

Hope and Love Option, Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund Save Horses, Heal Heroes



Nanette Dieterle of Hope and Love Option with Raffi and Marnin who arrived at HALO in 2011, just months old and orphaned.

Hope and Love Option, Inc. (HALO), of Bethlehem, CT, has two goals: to rescue and rehabilitate PMU* foals and nurse mare foals, so they can learn to live happily and healthfully with people and to help veterans and others recovering from abuse or experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder.

"You have to pick a place where you can be effective, where you can set something in motion that serves the greater good to the best of your ability," says HALO founder Nanette Dieterle.

For many at-risk foals born into industries where they are viewed as by-products, that place is at the end of a windy road in Bethlehem, CT.

HALO provides therapy to several women and girls through a program based on the EAGALA** model, which focuses on recovery and skills training. Therapy participants learn about themselves and others by participating in activities with horses, and exploring and discussing feelings, behaviors, and patterns.

According to Nanette, therapy participants work with horses on the ground. Interaction with therapy horses requires non-verbal communication, assertiveness, creative thinking and problem-solving, leadership, responsibility, teamwork, relationship and confidence building through-out the healing process. Therapists observe and interpret responses and behavior and guide the healing process.

The foals and mares that provide that healing come from state seizures and animal hoarders, but most of them arrive at HALO as orphaned foals, by-products of a pharmaceutical industry that requires mares be impregnated for the production of hormone replacement therapy medication, but has no use for their foals, and from breeders who keep nurse mares to nurse newborn racehorse thoroughbreds leaving nursing mares' foals orphaned.

"Foals should stay with their mothers for six months," says Nanette. "These babies are orphaned days or weeks after their birth."

These newborn orphaned foals are often sick, malnourished and completely unsocialized, making them difficult to adopt and expensive to rehabilitate.

"They require years of care and training to grow into what society would consider functional," says Nanette, "but they have so much to offer at every stage of development."

"The care of these horses and the role that therapy participants play in the journey these foals take from being rescued, to healing others, to moving on to loving home is integral to the therapy process," says Nanette.

There is a treatment horse for almost everyone at HALO. There are

Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund Helps Provide Hope and Love

A \$2,000 grant to Hope and Love Option (HALO) from the **Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund** enabled HALO to establish a presence in the EAGALA-based abuse-recovery community with the development of a web site, www.hopeandloveoption.org, and marketing materials.

The Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund was established in 2006 by Peter Cable of Harwinton in honor of his wife, Miriam. Through its support of human services organizations, the Fund has provided grants to 15 nonprofits for programs that preserve the history of Northwest CT, improve educational opportunities for local children, support mental health initiatives, and improve the quality of life for elderly and disabled residents. As an endowed fund, the Miriam Mason Cable Trust Fund helps improve life in Northwest CT in perpetuity.

gentle giants, miniature horses with special needs, and young energetic colts and fillies.

"They have all been rescued from abuse, neglect and certain death," says Nanette, "and they all have something unique to offer."



Painty arrived at HALO through a state seizure of horses living in hoarding conditions.

"It's amazing to watch therapy participants and horses pick each other," says Nanette.

One recent therapy participant at HALO felt drawn to Marnin, a large male known for his skittishness and distrust of people.

"I watched her walk toward him," said Nanette, "thinking this is not good; he runs from everyone."

She walked up to him. He studied her, and then he stepped toward her and put his head on her chest.

"Rescuing horses, who in-turn help rescue people," says Nanette, "there is no down side to that."

**The urine of pregnant mares or PMU is used in the manufacturing of Premarin, human female hormone replacement medication.*

***Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association*