



# VTRA

## VICTORIA THERAPEUTIC RIDING ASSOCIATION

Winter 2015

# The Stable Voice

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### WELCOME BACK!

Welcome to the 2014/2015 riding year! The horses are home, the leaves are falling, and the pumpkins are ready to carve. This year brings many changes to VTRA—we have some new horses, new staff, and fun new events!

September saw over 30 new volunteers join our program, and each are now settled into their new roles as side walkers, horse handlers, and grooms. We are working hard to **expand our volunteer program**, with new roles for volunteers. Some of the new roles include: club house host/hostess; barn supervisor; tack store volunteers; tack and equipment manager; classified ad administrator. If you are interested in any of these new roles,

please contact Liz Gagel at [volunteer@vtra.ca](mailto:volunteer@vtra.ca).

On October 18th, many volunteers attended the **volunteer meet and greet** in the VTRA clubhouse. New and old volunteers came together for stories and refreshments—a nice chance to get to know some new people! Thank you to all those who attended.

This year, VTRA is working hard to expand our **Assistant Instructor program**. We invite any interested horse handlers or exercise riders who are interested in pursuing the program to speak with us. We are hoping to put together a small group of individuals that we can support through the assistant instructor process.

*2014/2015 is off to a great start, and is sure to be a great year!*

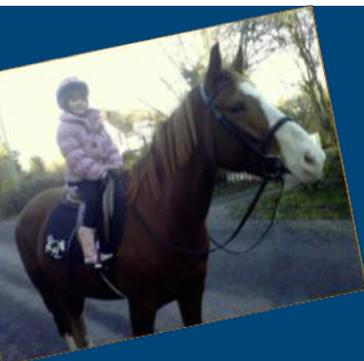
### CHAUSSETTE: VTRA'S OWN MIRACLE HORSE

Life with horses is never predictable, especially when you have 11. This October has been no exception, with one of our horses becoming extremely ill and ending up in a battle for her life.

becoming unable to pass manure, losing their appetite, and having a lot of abdominal pain. In some cases it clears up with prompt treatment, and sometimes it can result in complications that result in death. In Chaussette's case, the situation turned dire.

By Sunday, October 19th, Chaussette had a confirmed "impaction": a blockage in her digestive track that usually requires surgery, which had to be ruled out. Plan B was to administer fluids via IV in one last effort to save her life. This plan also required 24 hour supervision to make sure Chaussette would not roll from the pain and thus twist her intestines resulting in her

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Chaussette, a 9 year old thoroughbred/paint mare belonging to VTRA instructor *Kyrie Bond*, had a rough week in the middle of October. On Friday, October 17th, Chaussette started showing signs of colic. Colic is a term used to describe a range of digestive ailments in horses, and is characterized by horses

## UPDATE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Hello and welcome back to the program!

It's wonderful to see everyone again after our incredible summer break. We're off to a great start with lots of changes. I have reduced my hours to ½ time (in theory) to practice for retirement.

In addition to our staff changes, we have also added Early Intervention classes, offered in partnership with the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health (QA).

What is early intervention? Early intervention applies to children of school age or younger who are discovered to have or be at risk of developing a handicapping condition or other special need that may affect their development. Early intervention consists in the provision of services to such children and their families for the purpose



of lessening the effects of the condition. Early intervention can be remedial or preventive in nature--remediating existing

developmental problems or preventing their occurrence.

There are three primary reasons for intervening early with an "exceptional" child:

- to enhance the child's development
- to provide support and assistance to the family
- to maximize the child's and family's benefit to society



Friday mornings, 2 children under the age of 6, are put into a ½ hour semi-private class with a physiotherapist (provided by QA).

After only 3 lessons, physiotherapist Kim Andersen has already noticed improvements in posture, balance, hand/eye coordination, ability to follow instructions and comfort around the horses.

I would like to extend my personal appreciation to everyone who participates and supports this incredible program that enriches so many lives in our community. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

- Sue Colgate, Executive Director

### 2014/2015 RIDING AND TRAINING DATES

#### Session 1:

Riding: September 30 - November 25  
\*No classes Oct 13 and Nov 11\*

#### Session 2:

Training: November 26 - 28  
Riding: December 1 - February 5  
\*No classes Dec 22 to Jan 9\*

#### Session 3:

Training: February 10 - 13  
Riding: February 17 - April 6  
\*No classes February 16\*

#### Session 4:

Training: April 7 - 10  
Riding: April 13 - June 5  
\*No classes May 18\*

### EVERY DAY WAYS YOU CAN SUPPORT VTRA

- Keep receipts from Country Grocer and deposit them at the VTRA barn. 3% of what you spend is returned in the form of gift cards.
- Choose VTRA as your charity of choice at True Value Foods in Cordova Bay and 1% of your total comes back to us in the form of gift cards.
- Use our Co-op # 37989 when you purchase groceries, gas or furnace oil at Peninsula Co-op.
- Bring your empty drink containers to VTRA!

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death. VTRA staff *Liz Gagel* and Kyrie kept watch all through the night. By Monday morning, with no improvement, the difficult decision to euthanize later that morning was made. When the vet returned, she noticed the slightest of improvement and in a desperate attempt to save her life, Chaussette was taken to Kyrie's farm for continued care, away from the busy VTRA barn. Monday and Tuesday were very rough for Chaussette, but she hung in there. She continued to receive fluids and the 24 hours supervision went on. For Kyrie, this meant the second night without sleep and the second day she was unable to teach her classes. Finally, Chaussette started to perk up. By Tuesday night, it was confirmed that she was going to make it!

Chaussette's remarkable recovery is testament to the strength of this little mare as she fought for her life. Kyrie, Liz, and everyone

else involved played an important part in her survival, but it was Chaussette that had toughest job. We are most grateful to our vet *Danica Olenick of Swiftsure Equine Services* for her hard work and perseverance! We are all so relieved to have Chaussette with us, though it may be a while before she is well enough to rejoin the program.

Unfortunately, this happy ending story comes with a very heavy price tag for the VTRA. We did not foresee such an event and did not budget for it. *We hope that you will support our decision to do all it takes to save Chaussette by helping us pay those bills.* A special fund has been set up for Chaussette, at the club house, and online at VTRA.ca.

***From Chaussette and all of us, Thank You!***

## BOARD UPDATE - OCTOBER 2014

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

As summer transitions to fall, we welcome back all riders and families and look forward to another great year ahead.

VTRA is happy to welcome some new Board members and sad to say good-bye to others. *Leslie Climie* resigned in the spring and rumour has it both *Bob and Leslie* are going to be spending less time in our fair city and more time with family out East. *Emily Miller* who left to focus on her new business, *Amy Thompson* stepped down but can still be spotted exercise riding and volunteering elsewhere in the programs. *Audrey Cooper*, we are happy to announce, had to step down as she accepted an offer to be our first part time Operations Manager following a competitive process with several good candidates.

As Operations Manager, Audrey will be responsible for day to day management of the program. The position was created in response to the news that *Sue Colgate*, our existing Executive Director, will be retiring at the end of this season (i.e. June 2015). To prepare for that eventuality and to pave the way for a smooth transition, Sue is working half time, concentrating her efforts this year on fundraising and public relations while Audrey takes over

program management. The Executive Director role has been split in two for succession planning purposes. We believe that VTRA will be well served with this transition strategy.

We also welcome *Liz Brown* to a new part time position of Administrative Coordinator. She will be working closely with Audrey on program coordination and *Liz Gagel* on coordination of volunteers. Many will recognize Liz as she has been enormously helpful in setting up and staff training related to our new software programs.

We have been fortunate to have several people come forward to join the board. Organizations always need infusions of new people who bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the table. VTRA has attracted a very capable and talented group who are committed to ensuring VTRA is a well-run organization.

*At the AGM on November 22*, you will have an opportunity to meet the new board members and say hello to existing board members. Please plan to join us at 10 am at the VTRA clubhouse on Veyaness Road.

Carol Hubberstey, President of the Board

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2014/2015

At the September Board meeting the following people were appointed and will stand to be elected at the AGM on November 22:

**Alyson Hawksworth:** had a long career as a nurse, holding many interesting positions. She is actively retired and likes to paddle and compete in dragon boat races. She loves hockey, politics, positive people, writing stories, and contributing to the community. Alyson has been an active member of the Oak Bay Rotary Club. Other longstanding volunteer commitments has been working in the Royal Victoria Marathon and Times Colonist Medical Tents (both over 20 years).

**Jason MacNoughton:** is currently the Director of Communications, Ministry of Agriculture. He began his career in the communication and media field in Toronto, before returning to work for the BC Winter Olympics, followed by the White Caps Soccer Club, after which he joined the BC Government. Jason has a keen understanding of what drives or motivates corporate social responsibility. He has a young daughter and is anticipating the birth of his second child in December.

**Sara Pash:** has taught in the Political Science department at the University of Victoria and has served in various capacities in the community, including working at Berwick Retirement home in Royal Oak, as a senior mentor at Silver Threads and currently as a Board member on Silver Threads.

**Glenda Turner:** currently the Executive Director of the Friends of Music Society, Glenda has an extensive history in project management, marketing, leadership, and fundraising. She is active in the community as a volunteer, having held a number of senior roles in various organizations.

**Scott Vannan:** is a Realtor with Macdonald Realty Ltd. He is familiar with the equine world, having ridden and competed from an early in Southern Ontario. Recently Scott has become interested in playing Polo. Life has been good to Scott and he gives back by being involved in charity work, including being on the board of the CNIB Eye Appeal fundraiser, co-chair of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria House Tour.

**Anne Waterhouse:** previously on the VTRA Board, Anne is owner of the premises where we operate our program. She is a dedicated horse woman and has for many years looked after the VTRA herd.

**Terry Wendorf:** Recently retired from 33 years teaching in SD61 Victoria. She was 21 years as Program Coordinator and Team Leader for the Provincial Integration Support Program (serving students with severe/profound cognitive & multiple physical disabilities throughout B.C.). Terry is currently working as an online instructor for Vancouver Island University and occasionally provides workshops to places such as Camosun College on the role of the teaching assistant to maximize functional learning for students.

### VTRA - AGM: Everyone Welcome!

Where: VTRA Club House - 6917 Veyaness Road.

When: November 22, 2014 at 10 am.

Agenda Items:

- Committee Reports
- Elect New Board Members
- Presentations

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### CONGRATULATIONS!

All of us at the VTRA would like to congratulate Kyrie Bond on achieving her CanTRA Instructor I certification! Kyrie is now certified to mentor student instructors and student assistant instructors as they work to achieve their certifications. Kyrie passed her exams with flying colours, testament to how lucky we are to have her as one of our instructor. **Well done Kyrie!**

- **Silent Auction:** The session 1 event is underway, with many great items! The auction will end the week of November 10, and items must be picked up by November 20. We are always appreciative of donations of good quality items for the silent auction!

- **Modes of Payment:** we can now accept payment by credit card for any purpose, including rider fees and membership, tack store sales, and donations!

- **Thrifty Foods Smile Card:** the program continues this year, with all proceeds going toward our new indoor arena doors (see the pictures). Any staff member will be happy to give you yours and answer any questions!

### GOODBYE & THANK YOU!



This year, 2 members of our 4-legged therapists retired from our demanding program.

Gemm, here on the right, and Dixie, on the left, did not return to the program this year. They will both be missed by their riders and all of us.

We wish those 2 special horses lots of fun in their next life. Thank you for your work!



### THANK YOU CENTRAL SAANICH LIONS!



winter days. They also built a set of *dutch doors on our ramp*, which will keep out the wind while still allowing families and friends to view the riders.

This project will be funded by our *Thrifty Foods Smile Card* initiative—do you have **your** card? When you shop at Thrifty's, use a Smile card (available at VTRA office). Take your smile card to Thrifty's and add any amount of money to it (you can add it with your credit card, to still enjoy your rewards...), then use your smile card when you purchase your

Over the past few months, the Central Saanich Lions have been hard at work building a new door on our indoor arena! They installed a large *garage style door* that will block the wind on cold,

groceries. 5% of all money spent is returned to VTRA as a direct donation. This offer will expire when we reach our goal of \$3,500, or at the end of March 2015, whichever happens first.

We would like to send a big THANK YOU to the following people:

**Larry Griffith, Jim Dunn, John Argau, Garry Wake, Kerrie Griffith, Slegg Lumber, Windsor Plywood, Alliance Engineering, and Accent Doors**

