



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

Special People In Riding Therapy

Spring Edition 2008

SAVE THIS DATE!

The 18th Annual FSR Ride-a-Thon will be held on Saturday August 16 and promises to be bigger and better than ever. Watch upcoming newsletters and posters at the barn for more info!

LET'S HAVE A REUNION!!

We are extending invitations to our 18th Annual Ride-A-Thon to all previous riders and all volunteers who helped us in the past. We do not have current addresses for many of the volunteers and some of the riders, so hope you will help us out by updating our information on any previous volunteers of riders you are in touch with. Hope to hear from you, we need your help!

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

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mary Narges 920-924-9920
chknmary@hotmail.com

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Marlene Coffeen 920-924-9920
info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org

EQUINE MANAGER

Jenny Odekirk 920-922-1589
jodekirk@milwpc.com

NEWSLETTER

Linda Schneider 920-922-8762
minivan_mom_2000@yahoo.com

A BIG THANK YOU...

To all who made a donation to FSR in 2007 and had their donation matched by their employer! Companies that will match donations include Quad/Graphics, Anthem (Blue Cross/Blue Shield), Gannett Co., G & L, Alliant Energy, Miller Electric, Mercury Marine, and others. In the words of Jon Witkowski, a donor, "For several years I have been blessed with the opportunity to donate funds to FSR through a Community Fund established through Quad/Graphics. I set up a PSA (Personal Sharing Account) that I can designate to a non-profit agency of my choosing. I have chosen FSR to allocate funds to and am proud to do so."



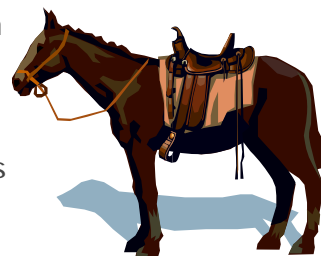
Jon is encouraging everyone to see if their employer does matching funds and use the opportunity to double or even triple your donation to support our mission. "My company takes great pride in doing this and will match any PSA or Community Fund donation dollar/dollar."

Can you help?

We are accepting items for our 9th Annual Raffle. Ticket sales will start in early June; we would like to formalize the list of prizes for the printer by May 1. If you can help us get prizes or you have suggestions, please let us know. E-mail us at info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org or call us at 920-924-9920. We appreciate your help!

It's In the Mail!!

The 2008 Volunteer and Rider Registration forms have been mailed! Please return at your earliest convenience, as we have started working on the class schedule for 2008 and wish for all riders and volunteers to get the class time of their choice. Hope to get your forms soon!



Hint for Volunteers

Did you remember to keep track of your expenses related to volunteering? Not only can you deduct direct money gifts made to FSR, you can also deduct 14 cents per mile for commuting to and from the facility, as well as to and from a fundraising or other FSR event. Make certain that you keep a record of the date, amount of mileage or other deduction. **If you have questions, refer to section 170 of the IRS code and Revenue Ruling 70-519 or talk to the individual who prepares your taxes for you.**

We Miss Ken Topp!!

Ken Topp attended a Volunteer Training in 2004. He had retired from Galloway West Saputo Cheese in 2002 after working there for 40 years. He started with us as a Side Walker but also helped a non verbal participant whose weight precluded him from riding learn groom skills. Ken worked with this individual on a one-to-one basis with one of the miniature horses we had at that time and soon was mentoring this young man in social appropriateness!

Ken was certified at the Green Level in Horse Handling and helped in many ways. In the fall of 2007, he felt his hip pain was too great to walk in the sand and on the trails so he sought medical care. Instead of a hip problem, he learned he had cancer. Ken moved on to "greener pastures" on November 19, 2007. We will miss his quiet presence when classes resume!

"SUBS"

We need people who are available to be substitutes during classes starting the week of May 5 to let us know so we have an adequate Substitute List to distribute at the start of the season. Thanks for your cooperation in this important part of our program!"



Russ Remus started helping one hour a week in 2005 and eventually helped in 2 or more classes on 2 or more days. He has completed three Horse Handling certifications and is a great asset to our classes. Russ is married to Darlene who works at US Bank in Fond du Lac. They have one married daughter who lives in Manitowoc with her husband and three children. Russ served 4 years in the Air Force and graduated from UW Stout with a teaching degree in math and industrial arts. He taught at St. Mary's Springs High School for 6 years and the next 26 years at Waupun Middle School teaching computers, woodworking, small engines, drafting, and building construction.

Russ is frequently referred to as "Mr. Remus", a title used with reverence and respect. Many parents of our participants remember "Mr. Remus" from his teaching days. Russ retired from teaching in 2005.

In addition to his time with FSR, Russ is working with Habitat for Humanity serving on both the Board of Directors and the Building Committee. He also serves on the Mission Committee at Grace Reformed Church. He works part-time at Pick'n Save grocery store in the dairy/frozen department and does interior/exterior house painting.

ON SALE NOW!!!

We have a limited number of 2008 Entertainment Coupon Books left and are selling them at half price! The Milwaukee Area Books now sell for \$20 and the Green Bay/Fox Valley with many FdL area coupons now sell for \$15. The coupons for fast food, fine dining, sporting activities, family travel, entertainment, and more are good until November 1, 2008. Could be a great birthday present that will keep on giving for someone or even for yourself! Call (920-924-9920) or e-mail us (info@FreeSPIRITriders.org) if interested!

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 riders honor.

Remember, the rider who has the most pledges raised in their honor becomes the FSR 2007 Honorary Trail Boss! You can even increase the amount of your pledges by doing a Brat Fry at Piggly Wiggly, Pick 'n Save, or corner gas station.



Rider in the Spotlight



When Julie Gau enters FSR's facility the place lights up! Julie is non-verbal, but her eyes and smile portray a message of delight. Julie has a way of making everyone feel good and wanting to engage with her. Her classmates at FSR have a brighter attitude and smile as much as she does when Julie is present.

Julie is 17 years old and lives with her mother in St. Cloud. She attends Campbellsport High School. Julie has 3 older siblings who live on their own: Jason who is 26, Jenny who is 24 and Jessica who is 21. Julie's dad died of a heart attack suddenly on April 28, 2000.

Julie's lungs collapsed when she was born leaving her with Cerebral Palsy and a formal diagnosis of static non-progressive encephalopathy. She also has acid reflux and asthma, but nothing can keep her down!

Julie came to FSR to reduce the stiffness within her body, increase flexibility and improve her socialization. She also needed to work on following directions and she implies she wanted to have fun. It looks like she has achieved most of those goals but she continues to work on her riding and handling skills. Say 'hi' to Julie when you see her, you will be glad you did!

About Cerebral Palsy ...

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is the term used to describe the motor impairment resulting from brain damage in the young child regardless of the cause of the damage or its effect on the child. Many of the normal developmental milestones, such as reaching for toys (3-4 months), sitting (6-7 months), and walking (10-14 months), are based on motor function. A physician may suspect cerebral palsy in a child whose development of these skills is delayed. In making a diagnosis of CP, the physician takes into account the delay in developmental milestones as well as physical findings that might include abnormal muscle tone, abnormal movements, abnormal reflexes and persistent infantile reflexes.

Making a definite diagnosis of CP is not always easy, especially before the child's first birthday. In fact, diagnosing CP usually involves a period of waiting for the definite and permanent appearance of specific motor problems. Most children with CP can be diagnosed by the age of 18 months, but eighteen months is a long time for parents to wait for a diagnosis, and this is understandably a difficult period for them. Making a diagnosis of CP is also difficult when, for example, a two-year-old has suffered a head injury. The child may immediately appear to be severely injured, and three months after the injury he/she may have symptoms that are typical of a child with CP. But one year after the injury such a child may be completely normal. This child does not have CP. Although he/she has a scar on the brain, the scar is not permanently impairing motor activities. After injury, waiting and observing are necessary before the diagnosis can be made. CP is not a specific diagnosis, but is more accurately considered a description—a description of a broad but defined group of neurological and physical problems.

For our program participants with CP, therapeutic riding improves posture and balance, helps with problem solving skills, maintaining focus and as with Julie Gau, helps with socialization skills.

More information about cerebral palsy is available at www.cerebralpalsyinfo.org; www.cerebralpalsy.info; http://kidshealth.org/parent/medical/brain/cerebral_palsy.html and <http://www.ucpa.org>.



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, improve the flow of the classes. If interested or have questions, talk with Mary.

"Are You a Handyman?"

Handyman type guys are needed to help on Wednesdays during the summer from 9 a.m. 'til 3 p.m. 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 to Mary if you have interest or questions.

FSR needs mature individuals who 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.

Trail Boss Needed:

It's not too early to start raising pledges in honor of a rider. Put together a team of sidewalkers, friends, family members and start raising pledges for a specific rider. The rider with the most pledges raised in their honor will be our 2008 Trail Boss at our 18th Annual Ride-a-Thon on Saturday, August 16. Call Mary for more info.

Make Your Reservation Now!!

The Volunteer and Rider Re-registration forms were mailed out in January. If you didn't get yours, please let us know or download the forms you need from www.FreeSPIRITRiders.org. Get your forms in quickly as the spots are beginning to fill.

Progressive therapeutic riding program seeks items for their 8th Annual Raffle. Individuals who can help with this revenue raising idea should call 920-924-9920 immediately.

Thanks to everyone who made a pledge to help the United Way through their employer. Special thanks to those who designated FSR to be the recipient of their payroll deduction!

We are still trying to make our mailing list current...Do we have your name spelled correctly? Does your address need correcting? Are you getting duplicate copies? Do you wish to have your name removed from our mailing list? Call 920-924-9920 to make necessary changes.

Special thanks to the inmates at Taycheedah Correctional Institute for copying, collating, and folding our newsletters - This is a big timesaver for our staff and volunteers frees us up to do other things beneficial to FSR. Plus, it provides valuable training to the inmates – what a great relationship!

Flexible Spending and FSR

Families may be able to take advantage of flexible medical spending accounts to cover costs for therapeutic riding at FSR!

It is a great option that helps families take advantage of pre-tax deductions.

The flexible spending account covers all health-related bills that are not covered by the patient's medical insurance. The employee actually saves money by setting up a fund with their employer for automatic paycheck withdrawal which is not taxed.

Please check with your employer to find if Flexible Spending is available through your company.

Survey Results Available

Remember the annual surveys that were handed out at the end of the season? Want to know the results? Even if you didn't complete a survey and weren't active in the later part of our season, you are welcome to review the results by e-mailing us at info@FreeSPIRITRiders.org.



Calling all volunteers!!

You can help us by recruiting more volunteers. Just think of the impact you could have if each of you brought one new volunteer into the program! Volunteers are especially needed to help with day time and late afternoon classes during the school year. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!** Interested persons should be encouraged to visit our web site, www.FreeSPIRITRiders.org, or call us 920-924-9920.

Do you grocery shop??

Of course, you do!! If you shop at Pick'n Save (in any city or location) register for an Advantage Plus Savers Club Card. On the registration form, designate FSR to be an organization to receive a 1% rebate from the amount you spend on groceries. The account number for FSR is 243100. Each time you present your Advantage Card when you grocery shop, a 1% donation from your purchase is added to FSR's account at no cost to you.

If you shop at Piggly Wiggly in Fond du Lac, save your grocery store receipts and drop them off at the barn or mail them to PO Box 1291, FdL 54936-1291. FSR gets a 1% rebate on the value of your purchase.

Eaton's Pizza

It's a good idea to keep a few Eaton's Pizza Coupons on hand for last minute planning – or better yet pick up a few fresh pizzas and freeze them to be ready for surprise guests. FSR is selling the coupons for \$5.00 each and there are reduced prices for multiple purchases. The proceeds help to feed our horses. The coupons are good at locations in FdL, Oshkosh, and West Bend. Call 920-924-9920 to order yours! Every little bit helps!

"Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense."

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.
By Scott Polzin



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

FACILITY ADDRESS
W3956 Highway 23
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

MAILING ADDRESS
P.O. Box 1291
Fond du Lac, WI 54935-1291

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

THERAPISTS
Duffy, Fancy, Fyre, King,
Molly, Poco, Punkin, Sara

INSTRUCTORS

Cindy Anderson 920-987-5228
cindalanderson@yahoo.com

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

Rose Hromadka 520-971-2543
rhromadka@gmail.com

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 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.