

**CTRA  
Welcomes  
New  
Executive  
Director  
Anne Muir**

The Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association (CTRA) is pleased to welcome Anne Muir to the team in the position of Executive Director. Anne is a third-generation Cowichan Valley resident with deep roots in the community. Anne comes to CTRA after 14 years of working with the MS Society of Canada as a fund-raiser and community development coordinator.



*Anne strikes a pose with therapy horse "Tonka" (photo credit: Colleen Hunt)*



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In addition to her passions for biking, boating, and bee-keeping, Anne grew up “utterly obsessed” with horses and rode competitively for many years. After a long hiatus from the saddle, Anne is “thrilled to be around horses again” with the CTRA. Anne’s belief in the far-reaching impact of the CTRA is evident when she states: “I believe strongly that not-for-profit organizations play an important role in our communities, creating a better place to live for all of our citizens.”

Anne takes the reins from former Executive Director Jennifer Barnes van Elk, who will be embarking on a new role with the CTRA as Communications Officer. Barnes van Elk says, “I am very excited to welcome Anne to the team in this exciting time of growth for our organization. Anne is an incredibly accomplished professional and a perfect fit for this important role.”

The Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association has expanded services in recent years to offer more programs streams for Persons with Disabilities in the Cowichan Valley. Programs such as the Therapeutic Horsemanship Program (an alternative or stepping-stone to traditional mounted therapies) and the new Stable Management Vocational Development Program (applied, transferrable job skill training in the context of the stableyard) offer horse-related opportunities for participation in addition to CTRA’s therapeutic riding and para-equestrian sport programs.

“We credit strong community support with enabling us to expand to better meet the needs of a diverse and growing participant population,” Barnes van Elk explains. “It is wonderful to welcome Anne Muir to the role of Executive Director during this phase of development and positive change. We are all looking forward to a bright future for the organization with Anne at the helm.”

**CTRA invites the community to a welcoming reception for Anne on Thursday November 21 from 4:30 – 5:30pm in the CTRA lounge. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Please RSVP to [info@ctra.ca](mailto:info@ctra.ca) if you plan to attend.**





*Eleanor (2nd from left, 2nd row) poses with the 2013 Life Skills class and her "new" antique collars (photo credit: Colleen Hunt)*

## **Eleanor Stringer and the SD 79 Life Skills Class - CTRA Heros!**

If you ever enjoyed the CTRA lounge on a "clean day" you have the School District 79 (SD 79) Life Skills class to thank. For many years, every week, the Life Skills class was responsible for the extensive cleaning of the lounge as well as many tasks around the stables.

Despite how challenging the mess, this incredible group managed to make the place look professional-grade spic-and-span - no minor feat considering all the mud, dust, horse hair, and general barn filth that migrates into the lounge every day! This incredible group even spear-headed several lounge re-decorations, creating some seriously positive feng shui!

CTRA is so grateful to all the students, teachers, and SD 79 staff that contributed to helping CTRA over the years. With limited resources, things like cleaning the lounge can fall to the way-side. By keeping the lounge tidy, clean, and organized, this group made an incredible difference for all the people who use this community space. The horses also appreciated all the work that was done "downstairs" to make their homes clean and cozy!

Last spring, CTRA organized a special thank you for Eleanor Stringer, whose long-running efforts were vital to building and maintaining the special relationship between CTRA and the SD 79 Life Skills Class throughout the years. Although Eleanor has now embarked on her new mission as the Employment Skills class teacher, CTRA will not soon forget her dedication to making a weekly visit to CTRA part of the Life Skills class curriculum. CTRA was thrilled to collaborate with the school to award Eleanor a pair of antique horse collars as a special "thank you" for everything she did for the students, the Life Skills class, and CTRA over the years. Eleanor's legacy of community building, inclusion, and passion for her work continues to inspire.

## Rockin' Ross!

We are thrilled to announce that CTRA rider Ross Wristen placed 1st in his class (Novice, Grade 1a) in the September 15 2013 Para-Equestrian Canada Sea-to-Sea Video Competition. Ross is no stranger to success, having placed highly in (and won) several classes in past competitions.



*Ross (right) celebrates a 2011 victory with fellow Sea-to-Sea winner Kirsten Milligan and (now retired) therapy horse "Mac" (photo credit: Lisa Pink)*

*Para-Equestrian Canada* (a division of *Equine Canada*) is the national governing body for para-equestrian horse sport in Canada. The Sea-to-Sea Competition offers a unique opportunity for riders with a disability as it allows competitors from across Canada to ride and film their entries at their home stable and compete on a national scale.

Instead of the traditional horse show model where participants must travel to a central location, entries in the Sea-to-Sea competition are submitted electronically to be judged by a qualified remote judge. This process allows riders to film their entries on their own time, on familiar horses, at their home centre. Not only does this minimize pressure, it prevents much of the cost and logistical barriers that can preclude participation from posing a barrier to involvement in large-scale, meaningful competitive opportunities.

Dressage "tests" are a pre-determined series of movements in an appropriately marked (and sized) arena designed to test each horse/rider pair on a number of expectations relative to their level. Riders are grouped according to level and judged against peers in their category from across Canada. According to Para-Equestrian Canada, the Sea-to-Sea competitors "receive a mark from 1-10 for each prescribed movement of their test, as well as overall marks for pace (freedom, regularity and activity), submission (attention and confidence, ease of movements, acceptance of bridle), accuracy and equestrian feel and skill." Each competition date for the Sea-to-Sea series is a separate show.

CTRA would like to extend a big "congratulations" to Ross and all of the competitors in the 2013 Sea-to-Sea competition series. We would also like to thank Para-Equestrian Canada for making this incredible opportunity available for riders with a disability. We are looking forward to many more competitions and to playing an important role in providing para-equestrian competition for local athletes.

# Resource Roundup!

CTRA has a number of programs that allow you to support our charity without making a cash donation! Many of these programs offer the chance for you to make a significant contribution by doing what you are already doing (shopping, flying, cleaning up after the big party). Take a look at the list below for all the ways you can make a difference at CTRA.



## Thrifty Foods Smile Card

This program is a great way to support CTRA by doing something you already do – shopping! When you use a smile card to pay for your purchases at any Thrifty Foods location, 5% of the money loaded onto the card goes towards CTRA. You can get your

card from our CTRA office directly or contact us via phone (250-746-1028) or email ([info@ctra.ca](mailto:info@ctra.ca)) and we will gladly send you one via mail.



## Canadian Tire Money

Do you have extra Canadian Tire Money lying around in your wallet, car console, and drawers? Put it to good use! CTRA gratefully accepts Canadian Tire money (there is a donation tin in our lounge). This money is used to help us purchase the everyday items necessary to keep our facility up and running! Check with your friends,

family, social groups, and clubs – its amazing how many people have this money lying around!

## Bottles for CTRA

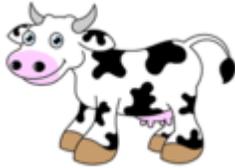


*Big party?* Did you know that CTRA has an account at the Cowichan Valley Bottle Depot (6476 Norcross Road, Duncan – near the WalMart)? Simply bring your bottles to the depot and tell them at the cashier's desk to credit the Cowichan Therapeutic Riding Association's account. Good for the environment and for a good cause – how can you go wrong? :-)



### **Pennies from Heaven**

With the government's recent decision to phase out the penny, CTRA gladly offers to take your much loved, seldom used, copper currency to its final resting place. Dig out your couch cushions and empty out your ashtrays and bring your cents to the penny drop at CTRA.

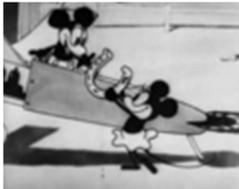


### **Daisy Dollars**

This fund-raising program turns dairy into dollars for CTRA! It's easy! Collect the UPC (bar) codes from your Island Farms dairy products (cut them out prior to recycling/disposal of the container) and bring them to CTRA. Bar codes must be submitted in groups of 50, so pre-bundled codes help, but any number of codes can add up to make a difference. This is an easy way to really help us raise the moooo-lah we need for our program!

To learn more about Daisy Dollars visit:

<http://islandfarms.com/community/daisy-dollars/>



### **Donate Aeroplane Miles**

Those who collect Aeroplane Miles can donate miles to CTRA! Through the Charitable Pooling Program, donated miles will be used to help CTRA purchase auction items, fundraiser prizes, and merchandise needed for the program. 100 percent of donated Aeroplane miles go directly to CTRA.

To visit CTRA's charitable pooling account and donate miles visit:

<http://beyondmiles.aeroplan.com/eng/charity/488>



### **Donate Used Horse/Riding Equipment and Tack to the Program**

CTRA gratefully accepts donations of tack and horse equipment. Donated items may be used directly for the program, sold for fundraising purposes in the used tack shop, or reintegrated into the community via the free store – in accordance with the donor's wishes. Remember when you clean out the old tack trunks - your dusty saddles, long-lost bridles, and old riding jodhpurs are very welcome at CTRA!

**To learn more about CTRA's donation programs visit:**

[www.ctra.ca/donations-sponsorships/donation-programs](http://www.ctra.ca/donations-sponsorships/donation-programs)

# Can You Tell?

The fall 2013 "Can You Tell?" question seeks to find out who was REALLY paying attention to the articles in this edition of the *Leading Rein* newsletter.

***Can you name the CTRA rider who placed first in his class in the September Sea-to-Sea video competition?***

The prize this time around is a **4 tire nitrogen fill** courtesy of Bowmel Chrysler (a \$50 value!). Nitrogen Fills maximize proper tire pressure, fuel economy, safety/reliability, and tire life.

Email [info@ctra.ca](mailto:info@ctra.ca) with your answer and preferred contact information to be entered for your chance to win! The winner will be notified by Friday Dec 6 2013.

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