



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS REVIEW



RIVER VALLEY RIDERS
THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM

SPRING 2015

Letter from the Director



For 25 years, I have witnessed the power of the horse to improve the lives of children and adults.

Also for every one of those 25 years, I have had to say, "Sorry we are full. No more riding spots." For me, this is the hardest part of offering horse therapy because I know so well the unique life-changing benefits that RVR provides. The riders have the opportunity to make friends and improve their relationships by sharing fun, laughter and true accomplishments with others. They grow stronger physically. They are able to do something so special...then it has to stop for the winter.

These reasons are why I am passionate about the dream to build a year-round facility with therapeutic riding, carriage driving and other activities directly benefiting our current and future riders and drivers.

Thank you!
Joan Dorle Berg

Program Updates

We are excited to begin our 2015 Program! All of our sites and programs (riding and driving) are filled. We already have waiting lists! We are so blessed with a great team of instructors –

Afton Tuesday:	Lead Instructor:	Lisa Flynn
	Instructor in Training:	Therese Naber
Afton Wednesday:	Lead Instructor:	Cheryl Holt
	Instructor:	Heather Thoele
Afton Driving:	Lead Instructor:	Kathy Jo Hanson
Scandia:	Lead Instructor:	Sally DelGiudice
Wisconsin:	Lead Instructor:	Joan Berg
	Instructor:	Terry Bailey

Most of our wonderful horse volunteers are returning to serve our riders and drivers again this year and maybe a few new recruits as well! We could still use more volunteer horses in Afton for Tuesday or Wednesday evenings, so if you know of a sound, gentle horse and willing owner, please contact RVR at 651-439-2558.

Spring Session Lesson Dates

- ◆ **Rick-A-Shay Ranch:**
Tuesday 6 & 7pm:
May 5, 12, 19, 26;
June 9, 16, 23
- ◆ **Afton:**
*Tuesday 5:45, 6:45
& 7:45pm:*
May 5, 12, 19, 26;
June 2, 9, 16, 23
*Wednesday 5:45,
6:45 & 7:45pm:*
May 6, 13, 20, 27;
June 3, 10, 17, 24
- ◆ **Wisconsin:**
Thursday 5 & 6pm:
May 7, 14, 21, 28;
June 11, 18, 25
- ◆ **Carriage Driving
in Afton:**
*Tuesday & Thursday
Afternoons*

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.



2015 Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon

The 16th Annual Walk-Wheel & Ride-A-Thon will be held on Saturday, June 20th at Lake Elmo Park Reserve. Join us for a fun day of enjoying the park, friendship and food! Lake Elmo Park Reserve has miles of trails for riding, walking, or wheeling. We will have great food for both breakfast and lunch and lots of door prizes! Registration and breakfast begins at 8:30am. Horseback riders head out on the trails at 10:00am through woods and fields. Walkers and wheelers start out at 10:30am on the paved paths. Lunch will be ready when everyone returns about noon.

To participate or to donate to this event, please visit www.rivervalleyriders.org. Pledge forms are available and donations are accepted online. More information will be mailed out later this spring. If you have any questions, contact Cheryl Holt by email: cholt@ergotron.com or call 651-439-2558 and leave a message.



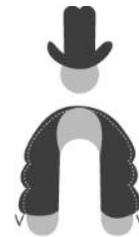
Riders on the Trail



Walkers Starting Out

This is one of RVR's main fundraising events for the year with proceeds going to support the program expenses of providing therapeutic riding and driving opportunities for people with special needs.

We ask you to join us and to invite your family, friends, co-workers, exercise buddies, and saddle clubs. With your support, the 2015 Walk-Wheel and Ride-A-Thon will be a success!



RVR Board Members

Officers

Joan Berg
Executive Director

Gail Olsen
Vice President

Cheryl Holt
Secretary

Kathy Jo Hanson
Treasurer

Directors

Sally DelGiudice
Mike McLaughlin

Yvonne Ecklund
Theresa Milligan

Noreen Dillon
Jill Steeves

Melissa Hagstrum
Jenny Sargent

Linda Knutson

Advisory Board

Aaron Keller

Dr. Bruce Oscarson



2015 Afton Site Improvements

Thanks to the generosity of over 200 individuals, corporations, and foundations, the Afton site at 2007 Neal Avenue South is receiving two major improvements in time for the 2015 season. Yes, we will have a picnic shelter and water!



Construction in Progress

The picnic shelter measures 20'x30' and has a concrete floor and sidewalk to the parking lot. It will provide a very comfortable place for riders' families and volunteers to wait for and watch the lessons. The foundation was poured in the fall of 2014. The landscaping was donated by Johnson Skidsteer Services, Adam Johnson (volunteer Sandy Ward's son). Several RVR volunteers helped to plant grass seed.



Building Materials Being Delivered

The picnic shelter is being erected by K Construction & Remodeling, LLC, Nate Thoele and his father (instructor Heather's husband and father-in-law). We are very grateful they are donating their labor and expect to have the picnic shelter ready by our Volunteer Training on April 18th. The inspiration and lead gift for this project was by Bill Schwab in memory of his wife, Maureen, who had volunteered for RVR with her horses.

Mantyla Well Drilling's equipment is on site and in place. Jeff Thron and his team have been lobbying their suppliers for RVR to get a pump and tank donated, in addition to providing the well at an affordable cost. Having water available at the Afton site will save over 1,500 individual bottles per year. Thank you to Mantyla for supporting RVR!



Ready to Drill

Our next project for the summer of 2015 is to have a 20'x56' storage building constructed by RAM Buildings, Inc. The City of Afton is working with us to process the required permits and approvals.

We invite all our supporters to come for a visit to see how your generous donations are benefiting riders, families, and volunteers!



RVR Therapy Horse Profile: Newman



Meet Newman. Newman is a 10 year old Appaloosa gelding who began his show career as a weanling. By the time he was three years old, he was a “been there, done that” horse. His show experience and laidback demeanor made him a perfect candidate to become a therapy horse. At the age of 3, he changed careers and became the youngest equine volunteer for RVR, beating out his sister Roo who had begun her therapy career at age 4.



Hannah's Team

Being a bit on the lazy side with wonderfully smooth and slow gaits Newman is a steady mount for our riders. He stands very still at both the mounting block and at the ramp. Newman is famous for his silly antics and fun personality. He loves to play with the objects we use for obstacles or at stations. He will pick up cones and twirl lead ropes. On costume night, he is a good sport about wearing his costume. Newman has always been a people horse and basks in all the attention he gets from both his riders and volunteers.

Story and photos by Sandy Ward



Katie's Team

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
 Joan and Roger Berg's Farm
 East Farmington, Wisconsin
 Rick-A-Shay Ranch
 Scandia, Minnesota

River Valley Riders