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Twinkie cannon, other homemade creations to be featured at Makevention

By Rick Seltzer

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Here are the basic ingredients in a Twinkie cannon.

Put together a pressure chamber and ball valve. Fill the chamber with pressurized air from a compressor. You'll also need some wadding — plastic bags work best.

"You can shoot the Twinkie a good hundred feet," said Jenett Tillotson, a member of Bloominglabs and organizer for Makevention, an event Saturday in Bloomington.

"We shot each other

with Twinkies for a while to make sure we wouldn't hurt anybody," Tillotson said. "What's the highest psi before it got dangerous? Luckily, Twinkies absorb the impact pretty well."

Those who aren't quite ready to make their own Twinkie cannons will still have the chance to see one in action Saturday at the first ever Makevention. The event, which Bloominglabs is hosting at the Bloomington/Monroe County Convention Center, will run from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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STEPH LANGAN | HERALD-TIMES

Jenett Tillotson shoots a Twinkie out of a homemade gun in this photo from 2012.

PALS Therapeutic riding service gets permanent home

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been riding Lola once a week for 15 weeks — working on her balance, core strength and communication skills.

Lisenbardt stands on a wooden platform with Renie, who pushes a button that causes a hydraulic lift to raise the platform about three feet. From there, Lisenbardt helps Renie climb onto a felt pad on Lola's back.

Holding onto a leather handle, Renie says "Aww!" (her version of "Walk"), and Lola begins walking around the arena, flanked by Lisenbardt and three "side walkers." Each time Renie spots a stuffed animal on top of an orange cone, she pulls back on the reins and says "Oh!" (her version of "Whoa!"), which signals Lola to stop. Lisenbardt then picks up the stuffed animal and hands it to Renie.

"The warmth of the horse helps her muscles relax," says Fern Bonchek, PALS' executive director. "And the movement of the horse stimulates Renie's diaphragm, helping her with communication."

Adam Long, Renie's father, says when Renie goes to bed on the nights before her riding sessions, she will often excitedly "sign" the word for Lola — adding that her love affair with Lola is evidenced by the more than 100 horse figurines and stuffed animals she has at home.

New digs

For the past decade, PALS' home had been a rented facility at Ellington Stables at 680 W. That Road.

But PALS has bought a new facility and 20 acres of land from Toby and Heather Turner, who bought the barn in an auction in 2003 after the previous owner, David Hinkle, died. Since that purchase, the Turners had been using the facility to run a horse-boarding business called Turner's Arena.

Bonchek said the newly renovated Equine Community Center enables PALS to house all its programs, staff, volunteers and horses under one roof. "It provides more of a community feeling among the staff," she said. "We can now more easily work together in a team environment."

She said PALS' indoor horse arena is twice as large as its former arena, and the organization now has an outdoor arena.

"We've already been able to expand our programming and expand our hours later into the evening," Bonchek said. "We'll eventually offer Friday and Saturday lessons as well."

The nonprofit organization has already added an *Equine Experiential Education* program, a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana that works on problem solving and communication skills and teamwork among Bigs, Littles and parents; Horses for Heroes for service veterans with physical or psychological disabilities; and Summer Camp featuring intensive riding and activities for camp kids.

She said by the end of 2017, PALS will have added three more programs — Equine Facilitated Learning that provides equestrian activities focusing on educational themes and standards; Hippotherapy that uses interactions with horses to facilitate physical, occupational and speech therapy for children age 2 and older; and a training program that allows people to become certified by PATH



CHRIS HOWELL | HERALD-TIMES

Lorene Long, 3, takes a ride on Lola Tuesday.

Celebration Saturday

People and Animal Learning Services will have a free, family-friendly event to celebrate its new home and to announce the launching of Phase 2 of its "Gallop for Growth" capital campaign from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday at 7644 W. Elwren Road.

There will be horse demonstrations on the hour, kids' activities, facility tours, food and door prizes — plus a noon program featuring several speakers and a ribbon-cutting.

It's hoped the capital campaign will raise just over \$1 million, which would cover the cost of buying and renovating the new facility situated on 20 acres, three years of operating expenses, program expansion and equipment.

Phase 1 raised about \$500,000 in cash and in-kind support which included a \$50,000 grant from the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, plus another \$75,500 in pledges from individuals that will be paid by December 2015. The goal of Phase 2 is to raise \$500,000 by the end of 2015, the amount needed to pay back PALS' bank loan, allowing the nonprofit to own the facility free and clear.

PALS Fun Show — The PALS Fun Show will be 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Oct. 12, at the Equine Community Center at 7644 W. Elwren Road in Bloomington. All PALS riders will participate in a day of equine-assisted activities while family and friends cheer them on.

PALS Web site — www.palstherapy.org.

International as therapeutic horse riding instructors.

By that time, PALS will have eight programs, counting the two programs that have been continued from the old facility — therapeutic riding and recreational riding.

"That will increase the number of participants we serve by more than 50 percent," Bonchek said. PALS' new home features 15 acres of fenced pasture for its 10 horses.

"This gives our horses a better quality of life, so they can be healthier and happier," Bonchek said. "And as we expand the program, we will be able to add more horses to our herd."

PALS had only 10 stalls at its former home and now has 35. Some of the stalls in each barn are filled with horses whose owners pay PALS monthly boarding fees.

Bonchek said since PALS began its programs at its new facility in June, it has doubled its number of full- and part-time staff to 12 — adding a barn manager, more instructors and other employees.

"It's wonderful to have a forever home," Bonchek said. "This a place we can call our own, a place we can expand in the years ahead to serve the different needs of individuals in our community."

MAKEVENTION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

It's a way to get exposure for the maker movement and bring together that movement's participants, according to Tillotson.

The maker movement is basically made up of people who like to create things. Think of it as a do-it-yourself trend involving enthusiasts of all types.

Makers can include ham radio hobbyists and soap producers. They can be screen printers and technology tinkerers.

"A lot of people think the maker movement is all about electronics," Tillotson said. "There's certainly that aspect to it, but we have a lot of makers who don't know how to program a computer, who aren't even computer literate."

Makevention admission will be free to the public. More than 30 exhibitors representing maker pursuits from around the area are scheduled to be on hand.

"A lot of these groups are excited about meeting each other and then also engaging the public and getting the word out," Tillotson said. "We're just in it to party together and make stuff at the same time."

Aside from the Twinkle cannon, Makevention will feature a flying disc throwing contest from FIRST Robotics. Bloomingslabs plans to bring its laser cutter and vacuum former. The vacuum former will be available to make molds of objects, molds that can then be used to make soap at a booth set up by the Bloomington-based Soapy Soap Co.

Other highlights include a textile booth that will allow visitors to add screen printing to a T-shirt or transform it in other ways. Bloomington Battle Games Club, a group that stages mock medieval-type battles with foam-padded weapons, will be there. The group makes much of its own armor and weapons, according to Tillotson.

At least one classic do-it-yourself activity will be represented, too. Organizers plan a Pinewood Derby track with cars on hand for racing. They're also encouraging scouts to bring their own cars for the track.

Makevention is based on the idea of Maker Faires, events that are held across the country.

The Bloomington event's name is a play off Hamvention, a ham radio event held in Dayton, Ohio,

Saturday shopping list

- Hoosier to Hoosier Community Sale (H2H): 8 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Warehouse, 1525 S. Rogers St., \$5 admission before 9:30 a.m. Cash only.
- Habitat ReStore Patio Sale: 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., 2450 S. Henderson St.
- Vintage Vogue by Goodwill Sale: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 422 E. Kirkwood Ave.
- Near Westside Neighborhood Association community yard sale: 8 a.m.-4 p.m., between North Adams and North Rogers streets on the west and east, and West Ninth Street and West Kirkwood Avenue on the north and south. Stop by 702 W. Seventh St. to pick up a flier showing the locations.
- IU Surplus Stores: 9 a.m.-3 p.m., 2931 E. 10th St.
- Unitarian Universalist Church garage sale: 8 a.m.-1 p.m., 2120 N. Fee Lane.
- Makevention: 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Bloomington/Monroe County Convention Center, 302 S. College Ave.

MORE INFORMATION

- On Makevention, at <http://makevention.org>.
 - On the H2H sale, at www.indiana.edu/sustain/programs/hoosier-to-hoosier
- Email h2h@indiana.edu for questions about donations or volunteering.

according to Tillotson.

Since this is Makevention's first year, organizers aren't sure how many visitors to expect. They're hoping for at least 500.

Makevention is a stop on this year's annual Resale

Trail communitywide garage sale. The Resale Trail also includes the Hoosier to Hoosier Community Sale, which peddles castoffs from Indiana University students who moved out in the spring.



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