is a good friend of Kara's and they share two common bonds. Both women have little control over their bodies, use a wheelchair for transportation and have a love of horses. But the difference between Joni and Kara is that Joni never lost her clear mind or her talent for painting/drawing. She had an accident when she was 18 years-old that left her with quadriplegia. Her rehabilitation therapist told her that talent is not in her hands, but in her mind. So Joni learned to express her art by clenching a pencil or paintbrush between her teeth while drawing strategically on canvas. Now she sells her paintings, authored book after book and she has a world wide ministry that helps others with disabilities.

We believe that using therapy to change a person's perspective on life is what the Shea Center is all about. For a moment in time, riders with disabilities are sitting high on their horses while their minds and souls are sitting high too. For a time, these riders are just like any other. Kara and her

peers feel the wind against their cheeks, the magnificent swagger of the horse's gait underneath them and they need no equipment to hold them in place. They are free from the every day strappings that are part of the stigma that labels them "special."

We have a great deal of respect for those who have compassion for the disabled and will lend their voice for someone who has no voice. You are the ones who help make our life and other lives full.

From the bottom of our hearts we thank you for your generous donation to keep The Shea Center a thriving haven for our daughter and her friends.

*Sincerely,
Brad & Terri Green*





THEIR SMILES SAY IT ALL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Elizabeth's brain injury created a series of extraordinary challenges she continues to overcome in her young life of seven years. Chris says the first few years of being a parent of a child with a disability are the hardest. Elizabeth has already had hip reconstruction surgery, she has great difficulty with eating and her muscles can either be very tight or very weak.

"Learning that one of the premier places in the world to help people with special needs was in our backyard was the first gift The Shea Center gave us," Chris said. "The simple fact that this place exists is a gift."

Elizabeth's expressiveness is not with words, but you can tell how she's feeling. Chris knows that his daughter cannot do the things that typical kids are doing, so standing ringside at The Shea Center and cheering on his daughter feels just like parents at a soccer or baseball game cheering on their able-bodied kids.

Chris and Jennifer had a second child who, at age 13 months, stopped talking and trying to say words. Soon after, Elizabeth's little brother Trevor was diagnosed with autism.

The family immediately put Trevor on The Shea Center waiting list for therapy services. After he turned two, he entered the program which turned out to be January of this year. Like his sister, Trevor is now riding and smiling on the back of a horse. And through therapy at The Shea Center and daily behavioral analysis, he is starting to speak again.

"We are in the unique position of seeing how The Shea Center can serve our children with their unique circumstances and we are eternally grateful."

"The simple fact that this place exists is a gift."

Reflections from Chris Hilgeman

LIFE NOW, LIFE THIRTY YEARS AGO

"I see people like the Lewis Family as trendsetters. Their son Michael, the Center's first rider, was born forty years ago in a time when people with disabilities had to fight for every service. Whenever I see older adults with cerebral palsy, I know that their parents had to fight for everything and deal with a lot. Society was not as helpful then as it is now. I know the Lewis Family, and others like them, have made it easier for my family."

ON VOLUNTEERING

"My daughter had been in the program just two weeks and I noticed an outdoor storage cabinet was falling apart. Next thing I know, I'm volunteering. The new facility is much easier to maintain and I'm looking forward to the completion of the entire building project. It's nice to know that there are people in the community who want to have a place like this built. It enables the staff and volunteers to make an impact on so many people's lives like it has my family's."

ABOUT THE STAFF

"The staff really cares about their clients which is so important from a parent's perspective. They love the horses, but I see how hard they work every day – I've seen them come in off the clock, they make sure the job is done and everyone is so nice – everyone always seems to be in a good mood. And most importantly, they have never given up on my daughter, even when her progress regressed or was slow. There are wonderful people here."

ABOUT THE CENTER'S FUTURE

"I would like to see the Center continue to grow and expand to reach out to the community in even more ways. Perhaps it can be a place that provides more than riding programs for the special needs community. It could be a service referral place for parents and caregivers as well as expand the types of educational opportunities available to health professionals."





Speech Therapist at The Shea Center

TERRI HUTCHISON M.A. CCC-SLP

The Shea Center welcomed speech therapist Terri Hutchison at the beginning of this year's spring sessions. Terri is a California licensed speech-language pathologist and the director of therapy services at Life Spirit Speech Pathology, Inc. in San Juan Capistrano. For the past six years, Terri has worked in speech language therapy services both in private practice and within the public school system. Terri's services are now offered to Shea Center clients for initial speech screening, private speech hippotherapy and consultation/program set-up for current clients.

Terri is a passionate rider and began incorporating therapeutic horseback riding activities with some of her patients about two years ago. She has a Level I certification to conduct hippotherapy from the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA) and is in the process of obtaining her Instructors Certification through The North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA). She holds a BA in Applied Psychology and a MA degree in the study of Communication Disorders at California.

Contact Trish Evans at (949) 240-8441 ext. 110 if you are interested in speech and language services with Terri Hutchison at The Shea Center for Therapeutic Riding.

around the barn



Gracie

Gracie worked on an Amish farm in Missouri before coming to the Shea Center as a therapy horse four years ago. She is a 24-year-old Draft Cross mare used in therapy sessions by children and adult riders who have a wide range of special needs. Because of her confirmation and size, Gracie provides a wide base

for stability and offers steady and rhythmic movement for riders.

Gracie is sponsored by Barry and Doreen Skuse through Horses for Healing, a charitable fund founded by the couple six years ago to support The Shea Center. Their annual sponsorship helps underwrite the cost of feed, shavings, shoes, routine veterinary care and other stabling expenses to keep Gracie healthy and fit for her important role serving at The Shea Center clients.

Each year, Barry and Doreen partner with The Shea Center to raise funds through their annual Horses for Healing Golf Tournament that brings new friends and supporters to The Shea Center each year. In addition to their sponsorship of Gracie for the past four years, Horses for Healing offers scholarships as funds become available to clients who require financial assistance.



This year's Horses for Healing golf tournament will be held on Monday, October 27 at Arroyo Trabuco Golf Course.

A \$200 entry fee includes food and drinks on the course, sit-down dinner, and silent and live auction. For more information, contact Barry at (949) 370-9611 or e-mail noxqss@cox.net. Over the past six years, the Horses for Healing Golf Tournament raised \$47,000 to support the Shea Center.

Shea Center horses can be sponsored at the \$2,500, \$5,000 or \$10,000 level to cover the cost of boarding, feeding and caring for one year. Shea Center horses currently available for a partial or full sponsorship include:

- Banner
- Cash
- Derby
- Ladybug
- Little Red
- Notabene
- Rio
- Tasha
- Winston

Contact the development office at The Shea Center (949) 240-8441 ext. 111 for more information.



up and coming...

2008 shea center events

■ **JUNE 28 – 30**

Instructor Training Certification Weekend

■ **JULY 7 – AUGUST 23**

Summer Therapeutic Riding Programs and Morning Equestrian Experience

■ **JULY 11**

Volunteer Appreciation Banquet

■ **SEPTEMBER 13 – SAVE THE DATE!**

Summer Sessions at The Shea Center Support Military Families and Shea Family and Friends

The Shea Center proudly offers a special new "Morning Equestrian Experience" for children of active duty or retired military personnel and for friends and family members of Shea Center clients. Programs for children of military families (both active and retired) will be sponsored in full by the RichLynd Foundation with valid copy of military ID.

The week-long summer programs include six sessions between July 7 and August 23 from either 8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m. or 10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Sessions are offered to children ages 5 through 16 with and without special needs.

Riders will be grouped by like ability levels and interests as they learn riding skills and experience all aspects of horsemanship. The cost of a week-long summer session is \$300 or \$400, depending on the program.

Therapeutic riding lessons will also be offered this summer on Tuesday through Friday from 1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

For more detailed information about these programs, call Adre Hudgson at (949) 240-8441 ext. 123 or email her at ahudgson@sheacenter.org.

The SheaCenter 30th Annual **BBQ** and **FAMILY REUNION**

The Shea Center BBQ and 30th Anniversary Family Reunion

Bring your friends and neighbors to The Shea Center BBQ and 30th Anniversary Family Reunion. It's a festive country western event featuring a hearty barbecue dinner provided by Claim Jumper Restaurants, rider demonstrations, silent and live auctions, activities for children, live country western music, dancing and entertainment. For information, call Susan Martin at (949) 240-8441 ext. 101.

**PLUS: Klein Family Education & Therapy
Building Groundbreaking Ceremony**



■ **DECEMBER 13**

Shea Center Winter Equestrian Games and Horse Show

New SheaCenter.org Website!

A new Shea Center website will debut this summer. Its primary goal is to provide better communication, more information and automated services for our clients, volunteers and friends.

It will have many new conveniences:

- Online rider enrollment
- Volunteer sign-up and registration
- Event reservations and schedules
- Ticket sales
- Easy ways to contact the Center

The site will also be a source of educational materials and resources providing relevant therapeutic riding topics and success stories from The Shea Center's own family.

...Watch for details

The Shea Center Wish List

The Shea Center relies on generosity of individuals, foundations, organizations and corporations to improve the lives of people with disabilities through horse-related programs. Because rider fees only cover 13% of our annual operating and program budget, The Shea Center seeks charitable gifts to fund our therapeutic riding programs. Currently, we are in need of new tack, office furnishings and other supplies and equipment. If you are interested in making a cash gift towards the purchase of any of the following "wish list" items or if you have resources that can provide us with a discount, please contact our development office at (949) 240-8441 ext. 111.

OFFICE FURNISHINGS

- Dell PowerEdge PE 1900 general-purpose tower server
- Matching office furnishings, including filing cabinets, tables and folding chairs

PROGRAM AND FACILITY NEEDS

- Durable outdoor seating and shade covers for clients, families and guests
- Digital video recording equipment for documenting our work in the arena and therapy department

TACK

- 18" dressage or all-purpose Passier or Stubben saddles (10 needed)
- Pro-choice dressage saddle pads (12 new pads needed)
- Gift cards/certificates for local tack and feed stores and Dover Saddlery

Newsletter editor: Barbara Kimler/Barbara J. Kimler Public Relations | Design: Cathy Cervantes/Trixie Design
Contributing writers: Dana Butler-Moburg, Cindy Bobruk, Terri Green, Chris Hilgeman

2007 Annual Report



The Shea Center's 2007 Annual Report provides an overview of our 2007 fiscal year and how we fulfilled our mission of improving the lives of people with disabilities through horse-related programs. It summarizes all

Shea Center activities including client services, volunteerism, the Klein Family Challenge, philanthropic activity and other highlights that occurred from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007.

Visit www.sheacenter.org to view or print a copy of the complete report.



The **SheaCenter**
for Therapeutic Riding

NEWS

Summer 2008

The J.F. Shea Therapeutic Riding Center

26284 Oso Road
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675
T (949) 240-8441
F (949) 240-3447

www.sheacenter.org

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SANTA ANA, CA
PERMIT #4849

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED