



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS REVIEW



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS
THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM

WINTER 2012-2013

Letter from the Director



Dear riders, drivers, volunteers, parents, donors and friends of RVR,

This has been another exciting and amazing year for RVR. Our successful fund-raisers the Walk-Wheel and Ride-A-Thon, the Round-Up Dinner and Auction, and individual donor contributions have propelled RVR forward and the future looks golden. RVR's potential for future success is dependent on relationships formed and nurtured with trust. The professional dedication I see every day at RVR supports the embodiment of sustainability.

Dedicated volunteers enabling our riders and drivers to have a pride in their accomplishments, empowering an increase in self-confidence with the horse at the center, create RVR's learning environment.

This year RVR engaged the community through grants from the St. Croix Valley Community Foundation allowing RVR riders and volunteers to plant trees and grow a straw bale vegetable garden. Also Eagle Scouts gave time and dollars to improve the Afton site.

This past summer RVR lost two dedicated horse volunteers who gave many hours of their happy horse lives to RVR. This issue of the RVR newsletter is dedicated to our horses, those in heaven and those helping us every day bring smiles, accomplishment and success to all our participants.



"We love horses for what they embody: freedom, spirit, adventure, perseverance, and drive. Horses are gentle, loyal, fierce friends and the ultimate travel companions who are willing to go the distance with you."

~Author unknown

As you gather with your families around the holidays, remember you hold a very special place in my heart. It is because of you RVR continues on this path of success.

Thank you,
Joan Berg

River Valley Riders thanks the following individuals and businesses for supporting the Round-Up Dinner and donating items for the silent and live auctions:

Lake Elmo Inn and Event Center
Tommy Burnevik
Fladeboe Auctions
Bayport Printing House
A Little TLC - White Bear Lake
Advanced Dermatology Care
Anonymous
Baker Court Interiors
Bearz Sport - White Bear Lake
Bella Luce - Hudson
Belle Amie Spa - Lake Elmo
Bibelot - St. Paul
Baxter Black
Agatha Blesy
Blush - Lilydale
Chris Bothke
Brave New Workshop
BNSF Railroad
Cafe Latte - St. Paul
Candyland - St. Paul
Canterbury Park
Chicago Dogs - Stillwater
Crabtree's Garden Gate
Crystal Ball Farms - Osceola
Barb and Dale Danner
Joanne Danner-Bacon
Ann Delmont
DeMori's Italian Food
Noreen and Tom Dillon
Dorothy Ann Bakery
David Durand
Yvonne and Kent Ecklund
Extended Stay Hotels
Fitogo - Hudson
Flat Earth Brewing Co.
Ryan Foss
Nanci Fulmek
Beverly Gerth
Grand Casino
The Grubb Family
Haskell's - The Wine People!
Heart and Soul Reflexology
Houle's Farm Garden and Pet
Janna's Hides and Rides

Continued on Page 4



In Memory of Chance and Fritz

Written by Joan Berg

RVR lost two wonderful horses this year. It is with a very sad heart I write about these special friends.



Fritz came to RVR as a donation from a family in southern Minnesota whose child had outgrown him. He was a Shetland Pony gelding with a flashy golden Palomino color. Fritz was named by Lisa Flynn after the book "Fritz and the Beautiful Horses". He pulled a cart among his many talents and found a

way into our hearts. Fritz was the perfect size for many new riders who might be cautious about great big horses. My grandson Charles spent many hours riding, brushing and leading Fritz. His pasture buddies were Teddy, now in heaven, and Dixie who misses him every day. The Wisconsin riders and volunteers were blessed to have this amazing, sweet pony as a friend and therapy partner.



Chance was a Morgan / Tennessee Walking Horse gelding who lived to be 26 years old. I bought him at the age of four and changed his name to Chance when we wondered if we

should really take a "chance" on this one. His first year with us, he did trail riding, wagon train traffic control, a trip to the Big Horn Mountains, and learned to pull a wagon. He was my very special friend and a blast to ride. He always had to be first on the trail and would leave those Quarter Horses in the dust. Chance really showed his true worth when he became a therapy horse. Amazing as it may have seemed to those who knew him, he had the best disposition for this new career. He would slow his pace if the rider seemed off balance and always turn to say good-bye. Chance volunteered for school groups and RVR from 1994 until just days before he died. I doubt I will ever find a better horse and partner to share what I love doing.



12th Annual Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon Biggest Turnout Ever!

The 12th Annual Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon was a huge success. It was held on Saturday, June 23rd at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. This is one of RVR's main fundraising events for the year with proceeds going to the RVR program to provide greater therapeutic riding and driving opportunities for people with special needs. The 2012 event raised over \$24,000 with a record number of participants.

The hamburgers and hot dogs were excellent, watermelon went over well, and Kowalski's cookies were a big hit once again! Lots of bottled water, which was appreciated by everyone.

The weather was perfect - partly cloudy...not too hot...no rain...nice breeze.

Twenty-one horseback riders and forty-one walkers and wheelers set a new record for number of participants!

We are looking forward to another great event in 2013, set for June 22nd at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Please save the date and join us for a fun day enjoying the lovely park. Your support will make this another record breaking event! Tell your family, friends and saddle clubs.



Orphy Beattie Honored with PATH International Sis Gould Driving Award

The heart of Orphy Beattie is filled with compassion and humility. This is demonstrated by the many ways that she serves others including as a therapeutic carriage driving instructor for River Valley Riders. She retired on October 4, 2012 after 15 years of service. In recognition of her excellence, Orphy was awarded the Sis Gould Driving Award from the Professional Association for Therapeutic Horsemanship International on November 2, 2012.



Orphy's husband John volunteered with her during the therapeutic driving lessons. Orphy's other partner is her 19-year old Norwegian Fjord, Olaf. Orphy purchased Olaf specifically for the therapeutic driving program. The Beattie's also shared their home, MacBeth Farm, as the therapeutic driving lesson site two days per week.

Orphy's attention to details produced a perfect safety record. Olaf would always be well groomed and conditioned for lessons as well as the harness and carriage flawlessly maintained and spotlessly cleaned. The dedication of Orphy's volunteers is testament to the positive environment Orphy would create during lessons.



Over the years her students have experienced her loving nature and learned from her expertise of horses and driving. Allen was Orphy's first driving student

fifteen years ago, followed by Surya, John, Brian, Andy, Enzo, Sonia and David. Tana was Orphy's youngest student. Tana would express her happiness as she drove with Orphy and do her little "happy dance" by wriggling her arms and legs with a laugh of pure abandoned joy. Many of Orphy's students have limited speech and Orphy engaged them in ways that produced smiles and words like "happy".



Orphy is a blessing to those who are privileged to know and love her. With her well-deserved retirement, we will miss her deeply and wish her and John much happiness for many years in the future!

Written by those who love Orphy, John and Olaf - the families of the students, and the driving volunteers

River Valley Riders thanks the following individuals and businesses for supporting the 2012 Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon by donating door prizes and food:

A Little TLC - White Bear Lake
Caribou Coffee - Maplewood
Fashion Eyes In White Bear
Melissa Hagstrum
Key's Café - White Bear Lake
The Milligan Family
Susan Schmidt

Anonymous
Cub Foods - Stillwater
Federated Co-ops
Houle's Farm Garden and Pet
Kowalski's Market
Gail and Geary Olsen

Bruegger's Bagels
Donatelli's - White Bear Lake
Focus Financial
Mary Beth and John Kelly
The McLaughlin Family
Sam's Club



River Valley Riders

8362 Tamarack Village
Suite 119-440
Woodbury, MN 55125
Phone: 651-439-2558
E-mail: rjberg@centurytel.net
Web: www.rivervalleyriders.org

Locations:

2007 Neal Avenue South
Afton, Minnesota

Rick-A-Shay Ranch
Scandia, Minnesota

Joan and Roger Berg's Farm
East Farmington, Wisconsin

About River Valley Riders

The mission of River Valley Riders is to enrich the lives of children and adults with special needs by providing equine assisted activities and therapies.

Lessons are conducted in accordance with the safety, training and instructional guidelines of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International.

2013—SAVE THESE DATES

February 17:

"Understanding Horses" Workshop for Volunteers

Learn how to tack and lead safely.

Gain hands-on experience performing many of the riding exercises that are taught during our lessons. \$10 participation fee and RSVP is required.

Visit www.rivervalleyriders.org for more information.

April 13:

Volunteer Training

June 22:

Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon

November 2:

Round-Up Dinner & Auction

Round-Up Wrap-Up

This year's Round-Up Dinner and Auction was a smashing success! People gathered at beautiful Lake Elmo Inn Event Center on November 10th for great company, fine wines, fantastic food, and a chance to bid on an amazing array of items. By evening's end, over \$50,000 was raised in support of RVR's mission!

The evening began with music by Tommy Burnevik and sampling wines selected by Nick and Brandy Gerth. This was a perfect opportunity for RVR's new friends and loyal supporters to socialize.

A delicious dinner with table-side-trivia provided extra fun and prizes. The evening ended with an exuberant live auction called by Kelly Conger of Fladeboe Auctions, many generous donations to "Fund the Vision", and the exciting "Ears & Tails" game.

Mark your calendars now for Saturday, November 2, 2013. Due to the success of this year's event, we are pleased to announce that the 10th Annual Round-Up Dinner and Auction will be held at the Prestwick Golf Club of Wedgewood in Woodbury.

RVR thanks the Lake Elmo Inn Event Center for six wonderful years!

RVR Board Members

Officers

Joan Berg, Executive Director
Gail Olsen, Vice President
Cheryl Holt, Secretary
Kathy Jo Hanson, Treasurer

Directors

Sally DelGiudice
Noreen Dillon
Mike McLaughlin
Jill Steeves

Yvonne Ecklund
Melissa Hagstrum
Theresa Milligan
Jenny Sargent

Advisory Board

Aaron Keller

Dr. Bruce Oscarson

River Valley Riders thanks the following individuals and businesses for supporting the Round-Up Dinner and donating items for the silent and live auctions:

Jerry Jasicki
Joyful Expressions - Hudson
Lynn and Jim Jutz
Ann and Elmer Kasperson
Lake Country Booksellers
Lakeshore Players Theatre
Madline Horsemanship Clinics
Mall of America
Mama Maria's - North Hudson
Joe Mauer
David and Amber McLaughlin
The McLaughlin Family
Toni Meglitsch
Millhouse Veterinary Service
The Milligan Family
Mills Fleet Farm
Minnesota Vikings
Minnesota Wild
Mystic Lake Casino Hotel
Old Log Theater
Ordway Center
Osceola Veterinary Service
Outback Steakhouse
Painted Table - White Bear Lake
Par-A-Angels Jewelry and Gifts
Park Square Theater
Party On Stillwater
Chris Pattee
Peggy Coleman Art
Plymouth Playhouse
Sandi Prentice
R.F. Moeller Jeweler
Resource Logistics
Bonnie and Jan Reyers
Rivertown Inn - Stillwater
Sal's Angus Grill - Withrow
Kim and Alan Salmela
Sam's Club
Bob Schmidt and Regina Zedell
St Paul Hotel
St. Croix Casino
St. Croix Saddlery
Judie and Rick Steenberg
Jill Steeves
Summit Brewing Company
Sylvan Learning Center - Hudson
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Bill Tischer
Tjader and Highstrom
Sheila-Marie Untiedt
Jamie Ward
Susan Wilson
Dan Wolfe

and the dedicated hard-working Round-Up Committee