

A young girl with blonde hair is blowing a dandelion seed head. The background is a lush green field with several horses grazing. The overall scene is bright and sunny, with a soft focus on the girl's face.

**Annual Report 2009**

*Mystic Mountain*  
**Training Center**

**Mystic Mountain Training Center**

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**Denise Olczak**  
Executive Director

**Our mission  
is building a safe  
and healthy world  
for children and  
families through  
mentoring,  
discipleship  
and teamwork.**

**Lives Touched in 2009:**

- \* 54 Adult and Teen Volunteers
- \* 103 Day Camp Participants
- \* 600 Parents and Friends for the Friday Night Programs
- \* 105 Day at a Horse Farm Participants
- \* 196 Ball and Prom Attendees
- \* 12 Spa Day Attendees
- \* 14 Horse Lovers
- \* 1 Extremely Dedicated (and sometimes crazy) Executive Director

**Dear Mystic Mountain Friends,**

Hold on tight as I share with you just a tiny bit of a recent Mystic Mountain whirlwind. My story begins this past spring when mothers and children from a homeless shelter in Erie came out to visit us for **A Day at a Horse Farm**. Just as I finished welcoming everyone, I felt a tug on my shirt. A beautiful little girl with eyes wide as saucers, and braided beaded hair that bounced with her every word, stomped her little foot and defiantly announced, "I don't like horses and I don't want to be here!" I assured her that she was allowed to have her opinion, but today we were going to learn about horses, and at the end of the day I would very much like to know what she thought about them. She agreed, and we were off to the barn to meet and greet the horses.



Marble, our beautiful dappled grey mare, is always a favorite. She was brought out and each student learned how to say hello. Then they were off to a classroom activity in another building. Within five minutes the barn door flew open and there was my defiant new friend. **"Marble missed me!"** she loudly proclaimed and threw her arms around Marble's neck. Who would have guessed?



The next session was on the topic of grooming, so each child received a brush, and instructions on how to use it. Three children were placed on each side of Marble, and there was **Marble's new friend**, brushing up a dust storm, singing and chattering a mile a minute. "Would you hold this please?" she calmly

asked as she handed me her brush. Once again she threw her arms around Marble's neck as the horse gently dropped her big head into the little girl's waiting arms. **"Oh Marble, let me tell you my story!"** and little girl gibberish was all that could be discerned. Just as quickly as the gibberish had started, it ended, as the child politely requested the return of her brush, I turned to see tears running down her mother's and the group leader's faces.

Later, I learned that this dear child had been through things that no child should have to endure. As a result, she had climbed inside of herself and would let no one near to touch or to talk with her. Several therapists had tried unsuccessfully to reach her over many months and sessions, yet God had used a beautiful dappled grey horse with a kind and gentle spirit to reach her heart in just under two hours. **She was out of the whirlwind!**

Everyday is a new adventure at Mystic Mountain as we touch and change lives, whether they be inner city or rural youth. To all of you who stand with us, **THANK YOU!**

**-Denise Olczak, Executive Director**



**Mystic Mountain Training Center**  
located in the hills of southwest Erie County  
Pennsylvania, is a non-profit, faith based organization,  
offering high adventure, hands-on learning programs  
for children and adults.

**Summer Day Camps:**

The four, week long, 2009 Summer Camp experiences consisted of:

- Teen Leadership Development
- Young Explorers
- New Frontiers
- Great Adventure Day Camp

All camps offered equine, shooting sports, canoeing, fine arts, and environmental experiences.



The hallmark of this program has always been our one-on-one mentoring. Our rifle instructors are all NRA certified, the summer

equestrian program has met **Christian Camping Horsemanship International** standards, thereby allowing certificates to be awarded to the campers. Two of our adult instructors spent a week in Oregon at a Leadership Summit hosted by **Crystal Peaks Youth Ranch**.



In 2010 we are looking forward to initiating many unique changes for our tenth anniversary. One addition to our Great Adventure line up is the development of a new **Advance Camp** where kids choose one favorite activity to excel at.

**Programs:**

**A Day at a Horse Farm** is an all day field trip for children of all ages to engage in a hands on approach to horses, and learn not to be intimidated by their size. In 2010 we are looking forward to offering this unique and rewarding experience to over 90 kids from the **Erie School District's** after school Champs program.



**Board of Directors:**

- Michael Mitchell, President
- Matthew Maynard, Vice-President
- Denise Olczak, Secretary
- Dennis Cholak, Treasurer
- Jessica Maynard, Admin. Assistant
- William Olczak, Business Manager
- Mary Ann Lindenberger

**Volunteer Advisory Committee:**

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- Brittany Bilski
- Kelly Boisvert
- Alan Duda
- Melanie Hurta
- Jane Lenart
- Sandy Mitchell
- Becky Nicely
- Bev & Terry Sadler
- Rachael Sadler
- Mary Frances Stainbrook
- Michelle Winkelbauer

**Financials:**

**Income:**

|                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| In-kind Volunteer Time | 155,600          |
| Camp Income            | 17,204           |
| Grants                 | 14,500           |
| Individual/Business    | 6,375            |
| Fundraisers            | 3,046            |
| Program Income         | 845              |
| <b>Total Income</b>    | <b>\$197,570</b> |

**Expenses:**

|                       |                  |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Operations            | 108,498          |
| Camp Expenses         | 80,071           |
| Program Expenses      | 5,080            |
| Staff Training        | 4,715            |
| Building/Equipment    | 2,716            |
| Fundraising           | 1,221            |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> | <b>\$202,301</b> |

**Your donation could help us close this financial gap.**



Two **Horse Lovers' Weekends** were hosted in 2009 for Mother-Daughter couples, which resulted in both improved riding skills, and also a deeper mother-daughter bond.

A **Ladies Spa Day** was hosted for local women where they were treated to a professional massage, makeovers, uplifting teachings, time to spend with a professional counselor, and opportunity to relax in the hot tub. Evaluations from the participants contained extremely positive feedback, including, *"I feel like a new woman!"*

**Fundraising:**

Two major fundraising events occurred in 2009. The 8th Annual Victorian Ball, for teens and their families, and the Erie Christian Prom, for teens from Erie, Crawford, and Warren counties, as well as Ohio and New York, were hosted to raise funds for the Summer Camp Scholarship Fund. We also launched our first annual campaign appeal to which we received many responses.

Mystic Mountain is not financially supported by any particular church, organization, or government agency. Our operating funds come from friends like you who believe in our mission of spreading the "good news" in a unique and captivating way. In 2010 we need to raise an additional \$60,000 to meet salary and facility development needs. Would you consider a monthly contribution of any size to partner with us on this Great Adventure?

**The Board and Staff of Mystic Mountain Training Center would like to thank our volunteers and donors. Thank you for all you do to support this mission!**

Donors:

Action Drilling  
 American Airtight Windows  
 Dennis & Laura Baker  
 Dr Stanley Bogusz  
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 Doris Yonil  
 Robert & Michelle Zehr

Teen Staff:

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
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| Gretchen Landin   | Spencer Zeyfang  |

**A special thank you to all those not mentioned who have supported us through in-kind services, volunteering, and prayer!  
 We could not do it without you!**

