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Going Miles for Smiles Trained Pig Invited to Audition for America's Got Talent National TV Show

Ocala, FL, January 19, 2012 – America's Got Talent, the popular NBC TV series, has invited a Going Miles for Smiles trained animal to audition to appear on the nationally broadcast show.

Smooch, an adorable pot-bellied pig, will appear at the show's Charlotte, NC audition on February 3rd. Smooch is trained to do a wide variety of amazing tricks, and his audition he will showcase his ability to climb stairs, slide down a slide into water, blow bubbles and more all on command. America's Got Talent is NBC's top-rated summer series and is now in its seventh season.

Smooch is part of the Going Miles for Smiles Foundation (GMFS), a 501(c)-3 non-profit organization Thea Wilcox founded while she was writing her book entitled *Puddleby* (published 2010).

At the same time Wilcox wrote her book, she was simultaneously training her miniature real-life pony, named Puddleby, as well as her pig Smooch, to do special tricks and to feel comfortable around groups of people.

The Going Miles for Smiles Foundation centers around the pony Puddleby and his other animal friends Smooch, Cedric the goose, and a "mini" pony named Puddles. The ponies and Smooch entertain groups of people of various ages with their special array of feats. From the youngest of children, to adults in their twilight years, the animals visit hospitals, retirement homes, and other settings to entertain and be pet and loved. There is no cost to organizations who welcome Puddleby and friends.

Wilcox funds the GMFS Foundation via the sale of Puddleby books and merchandise (such as toys that represent the animal characters in the book), and by private and corporate donations.

Wilcox as a child spent time around horses, and grew to love them from an early age. Her love for equines and other animals grew over the years, but it wasn't until very recently that she authored her first book and started her non-profit organization.

"Many years ago, I promised to give back to children and their families who were in the throes of chronic childhood illness," Wilcox explained. "I wasn't able to fulfill this promise until very recently, but better late than never!"



Wilcox explained what the opportunity for Smooch to potentially appear on America's Got Talent means to her and Going Miles for Smiles. "One of my goals for the coming year is to bring more attention to my foundation, so that Smooch, Puddleby, Puddles and others can bring a smile to mire people – both young and old – who are facing difficult times. I am so excited that this audition has come along, and that we may potentially have the chance to introduce Smooch to a very large audience."

With the talent search open to acts of all ages, and open to humans and trained non-humans, America's Got Talent has brought the variety format back to the forefront of American culture by showcasing performers from across the country. The series is a true celebration of the American spirit, featuring a colorful array of hopeful stars, including singers, dancers, comedians, contortionists, impressionists, jugglers, magicians and ventriloquists, all vying for their chance to strut and perform on stage hoping to win America's hearts.

About Going Miles For Smiles and Puddleby Pony:

Going Miles for Smiles seeks out and discovers people of all ages who are losing hope in life, who are sad and despondent, or who simply have had some bad luck in life and need an upwards lift. GMFS is committed to ensuring that attention is given, entertainment is provided, and above all love is poured forth to those whose dreams were dashed or who have a sad view of the world and their life at hand. The vision of GMFS is to bring a lasting smile to the face of all who meet a Puddleby pony.

The book *Puddleby* is published and is available for sale, along with other merchandise, on the Puddleby Pony website. 100% of proceeds of sales from the site go toward funding the GMFS Foundation, and is a means to carry out Wilcox's promise to give back.

Websites:

www.PuddlebyPony.com

www.GoingMilesForSmiles.org

Facebook:

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