

VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE

PROLOG: Somehow, and probably NOT accidental, Triple H and our Therapy Horses attract very special people; Special in their dedication...special in their heart...special in their persistence. David & his daughter, Hannah are 2 such very special people. And here, for the Big Give, is their special story:

David Sharman and Hannah, His Daughter

David, and his 15 year old daughter, Hannah both giggle infectiously when asked how long they've been coming to Triple H. And the answer is, FOURTEEN YEARS! Fourteen of her fifteen years. And not just occasionally. Together, they estimate that even with breaks and vacations Hannah has ridden various of the Triple H Therapy Horses 30 times a year for a total of over 420 riding sessions, usually with David but sometimes with his wife JoAnn as Hannah's sidewalker.

Hannah has Cerebral Palsy (CP), making smooth movement, standing and walking difficult. David, most usually, and as you see in the picture, holds Hannah lovingly in front of him so she is upright. She much prefers this to her ever-present, seldom-used wheel chair.

David recounts the main benefit of equitherapy to Hannah has been the stretching and muscular benefits of games and riding and particularly games that Hannah plays that require stretching and coordination; bowling, ring-toss, etc.

Together, and lovingly, they both recall Hannah's early memories of riding; he reminds her of how at 2 years of age, she had to have a large bolster in front of her to lay on and that she literally lay forward in order to ride. Now she sits basically upright, unsupported (though always surrounded by side walkers). Early on, her feet had to be tied into the stirrups. Now she keeps her feet in the stirrups unaided. She giggled at the memory.

David asked Hannah for her favorite horse; she answers "Coors," her current horse. She goes on to quickly rattle off the names of 10 or 12 Triple H horses. Soon David realizes she's naming every horse at Triple H and she is, as she often does, pulling his leg.

She has quick answers: Favorite time of year, when it's cool (she's especially temperature sensitive); verbal commands she gives, whoa and walk on; her favorite things, going uphill and trotting...and the fact that the horses listen to her; they both mention how they like the new, clean paths that have been cut through the Hill Country terrain of Triple H.

All-in-all, Hannah is most happy IN HER LIFE when she is at Triple H. Even though she has her favorite horse (usually the one she is currently riding), Hannah often visits and grooms most of the 19 Therapy Horses at Triple H. Likewise, the horses know and love Hannah.