

Letter to the Editor, Erie Times-News, January 1, 2010

Horse-riding program praised

It was one of the ironies of life. I am a volunteer for Therapeutic Riding and Equestrian Center, a nonprofit group that uses trained horses to provide safe equine activity to those with special abilities.

Words haven't been made to truly express the joy it can bring to a person when they see the smiles on the faces of those participating in the program. It has always made me realize how small my own problems are.

I was to begin my sixth year of TREC in March when I contracted a virus called GBS and had to be hospitalized. The virus attacked my peripheral nervous system and rendered me paralyzed from the neck down. I was very much like the riders who had inspired me. What would happen to me?

Slowly I improved, gradually going from wheelchair to walker to independent walking. I returned to TREC.

With the help of caring instructors, Karen, Kimberly and Danielle, I learned to sidewalk again. On two occasions, I was able to ride myself. It was then that I began to realize the inner satisfaction that TREC riders must feel, and how blessed I am.

This time of year is often spent in reflection and new resolutions. If it is your intention to devote your time, talent or, treasure to a nonprofit cause, I can think of none more worthy than Therapeutic Riding (trece.org). It will change your life forever.

Thomas Fetterman, Girard