

## WOW, FSR IS 20 YEARS OLD!

In February of 1987 a group of visionaries met to discuss the advantages of starting a therapeutic horseback riding organization in Fond du Lac. And that was the start of what we have today – 20 years later! In honor of this anniversary of 20 years of commitment to enriching lives of children and adults with disabilities through safe, therapeutic interaction with horses, we are initiating a “\$20 For 20 Years Campaign.” Like a birthday gift to the program that will enhance our ability to continue putting smiles on faces and hope in hearts for another 20 or more years.

You are invited to attend our Open House on June 16, 2007 from 1 - 4 pm, which is part of our year-long celebration!

### \$20 FOR 20 YEARS CAMPAIGN

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSED IS MY FIRST \$20

**FREE S.P.I.R.I.T. RIDERS, INC.**

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**NEWSLETTER**

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## Elizabeth Karmenn is a Winner!

Elizabeth Karmenn was recently named the winner of the Violet Richardson “Honoring Young Women for Volunteer Action” award presented by Soroptimist International of Fond du Lac.

The Violet Richardson Award recognizes young women who make the community and the world a better place through volunteer efforts. Elizabeth was awarded \$250 (FSR also received \$250)!

Here is her winning essay:

“Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders is a place where dreams come true. It is here where riders with disabilities – whether physical, mental, or emotional – can be as normal as any other person. On the back of a horse, they can be free.

The conclusion of the 2006 riding season marks the end of my second year at Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders. I feel that not only have I made a difference in the lives of the riders, but they have made a difference in mine. The S.P.I.R.I.T. in Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders stands for Special People In Riding Therapy. Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders is committed to enriching the lives of children and adults with disabilities through safe, therapeutic interaction with horses. Classes are held on weekdays, and usually run fifty minutes long. An instructor organizes the class and coaches the riders.

Then there are the volunteers – the people who make it all happen. Riders generally have one to two Side Walkers to assist them with activities and riding. The horse is led by a Horse Handler, who is there to help the rider control the horse. New volunteers start out as Side Walkers, and with training and experience can attain Horse Handler levels. Horse Handlers start out with grooming and tacking, and progress to leading a horse in class.

I first started volunteering when I was fourteen, because I wanted to work with the horses. I have loved horses all my life and I jumped at the chance to volunteer in my community and interact with horses at the same time. In the two years I have volunteered there, I have worked to become a Horse Handler and lead horses in class. Riding therapy has many benefits including improved muscle tone, balance, posture, and coordination. I have seen many riders improve throughout the year. One girl is more confident, one boy has better balance, and another girl has better motor skills. I enjoy seeing them develop, as do all the volunteers.

This year I helped with the Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Drill Team, which is made up of some of the advanced riders. The riders were always so happy to come and ride, and they did a very good job learning to execute some of the difficult maneuvers. One of the riders, Amelia, has a very close relationship with her horse, ‘King.’ King has a reputation around the barn for being cranky, but he always behaves well for her. She has ridden him for a few years, and rides him better than anyone else.

The rider I worked with during the second class was a girl named Faith. She is only four, and everyone loves her because she is always in high spirits. She loves to pretend to be a princess, and always says that her horse is too dirty. Her concentration has improved over the past year, and I was sad to see her leave after our last session. Many volunteers form friendships with the riders they work with. It’s wonderful to see how riders at Free S.P.I.R.I.T. are treated like any other person, and are appreciated and respected, despite their differences. Working at Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders has helped me, as well as the riders. I would go right after school on Tuesdays, and if I’d had a bad day, I could spend some time working with the horses, which always made me feel better. Then I’d lead a horse in class and help the rider, and that would really make my day.

Therapeutic riding helps more than the riders, because the kids seem to glow with happiness. Everyone there becomes a part of it, making it a wonderful experience for each person. Choosing to volunteer at Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders was a decision I have never regretted. I love every minute of being with the kids and the horses. Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders truly is a place where dreams come true.” ❁



ELIZABETH KARMENN

## She's a Winner!

Laura Rogers was named winner of the Children's Long Term Support Child Award Winner at the Children's Long Term Support Parent Advisory Committee Second Annual Awards Ceremony on April 2. She won this award for her work as a Side Walker with Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders and her work with the ARC Socialization Program.

Laura began with FSR when she was 14 years old and not only helps with classes where she is a special friend to the children she helps, but also helps with many of our fundraisers. Thanks Laura, for all you do! \*



## DACC Days

We have a lot of work to accomplish this season and need to do much to prepare for our 20th Anniversary Open House on June 16. The guys from the Drug and Alcohol Correction Center will be starting their work with us on Wednesday, April 18 and will continue until mid August.

Your help is needed as we are responsible for feeding them their noon meal on the days they help us. Annette Marquard is the chief cook and dishwasher and needs a break every now and then from the multiple responsibilities of the meals.

Help is needed with donation of foods, beverages including soda, condiments, paper plates, and plasticware, as well as preparing and serving the food. Call 924-9920 if you can donate salad, entrée, or dessert or help serve on one or more Wednesdays. \*

## Volunteer Corner

It is extremely important that volunteers arrive at least 10 minutes early (even earlier if you are certified a Horse Handler who helps with grooming and tacking). We regret to say that too many classes have had to be delayed in the past because volunteers did not keep their commitment to arrive on time, thus allowing classes to start on time. Think of how you would feel if you had an appointment for a service you are paying for, arrived at the appropriate time, and then couldn't get started because those who said they would be there to help weren't! It wouldn't feel very good! \*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 27-28	Ride-For-Pride benefiting FSR
April 30	Start of 2007 classes!
June 16	1-4 pm 20th Anniversary Open House
August 18	17th Annual Ride/Walk-A-Thon
September 14-16	NARHA Instructor Workshop/Certification at FSR

## From your Director ...

*We have received an overwhelming response from riders this year! This is the first year we've scheduled classes at 7 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the start of the season; in the past we started those classes after school was out! We need volunteer help more now than ever before to side walk and horse handle, and we appreciate all who have stepped forward to meet this challenge.*

*There are many things to do that no one ever sees; it isn't just helping during classes. Much behind-the-scenes work needs to be done so that the classes can be held! We are reaching out to you to help us with increasingly more difficult tasks as we strive to make the wish to ride come true for more individuals. The barn, classes, our environment, and our Healing Gardens offer the participants a different look at the world.*

*When I hear a participant laugh, watch them learn new skills, and see them leave with a tired but happy look on their face, it tickles my soul. Thanks to all who work so tirelessly to raise the funds, complete the paperwork, and tell others about us. You all make us look so good!*

*Mary*

*vol-un-teeer (val' en tir') n. [obs. French volontaire, a voluntary]  
1. A person who offers to do something of his own free will.*

## 2006 Volunteer of the Year ...

This volunteer has been involved with FSR for 18 years. She has helped with every fundraiser in some way or another for that same amount of time. She has spent hours planning and preparing food for the meals we serve to the men from DACC for the past 4 years and is looking forward to helping in the same way this year. She has also helped with the meals served at the Ride-A-Thons and for the annual United Way Day of Sharing and more.

She has even tried out the Board of Directors position of Secretary for a while years ago and realized that was not the right place for her time and talents. She has gone through Side Walker training and helped when her daughter Amy was riding, but found that wasn't her niche. So she helps in hundreds of other ways, always with a smile on her face.

She organizes the FSR booth for the Annual Community Bazaar at Forest Mall and does the same for the annual SIGMA Holiday sale. She bakes cookies for many events and decorates the most beautiful cakes for a variety of activities including our raffles. She makes handmade sewn articles for our Silent Auctions and other activities. She even helps out by making bean bags and more for use in our classes.

She and family members help to proudly display our banner at every Ride For Pride event from which we have benefited. She sells Entertainment books and Eaton's Pizza coupons and tickets for any event we sponsor that requires tickets.

By now you have likely figured out that we are referring to **Annette Marquard**! Annette retired from her position as Administrative



ANNETTE MARQUARD

Assistant to the CEO at Giddings and Lewis and then became even more involved with FSR activities a few years ago. Though Annette is not an

active class volunteer, she meets and exceeds the criteria for 2006 Volunteer of the Year for all the reasons mentioned above and more! She is thoughtful, kind and considerate to all - whether it's another volunteer, parent of rider, rider, staff, or inmate helping us to put smiles on faces and hope in hearts. Thanks, Annette, for all you do and for being you! ☀

## FSR's Core Values

At our facility, we encourage our staff and volunteers to provide a respectful, caring, nurturing, and compassionate environment for our community. If a staff member, volunteer, parent, rider, guardian, or a visitor is not respectful or caring towards someone else, they will learn that we do not tolerate that behavior in our environment. They will be given the chance to change their behavior or, instead, choose to leave. We want the experience for everyone in our program to be a quality and valuable experience! ☀

*Volunteers are not paid –  
not because they are worthless,  
but because they are priceless.  
~ Susie Riner*

### Pick 'n Save Shoppers Can Help!

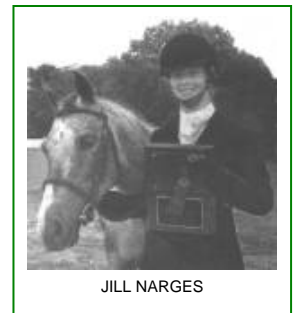
When you use an Advantage Plus Savers Card at Pick 'n Save, a portion of your spending can benefit FSR – that is, IF you have designated FSR as the non-profit organization you'd like to help.



If you already have a card at Pick 'n Save, go to the store's service desk and complete a form. Indicate FSR's six-digit identification number **243100** in the appropriate spot. If you forget the number when you get there, just ask someone behind the counter and they will know how to find the number. Sign up today, you'll be helping to feed our horses. ☀

### "COPS FOR KIDS" YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

Our volunteer, **Jill Narges**, has been named the winner of the 2007 "Cops For Kids" Youth Scholarship Award which will be presented May 3 at the 2007 Awards Banquet to be held at the Ramada Plaza Hotel. Jill is active with FSR and other organizations, as well as her school. ☀



JILL NARGES

### Why volunteer?

FSR needs volunteers – people to help in the office, with fundraising, during classes, making crafts, on various committees, and on our Board of Directors. Volunteers often say they get as much – and even more – from volunteering as they give. Here are a few national volunteering statistics with which FSR volunteers may identify:

- 90% of volunteers feel a sense of belonging or a connection with their communities
- 85% think community volunteer work adds a purposeful sense of structure to their lives
- 80% report having made new friendships as a result of volunteering
- 57% believe their volunteering has enhanced their personal career by increasing networking and skill-building opportunities
- 13% report a job or career change after their volunteering

You can make a difference, not only in the lives of others, but also in your own! ☀

## 2006 Volunteer Rookie of the Year!

Little did we know when **Bruce Hybert** approached us to do volunteer work that we had such a hard working fellow to help us meet our mission! Bruce came on as a Side Walker and often helped us 3-4 days a week and for 4 or more classes each day if needed. He was always on time and eager to help.

Bruce advanced through the Horse Handling Certification level of Green which means that he is now a Horse Leader when needed for that purpose with our classes.

He helps groom horses for classes and does other little things to make us

look better to our visitors.

Bruce is kind to everyone and, though a relatively quiet fellow, has made many friends through us. He recognizes that our program participants are people first and helps them become more independent with their skills.

Bruce was a top placing volunteer in raising funds for the 2006 Ride/Walk-A-Thon. He raised most of his funds by selling raffle tickets.

Bruce works at Bob and Bonnie's Donuts where he is a valued employee. And he is equally valued by FSR and our program participants! ☼

### HELP WANTED

We need help from people who like to bake and cook to make desserts, salads, and side dishes for the meals we serve to the inmates from DACC every Wednesday. You may choose to help every Wednesday or you may choose to help only once or twice.

If interested or if you have questions, call Annette Marquard at 922-1018. ☼



BRUCE HYBERT

## Giving to FSR can help in Estate Planning

Besides the good feeling that come from helping others, donation of stock to FSR can be beneficial to donors. When long-held stock is sold, the capital gains can result in a hefty tax. If stock is donated to a charity such as FSR, a tax deduction in the amount of the capital gains can be taken. Making a stock bequest to a charity can also be a beneficial part of estate planning. By leaving stock to FSR in a will, a person's estate can receive a tax deduction. Give this some thought! ☼

### NAMING RIGHTS

Want to help FSR and have your name on a stall for your efforts? There are still 3 of our stalls available for you to name for giving a pledge of \$5,000 towards our Debt Reduction Fund. You could also pledge \$20,000 and the tack room would be yours to name or \$15,000 and the feed room could bear your family name, your company's name, or your service organization's name. For \$50,000 the Family Room can be named by you or your group; for \$100,000 the arena could be named.

Let us know or call 924-9920 for more information. We would like to have the naming plaques in place by June 16 for our 20th Anniversary Open House. This does not require full payment in advance, payments can be worked out by pledging an amount per year, or month until the amount is paid off. ☼

### FORMAT FOR OUR CLASSES

All classes at FSR operate under the same basic format: The first 15 minutes are devoted to mounting each of the riders and ensuring safety in the fit of all tack and adaptive equipment. At times, mounting can be completed in 5-10 minutes and the instructors work hard to ensure all will be mounted and riding within the first 15 minutes of the class time.

The next 20 to 25 minutes are devoted to riding activities including any exercises and games used to increase flexibility, improve posture and balance and promote greater independence. The last ten minutes will be used for dismounting with safety as a priority. This should allow enough time for volunteers to change any horses and/or tack for the next class so that classes can start in a timely manner.

Anytime there is a delay in the start of classes for any reason, the instructors will be using our sound system to let all family members and observers know, and even perhaps how they can help the activity start in a timelier manner. ☼

## FSR to Host On Site Instructor Certification

We will be the host of a NARHA On Site Instructor Certification on September 14, 15 and 16. If you are interested in becoming a Registered Instructor, there is criteria you need to meet including doing 25 hours of practice instruction under the guidance of a NARHA Registered Instructor. If you wish to get started on this process, please let Mary know at 924-9920 or stop by the office. ☼

### WANT TO BECOME A HORSE HANDLER?

Any current experienced Side Walker who wishes to advance to the first level of Horse Handling can do so by letting any instructor know. The instructor will then arrange a time to work with you on the certification process. The same holds true if you wish to advance to another level of Horse Handling, just let an instructor know! ☼

## Volunteer Award Criteria

In order to be named the *Volunteer of the Year* or *Volunteer Rookie of the Year*, you must meet specific criteria including displaying a non-judgmental attitude to other volunteers, staff, and most of all to all of our program participants. The selected person must help with at least one fundraising event as well as with classes as a Side Walker or Horse Handler. Additionally, the eligible person must be friendly and courteous to others, represent FSR in a positive manner, and be focused on our mission.

So now you know what to do to become this year's *Volunteer of the Year* or, if you are new to us, the *2007 Volunteer Rookie of the Year!* ☀

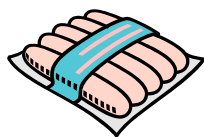
## 9th Annual Raffle Being Planned

Would you like to be part of the success of our 9th Annual Raffle? We're soliciting raffle items now through May 15. We are hoping to have tickets printed and ready for sale at our 20th Anniversary Open House on June 16. If you wish to donate an item, service, or gift certificate (or know someone who would like to) let us know by calling 924-9920 or e-mail us at [info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org](mailto:info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org). This is a great advertising opportunity for businesses, as we will be distributing more than 7,000 tickets this year! ☀

## What's in your freezer??

We need turkeys from which Annette Marquard can make hot turkey sandwiches to feed the DACC men. We could also use hamburger in 3-lb lots, hot dogs, brats, and even venison can keep the cost down.

It's not much to ask of us when you consider all the work that gets done each Wednesday! ☀



## Want Ads ...

- 5 Horse Handlers are needed for 4 classes on Wednesdays beginning June 13. The classes are held 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, and 1:30 pm. Call 924-9920 if you can help with one class or all four.
- Are you cleaning out your flowerbeds, perhaps removing some plants, roots, or bulbs? We have the perfect spot for them – it's our Healing Garden! Rather than throwing out your excess, bring it to us and watch our garden grow. Be sure to let us know the name of the plants when you bring them. Please call 924-9920 in advance.
- Are you crafty? We are looking for people who enjoy making crafty things – especially horse crafts – to help us with upcoming fundraising events. Call Annette Marquard at 922-1018 for more information.
- FSR needs mature individuals that have time and are interested in grooming and watering our arena to help keep down the dust. This will require training in using our Gator. If interested, let us know!
- We could use a few good people who are experienced class volunteers but are no longer interested in helping during classes to help organize behind the scenes. The ideal candidate could assist the instructor in setup for the classes, oversee the tacking and grooming procedures for the next classes, answer volunteer questions, and improve the flow of the classes. If interested or have questions, talk with Mary Narges.
- Handyman-type guys are needed to help on Wednesdays during the summer from 9 am until 3 pm or any 2 or more hour shift in that time span as we keep our facility, pastures, and garden in tip-top shape. Lunch will be provided. Talk with Mary Narges if you have interest or questions.
- It's not too early to start putting together your team for the Ride/Walk-A-Thon. You could choose a rider and raise pledges in that rider's honor. Remember, the rider who has the most pledges raised in their honor becomes the FSR 2007 Honorary Trail Boss! You can even increase your pledges by doing a Brat Fry at Piggly Wiggly, Pick 'n Save, or the corner gas station.
- Trail Boss Needed: It's not too early to start raising pledges in honor of a rider. Put together a team of Side Walkers, friends, family members, and start raising pledges for a specific rider. The rider with the most pledges raised in their honor will be our 2007 Trail Boss. Call Mary Narges for more info.

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

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



**DATED MATERIAL**

◆ FACILITY ADDRESS ◆  
W3950 Highway 23  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

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

PHONE: 920-924-9920  
EMAIL: info@freespiritriders.org  
WEBSITE: www.FreeSPIRITRiders.org

◆ THERAPISTS ◆  
Duffy, Fancy, Fyre, Justin, King,  
Molly, Poco, Missy, and Valentine

◆ INSTRUCTORS ◆

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## MISSION STATEMENT

Free S.P.I.R.I.T. Riders, Inc.  
is a non-profit organization  
founded in 1987  
committed to enriching the  
lives of children and adults  
with disabilities  
through safe therapeutic interaction  
with horses.



## VISION STATEMENT

Free S.P.I.R.I.T. 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.