

connections *communiqué*

A quarterly publication for **pbjconnections**

September 2010

Helping Kids Transition Back To School

Transitions are difficult for all of us, but can be especially difficult for kids. As they head back to school, kids face not only the transition from the freedom of summer to the structure of the classroom, but many face new schools, new teachers, and new friends.

Many kids with behavioral or social skills issues dread heading back to the classroom where they anticipate feelings of loneliness, victimization and stress. The long school year stretching in front of them is daunting. Kids have a hard time thinking beyond the immediate future and it is difficult for them to see that they survived the last year and will survive this one as well. The next week may feel like an eternity for them. If they struggle academically or are the victims of bullying, this just adds to the anxiety.

PBJ Connections works through this transition from summer to school by coaching kids on how to change their thinking patterns, and in turn, manage their anxiety and improve their social skills, which leads to a more pleasant school experience.

Kids learn to "Think Like a Horse". Horses have a calmness about them because they think in the present. They are incapable of "what if" thinking and don't have anxiety of what might happen in the future. Horses use all five senses to



react to their surroundings. We start by having kids look at the world through the eyes of their favorite horse and finish the statements, "I see...I hear...I taste...I feel...I smell..." Once they have mastered seeing through the lens of the horse, they transition to sensing for themselves. We then send them home to practice outside of the barn environment. This exercise helps them stay in the

moment, pay attention in class, and avoid unpleasant social incidences. They learn to wait and respond to actual events rather than anticipate what might happen.

Horses are masters at being assertive leaders when they need to be and being followers when necessary. We have kids practice assertive posture, words and communication skills with the horses. When a child can be assertive with a horse, the horse allows the child to be a leader, improving social skills and self-esteem. We help the child transfer these skills to human-to-human interactions, giving them confidence to face new social situations in the school environment.

It is important to remember that kids need our patience at this time of year because each new school experience is a huge transition. If your child is showing signs of anxiety or is facing social challenges, please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

Name / Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

I wish to make the following donation. \$ _____ Cash/Check Enclosed

Mail to: PBJ Connections, 9800 Jug Street Road NW, Pataskala OH 43062. **Online:** <http://www.pbjconnections.org>

May we publish your name in our quarterly newsletter and online? Yes No

May we publish your comments in our quarterly newsletter and online? Yes No

Comments: _____

Please remove me from your mailing list.

Founders' Circle – With your contribution of \$500.00 or more, a child can participate in a eight week group session.

Builders' Circle – Your donation of \$250.00 or more can sponsor a weekend of family therapy.

Sustainers' Circle – Your donation of \$135.00 or more can sponsor a young boy or girl for a single therapy session.

Contributors – Your donation of \$60.00 allows a child to participate in a single group session.



Helping Horses Help Kids Trick-Or-Treat Reception

Join Honorary Chairs, Mo & David Meuse, Friday, October 29 for an evening of sweets, treats and magic at our 3rd Annual Helping Horses Help Kids fundraiser. This year's trick-or-treat themed event will be held downtown Columbus at the Loft at Smith Brothers from 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Hosted by Comedian Jeff Demas, with special guest NBC4's Cabot Rea, the fundraiser features hors d'oeuvres, a Peanut Butter & Jelly Bar, cocktails and desserts, silent and live auctions, entertainment, magic and much more.

The fundraiser begins with an on-line auction in early October which will close during the live event. In addition, we will have trick-or-treat tables with gifts from local businesses, and a grab bag raffle with valuable prizes.

Tickets are \$50 general seating, \$75 reserved seating and \$750 for a table for 10 and are available online at www.pbjconnections.org.

You can help us reach more youth and families by becoming a sponsor or by donating to our Silent Auction or Grab Bag Raffle. Sponsorship information is available on our website. For more information contact Kelly at (614) 306-0169 or kellyg@pbjconnections.org

Congratulations PBJ Connections for reaching 1,100 client sessions.



Rocky Thanks You

When Rocky became sick and needed a major surgery last month, the notes, emails and donations came pouring in. We were touched deeply by the love shown

for Rocky and truly appreciate everyone's support. Rocky will have a long recovery and is doing well. His vet bills are still a concern as they are currently nearing \$6,000. If you would like to donate toward the cost of Rocky's surgery, please mail your donation to: PBJ Connections—Rocky; 9800 Jug Street Road NW, Pataskala, OH 43062.

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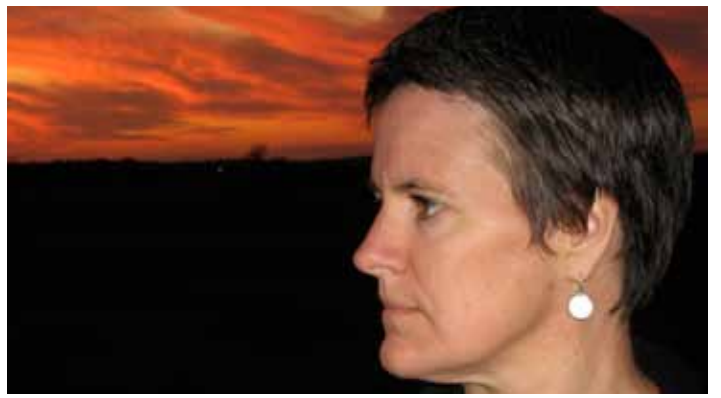
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Meet Board of Director Member Melissa Victor

Melissa joined our Board of Directors August 2007, and is serving her second year as secretary/treasurer. She has been instrumental in developing the organization's image by donating her graphic design expertise and skills.

Growing up on the shores of Lake Erie, Melissa has been a horse and nature lover her entire life. She continues to explore nature in her life and work and provides *Creativity with a Kick* with her company, HorseHouse Design.

Melissa says she volunteers in exchange for peace of mind, knowing that she is helping to spread the word about PBJ Connections. She says she, "loves knowing that every single day, kids are exposed to nature and animals at PBJ Connections," and hopes "one day these kids will become independent, resourceful, open-minded and creative adults."

PBJ Connections Peace Garden to Become Reality

We will soon have a peaceful retreat for clients and their families to rest, contemplate and enjoy nature. We have received several donations allowing us to start planning for a peace garden, which is being built in memory of Westerville sisters Nicole and Sarah Dobson who were tragically killed last December. A public dedication ceremony is being planned. If you would like to donate toward the cost of the Peace Garden, please mail your donation to: PBJ Connections—Garden; 9800 Jug Street Road NW, Pataskala, OH 43062.

What's Happening This Fall at PBJ Connections?

Fall Group Sessions: Registration is open for fall therapy groups. All groups focus on improving behaviors in a group setting while working through experiential activities with horses. Groups begin the week of September 14 and run weekly for ten weeks.

New program: In addition to our traditional Equine Assisted Psychotherapy and EAP groups, we are adding Therapeutic Riding to our fall schedule. We will work with clients to determine the best therapy approach for their situation.

Horsemanship Clinics: In July, PBJ Connections introduced free horsemanship clinics held during our public open house the third Saturday of each month. Each session features a new clinic topic and a brief demonstration of our program. Upcoming topics include: Things You Always Wondered About Horses; Barn Cleaning Competition; Lunging and Equipment; and Holiday Party with the Horses.

For more information on these programs and more, call Holly Jedlicka at 614-395-1395 or visit our website at www.pbjconnections.org.

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www.pbjconnections.org