

Welcome, citytosaddle@com
 Boston Herald Daily News Tribune MetroWest Daily News Milford Daily News Daily News Transcript Town Online

MILFORD DAILY NEWS

auOnline
 Point your career upward

GET YOUR DEGREE IN
**Organizational
 Psychology
 & Development**

Bachelor's in 13 MONTHS.
 Master's in 10 MONTHS.

[LEARN MORE!](#)

[Home](#) > [News & Opinion](#) > [Local News Coverage](#)

A trot out into the suburbs

By Melissa Monti / Daily News Staff
 Sunday, August 28, 2005

MILLIS – For the past two years, two women have been giving children the rides of their lives – on the backs of horses.

The effort started on a trip to Canada to buy a horse several years ago, when Barbara Zenker and her horseback riding instructor, Kim Summers, decided they wanted to share the sometimes pricey equestrian experience with kids.

Soon after, their dreams turned into City to Saddle – a nonprofit organization that sponsors 6- to 13-year-old children to take free horseback riding lessons.

"I've been riding my whole life and have found that it's inherently an expensive sport. Unfortunately, because of the costly nature of the sport, a lot of children never get to experience it," said Summers. "I thought it would be nice to share it with a more diverse population."

Since the program's inception in 2003, the co-founders have written letters and called the Big Brothers of Massachusetts Bay, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Roxbury, St. Tarcisius Catholic Church in Framingham and the Brewster Housing Authority to find a diverse groups of student to participate.

Originally starting with six students and one stable, the organization now offers a two-week seminar with about 35 kids at several stables in eastern Massachusetts.

Zenker and Summers hold fund-raisers through the stables to fund each student at about \$600 each – sometimes providing transportation, Summers said.

"It was clear to both of us that children responded so intensely to horses and the whole riding experience. And we've recognized as adults that this sport is so expensive and so difficult to access," said Zenker.

Riding campers can't help but agree.

"It's like so good – you get to let out your dreams. (At the camp), you get to ride and it's so fun," said 8-year-old John Docarmo, a past City-to-Saddler, who said he wanted to take lessons before, but couldn't get into an expensive camp near his Holliston home.

"My mom got me into this for free," said Docarmo.

"I like it – you get to trot and post (on horseback). I love the trail rides," said co-camper Noah Johnson, 8, from Dorchester.

[\[continue\]](#)



Maggie Hamilton, 9, of Canton pats Panda Bear at Apple Knoll Farm in Millis. (Mike Springer photo)

Herald Interactive Tools

- [Related articles](#)
- [E-mail article to a friend](#)
- [View text version](#)
- [Search site](#)
- [Sign up for home delivery](#)

CapIt

The
Capi
High
Savi
Acco

3.

- No
- No
- Bali

Click

ML

MILFORD
DAILY NEWS

[Home](#) > [News & Opinion](#) > [Local News Coverage](#)**A trot out into the suburbs**[\[continued from previous page\]](#)

Six volunteers operate the five camps now held at Dunvagen Farm in Wrentham, Apple Knoll Farm in Millis, Grazing Fields in Bourne, Woodsong Farm in Brewster and Dana Hall School in Wellesley – the site of City to Saddle's first camp session in 2003.

Dana Hall is the place where Zenker shook off 30 years of dust from her riding shoes and took lessons with Summers a few years ago.

During the two-week sessions, kids learn basic horsemanship, including riding, grooming, saddling, mounting and dismounting. Volunteers also provide a daily lecture where students learn about different breeds, colors and behavior styles of a horse.

"It's very important to learn what the horse is thinking through its body language," Summers said.

Due to the program's increased popularity, Summers and Zenker will look to hire a professional fund-raiser to accommodate more students. The two are also thinking about developing a scholarship program for outstanding riding students that would let them take free lessons throughout the year.

Last week, campers finished up a two-week camp at the Forest Lane Riding Center at Apple Knoll Farm in Millis. With a degree in equine studies from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Summers also works as the riding director at the farm year round.

For information on how to make donations to City to Saddle, please call 781-891-5920 or send an e-mail to citytosaddle@aol.com.

[« Previous](#) | 1 | [2](#) |

Maggie Hamilton, 9, of Canton pats Panda Bear at Apple Knoll Farm in Millis. (Mike Springer photo)

Herald Interactive Tools

[Related articles](#)[E-mail article to a friend](#)[View text version](#)[Search site](#)[Sign up for home delivery](#)

Melissa Monti can be reached at 508-634-7582 or mmonti@cnc.com.

Today's most read articles Updated 11:30 AM ET

1. [Police log from Monday, September 19, 2005\(973\)](#)
2. [On the fast track: Milford man geared up for career as race car driver\(429\)](#)
3. [Red Hat Society brings color to Milford\(358\)](#)
4. [New faces take out papers for council race\(340\)](#)
5. [Pet projects: Wayland woman among those rescuing Katrina's](#)