

*Providing More  
Than 40 Years of  
Unbridled Possibilities*

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**Mane Stream**

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

# Current

DECEMBER 2014

## From the Rail

Change is hard. Most of us resist what is new and try to hold on to what is familiar and comfortable. But change is inevitable. And we here at Mane Stream are no more immune to the effects of change than any other organization.

One big change for us was the need to say farewell to our dedicated Executive Director for the last 13 years, Nichola Redmond. Nichola has accepted an exciting new position directing a nonprofit in Virginia.

While it was difficult for us to say good bye to Nichola, we wish her all the best in her new job. And we are secure in the knowledge that we will not lose

touch. Nichola's passion for our organization remains unwavering as she is committed to helping us on a volunteer basis by chairing our Spring Event committee.

Other changes for Mane Stream have come as a result of the changing needs of our community. And we find ourselves having to refine our offerings to better serve those needs. Toward that end we have plans to increase our therapy offerings to better serve the growing numbers of individuals with autism.

In addition, we are looking forward to launching other programs that will provide services for children and adults

By Linda Dietz  
facing and surviving cancer. We also hope to add services for other groups needing equine assisted psychotherapy.

But while many things have changed here at Mane Stream there is much more that has remained the same.

Our mission to continue to improve the lives of individuals with special needs has not changed. Our wonderful and generous horses, our talented and expertly trained staff, and our amazing volunteers remain our greatest assets.

And you, our generous donors and supporters, remain our lifeblood. ***Without you, we could not exist.***

## Lucy's Mitzvah Project - Writing a Book!

The work that we do at Mane Stream has an impact on the lives of many. This includes not only on our participants and volunteers but also on their family members and friends. They in turn share their experiences with the greater community. In this way, we all extend Mane Stream's sphere of influence and benefit.

Sometimes, people are inspired by their experience with Mane Stream to do extraordinary things. This is Lucy's story. Lucy's brother Adam comes to Mane Stream twice a week for equine assisted physical

therapy. Because the therapy at Mane Stream was so helpful to her brother, Lucy wanted to find a way to give back to Mane Stream and because she is a creative person, she found a unique way to do just that!

Lucy wrote a book titled Take a Tall Walk With Me as her mitzvah project for her bat mitzvah which was in April of this year. Lucy talks about her project, "A mitzvah project is like a charitable or big good deed. Because mine was a little bigger than others, I even needed help to complete it."



Lucy is referring to crowd funding the expenses associated with her project. Lucy asked each person invited to her bat mitzvah to donate \$20 to help

*cont. on page 6*

## The Mind of a Champion and the Team at Mane Stream

*Matthew's insatiable desire to improve, learn and progress proves he has the mind of a champion!*

*The work that Mane Stream does is based on a team concept that includes a therapist or instructor, volunteers, a participant and a horse or pony.*

*One of the best examples of teamwork is to watch a session led by Mane Stream's physical therapist Ruth Nortje*



*when she is working with Matthew Fertig. Ruth and Matthew share their perspectives about the experience.*

### **From Ruth:**

Matthew came to PT from the Adaptive Riding program because of a progressive decline in his muscle function and the resultant loss of ability to sit unsupported. He was no longer able to use his arms to steer his horse and perform the tasks required for adaptive horsemanship.

Now 17, Matthew has been working with me for the past 3 years. When we first started to work together, Matthew could barely muster a single hand clap and was totally dependent upon his arms for his trunk posture and sitting balance. At home he was unable to assist with dressing due to needing his arms to support himself and he had

become more dependent upon his wheelchair than in the past. While he had very strong tricep and lateral muscles, he was unable to use his core muscles effectively, and as a result his posture was declining rapidly and he was unable to balance himself. Matthew had also been through surgery for his leg. This caused him pain when sitting on a regular saddle as his leg did not have adequate range of motion to fit in a saddle. But he had never complained about it!

Due to its uniqueness, the availability of equine assisted therapies is critical for people like Matthew and so many of my clients. **There simply is no piece of equipment as dynamic, as repetitive, as movement specific, as adaptable or as stimulating as the horse.**

*cont. on page 4*

## Ask the Expert: What is Carriage Driving?

One of the adaptive horsemanship activities that Mane Stream offers is carriage driving. Carriage driving offers people the opportunity to learn about horses, horsemanship and experience horses in a different way from riding. It is also an equestrian activity that may be more appropriate for some individuals than riding. Driving allows those with disabilities to learn, demonstrate skills and advance in an equestrian sport. People with disabilities often compete against those without disabilities in Combined Driving events.

At Mane Stream, instructors provide a student with training on grooming, harnessing and putting horses to the carriage and carriage driving techniques.



Some of the benefits of driving are similar to riding, including a sense of freedom, development of a bond with the horse and pride in accomplishment. Driving requires a more

*cont. on page 7*

*Did you know?*

*People with disabilities often compete against those without disabilities in Combined Driving Events?*

## Hanging On, 21 Years and Counting: Cynthia Barkman

This volunteer spotlight shines on longtime volunteer Cynthia Barkman, whom you might meet at our Horse Show, Equus Gala, Spring Event, Thursday adaptive riding lessons or any number of community events scheduled throughout the year.

During the past 21 years Cynthia has played many roles in the organization including many different positions within the Board of Directors and is one of our best ambassadors. Now hear her story.

In 1993 when I joined SHHRC (now Mane Stream), it was being run out of the Crossroads Farm by its founder Octavia Brown. It was an organization with a big heart, led by a dynamic woman and on about a buck and a half a day budget. **"I was hooked in a nano-second!"**

21 years later and I still enjoy every minute I spend volunteering for Mane Stream, in every capacity though of course my favorite role is as an adaptive riding lesson volunteer. And part of what makes it so enjoyable is that it fulfills the need to spend my time and whatever financial resources my husband Ron and I can,

to help others. I know that sounds corny and it's certainly not something unique to me. But I feel strongly about the Mane Stream mission and want to do my part to ensure that the organization is adequately funded to do that important work.

Most people want to know that they've been able to make a positive impact on someone else's life. But as a Mane Stream volunteer, I have a front row seat to the greatest show on earth – to witness first-hand the very real, positive impact that Mane Stream programs bring to the lives of our clients. ***That's pretty darn enjoyable or I guess I wouldn't have hung around for 21 years!***

So I have a vested interest in making sure that this organization stays financially healthy which is why I also enjoy being on the Board. And this is an extraordinary Board. It's a relatively small group of people who are passionate about the mission of this organization and dedicate their time and financial resources to ensure that we're here for many more years to come. And since we need to raise almost \$1M a year to

keep the lights on, that's no small feat.



Linda Dietz, Board President & Cynthia Barkman

But here's what never changes – the sacrifices and struggles that our clients and families face in their daily living, 24 x 7, 365 days a year. Many parents of children we serve will never get the opportunity to experience with their child so many of the little things that we often take for granted – that first day at dance class, karate, soccer - or shopping for that first prom suit or gown. And we can't give that to them. But we can play an important role in achieving other goals – goals that to each individual client or family are real and tangible - and fulfilling.

Thinking about it in this context helps to keep me grounded and keenly aware that challenges in my life, probably pales in comparison to what Mane Stream families tackle every day of theirs. But we know that whether we're giving of our time, our financial resources, or both, the commitment we make to ***Mane Stream brings each family one step closer to a more typical childhood or life – and there's nothing more motivating than that.***

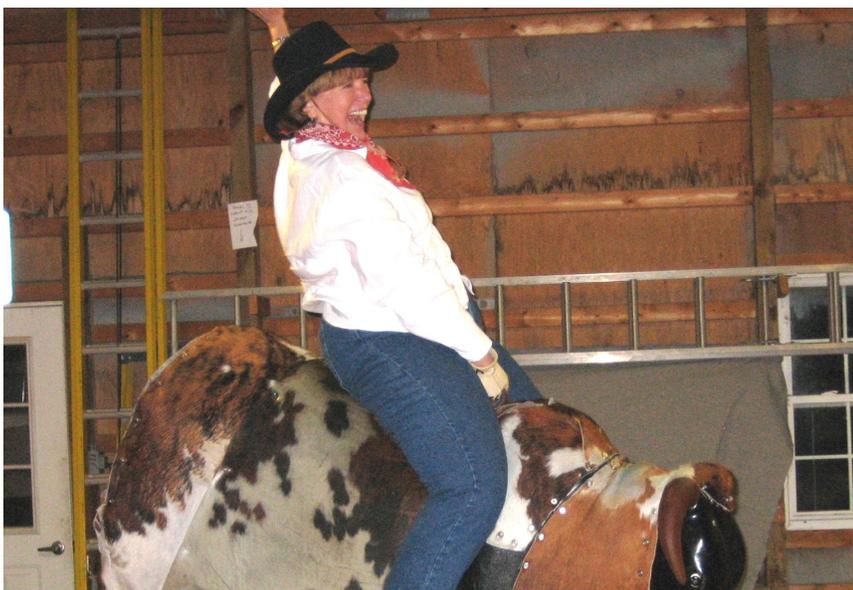
### MAKE AN IMPACT

Consider...

- ...volunteering for an event
- ...sponsoring a horse
- ...becoming a leader/sidewalker
- ...assist with fundraising efforts

**ACT NOW**

[info@manestreaminc.org](mailto:info@manestreaminc.org)



Cynthia Barkman, accomplished bull rider and current VP of the Board of Directors, previous Assistant Treasurer and Director, Chair of the Operations Committee, Special Event Committees, Co-Chair of the Equus silent auction, Ring Steward at the Mane Stream Horse Show, Adaptive Riding Lesson Volunteer & dedicated major donor.

## The Mind of a Champion, continued

Most therapy settings fall short of providing the required workouts to produce optimal progress for children with disabilities. There is a fairly narrow window of opportunity that needs to be maximized and I believe that through the assistance of the horse, we provide that here at Mane Stream!

Matthew started on our gently moving "couch" Beyra one of our Norwegian Fjord ponies, and progressed to our dynamo Minnie, the monster truck version of a Norwegian Fjord!

Matthew is now able to sit unsupported for up to 15 minutes at a time against Minnie's huge stride, against the strong resistance of her halts and the acceleration of her take off (talk about an abdominal workout!) and finally also against her stride whilst going up and downhill.

He progressed from requiring maximum balance support with

a wide western saddle, to now working on just a thin bareback pad, maximizing the balance and core muscle challenges provided by the horse.

Due to the gains in his core muscle strength, **Matthew's spine alignment improved significantly** - much to the astonishment of his physician - which is a lifelong gain at this age.

Matthew is now able to get himself in and out of bed - a very meaningful gain for a young man. Just in the past month, Matthew was able, for the first time ever, to actively sit up straighter by contracting his Abs, going beyond "just holding" his posture!

Driven to excel, Matthew refuses to be confined by his body's limitations and is eager to work for better and higher levels of function and performance.

**Matthew's insatiable desire to improve, learn and progress proves he has the mind of a champion!**

As a two-time Olympian myself, this mindset resonates strongly with me and makes for an incredibly dynamic workout team: do we ever have fun, and do we ever sweat it out! Matthew always wants more - he works at it with every fiber of his being, every session. On the sports field, Matthew was able to shatter all his own personal bests, and several National records by large margins at the National Championships!

### From Matthew:

Over the past few years of doing PT at Mane Stream I have gained a lot of independ-

ence, self-confidence, endurance, physical strength and functional ability. I have a lot more endurance than before and feel so proud of my achievements whenever I am able to do something new or difficult, and when we meet new goals.

**PT on the horse has made a huge difference in my life.** I am now able to get myself in and out of bed. I am able to sit by myself on the edge of my bed and pull on a shirt with so much less help than before. I can now also get in and out of the bus - even without my brace on! I am walking better than ever as my legs have gotten stronger too. All of this helps me in my track and field competition.

I now have an extensive training schedule which includes working with a personal trainer on Saturdays. I also just competed at the Track and Field Nationals in Iowa where I set personal bests in all of my 10 individual events and won 4 Gold medals and 7 silver medals (including a 4 x 100m relay)!

Ruth really helped motivate me with her Olympic experience before I went to compete and I remembered the things she said when I raced. I am able to use my arms so much more freely due to the strength gains in my core muscles. Because I no longer have hip pain from the long stretches I get on the horse, I am able to flex much deeper in my racer. I also have much better balance and endurance.

**Ruth & I are quite the team! She pushes me to my limits and I always feel so proud when I succeed or learn a new skill.**

*Matthew recently competed at the Track & Field Nationals in Iowa where he set personal bests in all 10 of his individual events, won 4 Gold medals & 7 silver medals (including a 4x100m relay)!*



# Mane Stream Highlighted in new Therapy Horse Book

A new series of books has been released: **Horses That Help with the American Humane Association.**

Geared toward 3rd & 4th graders, the chapter books highlight horses with special jobs. Devoted to Draft, Performing, Police and Therapy horses, all of the books open with a true story and close with a retirement section. Interior chapters cover history, horse breeds, training, and horses on the job. The strong emotional bond that develops between working horses and their people resonates throughout.

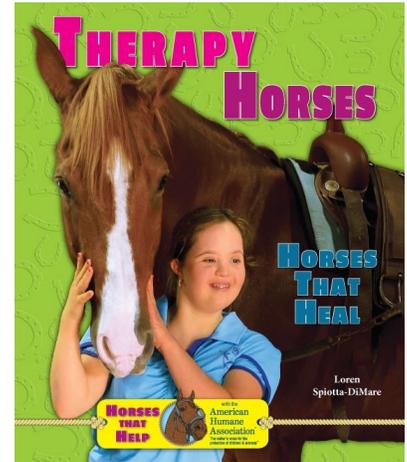
The series was written by long-time animal book author and Quarter Horse owner, Loren Spiotta-DiMare of Tewksbury.

While researching **Therapy Horses:**

**Horses That Heal,** Spiotta-DiMare spent a good deal of time at Mane Stream interviewing former director Nichola Redmond, physical therapists, speech therapists, volunteers and parents of several participants.

Michelle Purri of Clinton Township and the author's horse, Elwood appear on the cover and in the introductory chapter of **Therapy Horses.** As a five-year-old Michelle was a participant at Mane Stream (called Somerset Hills Handicapped Riders at the time.) Today at twenty two, she takes weekly Western riding lessons on Elwood with the author's trainer, Tiffany Totorello of Pittstown.

Many of the photos in **Therapy Horses** and the other titles were contributed by Rozina Smith of Washington, NJ.



“Rozina did an excellent job of capturing the beauty of the horses and the many important jobs they are called upon to perform,” Spiotta-DiMare says.

The books are available in hardcover (\$20.00) and softcover (\$10.00).

To order an autographed copy contact: [author@LorensReadingRoom.com](mailto:author@LorensReadingRoom.com)

## Meet Sasha and Ranger

They may be the most petite members of the Mane Stream equine staff but they are as exceptional as the other horses in our herd. Both ponies came to us through the sharingVillage Driving for Surviving program and their job is driving.



Sasha

Sasha is a 9 year old bay Shetland cross mare. Although you may think she is a miniature horse, at 39 inches, she is considered a small pony. Miniature horses are no taller than 34 inches at the withers (the point at their neck where the mane ends), though there is a subcategory of Mini B which are between 34 inches and 38 inches at the withers.

Don't let her diminutive size fool

you, she likes running with the big girls and can keep them in line! Just as she knows her own mind, she knows her job, nothing fazes her and she is very happy to work with the children in a lesson.

Ranger, or Kid Rocket Ranger if you want to call him by his full name, is a registered American Shetland pony gelding. He is 19 years old and measures 43 inches at the withers, making him a hair under 11 hands tall. Ranger stands out with his bold bay paint coloring & his personality is just as remarkable. He is sweet and inquisitive, always wanting to know what you are doing when you work around him. He is a high energy pony and loves to work. It is very obvious when you get to know him that he always tries to do his best. Ranger has become a real favorite at Mane Stream.

For a pony or horse to be considered as suitable for the driving program at Mane Stream, he or she must be at least 5 years old with 2 years of consistent and varied

driving experience. They must have impeccable manners in harness, meaning they must stand quietly while being hooked to the vehicle and must stand absolutely still when asked.

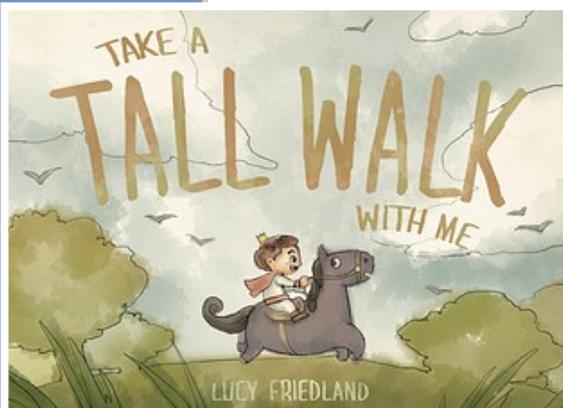
Driving is counterintuitive for a horse, a prey animal whose instinct is to run when being chased. This is one of the reasons that horses wear blinkers, because if they saw the carriage behind them out of the corner of their eye, their flight response might take over. Since taking away their peripheral vision with the blinkers is necessary, the horse must trust and follow the drivers rein, voice and whip aids. Sasha and Ranger have mastered these abilities well.



Ranger

## Lucy's Mitzvah Project, continued

fund her project. Lucy continues, "Let me just cut right to the point... I wrote a book. Not just any book, no, I wrote a hard cover, fully illustrated, self-published, available on my website, [takeatallwalkwithme.com](http://takeatallwalkwithme.com) and on amazon.com, children's book. And not to toot my own horn, but it is not half bad.



*"Mane Stream is the place that really helped Adam to walk when we weren't sure he ever would. So I wrote this book to help spread awareness of equine assisted therapy."*

**This book is about a prince named Adam, of course!**

I wrote this book to help spread awareness of equine assisted therapy. Mane Stream is the place that really helped Adam to walk when we weren't sure he ever would. My favorite thing about Mane Stream is the way they get the kids on the horses. They have this lovely ramp/stairs that the kids climb up and can get on the horse from higher ground. But if you're in a wheel chair, they have got you covered. There is this huge contraption that they

use and you get on the horse pretty easily. I really enjoy contraptions and this is definitely my favorite. My family is heavily involved in Mane Stream and I hope to follow in their footsteps."

"Now, back to my book. I wrote this book with Adam's help a while back. A couple months later I picked it up again, wondering about illustrations. I did not think I could illustrate it myself. I am not the best artist. I posted a job on a freelance website and got 107 responses. 107 people wanted to work for me, and even more importantly, wanted to help! I looked at each one of their portfolios, and there was one person I particularly liked. His name is Joe Pee; he lives in New Zealand and he is very talented. I realized that it was very expensive to hire him and also get the book published. So, I asked for donations and people sent them in. It was great! I hired Joe, sent him my book and illustration suggestions and within a couple of days I got the first couple of pages. It was such a great experience and without a doubt, one that I would do over again.

I will be putting the books in doctors' offices, approaching local bookstores to sell it, and donating 200 copies to Mane Stream to keep in their waiting room and to sell fundraising

events. I will be reading my book to children in schools and I will continue to find ways to market my book and let people know about Mane Stream."

Lucy learned much on this author's journey. Every step from concept to publication and marketing taught her new skills from editing to breaking down text for paging and story flow to communicating her vision to the illustrator and learning publication specifications. She will tell you that Adam is the person who inspired her since he has accomplished so much with his own personal journey.



When asked, "What was the best part of the project?" Lucy quickly replied, "Seeing Adam's face when he saw the book." Sometimes, the end result really is priceless.

Be a **SUPER HERO** and make a donation to our Spring Tack Sale

**We're looking for tack, saddles, riding clothes and anything horse related.**



## Waverly Wins Great Pumpkin Race



This year's Fall Festival (aka Ride-A-Thon) was a tremendous success thanks to all of those who made donations and gathered sponsors. The generosity of our volunteers, participants, friends and families helped us raise over \$10,200.00!

Mane Stream's Pumpkin Patch was filled with pumpkins representing the many donations that were received. All of Mane Stream's horses and ponies had pumpkins in their patches. Waverly was bestowed with the honor of the "Great Pumpkin" for receiving the most donations in his name and Carson and Myrell were big contributors as well.

The ring was decorated in a beautiful Fall theme to help us celebrate and we were able to show our appreciation for all of our wonderful volunteers with treats and hot apple cider generously donated by Melick's Town Farm.

## Ask the Expert, continued

intense focus, decision making and action planning than riding, so participation in driving can help an individual practice those skills. Participants also describe the benefits of driving to include: making friends, gaining self-confidence and having fun.

In adaptive driving at a PATH accredited center, driving lessons are taught by a PATH certified driving instructor and students or participants sit in a cart (two-wheeled vehicle) or a carriage (four-wheeled vehicle) with an adult, experienced whip (driver). At first, two sets of reins are used: one for the experienced driver and one for the student. This way the experienced driver has a means of control in the event of an emergency or can help the student by emphasizing the rein aid if needed.

Once a student becomes more adept with his or her driving skills, the experienced driver will continue to drive with the student but will not have a set of reins. When the instructor feels that the student has progressed to the point of being an independent driver they will no longer have an experienced driver in the vehicle with them.

During driving lessons, students learn to control their horse at the walk and trot on the straight and through turns as well as changing gaits and halting with accuracy by practicing school figures (circles, figure eight and serpentine—a series of connected curves and straight lines).

After a student has mastered those basic skills they can put them to use by driving a cones course where pairs of cones are set up as narrow gates. A weighted ball is placed on top of the cones and it will fall to the ground if a cone is "bumped". These courses can be driven at a variety of paces to make it interesting.

Students who have developed the necessary skills can leave the ring for a bit of off-road driving which is great fun!

There are also competition opportunities for students with advanced skills in both pleasure driving classes and horse driving trials.

*Who knows, maybe there will be a driving team at Mane Stream one day.*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**Boot Scootin'  
Bar B Que**

Saturday, May 30, 2015

6:30pm - 11pm

**LIVE BAND and LINE DANCING**

Whole Roast Pig with all the fixin's



## Young Philanthropists

By Denise Cooke

Abby Werbel and Isabella Pizzo, two young ladies from Far Hills, turned 7 and 8 this past summer. But instead of having friends bring presents to their party, they asked that donations be made to Mane Stream.

They knew of us from Abby's mom, Jamie, who has been a supporter for several years. They came to the farm one afternoon to present us with the donations. Both being riders, the girls enjoyed a tour and meeting some members of our special herd. Above (l-r), Isabella, Abby and Blaze are with Linda Dietz, President of the Board of Directors, who came to receive the gift. We are so gratified when children this young show such a philanthropic spirit and an interest in a local organization where they can have a real impact. We thank Abby and Isabella again and hope they remain involved with us for years to come.

## The Partners of Mane Stream, We Thank You!

There are a lot of partners in the Mane Stream Team. It's the time of year to be thankful for those who have helped and supported Mane Stream throughout the year.

Volunteers, participants and donors are visible members of the team. Yet there are many behind the scenes team members that support Mane Stream in ways you may not have heard about.

Many of our suppliers help Mane Stream through discounts and access to resources that we may not have or own.

Our hay supplier, **Bob Hoffman**, also donated hay bales for seating at the Boot Scootin' BBQ.

**Scott Previte**, our wonderful farrier who takes such great care of the horses and came through with 300 mini shoes for an event.

**Dr. Jim Smith**, the Mane Stream herd dentist, keeps everyone smiling with his equine dental services.

**Leslie Brooks**, an Equine massage therapist, treats our herd throughout the year, keeping them all more comfortable.

When there is an outdoor project with which we need some extra help, **Craig Tweedie** is always there to lend a hand.

Finally, let us count the ways that the wonderful **Running "S" Veterinary team** and the Staller Family have supported Mane Stream: provides excellent medical care, free vaccines through requests from the Veterinary Technicians at Running "S", **Dr. Greg Staller** donates all the veterinary supplies required to take care of Mane Stream's herd of 14 horses and ponies from his clinic and is able to provide some services at no cost.

**Catherine Haddad Staller** donated a portion of the winnings from Mane Stream Hotmail as well as increasing the visibility of Mane Stream in the horse world.

These often unseen team members help keep Mane Stream's mission possible for so many people.



**Mane Stream**  
PO Box 305  
83 Old Turnpike Road

## JOIN THE TEAM

Make a difference in your life and the lives of others.

Explore our website at [www.manestreaminc.org](http://www.manestreaminc.org)

Complete & send in your prospective volunteer forms by emailing Carol Ferris at [volunteer@manestreaminc.org](mailto:volunteer@manestreaminc.org) or call with any questions at 908-439-9636 x204



## MAKE AN IMPACT

Donate now to help support Mane Stream's diverse programs of equine assisted activities and therapies.

You may send a check to the address below, call with a credit card number or go to our website and click on the [Make a Donation](#) button on the How You Can Help page.

Providing *Unbridled Possibilities* for Children and Adults with Special Needs

Phone: 908-439-9636 ■ Fax: 908-439-2338 ■ E-mail: [info@manestreaminc.org](mailto:info@manestreaminc.org) ■ Web: [www.manestreaminc.org](http://www.manestreaminc.org)