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Photo:Leslie Charleson and Romero Photo Credit: Courtesy of Leslie Charleson.

General Hospital's Leslie Charleson Raises Funds For New Canaan Mounted Troop

New Canaan, CT – September 7, 2006 – On July 23, 2006 Leslie Charleson hosted “Brunch with the Quartermaines” as part of General Hospital fan club weekend at the Sports Club Lodge in Studio City, CA. This charity event was created and produced by Charleson, the renowned actress from television’s *General Hospital*. The brunch raised an unprecedented \$7,500 for NCMT.

Charleson recently reunited with the NCMT after many years of riding there. “Charleson called and said she had not seen the Troop since she was a child and wondered if she could visit. I told her that would be great and asked her to give me a call when she was in Connecticut,” said Michelle Schmerzler, President of NCMT. “Leslie responded, ‘I am in Connecticut. In fact, I am right around the corner,’ so I told her to come right over.” Schmerzler and the students happily welcomed her back to the place where here love of horses was fostered many years ago.

Schmerzler led Charleson on a tour around the facility and talked about the programs they offer. She also explained the importance of the New Canaan Mounted Troop’s Capital Campaign that would help build a much needed new barn. Charleson was impressed with the level of care the horses received, as well as the enthusiasm of the students in the program. Charleson committed to helping the Troop in any way she could, as the NCMT was very special to her as a child and remains so to this day.

Charleson is best known for her role as the character of Dr. Monica Quartermaine on *General Hospital*. She joined the cast in August of 1977 and remains one of the show’s most beloved characters. This signature role is a reflection of what has been a long and illustrious career and has built a large fan base.

Every year during the “General Hospital Fan Club Weekend,” Charleson throws a party for her fans called “Brunch with the Quartermaines.” The sold out event is a highlight of the General Hospital Weekend. Fans travel from all over the United States to spend an afternoon with the Quartermaine clan. In preparation for the event, Charleson collects items straight from the General Hospital props and wardrobe department, as well as her

own collection of memorabilia. She offers these items in a silent auction to raise money for the charity of her choice.

This year, Charleson chose to donate proceeds to the New Canaan Mounted Troop's Capital Campaign. "New Canaan Mounted Troop is a wonderful organization and was a large part of my early introduction into the horse world, which continues to be a passion of mine to this day," said Charleson. "Donating the proceeds from this event is just a small way I can help in a big goal that influences many children's lives as it did mine," said Charleson.

Today, she continues to be an avid horsewoman and owns a lovely Andalusian gelding named Romero. Charleson rides whenever she can and enjoys exhibiting in parades. This year Charleson will ride in the prestigious Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day.

New Canaan Mounted Troop, Inc. (NCMT) is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit educational and charitable youth organization devoted to building leadership, responsibility, and confidence in youth through sound horsemanship.

NCMT is home to 30 horses that have either been donated or lent to the NCMT horsemanship program. Involvement in NCMT's programs has increased so dramatically and the need to update and rebuild the current facility has increased with this growth.

"The Capital Campaign was launched to raise money in these efforts to rebuild with campaign goals of raising three million dollars," stated Schmerzler. "The need for the new facility will not only benefit the many young riders in the program, but will create a much more comfortable stable for the horses that so dutifully teach these students day in and day out. We are eternally grateful for all the support Charleson has given us," she added.

For more information on the New Canaan Mounted Troop, please visit their website at www.newcanaanmountedtroop.org.

To view Leslie Charleson's website, please visit www.lesliecharleson.net.