

PEGASUS THERAPEUTIC RIDING
Formerly Pegasus Riding Academy for the Handicapped
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A New Name for the Pegasus Riding Academy for the Handicapped

PEGASUS THERAPEUTIC RIDING

Palm Desert, September 7, 2013: Pegasus a 32 year old community based non-profit organization that provides equine therapy to “special needs” individuals, of all ages and all disabilities at no cost, has changed their name from *Pegasus Riding Academy for the Handicapped* to:

PEGASUS THERAPEUTIC RIDING

All Special Needs, All Ages

Thirty-two years ago, here in the Coachella Valley, Pegasus came into being. Back then they began with only two or three retired horses, and a few Pegasus clients who were all considered handicapped, referring to physical disabilities. Before long, Lori Sarner, our current President and Founder of today’s Pegasus, took over the struggling equine therapy program and began to build its stable of therapy trained horses, its recognition by the Special Needs classes and Foundations in the desert, and its reputation as a medically approved program. Then, In the early 90’s as Pegasus grew, so did the type of disabilities that were treated. Today, approximately 60% of the riders are mentally “developmentally challenged.” It became obvious to **Pegasus** that a new name was needed that properly spoke to the general public, physicians, families and/or caretakers regarding what **Pegasus** provided. *“Our new name says exactly what **Pegasus** offers”, stated Karen Renberg, Vice President of Pegasus, Operations. **“Therapeutic Riding for ‘All Special Needs’ and ‘All Ages’**”.*

Treatment for Multiple Disorders, using the aid of animals or “Hippos Therapy” is not a new concept. Historically this therapy literally refers to treatment or therapy aided by the use of a horse. Its earliest recorded mention is in the ancient Greek writing of Hippocrates. Known today as Equine Therapy, this form of treatment was not approved for use in the United States by the AMA until the early 60’s. Originally Equine Therapy was used for those recovering from Polio and leg injuries. Later the therapy began to be used for other disabilities, including various mental developmental disorders, Autism, Down Syndrome, etc. Currently Pegasus riders represent over **forty different special needs**. **Pegasus** continues to refine its six page Rider Application so that their trained Instructors will know what they are treating, and that a Physician had approved this therapy for the client.

Pegasus serves more than 200 disabled children and adults, most come by bus, paid for by Pegasus, most come from “Special Needs” classes from all three of the Unified School Districts; as well as Angel View, Desert Arc, The Stroke Recovery Center, United Cerebral Palsy, and ‘Home School’ *special needs*. Therapy is also available on Saturdays, family or guardians providing transportation. The Pegasus horses are all donated or adopted and are trained for about a year to be therapy animals. Classes are held Wednesday through Saturday, from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm, each class is 30 minutes. The **Pegasus** horses are the heart and soul of the organization, and will live the rest of their lives at the Pegasus facility under the care of Virginia Davis, Ranch/Stable Manager. Pegasus is always seeking volunteers. Please call Karen Renberg, volunteer coordinator, at 760-413-5054 for more information. The **Pegasus Therapeutic Riding** facility is at 35-450-B

Pegasus Court, in Palm Desert, close to Xavier School, on Chase School Road. This year's riding season will start October 16, 2013 and continue through May, 2014.

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