

Hearts & Horses

How Two Sugar Land Sisters are Making a Difference

WRITTEN BY JENNIFER WEINER

Photography By Joey T Photography

Brooke gives Molly a big hug

Spiritual leader Mahatma Gandhi inspired his followers with the popular quote, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” Eleven-year-old Madison and nine-year-old Brooke Frohock may not know who Gandhi is, but these Sugar Land girls certainly live by his principles.

These two sisters started an organization called Hearts and Horses, which raises money and awareness for S.I.R.E., Houston’s Therapeutic Equestrian Center. Using their own resources and enthusiasm, the girls raised hundreds of dollars for this organization that provides therapeutic horseback riding to disabled people.

Madison and Brooke know all too well about living with handicaps. Their five-year-old sister, Delaney, was born with part of her brain missing. Physicians refer to it as the Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum, possibly caused by a chromosome deletion. There aren’t any known cases like this in the world, and doctors didn’t think Delaney would survive. “In the beginning, things were rough,” explains mom Gabrielle



Brooke, Molly the horse, Madison and Laney



Madison riding Molly



Madison, Laney on Molly, and Brooke with mom, Gabrielle.

Frohock. “She would have 20 seizures a day. Ambulances were constantly at the house.”

Delaney’s Miracle

Two years ago, while Madison and Brooke were taking horseback riding lessons at Sienna Stables, Delaney also got a chance to ride – and it changed her life. “Therapeutic riding helped Laney to build her core strength,” says Frohock. “She used to just lay there. After years of riding, she crawls and is thriving. She has also made a connection with the animal, despite being unable to talk. They’re so huge, and yet so gentle with her. The horse has an understanding and knows to be careful when riding with a handicapped rider.”

Volunteering for S.I.R.E.

S.I.R.E. relies heavily on its volunteers. Madison and Brooke have volunteered as riders to help train incoming volunteers, but they also have helped financially. “Last year, we made heart-shaped horse muffins and sold them at horse shows as a S.I.R.E. fundraiser,” boasts Brooke. “We came up with the recipes ourselves and did all the baking, from shredding the carrots to mixing up the oats,” adds Madison. The girls raised enough money to purchase a \$500 saddle S.I.R.E. needed to help injured war veterans ride.

Giving comes naturally to the Frohock sisters. Two years ago, they raised \$700 by selling their toys at a garage sale. “We wanted to help pay for Laney’s wheelchair,” shares Brooke. The five-year-old has an impressive ride. Her pink chair has wheel



These little girls with big hearts started “Hearts and Horses,” which raises money for S.I.R.E.

covers that read, “Just for today, be happy,” designed by renowned artist Mary Engelbreit. “At first Laney was given this black wheelchair and I said, ‘Not my little girl,’” explains Gabrielle Frohock. “I contacted Engelbreit and was thrilled with this artwork she designed for Laney.”

A Way of Life

The girls don’t see their volunteerism and fundraising as special. It’s merely a way of life for them. They’re constantly dreaming up new ways to help out in the community. They’re also helping the community understand their special sister. “Handicapped children mean just as much to their parents as any child,” says Frohock. “Before

Delaney, I never saw that. She brings out an acceptance – the neighborhood kids have wheelchair races with her. It’s quite special. They’re learning not to be afraid of someone who is different.” SLM

JENNIFER WEINER is a stay-at-home mom. When she’s not writing, she’s busy chasing after her pride and joy, four-year-old Jacob and one-year-old Matthew.

S.I.R.E. Houston’s Therapeutic Equestrian Centers

For more information about S.I.R.E., to volunteer, or make a donation, visit sire-htec.org. Visit hearts-n-horses.com to learn more about Madison and Brooke’s fundraising efforts for S.I.R.E.