



RANCH RAMBLIN'S

Majestic Hills Ranch for Children 24580 Dakota Ave Lakeville, MN 55044
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Riding Season is Almost Here!

by Vicki Benson, Executive Director

Looking out my office window and watching the snow come down, it is hard to believe that riding season is only a couple of months away. If you need registration forms or volunteer applications, please visit the website to download them, or contact Vicki at (952)426-5688 or

vbenson@majestichillsranch.com to have a copy sent to you.

As always, slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Please be aware we will need current physician release/medical history forms for all participants. Weather permitting, the season will run from May 3rd to October 28th with summer session running June 14th to September 2nd.

Advanced Riding Classes are available this season. We will have a new arena for this class separate from the other classes. Classes will be held twice a week. The instructor is Brenda Steinhauer. Brenda grew up with horses, her experience includes; barrel racing, showing in dressage, mounted endurance, training horses, teaching riders at numerous facilities, and she headed up equine programs for various camp programs. Brenda's experience, patience and talents have always been a valuable asset to Majestic Hills Ranch and we are thrilled she's going to share them by heading up the advanced class for riders. Riders will need to meet minimum requirements for acceptance into these sessions. We are very excited about this expansion of the program and will keep everyone posted on how things are going.

Changes At The Ranch this spring will bring some new arrivals to the ranch. Finn and Doc will be joining our line-up of program horses and we will have some lambs in the petting zoo for the kids to visit. We'd like to add a couple of alpacas; if anyone knows of a breeder in the area who would like to donate two, the ranch would love to give them a good home. You may notice there are a few familiar faces missing...Walker, Tucker and Coal (the dogs), Norman the steer, Ellie Mae the donkey and Roo the wallaby have been adopted by other facilities. In all cases, they were getting a bit too pushy with the children and it was felt they would be happier elsewhere. Rest easy, though. Stuart is still around and will contribute his "Stuart Says" column in the next newsletter!

The wagon rests in winter,
the sleigh in summer, the
horse never. ~Yiddish
Proverb

Volunteers Needed

We are starting to recruit volunteers to assist with the Riding Program this summer. Once we have an idea how many volunteers we'll have we can begin filling the therapy sessions. We ask for a four hour commitment, whether it is once a week or once a month. Volunteers should be able to walk in the arena with the horses for an hour at a time and jog for brief periods. Horse experience is a bonus, not a requirement. If you know someone who would be interested, have them call Vicki at (952)426-5688 or CJ Pierson at (612)860-1666.

Advanced On Line Training is now available for volunteers who would like to learn how to work more effectively with various disabilities. You can find the link at www.teachersoncall.com. Click on training then click on Paraprofessional Cost is \$19.95 Training is great! It takes about 2 hours to get certified.

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Horse of the Year 2009: Duncan

Two years ago one of our volunteers came to us and said, "I just met a horse up at the rescue that we have to get for the program." Soon thereafter, a horse trailer pulled in and delivered a dark bay pony/draft horse cross named Duncan to us. He was emaciated and bore the scars of a difficult life, but Mary was right. There was something in those soft brown eyes that touched your heart. Over the winter we nursed him back to health and in the spring the vet declared him "older than dirt," but ready to work. He was given his rainbow halter and quickly became a favorite of the kids, volunteers and parents. At the beginning of this last season we began to notice a slight limp in the old boy, but he seemed to walk it off after a while. We put him on a joint supplement, but towards the end of the season that limp was noticeably worse and Duncan was no longer walking it off. Reality needed to be faced. The heart and spirit were still willing, but the body wasn't able to keep up anymore. In the first week of September the decision was made to retire Duncan and he was returned to the rescue, as we were fostering him for them. Rest assured, he is a healthy, happy pasture pet who is enjoying his well deserved retirement at his new forever home.



Morning instructor Molly, Duncan and Maddie at work last summer.

Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars now for these events we have scheduled for the season and join us! We have more things in the planning stages, so check the website and Facebook page for more details as they are finalized. We would like to have some pancake breakfasts, spaghetti feeds or a hunter's supper as well. If you have access to a space with kitchen facilities where we could hold these, let CJ Pierson know at (612)860-1666.

Volunteer training and orientation

April 3rd, 10th and 17th: Orientation and training for new volunteers at the ranch. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Spring Clean up Day at the Ranch

May 1st: We'll be getting the grounds and equipment ready for riding season. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 15-20 volunteers will be needed to help with cleaning up and landscaping projects. This is a great project for groups to get involved with.

May 3rd: Riding season starts!!

June 14th: Summer sessions start!!

Garage Sale

June 24th, 25th and 26th: 7508 3rd Ave S Richfield. Hours will be 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday. Set up will be on June 19th and we will need 8 volunteers then and 8 more on the 26th to tear down. Donations can be dropped off at the Richfield location on the 19th or at 3001 Metro Dr #480 Bloomington prior to then. No large furniture items, please.

Cornerstone picnic at the ranch

June 25th: We'll need 12-15 volunteers to help play games, do crafts and grill. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

HopeKids picnic at the ranch

July 14th: We'll need 20-25 volunteers to help play games, do crafts and grill. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Volunteer recognition picnic

August 21st: Participants and their families are invited to join us to thank the volunteers for all of the hard work they have done for the program. Bring a dish to pass. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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Upcoming Events cont'd from page 2

Pig Roast September 11th

A good time was had by all last summer at our first annual pig roast. Come and join us for food, music, raffles and more! We'll need 12 volunteers to assist with set up and the event.

Main Event Fundraiser October 23rd

Once again, we will be at the Shriner's Center in Minneapolis for our Main Event fundraiser. Mark your calendar now and join us on October 23rd for dinner, entertainment, silent and live auctions and good company. Purchase a \$100.00 raffle ticket for a chance to win \$10,000.00. Tickets are on sale now. We have several levels of sponsorships available for the evening.

Grand Sponsor: \$5,000.00. Reserved seating for 16, 2 pages of color advertising in the event program, gifts for each attendee, a banner at the event and written and verbal recognition for your support.

Corporate Sponsor: \$1,000.00. Reserved seating for 8 to the event, a full page color ad in the event program and verbal recognition.

Facility and Decorations Sponsor: \$1,700.00. Help cover the expense of renting and decorating the hall for the evening. You will receive recognition at the event for the support.

Program Sponsor: \$1,500.00. Sponsor the printing of the evening's program and get a full page color ad.

Entertainment Sponsor: \$3,000.00. Sponsor the entertainment for the evening.

Live auction sponsor: Donate live auction items such as: a lawn mower, snow blower, airline tickets, condo or cabin rental for a week, balloon rides, a jet ski, snowmobile, gift cards for a new wardrobe, a year of gas or a year of groceries, ...etc. These are just some ideas.

All sponsors will be recognized on the website, on our Facebook page and in the event program. If there is an area we didn't mention that you'd like to sponsor, we'd love to talk to you about it.

Contact Larry John at (952)888-6077 or at ljohnson@asiemployment.com for more information or to make a donation

Fall clean up day at the Ranch

October 30th: We'll be working on cleaning and storing away program equipment for the winter and winterizing the grounds and barn. 10-15 volunteers will be needed to help from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This is a great project for groups.

November 20th: Pancake Breakfast with Santa. Kick off the Holiday Season with us at the Applebee's in Burnsville Center. 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. The Tuesday before, the 16th, will be dine and donate day for the ranch. Tell the server you're dining to support MHR and 15% of your tab will be donated to us.

Donations Needed

There are always things we're in need of around the ranch, and here are a few things we'd like to have:

- Ink cartridges for printer (HP 60)
- Ultra Shield Fly spray for the horses
- CV80D Fly spray for barn
- Apple Flavored horse treats (Fleet Farm)
- Color printing services for our quarterly newsletter
- Stall forks and feed buckets
- Portable mounting ramp
- Covered seating area for parents
- Pavilion to cover the picnic tables
- Gently used wide tree saddles for the advanced riding program.
- MHR Logo T shirts, coffee mugs, key chains, water bottles, etc for our volunteers.
- Tank heaters and heated water buckets

Our biggest wish: AN INDOOR ARENA

Majestic Hills Ranch Foundation
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