

February 13, 2008

Grassland: Retired Saddle Up! horses need good homes

Creativity, generosity and beauty — three things that grow abundantly in our community — converge at 1549 Old Hillsboro Road in the form of Saddle Up!, a recreational therapeutic horseback riding program. On these 34 beautiful acres, countless volunteers generously donate their time and skills to provide creative therapy options for special-needs children ages 4-18.

On a recent Saturday morning, children, families, volunteers and staff gathered at Saddle Up! for a retirement party honoring four horses for their years of sweet service to these children. The horses were all groomed and proudly positioned in their stalls amid decorations of hearts and photographs.

"Love buckets" were created for each horse and filled with thank-you notes and gifts to wish the horses well in their retirement. Linda Parker, the grandmother of a Saddle Up! rider, baked horse-shaped cookies for the children to decorate in honor of their favorite horses, with colored icing provided to match the colors of the four retiring horses. I told you these folks were creative!

So, what's next for these gentle and beautiful creatures? Well, Heidi has become the resident companion of a Saddle Up! instructor whose own horse recently passed away. Nomo is returning to her original owner. As for the other two? Well, that's where you, our faithful readers, come in.

King Bee and Alyska are two very special senior citizen horses who need a good home. They've become quite dependent on one another during their years together at Saddle Up!, so they need to remain together. They are both over 30 and will need some special care and attention. If you or someone you know would like be considered as adoptive parents to these very special animals, call Kelly O'Brien at 794-1150, ext. 30.

I'm counting on you — the creative, generous and beautiful people of Grassland — to find homes for these giving and loving creatures.