



# HETI

Federation of Horses  
in Education and Therapy  
International

May 2013 Newsletter

## In this issue

[From the Director](#)

[From the President](#)

[First EAAT Lessons in Taiwan](#)

[Riding Out of Addiction](#)

[Opportunities](#)

[NAEFW Certification](#)

## Quick Links

[Membership information](#)

[Calendar](#)

[HETI publications](#)

## First EAAT Lessons in Taiwan

by Uta Rindfleisch-Wu

The reason why I was willing to take over the big task of organizing the HETI Congress, is none other than the hope to be able to promote the development of Equine Assisted Education and Therapy in Taiwan and make the public more aware of the benefits of the relation between horses and people, but also of the fact, that Therapeutic Riding is not equal with putting a disabled person on an old, retired horse.

At the presentation in Athens I had mentioned that one of the possible sites for the Congress would be the Pingdong Technical University (PTU). Although the organization committee has now decided for another venue, the Aletheia University in Danshui, a suburb of Taipei, the dean of the Department for Animal Science at PTU invited me to teach several regular lessons on EAAT as part of a course on Equine Studies, a first for Taiwan and actually a first result of bringing the Congress to Taiwan.

The course was a two-fold, with half of the time classroom teaching and the other half in practical workshops. The University has a farm, where among other animals a few ponies are raised for the students to practice, but I had heard that one could not do a lot with these ponies, because they lacked training. Therefore the University was willing to transport the students for the workshop part to a riding club in the next bigger city of Gaoxiang, where I would have had a greater choice of suitable horses to work with. Unfortunately on the day which was set for the workshops, the school bus was not available, which meant that I had no other choice than working with the universities' ponies.

I had looked at the biggest pony beforehand, because I was told that she had quite some temper, she was famous for kicking and biting, but with just a little bit of ground work, she

## From the Director

Greetings to all,



As Ann says below, here in the eastern US we share the enthusiasm of our horses for the warm days of spring. Thanks to all of you who have renewed your HETI memberships or become members for the first time. Members are the life blood of our organization and we value you highly. If you have not yet renewed your membership, now would be the perfect time. We are hard at work putting the finishing touches on both our directory. The next issue of the Journal is also in progress. These are both labor-intensive projects and we appreciate your anticipation of them. We feel you will not be disappointed

when you see the results.

In response to many requests, we are posting inquiries and openings for internships and employment on our website. We see this as an excellent way we can put our website to work for you, so please do not hesitate to contribute to this new venue which you can access [here](#). Conversely, do let us know when positions have been filled so we may remove them and hence keep our listings fresh.

As always, our ears and email in-box is always open to suggestions and news, so please don't hesitate to keep in touch!

My thanks to all of you!

Sincerely,

Gisela Rhodes, E.D.  
HETI  
P.O. Box 134  
Damariscotta, ME 04543  
USA  
[office@hetifederation.org](mailto:office@hetifederation.org)

---

## From the President

Hello,

It is late Spring where I live and for the first time in many years we are having a real Spring season - mild daytime temperatures and cool evenings. The trees have just blossomed and many



of the early flowers are up. It is also the time of year when people stop in to regretfully inform us that they think our horses are dead! No, we tell them, they are just lying out in the sunshine enjoying the wonderful break from winter - just as we are. So if it is springtime where you are, I hope you are enjoying the feeling of renewal and hope. If you are moving into your Winter months, I hope that you and your horses are feeling safe and secure from the elements.

The HETI office is closing out the 2013 membership drive - if you still have not renewed, please do so at your earliest convenience. You don't

turned out to be an absolutely sweet young mare who just wanted to know where her place is. I used her and two other ponies to train the seventy participants in horse leading techniques, some groundwork and horse leading and side walking in the Therapeutic Riding Setting. At the end of the first workshop one student came up and told me that she never had seen that mare to behave so well.

When I had to prepare a test for my part of the course. I choose to add one question asking them what impressed them most during the three days of lesson. For nearly one third it was the introduction to vaulting, which was done by video. It was unimaginable for them how somebody could do movements on the moving horse, which they themselves hardly can do on the ground. For the vast majority however, nearly two third, it was the workshop and the experience of being able to handle this mare without her kicking or biting anybody, but actually showing quite some potential to become a well behaved, patient and caring Therapeutic Riding Horse. The students were impressed to see that people doing EAAT work know how to handle and train horses and that there is a lot to consider before choosing a horse to work in this special field.

I do not know how many of the seventy students will later work with horses and how many of these will one day be involved in EAAT, but if they have learned to handle their own horses on the campus in a more correct and safe manner, for their own sake and for the sake of their horses, than it actually might have been fortunate that we had to do the workshop on the campus.

---

*Uta Rindfleisch-Wu is director of the Chinese Taipei Equestrian Association and a member of the HETI Board.*

---

## Riding out of Addiction

**by Ann Kern-Godal**

In early February Norway's Health Minister Jonas Gahr Store announced his 10 point priority plan. It included Alternative Research. A few days later he paid a surprise visit to Oslo University Hospital's Stallen (Stables). He had heard of the research undertaken there and wanted to know more about horse assisted therapy and to hear the views of the patients and staff on this alternative therapy. His interest, plus the subsequent questions from clinicians and the public, prompted the following article.

Horses have been working with patients at Oslo Universitetssykehus (previously known as Gaustad) since 1974. Throughout that period the horses have been owned by the Oslo and Slemdal

want to miss out on receiving the Directory and the Journal this year!

As we reported at the Association meeting in Athens, Greece, the HETI Executive Committee is mindful of the budget - we are all experiencing financial down times and HETI is no different. Respectful of the budget, in July the Executive Committee will be holding week-long meetings via SKYPE so that we do not incur travel expenses this year by meeting face-to-face. I will travel to the HETI office in Maine, USA and Gisela Heimsath Rhodes and I will work from there and communicate with the Committee throughout the week via SKYPE. If you speak with one of the members of the Committee, be sure to thank them for their flexibility and dedication to HETI as they will be re-arranging their lives (and time zones) for a week, to complete the business at hand.

There are a number of items on the agenda for the Executive Committee to work on during this time. I have briefly listed a few here. If you have suggestions for agenda items, please do not hesitate to notify the HETI office of your thoughts and ideas. Please remember that we are required by the Constitution and By-Laws to bring certain items to the entire membership - this list is a "working" list and these items will be brought before the membership, as appropriate.

- Review the Constitution and By-Laws as working documents
- Review the annual budget
- Complete Level I of the HETI Education Program
- Work with the Journal editors to complete the process for the Journal to become peer-reviewed
- Evaluate membership levels and make recommendations to the membership at-large
- Review the progress of the XV International Congress
- Etc.

In closing, I just want to remind everyone to begin planning your travel and arrangements so that we can meet in Taiwan in 2015!

My best regards,

Lions Clubs, and cared for by patients and staff at the hospital. Each horse is carefully selected, trained and used exclusively for therapeutic work with patients. Skilled therapists, who are also qualified riding instructors with proven horse handling skills, are responsible for the horse assisted therapy program.



*The Stallen Team: Jeanette Lysell, Silje H-O Liestøl, Kristin D Borgen and Anne Normann*

Since 2010 the horses at Oslo University Hospital's Stallen have worked exclusively with young drug addicts in treatment at the Department of Addiction Treatment (Youth). Now a major research study is seeking to measure the impact of horse assisted therapy on addiction drop out and treatment. Preliminary results, reported at the International Scientific Addiction Medicine (ISAM) Conference in Geneva last year, are promising.

### **Horses and Health**

For more than 6,000 years horses have worked with man in various ways. Their special contribution has enhanced mankind's physical and mental well-being. They have provided meat, energy for transport and agriculture, a comrade in war, a companion athlete in sport and a leading figure in mythology, literature, sculpture, art and the media. In antiquity, Socrates noted the horse's contribution to man's health and Xenophon wrote of man and horse's mutual confidence and interdependence in war. More recently the statement, "there is something about the outside of a horse which is good for the inside of a man" has been attributed to Churchill.

Over the past 50 years in many countries, including Norway, horses have worked increasingly in health programs aimed at improving physical, mental and psychological well-being.

### **Horses and Addiction Treatment**

Inclusion of horse assisted therapy as part of

Ann O'Shallie  
[ann@HETIfederation.org](mailto:ann@HETIfederation.org)

Save the date!  
2015 HETI Congress  
Taipei, Taiwan



Chinese Taipei Equestrian Federation

Find us on Facebook 

Like our Facebook page  
HETI - Horses in Education  
and Therapy International  
(formerly FRDI)

[www.facebook.com/HETI.international](http://www.facebook.com/HETI.international)

Support our Sponsors!

### Support HETI

when you send flowers with Petals Network in December  
25% of the flower value of your order  
will be donated to HETI (normally 20%)

Choose from our magnificent range of over 100 products.  
There's something to suit every occasion  
and every budget

To order please visit:

[www.petals.com.au/frda](http://www.petals.com.au/frda)

or phone: 1800PETALS (738 257)

and quote 9093



Petals delivers Australiawide & over  
90 Countries



Order your flowers through Petals  
Network and a portion of your

addiction treatment is not common but there is a growing interest, particularly in the USA. OUS Stallen is seen by many as a leader in developing this work and researching its impact.

When patients participate in OUS Stallen's program, they work with a therapist and a horse in a structured 12 session program. During the first four sessions patients get to know the horses, learn about horse behavior, safety and how to do basic tasks such as grooming, leading and tacking up. Even patients with previous horse experience do these introductory sessions, often taking on a supporting role to those who have little or no experience. In the following eight sessions the patient, horse and therapist undertake activities and exercises aimed at addressing specific agreed objectives, such as dealing with anxiety, aggression, the need to set and maintain safe boundaries, etc.

#### Ground Work

Contact  
Boundaries  
Trust  
Anxiety  
Communication  
Connection



#### Mounted Work

Body awareness  
Balance  
Centering  
Co-ordination  
Posture  
Limit setting  
Rhythm/regulation  
Anxiety  
Mastering



Activities undertaken with horses differ depending upon the agreed therapeutic objective and the patient's health on the particular day. Patients can choose not to do a particular task. Some, for example, choose not to ride. They seem, nonetheless, to benefit from and enjoy other horse related activities.

Examples of activities and exercises with horses, and how to connect these to themes and challenges the patient needs to work with: By observing the herd patients can see how the horses react and communicate their behaviour and cooperation. Patients can discuss how they feel inside when a horse comes towards them or walks away from them.

When grooming the horse a patient gets to know and understand it better, to build a relationship and to feel social connection, while doing a task that is important for the horse's welfare. Feeding and watering the horses are simple tasks, but patients often remark on the "good" feeling which

purchase goes toward FRDI's fundraising efforts.



Learn how to make a rope halter and support FRDI at the same time.

For more information,  
[click here.](#)

HETI welcomes submissions from its members! Send your important dates - workshops, trainings, competitions, employment opportunities, etc., (in English) to the [office](#). We will promptly publish them on the website!

## Opportunities

*[This new feature is for members to solicit assistance in employment or research. In each issue we will highlight a particular opportunity. Visit the [Resources](#) page on our website and scroll down to see the complete list. Please send new items to George at [george@hetifederation.org](mailto:george@hetifederation.org).]*

Institut Equiphoria is an equine therapeutic riding center in France. Equiphoria has started a research program in collaboration with the French National Institute for Agricultural Research [Institut National de Recherche Agronomique] (INRA), which seeks to define the specificities for horses that are fit for therapeutic riding activities.

In order to conduct this work it is necessary to test a number of horses (around 30) that are being used only for therapeutic riding.

Equiphoria is looking for centers that have 10 or more horses that comply with this condition to conduct the testing program.

If you are such a center, they

accompanies taking responsibility for responding to the horse's needs.

To lead the horse and decide when to stop or turn, or keep the horse at a suitable distance are good exercises for working with boundaries, relationship, cooperation and giving clear directions. Patients often feel more at ease discussing such issues in the context of horse handling and can draw meaningful conclusions about themselves.

By riding the horse in the arena patients work at keeping focus through different exercises, concentration, body awareness, control, communication through the body, body composure, giving clear instructions, etc. They learn a sense of mastering from a new perspective, but one which enables them to understand and assimilate it into their everyday activities.

Lungeing is a good tool as well for focusing on how your body can be used in communication with the horse, and to enable feel of one's body against the balancing horse. Patients become aware of how they sit on the horse, their capability of distension, cooperation between tension and hypotension in your body, stability and body composure.

When riding skills are sufficient patients can ride out in the forest, getting an added sense of mastering and control, plus the pleasure of seeing, hearing, smelling and generally enjoying nature with their horse. In winter they experience the added excitement of horses stimulated by open field of snow.

An alternative to riding is driving a carriage, where without having to sit on a horse patients still get the feel of taking control, of trust and outward, forward thinking. When driving a carriage with other passengers they are "responsible for the whole group". This, in addition to experiencing the power and steadiness of the horse in hand gives a feeling of true mastering.

These activities involve good healthy exercise, having fun, learning new skills, etc. However, while physical exercise, fun and skills acquisition are important (and often missing from the lives of many young drug addicts) the prime purpose of this program is therapy and contribution to a successful treatment outcome.

### Why Horses?

This is a frequently asked question, along with "why not dogs?" Other animals, particularly dogs, have been used in a wide variety of health programs with proven beneficial effect in physical health such as reduced hypertension.

Horses have certain characteristics found to be beneficial in innovative psychological work in emotional and cognitive fields. Perhaps the most obvious characteristic, particularly to a new

would greatly appreciate your collaboration.

Please contact Equiphoria at:

[erik.bogros@equiphoria.com](mailto:erik.bogros@equiphoria.com)

+33(0) 6 78 16 06 57

+33(0) 4 66 32 10 46

## NAEFW Certification Training

**by Certification Candidate, Gabrielle**

A module of the certification training for the National Association for Equine Facilitated Wellness (NAEFW) was held in Almonte, ON, Canada in October, 2012; the five days were facilitated by Deborah Marshall [www.generationfarms.ca](http://www.generationfarms.ca). NAEFW Certified Practitioner, Mentor and Trainer, co-facilitated by Susan Cressy, NAEFW Equine Professional candidate and featured the equine herd of Susan Allan's Willaway Farm, as co-therapists.



The nine women who participated came from varied backgrounds that included psychotherapy, education, life coaching and the equine professions.

Deborah Marshall's years of experience working with trauma, somatic therapies and her advanced Epona training brought a strong mind-body connection focus to the week. Grounding through mindfulness, awareness of the senses and breathing was integral to many of the activities. For one exercise, we were invited to work with the interplay of what's outside of us, such as sights, sounds and smells, with what's inside, like our breathing, emotions and body sensations. Moving back and forth between them created a strong present moment focus and awareness, an optimal place from which to begin interacting with people and horses. Throughout the week, our bodies

patient, is the size and strength of the horse. Horses are much stronger than humans. Physical strength alone cannot make a horse follow a command. It requires focus, patience, clarity and a degree of leadership - mental resources and skills often missing in young insecure people. By not responding to inappropriate cues, well trained horses can help patients to learn how to activate skills. As a patient once commented "Ronja is bigger than me. I found aggression didn't work with her so I had to try your way of asking her to cooperate ... the funny thing is that I've found it works better than aggression with humans too". Patients and good riders alike are often amazed at their ability to obtain a positive response from such a large, sometimes frightening animal. Such a feeling does wonders for self-esteem and can help engender a much needed "yes we can" type of motivation in patients.

Horses are present in "the here or now". They do not judge or have preconceptions about what is right or wrong. Patients have commented "my horse does not know about my past, he does not care what I look like but he does seem to understand how I feel and seems to share my feeling in a way which makes me feel good" It is reassuring to see a growing bond between horse and patient, particularly in a patient who has lost all trust in safe physical comfort and touch. The horse may engage in mutual grooming by gently nibbling the back of a patient scratching the horses shoulder. We have seen horses use their head to gently hold a sobbing patient against their side.

When patients bond with a horse they may discover a meaning which they could not hear from the rational human voice. For example, boundary setting is often an issue with addicts. A highly interactive horse will often invade human boundaries until the person exerts the appropriate energy and behavior to gain the horse's respect. A patient in search of love and contact may tolerate inappropriate, even invasive behavior from a horse and mistake it for affection. Boundary setting is used to enhance Mastering. Once accomplished, it can lead to insightful comments such as "ah I think the horse actually respects me now ... I quite like that feeling " or ".....you know I've just realized it's actually the people I like who I let walk all over me" or " ....perhaps it's not the people I dislike who are the real problem in my life...."

### **But does it work?**

Therapists at Oslo University Hospital have thought for more than 30 years that Stallen's horse assisted therapy is effective and worth the investment. Studies now underway are assessing the qualitative and quantitative evidence. Patients claim the horses are helpful and motivating. Some claim the horses "keep me in treatment" or "they teach me more about myself than all the talk in meeting rooms."

became our guides and we practiced making room for our senses as our most valuable resource. Both Deborah and Susan were remarkable role models for us to emulate, but of course the horses were the best teachers of all.

Each day brought a new array of things to learn and to try.

The week included a detailed overview of the neuroscience of trauma and how it is processed in the brain. We discovered what the triggered sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems look like, and learned to identify and work with states of hyper- and hypo-arousal, as well as that optimum arousal zone described as the "window of tolerance". We were encouraged to map out a window of tolerance for ourselves by identifying what triggered us to move out of balance in each direction. And although the theoretical sessions were held indoors, the horses were still in view from every window, providing opportunities to observe their occasional states of hyper-arousal, but mostly to draw on their calm equilibrium.

The experiential components were structured in a variety of ways. Some were individual (wandering the paddocks to meet the herd and noting down our emotional responses), some were in dyads (practicing guided meditations), and some involved the whole group (building an obstacle course and leading a horse through it together). Most often though, we worked with a horse in small groups, where each person would volunteer to be either the client, the therapist, the horse professional and sometimes the observer, in order to practice the skills that were demonstrated. For example, we worked on sensing the energetic boundaries of our bodies and of the horses; we facilitated a leading exercise; and we practiced helping the "client" and the horse stay within their window of tolerance.

There were many sessions where Deborah would demonstrate an activity before asking the group to practice. Sometimes it was possible for participants interested in exploring an issue from an earlier discussion, debrief or practice session to volunteer and experience Deborah's approach first-hand, profoundly deepening the learning experience for themselves.

My PhD study (funded by the Norwegian Research Council and the Swedish- Norwegian Equine Research Fund) has shown preliminary evidence from 18 months data that patients who participate in *hesteassistert terapi* have a much higher chance of a positive treatment outcome than those who did not undertake this therapy. Further analysis and a randomized control trial (which started in January) should provide a more definitive answer to whether our patients are indeed riding out of addiction.

*Ann Kern-Godal*  
*Department of Addiction Treatment (Youth), Oslo University, Norway*

Despite the very full agenda, the days did not feel overwhelming or rushed. There was a feeling of respect for what people and horses needed, with deft shifts in plan based on how the learning progressed. That we might need a stretch. That we weren't ready for more information. We were told that slowing things down was integral to the process; experiencing what that felt like as we learned together was wonderful.

For more information about the National Association for Equine Facilitated Wellness go to: [www.equinefacilitatedwellness.org](http://www.equinefacilitatedwellness.org)