



## Lily Lesser: The Future of Philanthropy

Thirteen-year-old Lily Lesser of Chappaqua, N.Y., has clearly taken the adage "it's better to give than to receive" very much to heart.



*Teen philanthropist Lily Lesser and riding buddy Owen meet up for their weekly lesson at Fox Hill Farm in Pleasantville, N.Y., which hosts one of our six Pegasus chapters.*

In lieu of receiving bat mitzvah gifts from her friends and family, Lily requested donations be made to Pegasus Therapeutic Riding. As a result of Lily's community-minded request, Pegasus has received more than \$3,600 in donations to date, and gifts are still coming in.

Lily takes riding lessons at Fox Hill Farm in Pleasantville, N.Y., which also hosts one of Pegasus' six chapters. She became aware of the Pegasus mission after watching riders with special needs participate in therapeutic programs at Fox Hill.

When Lily and her parents began planning her bat mitzvah celebration, she felt it was important to make charitable giving part of the experience and knew just which organization she wanted to support.

"I can see how much the Pegasus lessons help kids with disabilities, and I wanted to do something good for them so they can keep riding," states Lily. "I know learning horseback riding can be hard work, but the Pegasus instructors make it fun. The riders always look like they

enjoy doing the exercises, and their faces really light up when they see the horses coming into the ring."

This is not the first time the young philanthropist has raised money for Pegasus. Last summer, Lily organized a bake sale at Fox Hill to benefit the nonprofit's therapeutic programs. Her mother, Ellis, and her friends from Fox Hill helped with the baking, and the sale raised over \$350.

Lily is a standout example of the growing trend among young people to donate to charitable causes and participate in community service activities. According to the Association of Fundraising Professionals, market research conducted by Grizzard Communications Group in July 2008 showed that despite the slowing economy, younger donors actually planned to increase their giving.

Researchers believe this can be partially attributed to the fact that younger donors are generally unconcerned with the ups and downs of the economy and therefore tend not to curtail their spending habits during a downturn. Given the current economic climate, this highly cause-oriented group is rapidly becoming a vital asset to the wide range of charities they support, both as donors and volunteers.

Here at Pegasus, we can say with absolute certainty that Lily Lesser is a vital asset to *our* program. On behalf of all the riders who will directly experience the benefits of Lily's generosity when they participate in our program, many thanks to an incredible young woman whose selflessness is an inspiration to us all.



"Pegasus means poise, confidence and pride for my children."



- Michelle Gavens, parent of riders Debbie and Sam, Fox Hill chapter, Pleasantville, NY

## Thank You for a Great Start to Our 2008-2009 Annual Drive!

Many thanks to everyone who has already made a gift to our 2008-2009 annual drive. Despite the current economic conditions, we received more donations between September 2008 and December 2008 than we did during the same time period in 2007. As always, it is our riders who will benefit most from your selfless generosity, and we extend our sincerest thanks to you on their behalf. In these challenging times, we are deeply appreciative of your continued commitment to Pegasus and the very special people we serve. Here's to a joyful and more prosperous 2009 for us all!



"Riding Jessie makes me feel happy. I like playing the music games and finding hidden stuff. Riding backwards is fun because it is silly."

- Jack, rider,  
Ox Ridge Hunt Club  
chapter

## Construction Update

Thanks to an incredibly generous \$1 million gift from an anonymous rider family, Pegasus was able to complete a number of projects at our Pegasus



Farm chapter this past fall. They include an 80' x 184' covered outdoor arena, a 48' x 24' run-in shed, completion



of our barn manager's onsite apartment, improvements to our parking areas and our shared entrance and driveway, and a stormwater management system. On January 14, 2009, volunteer Amanda Ek and Remy took Pegasus Farm's first official ride around the new arena. For

more details about our exciting projects, and to view photos of the construction, visit us at [www.pegasustr.org](http://www.pegasustr.org).

"My daughter Lorena rides in Brewster. She's been with Pegasus for half her life, and she just loves it! Horseback riding is 'her activity;' that is, her siblings don't do it, so she has an opportunity to excel in something. This, together with the fact that she's on top of a beautiful animal with whom she has a bond, builds her self-confidence and self-esteem. She has a lot of fun and doesn't even realize that she's working hard. What a wonderful way to help her with her general development!"



- Liz Paras, parent of rider Lorena, Pegasus Farm chapter

## Volunteer Q&A with Elice Rojas

Somers High School senior Elice Rojas participates in the Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Walkabout Program, a highly selective, year-long program for college-bound seniors that includes a volunteer service project. Elice heard about our programs and chose to volunteer at Pegasus Farm. We recently sat down with Elice and asked her to share her thoughts about her experience.



*Elice and Pegasus therapy pony Honey Bun enjoy a little "girl time" together before program.*

**Q: Why did you choose Pegasus as your Walkabout volunteer service project?**

A: I am generally an animal person, and I have had experience with children, so when I heard about Pegasus from the staff and a few peers, it sounded interesting. Having never worked with horses before, the chance to learn something completely out of my element was incredibly exciting and eye-opening.

**Q: What has the experience meant to you?**

A: Pegasus taught me so much about horses, the children that participated in the program, and myself. I learned that horses are incredibly gentle and caring animals. The children in the program were inspiring as well, and it was a pleasure getting to work with them and know them individually. As for myself, I learned that even if I am put in a unknown situation, I can quickly adapt, and if I can give it a chance, I can definitely learn to love it.

**Q: What did you learn about volunteering in general?**

A: That everyone should just go out there and help in any way. Pegasus is such a great program and a truly touching experience. Any way that one can help or participate, even without a knowledge of horses, is a great help. I hope to be back in the spring or the summer to volunteer again.

## Jane Silberfeld's Legacy

Jane Silberfeld always had a keen interest in kinesiology, health and nutrition—an interest which led to a successful career as a posture teacher. Later on in Jane's life, that same fascination with physical movement inspired her to co-found Pegasus Therapeutic Riding.

The seeds were planted during a visit to Holland, where Jane observed one of her relatives working at a therapeutic riding program and became deeply intrigued. Upon her return to the U.S., Jane contacted Florence Asch to inquire whether there was a similar program in the Greenwich area. Florence suggested calling Gerry Hodgson, president of Ox Ridge Hunt Club, for help. Jane followed up on Florence's suggestion, and in September 1975, six students began attending weekly Pegasus lessons at Ox Ridge. The program was a great success, and Pegasus Therapeutic Riding was officially in business.

Jane soon became a member of NARHA (formerly the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association) to stay informed about the latest therapeutic riding research and practices. For years she remained involved with Pegasus, making many contributions integral to our growth.

Jane's involvement in therapeutic riding eventually grew into a family affair. While accompanying Jane on a site visit to a riding center in Washington, D.C., her daughter Kay decided to take lessons there herself. Kay then began volunteering for the program in her spare time. Five years later, she took the instructor's training course and spent the next three years at the stables providing therapeutic riding lessons to public school children with learning disabilities.

Throughout her life, Jane was a staunch advocate for our riders. A generous donor herself, she also did a great deal of fundraising and outreach. Upon her death on August 13, 2008, Pegasus was informed that Jane had continued her legacy of support with a bequest of \$10,000. For this extraordinary gesture, as well as for the many intangible gifts of time and talent she gave us over the years, we honor the memory of Jane Silberfeld and express our deepest gratitude for her lifetime of visionary stewardship.



Pegasus means to us—a reminder to be hopeful of the potential of a child with disabilities in a world where we are reminded far too often of their limitations. We will always be indebted to Pegasus for all that it has done for our daughter and our family!"

- Jane Ford Shaw, parent of rider Isabel, Corgi Hollow Farm chapter, Newtown, CT



### It's "Safety First" for Pegasus Instructors

Kee Cronin and Suzy Angier joined their fellow Pegasus instructors at a first aid/CPR recertification course in January, in accordance with NARHA guidelines. As usual, practice made perfect, and all of the "victims" survived!

## The "Healing Hooves" of Pegasus

(owners' names are in parentheses)

### Corgi Hollow Farm - Newtown, CT:

Annie (Betsy Medinger), Edgar Allan Pony (Anne Leary), Hobbs (Monica Arienzio) and Tumbleweed (Pegasus)

### Fox Hill Farm - Pleasantville, NY:

Bubbles, Chip\* and Sparky (all owned by Ann Grecni)

### Kelsey Farm - Greenwich, CT:

Ben,\* Dundee, Elmo, Molony, O'Malley, Snickers, Tigger, Truman and Whiskers (all owned by Easy Kelsey)

### Ox Ridge Hunt Club - Darien, CT:

Classico (Sue McGraw) and Jessie (Pegasus)

### New Canaan Mounted Troop - New Canaan, CT:

CJ (NCMT), Cortell (NCMT), Georgie (Lisa Cohen), Rambo (NCMT), Razz (NCMT) and Spunky (NCMT)

### Pegasus Farm - Brewster, NY:

Abu (Joanne & Roy Threlfall), Chance\* (Pegasus), Dixie (Pegasus), Ellie (Cheryl Garrett), Honey Bun (Robin Greenwood), Ideal (Harry & Colby Eisen), Jingles (Pegasus), Packer (Pegasus), Patrick\* (Pegasus), Rio (Cheryl Garrett), Remy (Steven Rattner), Wolfie (Jamie Prusak) and Zoe (Susan Koch)

\*These horses and ponies have very recently retired



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### ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS:

Exciting news! We'll be holding all-new volunteer workshops throughout the year. Visit the Pegasus Calendar at [www.pegasustr.org](http://www.pegasustr.org) for details about upcoming dates, course topics, and how to register!

### Do we have your current email address?

If you're not currently receiving emails from us, contact us via our website at [www.pegasustr.org](http://www.pegasustr.org) to ensure you're included in all our communications.

Phone: (845) 669-8235 x101 Fax: (845) 669-5249

[www.pegasustr.org](http://www.pegasustr.org)

*Please notify the Pegasus office of any address changes*



Hey,  
what's

all the



excitement  
about?

Oh, that's right!  
It's almost time for the  
28th Annual Pegasus Horse Show!

#### Save the Date:

Sunday, May 17, 2009

10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Coker Farm

69 Stone Hill Road, Route 137

Bedford, NY 10506

The Horse Show is open to the public,  
and admission to the event is free.  
Watch our website ([www.pegasustr.org](http://www.pegasustr.org))  
and your mailbox for further information!

To make a donation in support of the  
Horse Show and our Pegasus programs,  
please contact Development Associate  
Syreeta Jones at (845) 669-8235 x101.