



NH4H Pre-Conference Bios Nov. 2, 2010

Mary Jo Beckman

Mary Jo Beckman, Commander U.S. Navy (Retired) : Mary Jo is a NARHA Master Level Instructor and a NARHA Driving Instructor. She has been the instructor and driving force **since 2006, behind the Army's Caisson Platoon Equine Assisted programs** located in Ft. Myers, VA. Mary Jo is also the volunteer liaison for the NH4H Task Force.

Leslie Esselburn

Leslie Esselburn, Executive Director, Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT). Since 1980, Leslie has served on numerous local and state wide non-profit boards. In 1990 she left her 20-year career in banking to become a full-time none profit manager and has been at TROT since 2000. She is a rarity in the world of therapeutic riding programs-she is allergic to (and kind of afraid of) horses! But this allows her to stay focused on raising the funds need to sustain the program.

Marge Gunnar

Marge Gunnar, Executive Director of Brave Hearts, Harvard, IL Marge is the founder and the heart and soul of this innovative program that includes therapeutic driving and a very active veterans program. **“Harmony with Horses” is a unique program offered monthly** by Brave Hearts to promote communication between participants and their equine partners, which is another way to reach out to our brave soldiers.

Amanda Hogan

Amanda Hogan, Executive Director, Windrush Farm Therapeutic Equitation, Inc. Boxford, MA. Mandy is a NARHA Master Level Instructor. She is active on: the EFMHA Equine Specialist Certification Sub Committee, the NARHA Horses for Heroes Task Force and the Advisory Board of Essex Agricultural and Technical Institute. Mandy actively instructs students with disabilities at Windrush Farm.

Dr. Mack Mann

Dr. Mack Mann, Chief of Mental Health Services at the Sheridan WY VA Medical Center. Dr. Mann has over eight years experience teaching university level psychology and is a researcher, clinician and is considered to be an expert in the areas of PTSD and Substance Abuse Treatment. Dr. Mann is a proud veteran of the United States Air Force.



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Paula Quillen

Paula Quillen, Founder of Right Step Therapeutic Riding Center, Littleton, CO. Paula is a NARHA Registered Instructor who currently instructs over 40 client a week. She has established a complimentary organization called Reining Heroes which is an experiential equine assisted psychotherapy program for Veterans. This project also includes the participation of Aurora Mental Health and Denver University. Paula has been published numerous times, most recently in The Horse Trader of February of 2009.

Joan Schroeder Cutler

Joan Schroeder Cutler, Running WJ Therapeutic Riding, Texarkana, TX. Joan is an Advanced NARHA Instructor. Formerly lead instructor for R.O.C.K. Horses for Heroes in Georgetown TX. Joan serves on the Accreditation Committee and is the NNARHA Region 8 Representative.

Dr. Paul Spiers

Dr. Paul Spiers is a clinical neuropsychologist who became a therapeutic riding client at Windrush Farm after he suffered a paralyzing fall from horseback. Paul was the President of the NARHA board of Trustees from 2006 to 2007. It was on his recommendation that the NARHA Horses for Heroes initiative was started. Paul is currently the Board President of Windrush Farm, where they have an active veterans program.

Sue Suddith

Sue Suddith, Executive Director and Founder of Children, Horses and Adults in PartnerShip (CHAPS) in Sheridan WY. Sue has a Masters in Nonprofit Management and has served as a board member and volunteer for various nonprofit programs in Florida and Wyoming. She has formed a unique partnership with the Sheridan VA in order to create a program for psychotherapy at CHAPS. Sue serves on the NARHA Center Advancement Committee and is the NARHA WY State Chair.

Dave Trexler

Dave Trexler, NARHA Horses for Heroes Task Force. Dave is a decorated Viet Nam Veteran who has had a lifelong career in the horse world including General manager of the Al Mara Arabians breeding ranch in Tucson, AZ. He is an expert trainer of reining and cutting horses and has held national titles in both disciplines. Dave has served on the Board of Directors of NARHA and also served as the Interim Executive Director of Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT).



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Jackie Van Mark

Jackie Van Mark, Public Affairs Director for the Sheridan, WY Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Jackie has served as a senior advisor to Secretary of Labor, Elaine Chao and has run several political campaigns. Sue currently provides communication and marketing strategies for the VA across the state of Wyoming. The Sheridan VAMC along with its eight community based clinics, I the tertiary referral site for mental health across the Rocky Mountain region.

Mary Vardi

Mary Vardi, Director of Instruction/Equine Director, Therapeutic Riding of Tucson (TROT) Mary is a NARHA Registered Instructor who originally trained and taught in Israel. She has been working for over 20 years in the field of therapeutic riding and was instrumental in creating a Veterans Program at TROT in 2006, based on her experience with working with injured Israeli soldiers. Mary has developed a system of horse training that allows wheel-chair bound participants to experience working with a horse using only body position and energy to create communication and partnership.