

DECEMBER 2011-JANUARY 2012
\$2.50

MAGAZINE

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horseplay

Teaching life skills in one unique way

By Kim North Shine

Christina Pitts and Lynne Aldrich are used to horsing around on the job and they make sure that clients of their Grosse Pointe Woods consulting firm do the same.

Through their Pitts-Aldrich Associates, they use horses - and many other approaches - to teach better communications skills, management style, business and life strategies and more.

Pitts, Aldrich and their team of coaches lead group and individual workshops, conferences and one-on-one lessons locally and around the country.

Horseplay, which was added to the menu of their approaches less than a year ago falls in line with their philosophy of being experiential not passive so that more and deeper learning takes place.

Grosse Pointers can get a taste of Horseplay in February when *Optimizing NOW: Small Practices to Enrich the Moment* comes to the Family Center to lead a workshop.

"The same things that can be used to improve relationships in the business world can be used for families," says Pitts. "For example,

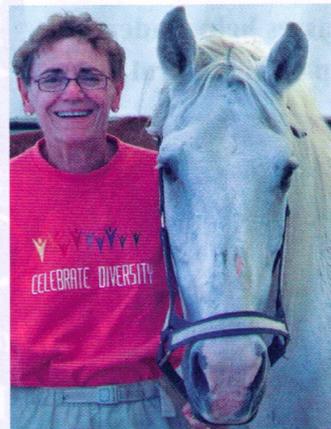
how to build a strong family cohesion, manage conflict, build awareness, self-esteem, have better communication."

While horses won't be on site, as they are when the pair teach Horseplay at one of three horse farms around Michigan, the lessons the animals impart will include building trust, being present and slowing down.

Pitts, who's led the consulting firm for 20-plus years, and Aldrich, who has worked as an executive at nonprofits and lends that experience to the consulting firm, have studied horses and communication for hundreds of hours.

"Our goal is that every human being would have a day with our horses," says Pitts. Aldrich adds, "We know

how changed you are after you walk out of that pasture." ♣



Above, Christina Pitts and Lily; left, Lynne Aldrich and Thunder