



Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders, Inc.

Special People in Riding Therapy

January 2004

Mark your Calendars NOW!

The FSR Volunteer Appreciation & Awards Dinner is scheduled for **Sunday, April 18th from 3:00 to 7:00 PM at the American Legion Hall, 500 Fond du Lac Avenue in Fond du Lac.**

FSR has experienced much progress since its inception in 1987. This growth is largely due to the efforts of volunteers like you. April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and it is a time when FSR would like to show appreciation to all those that help put smiles on faces and hope in hearts.

There are over 275 volunteers involved with FSR, ranging from Board Members, committee members, Side Walkers, Horse Handlers, people who help with the many facets of the Ride-a-Thon and other fund-raisers, the Healing Gardens, this newsletter, and maintaining the cleanliness of the facilities. Parents of program participants who help in any way are also invited to the Appreciation/Celebration.

It is not possible for FSR to accomplish what we do without the help of volunteers. Please come and plan to have some fun while renewing friendships, and make friends with other volunteers. Sign-up sheets will be available for your convenience to register for Side Walking/Horse Handling class times and days. Invitations for this event will be mailed soon. Hope to see you there!

Rose Smith, FSR Volunteer Coordinator

Who Will It Be?

At our Volunteer Appreciation celebration on April 18 we will be announcing the Male and Female Rookie Volunteer of the Year for 2003 as well as the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year for 2003.

The Award Criteria for Rookie of the Year includes:

- must have been a first year volunteer who displayed non judgmental attitude
- must have helped with at least one fund raising event as well as with classes as a Side Walker

or Horse Handler

- must have been friendly and courteous to others
- It is also important that the Rookies of the year represent FSR in a positive manner and display a focus on our mission.

The Outstanding Volunteer of the Year must have consistently volunteered for more than one year and also displayed a non-judgmental attitude. This person must have helped with:

- at least one fund raising event each year
- classes as a Side Walker or Horse Handler.
- displaying friendly, positive and courteous behaviors
- representing FSR in a positive manner
- And focused on FSR mission.

It could be you if you fit the above criteria! If it isn't you, you can practice the criteria and your turn may come. At the very least, you will know that you have provided a service that improved the quality of life for those you helped.

Calendar of Events

- **March 16**, 12:00 PM, Side Walker training (up to 20 participants.)
- **March 29**, 6:00 PM, Side Walker training (up to 20 participants.)
- **April 6**, Noon, Side Walker training (up to 20 participants.)
- **April 14**, at 7:00 PM, Side Walker training (up to 20 participants.)
- **April 18**, Volunteer Appreciation Celebration (see article on page 1)
- **April 23**, classes at 4, 5 and 6 PM begin for 4 weeks
- **April 24**, Ride For Pride
- **May 1**, approximate start of most of our classes
- **May 10**, Classes at 6:00 PM will begin
- **August 23**, 14th Annual Ride-a-Thon

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rom your
D irector

The first class for all our riders will be a bit different this year. The instructors will meet with each rider individually to develop a least 3 goals to be worked on and achieved during classes this year. Parents and guardians as well as riders—we need your input! Think about what you would like to accomplish and let the instructor know.

Something else that will be different this year is the way we are scheduling the riders for classes. We need all Horse Handlers to sign up at the times of scheduled class times, and then 2 Side Walkers per Horse Handler before we will schedule the riders. This will assure that we have enough volunteers for each class, though the classes may be smaller. We need as many as 5 Horse Handlers at 4:00, 5:00 and 6:00 pm on Fridays April 23 & 30 and May 7 & 14. No Side Walkers need to sign up as they will be St. Lawrence Seminary students. We will need up to 3 Horse Handlers to come as early as 3:00 to help prepare the horses for those dates.

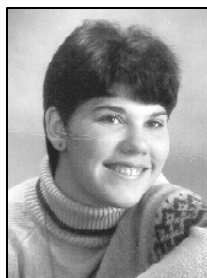
Other class times are 4, 5 and 6 pm on Mondays beginning May 3 with horse preparation help beginning at 3:30. There are tentative plans for classes at 9:30 am and 1 pm on Mondays beginning May 3.

Tuesday and Thursday evening class times will be 5, 6 and 7 pm with horse prep help needed at 4:30. There will be other classes also.

As always we ask that you be patient with us as we work through this change intended to increase safety for everyone.

Mary

FROM THE RIDER'S PERSPECTIVE



Our featured rider for this newsletter is 23 years old and works at Brooke Industries. **Victoria Alexaieff** enjoys her job, which involves learning work skills, packaging and making boxes. She has been at Brook Industries for almost 2 years. She graduated from Horace Mann High School in 2002. Victoria is the oldest in her family. She has a 19-year-old sister, Regina, who is a CNA for an ARC

Group Home. Her brother James is 18 and is high school senior who is home schooled. He is also a partner in the family business, Badger State Fireplace. Her youngest sister is Liza who is 16 yrs old and a junior at Horace Mann High.

Victoria loves music and she was delighted when Erik Helm presented her with one of his CDs at the benefit concert recently.

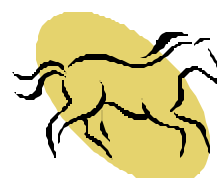
When her family lived in California, Victoria rode at the California National Center for Equestrian Riders, a program just South of San Francisco. She was not quite a teenager at that time

Victoria's diagnosis is Cerebral Palsy. She was born with no abnormalities, but when she was eight days old she became very sick. She experienced two heart stoppages, which deprived her brain of oxygen. She underwent heart surgery when she was 2 weeks old. As she got a little older delays were noticed and that is how she was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. She also has scoliosis and has had surgery to lengthen her heel cord.

Victoria's family has three pets: two dogs named Buddy and Blanca, and an iguana named Louie. Victoria began with FSR in 2003. She was excited to learn about FSR as she really enjoyed her riding experience in California. She hopes to gain better flexibility through riding. We look forward to the start of our season and seeing Victoria at our facility again!

Special Olympics

In a recent Special Olympics story in the Fond du Lac Reporter, **Laura Rogers** was pictured helping **Cindy Armstrong** with an activity. What's so unusual about this?? Laura Rogers is a FSR Volunteer and Cindy Armstrong is a FSR program participant!



Cerebral Palsy

When someone has Cerebral Palsy (CP), a part of their brain is not working or has not developed properly. This can be due to something that happened before birth, around the time of birth or in early childhood. The affected area of the brain is one of the parts which control the muscles and certain body movements. In some people, CP is barely noticeable. Others will be more severely affected. It is often not possible for doctors to give a reason why part of a baby's brain has been injured or failed to develop. Some possible causes: the mother of the baby had an infection in the early part of the pregnancy; the baby had a difficult premature birth and perhaps was unable to breathe properly; there could have been some bleeding within the baby's brain or perhaps the baby has a genetic disorder.

CP jumbles messages between the brain and the muscles. There are three types of CP, depending on which messages are affected, spastic CP is the most common form of CP, "Spastic" means "stiff" and this form of CP stiffens muscles and decreases the range of movement in joints. This tightness is always there and means that someone with spastic CP has to work harder to walk or move.

People with athetoid CP make involuntary movements, because muscles rapidly change from floppy to tense in a way they can't control. Their speech can be hard to understand because they have difficulty controlling their tongue, breathing and vocal cords. Hearing problems are also common. People with ataxic CP find it very difficult to balance. Their difficulties with spatial awareness means it is difficult for them to judge their position relative to other things around them. They may also have shaky hand movements and jerky speech. Many people with CP have a combination of two or more types. One of the difficult things about CP is that the effects vary from one person to another, making it difficult for doctors to say what type of CP a person has.

Benefits of equine facilitated therapy/activities for those with CP include: the movement of the horse can bring about normalization of muscle tone; it also causes stimulation to the postural and balance mechanisms, causes muscle strengthening, including strengthening of the diaphragm muscles and improved perceptual motor coordination.

For more information: www.cerebralpalsyhelp.com; www.ucpa.org; www.4lifecare.com
orwww.comeunity.com/disability/cerebral_palsy.

Way to Go Jessica!

FSR Volunteer, **Jessica Balson** competed in the Miss Fond du Lac contest. Her platform--therapeutic horseback riding! Jessica is a senior at Oakfield High School and plans to attend Moraine Park Technical College to pursue a degree in child development.

Jessica sang "Amazing Grace" for the talent portion of the contest. We are proud of you, Jessica! Hope you still have time for us.

Parents, Guardians, Aides, etc.

If you would like to be trained as a Side Walker to be able to help during a class when you come with your rider, please check the calendar on the front page to find a time that works for you. We can never have too much help!

Call 920-924-9920 to register for the time that is right for you.

It Spring time!

Are you cleaning out your flower beds, perhaps removing some plants/root or bulbs? We have the perfect spot for them...our Healing Garden. Rather than throw your excess out, bring it to us and watch our Garden grow.

Bring your discards to the facility and let us know what the plants are. Please call 920-924-9920 in advance.

FSR Mailing List

We are trying to make our mailing list more current. Do we have your name spelled correctly? Does your address need correcting? Are you getting duplicate copies of our mailings? Do you wish to have your name removed from our mailing list? Please help us. E-mail us at info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org or call 920-924-9920 with any updates.

“RIDE FOR PRIDE”

FREE SPIRIT RIDERS NEED YOUR HELP!!

**FOR
THE FOND DU LAC HARLEY OWNERS GROUP
AND
BOB’S HARLEY DAVIDSON’S**

“RIDE FOR PRIDE”

THE HARLEY OWNERS OF FOND DU LAC AND THE SURROUNDING AREAS AND BOB’S HARLEY DAVIDSON ARE PLANNING A RIDE TO BENEFIT FREE SPIRIT RIDERS AND MDA. WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP OUT WITH PARKING, CHECK-IN, OR ANYTHING THEY NEED HELP WITH THE DAY OF THE RIDE.

TO HELP US, PLEASE CALL TIM CRUZ

Home: (920) 922-7052

Work: (920) 921-7424 Email: tcruz@amfam.com

DATE: APRIL 24th, 2004 (RAIN OR SHINE)

TIME: 9:00AM, CHECK-IN @ BOB’S H.D. DEALERSHIP

PLACE: 12:00 PM, DEPARTURE, HOLIDAY INN FDL

**ANYONE INVOLVED WITH FREE SPIRIT RIDERS IS WELCOME TO STOP OUT AT THE HOLIDAY INN TO SEE THIS EVENT. LAST YEAR THERE WERE ABOUT 800 PARTICIPANTS IN THE RIDE. WE WOULD ESPECIALLY LIKE TO SEE OUR STUDENTS COME OUT.
THE HARLEY OWNERS WOULD LOVE TO SEE YOU!!!**

LET’S SHOW THE HARLEY OWNERS OUR FREE SPIRIT!!



Brett Favre Forward Foundation

We have just been notified that FSR is a recipient of \$5000 from the Brett Favre Forward Foundation! This is in response to a submitted grant proposal asking for support in enhancing our Volunteer Training program. The funds will be used to produce a more professional Volunteer Handbook, pay for the t-shirts, tank tops and sweatshirts we provide to our volunteers, pay the instructors for doing the training, offset the administrative costs of our volunteer program and more. This is our second grant through the Brett Favre Forward Foundation. In November of 2002 we received \$10,000 to complete our outdoor arena.

Brett and his wife, Deana, started the Foundation in 1996 to benefit disadvantaged or disabled children in Wisconsin and Favre's native Mississippi. The Foundation has donated in excess of \$1 million to charities in the two states in the last 8 years. And FSR is proud to have been a recipient of the Brett Favre Forward Foundation benevolence!

Do Horses Eat Pizza??

No, but you can help us feed our horses by purchasing Eaton's pizza coupons for \$5.00 each. You will receive a coupon for .50 cents off on your next purchase with each coupon you purchase. To order, send \$5 for each pizza desired with a self addressed, stamped envelope to FSR Pizzas, PO Box 1291, Fond du Lac WI, 54936-1291 or call 920-924-9920 to make arrangements to get the coupons.

Coupons can be redeemed at 2 locations in Fond du Lac, also in West Bend and Oshkosh. There is no expiration date on the coupons! Sale will continue until coupons are sold out.

Hint: they make great birthday, get well and 'thinking of you' card enclosures!

Enclosed please find a stamped, self-addressed envelope and a check in the amount of _____ for _____ pizzas at \$5 each.
I am proud to help feed Free SPIRIT Riders Horses!

Saturday Respite

Saturday Respite for children and adults with disabilities will be held at The Arc of FdL 500 North Park Avenue from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM one Saturday a month for the next year. Arrangements for respite can be made with Cerebral Palsy of Mideast Wisconsin, 800-261-1895.

Lifespan Respite Network of Dodge County

Do you enjoy working with people? You can become a respite care worker by attending the Lifespan Respite Care Provider Recruitment and Training in Beaver Dam. Call 920-356-9870 to learn more.

Are You A Horse Handler?

Would you like to be certified at a higher level of Horse Handling or get started at Horse Handling Certification? Call 924-9920 and leave a message about your desire, a time will be set up for you.

Condolences:

To program participant Kara Faucet and her family whose father died on January 19 at Hospice Home following a courageous battle with cancer.

And to FSR volunteer of many talents, Elaine Pirsig, whose mother died on January 25. Please remember these families in your prayers.

Front Page Story

FSR Volunteer and Marian College student, **Maria Bergene**, was recently pictured on the front page of the Fond du Lac Reporter in an article about the elections. To quote the newspaper, "Maria Bergene, Manitowoc, a junior pre-physical therapy major said that though she voted in the 2000 election, she has followed the 2004 campaigns more closely." She admitted knowing more about this election and felt that her vote in 2000 reflected her parent's political views. Regardless of who wins the election, we look forward to Maria's smiling face being in our arena again this season.

Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!

GENERAL FUND

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Fond du Lac Area United Way
Campbellsport Building Supply
Kettle Moraine Correctional Institute employees
David and Jean Lawrence
Mary Narges
Kathryn and Joseph Tasch
Lynn Woodruff
Virginia Duncan
Dr. and Mrs. James Hitselberger
Wisconsin Futurity Horse Foundation
Alicia Feyen
Arden Wendt
Lois Seibel
Mary Freeman
Wilma Hamilton
Thomas Abraham
FdL Foundation
Exchange Club of FdL
Kingston Lioness
Denise Retzlaff
Marcia McLaughlin
Roger and Diana Gerlach
Kathryn Oetjen
Jackie MCCurdy
Lions Club of Sherwood
FdL County Advocates
Anthony and Mae Schmitz
Split Rail Foundation
NFdL Knights of Columbus
C. R. Meyer and Sons
Fox Valley Kids Foundation
Joe and Dorothea Pease
Bob's Harley Davidson
Donald Pressley
R A Wegele, Jr.
John and Sally St. Peter
Sarah McGowan

DEBT REDUCTION DONATIONS

SNC Foundation
Phil and Nancy Martini
FdL Evening Lions
Christine Armock
Thomas Carlson, MD
Elaine Pirsig

IN KIND DONATIONS

Erik Helm
Michael Koepke

% OF SALES DONATIONS

Schwann's Home Service Inc
Farnum Companies
Piggley Wiggley
Pick 'n Save

Linda Steinmetz, who battled with cancer for the past few years, passed away on February 24. Linda was a past FSR board member and class volunteer who co-chaired our Capital Funds Campaign Committee. Linda will be remembered for her love of horses and her fondness for the special needs children and adults we serve.

Linda had an interesting history before coming to FSR: she is likely the only FSR volunteer who was a former rodeo barrel racer!

Linda has requested that memorials be directed to FSR and to the Central Wisconsin Cancer Program in Fond du Lac. Memorials in her name are being accepted at FSR, Linda Steinmetz Memorial, P O Box 1291, Fond du Lac WI 54936-1291. Linda is likely schooling Squeaky again as you read this!



Linda Steinmetz is shown during Horse Schooling with Squeaky as we geared up for the 2000 Riding Season at Neon Farms

Horse Etiquette

Art of Snorting: Humans like to be snorted on everywhere. It is your duty to accommodate your humans.

Open doors: Any door is an invitation for you and your human to exercise. Bolt out the door and trot around, just out of reach of your human, who will frantically run after you. The longer it goes on, the more fun for all.

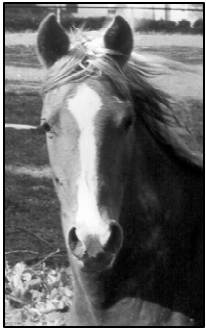
Nuzzling: Always take a big drink of water immediately before nuzzling your human. Be ready to rub your head on the area of your human where you just nuzzled to dry it off.

Visitors: Quickly determine which guest is afraid of you. Rock back and forth, neighing loudly and pawing playfully at the person. If the human backs away and starts to cry, swoosh your tail, stamp your feet and nicker gently to show your concern.

Refresher Course

Want to be a Side Walker again but want to brush up on your skills?? Simply register for any of the training sessions listed in the Calendar of Events, see which date and time works for you and register to attend. No matter how long you have been volunteering, you are sure to find at least one thing you will be glad you learned. Don't forget to call 920-924-9920 to register!

All About Chevettes!



Our featured horse in this newsletter is **Chevettes**, better known as Chevie. Chevie is a mare and is about 15 hands tall. She is 20 years old and is half Arab and half Quarter Horse. Her color is chestnut and she has a flaxen mane and tail.

Her distinguishing features include a back right sock and a blaze on her face.

Chevie was used as a show horse at the Winnebago County fair years ago by the people who donated her to us, Patty and Gary Konow, who reside in Larsen. The Konow family owned Chevy since their daughter Kim was 15 years old.

Chevie was a birthday present for Kim. Kim is now married, we know her as Kim Mueller and she is a former FSR volunteer and former member of our board of directors. The Konow family had owned Chevie since she was 5 years old.

Chevie was used as a pleasure horse in her younger years and she was used as a western pleasure show horse by Kim at least twice at the Winnebago County Fair where Chevie helped Kim win a first place.

Patty Konow remembers Chevie as a congenial horse who was more "like a pet dog who would run loose in the yard and would come when called!"

6th Annual Raffle Being Planned

Would you like to be a part of the success of our 6th Annual Raffle?

We are in the process of soliciting raffle items from now through April. We hope to have the tickets printed and ready for sale beginning in early June. If you wish to donate an item, product or service or know someone who would like to, let us know by calling 920-924-9920 or e-mail at info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org.

This is a great advertising opportunity for businesses as we will be distributing more than 5,000 tickets this year!

VOLUNTEER IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Karen Brietzman started volunteering with FSR in 2002. She is the mother of 2 children, Becky & Rick. She and her husband, Bill, have 3 grandchildren, Bret, Sara, and Tanner. Karen graduated from Random Lake High School and Milwaukee Area Technical College with an Associate

Degree in Commercial Art. After she married in 1971 she took on jobs lettering signs and trucks occasionally. That steadily grew into a full time business, which is now called K-B Lettering. A big part of her business is pinstriping. Many years ago she lettered a race car for Al Unser Jr, and Bobby Unser, Jr.! Karen says she really enjoys her job as it is usually something different each day; it may be a semi, a boat or a motorcycle. Her shop is at her home near Campbellsport.

When Karen is not working, she enjoys spending time with her grandchildren or leading a women's Bible study. Karen became a volunteer because she had been interested in horses since she was a child. She saw articles about Free Spirit Riders in newspapers for a couple of years and when she learned the program's director was her son-in-law's favorite aunt, she decided to volunteer.

Not only does she enjoy working with the horses, she finds it is great fun to see the riders enjoy being on the horses. She feels it is rewarding to see how the riders progress both in their riding ability, and in their relationships with their Side Walkers, Horse Handlers, and instructors.

Karen recognizes that everyone takes 2nd place to the horse! Karen says, "Volunteering with Free Spirit Riders is a great way to do something for others and meet other people who are also interested in horses and children." WE are pleased you found us, Karen!

Volunteer Opportunities:

Along with helping with classes, help is needed in a variety of ways. One way you can help is by making main dishes, salads, deserts, fresh fruit or vegetable trays for lunches on Wednesdays from May 5 through August 4.

Twelve inmates from the Drug and Alcohol Corrections Center will be back to help with the garden, landscaping and facility maintenance as well as helping with 4 classes on Wednesdays after school is out. As part of the privilege of having their help we need to provide lunch. Contact Annette Marquard at 920-922-1018 if you can help with these lunches in any way.



FREE S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders, Inc.
P.O. Box 1291
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1291

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Permit No. 13



DATED MATERIAL



Mission Statement

Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders, Inc.
is a non-profit organization
committed to enriching the lives
of children and adults with disabilities
through safe therapeutic interaction
with horses.



Vision Statement

Free SPIRIT Riders, Inc.,
a NARHA premier accredited center,
will be known as an efficient, cohesive,
professional, multi-disciplinary team
enthusiastically committed to fulfilling
our mission.

We will provide excellent,
comprehensive, equine therapy
services focused on the individual
needs of the people we serve,
in an enriching, nurturing environment.



Facility Address:

W3950 Hwy 23
Fond du Lac, WI

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 1291
Fond du Lac, WI 54936-1291

Phone 920-924-9920
Email: info@freespiritriders.org
Web Site: www.freespiritriders.org

Therapists

Tara, Stitch, Duffy, Magic, Sonny,
Fancy, Chevettes, and Duke

Instructors

Cindy Anderson 920-326-6108
kenanderson@centurytel.net

Ginger Schinktgen 920-979-3110
gingerschinktgen@hotmail.com

Sarah Perry 920-907-8279
horsewhisperer566@hotmail.com

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