

**Pegasus, Riding for the Disabled ACT (RDA)**, is part of a world wide charitable organisation working to assist young people with disabilities to improve their mobility. This is achieved by providing qualified riding instructors and suitable horses to enable these disabled people ride and perform approved movements which helps build up their strength when in the saddle.

The Pegasus organisation would not be able to function and provide this service to the disabled without the numerous volunteers and community organisations who give freely of their time and provide financial support to maintain the Pegasus resources. The Lions Club of Belconnen is one of those groups. The Lions have included Pegasus in their annual community services and financial support program for over 20 years.

The Lions Club of Belconnen is very proud of this longstanding association with the Pegasus Riding School. One of the objects of the Lions is 'to assist financially, culturally, socially, and morally, the handicapped, disadvantaged and infirm of the community'; the Lions commitment to Pegasus is seen to be in keeping with this objective. Over the past 20 years the Lions Club of Belconnen has been actively involved with Pegasus Riding for Disabled ACT at Holt by providing funds to maintain and improve the property, provide sponsorship for the care and upkeep of horses and provide labour for the improvement and maintenance of the property. Over the past 20 years the Lions Club of Canberra Belconnen Inc has been actively involved with Pegasus RDA by providing funds to maintain and improve the property, provide sponsorship for the care and upkeep of horses and provide labour for the improvement and maintenance of the property. In addition, many Lions members as a personal commitment have acted as assistants to children when riding. Through the involvement with Pegasus, Lions are assisting people with disabilities to ride and to build up their strength and confidence. Pegasus was established in Canberra in 1973 as a non-profit association. Its aim, at that time, was to provide riding for the therapeutic, recreational and social benefit of people with disabilities. Until 1979, Pegasus used facilities at Forest Park Riding School. In 1978 Pegasus was granted a lease of 70 acres at Belconnen, on which Pegasus farm was established.

Over the years excellent facilities have been developed including a community room, cottage, stables, hay shed, indoors and outdoors riding arenas, and fencing to provide suitable paddocks. The completion of a full sized indoor riding school in 1992, funded by the Federal Government, allowed Pegasus to expand its activities to comply with the Government's policy of integration of people with disabilities into the community, as required under the Disabilities Services Act 1986. Pegasus receives partial funding by the ACT Government based on wages paid.

Pegasus aims to provide all clients with safe and correct coaching in the arts of riding, driving, vaulting, and horse mastership. Horse riding exercises the whole body, improving muscle development and tone,

coordination and balance. The aims of Pegasus RDA are achieved by providing qualified instructors, suitable horses and trained volunteers to enable people with disabilities to ride and perform approved movements to build up their strength and confidence. Working with horses encourages responsible and caring attitudes, and helps with confidence, self esteem, communication skills, leadership and trust. All participants are able to enjoy equestrian activities in circumstances appropriate to their abilities, and in a pleasant and socially integrated setting. It would not be possible for Pegasus RDA to function without the numerous volunteers who give freely of their time and the involvement of community organisations who provide financial support and assist in maintaining the facilities available. The services offered by Pegasus RDA satisfy a community need not available from past or present Government programs. The Lions Club of Canberra Belconnen is pleased to be able to contribute in a small way to this great project. Our current Club Pegasus Project Chairman is Lion John Webb.

