



INSTRIDE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FIRST QUARTER

JANUARY 2011



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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INTRODUCTION

We want to wish you and your families a very Happy New Year. We have been in a bit of a hiatus when it comes to doing the newsletter. Due to the busyness of the season and duties changing around in the office, the newsletter became neglected. We are going to start off the new year fresh and will be sending the newsletter quarterly. We use this to keep you informed of goings on at the barn, session closings and just miscellaneous information you may like. We will also be posting pertinent information in the volunteer check in area as well as in the rider's area. As usual, if you have any questions about program, etc. please don't hesitate to ask one of us.

We hope that you have a wonderful and prosperous new year!

The InStride Staff

BIRTHDAYS

January—Clients: Connor Anderson, Olivia Barresi, Liz Chandler, Jesse Chu, Sebastian Moret-Ramirez, Cameron Peterson, Andoni Rezola. **Volunteers:** Jens Hansen, McKinnley Workman.

February—Clients: Ethan Lemmon, Kevin Smith, Jaylynd Wagner. **Volunteers:** Jennifer Bigner, Shirley Breitzig, Shirley Thompson.

March—Clients: Ryan Clapham, Anthony Cuffaro, Ryan Damron, Hannah Halperin, Jacob Norton. **Volunteers:** Bethania Clapham, Vanessa Cohello, Shay Forman, Jeanne Jeannotte (JJ), Gary Skarr, Pat Smith, Harry Stephens,



CLINICS

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We have Jesse Peters coming back to hold two clinics again this year. His first will be January 8th and 9th starting at 9:00 am with registration from 8:00 to 8:45. Auditors are \$35.00 a day. His second clinic will be March 26th and 27th with the same times and costs.

InStride is also holding a NARHA certification clinic from February 3rd until the 7th. This is for individuals that have completed special classes and is their last step to become a therapeutic riding instructor. In fact four people from InStride will be going for their certification; **Lori Williams, Camille Clarke, Joanne Newsome and Linda Frease**. Please note that we will be closed to therapy during the NARHA certification clinic. We will remind you as the clinic gets closer.

GIDDY UP!



Due to the economy we had to cancel Derby Day this year. Since Derby is our largest fund raiser and helps fill our scholarship coffers what could we do? An idea was formed and we ran with it....have a ride-a-thon involving our riders and their families. It grew from there as Donna challenged our Blacksmith and Veterinarian to put on a BBQ as well.

Our riders got pledges to ride one lap around the arena and sold raffle tickets for a 50/50 drawing. The winner of the raffle received \$850.00 of which they donated back \$200.00! There were games for the children, a face painter, bounce house (well hidden of course), silent auction, mini store, minute to win it, sumo wrestling, dessert contest, snow cones, etc... It was an awesome day with lots of great food.

Giddy Up and the Grand BBQ turned out to be a huge success! We raised approximately \$30,000.00 for scholarships for our riders. Who receives scholarships for our services you may ask? Almost all of our 65 weekly riders receives some form of funding assistance. Some need as little as \$20.00 while others much more. In fact we accept Medicaid and have riders from the Early Steps program and neither of these programs pays close to what our actual cost is. Anyone in either of these programs actually receives \$51.06 a session to help supplement what Medicaid and Early Steps does pay us.

We of course have many kinks to work out, but are looking forward to this coming year's Giddy Up/Grand BBQ. The date is October 9th 2011—so mark your calendar's now.

JACKIE

Our beloved Jackie passed on December 24th and crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. As most of you know Jackie was our first Therapy horse and has been with InStride for 16 years. Donna estimates she was 20 when she joined our team. She was a great therapy horse, short in size to easily assist our smaller clients but strong and spirited. About 5 years ago Jackie had some major health issues and was retired. We promised her she could live here as long as she wanted.

The couple of days prior to her passing we noticed Jackie laying down a lot. She seemed peaceful but it was pretty extreme how much she was laying down. On Thursday Jackie was having a hard time getting around and she was in pain on her left side. Friday she literally could not move. We quickly called the vet and made the appropriate arrangements. She is way too nice of a horse to have to suffer in any way.

Blessings to our good friend Jackie

Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by. The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. Her bright eyes are intent; Her eager body quivers. Suddenly she begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, her legs carrying her faster and faster.

You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your horse, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.



Then you cross Rainbow Bridge together.... Author unknown.

NEW EMPLOYEE



At this time we would like to introduce you to Camille Clarke. Camille has been involved with InStride for over 6 years as a past employee and volunteer. Camille has come back on board and will be working during our programs as a horse leader and general barn help. Please welcome Camille the next time you see her.

OLD FARMER'S ADVICE

1. Sometimes you get, and sometimes you get got.
2. The biggest troublemaker you'll probably ever have to deal with, watches you from the mirror every mornin'.
3. Always drink upstream from the herd.
4. Good judgment comes from experience, and a lotta that comes from bad judgment.
5. Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier than puttin' it back in.
6. If you get to thinkin' you're a person of some influence, try orderin' somebody else's dog around.
7. Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.



POT OF GOLD

You know the old saying; that there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Jennifer was outside the other day and took this picture and we wanted to share it with you. The entire staff feels that you are our pot of gold with all the volunteer work that you do for us, our riders and our horses.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS



It is that time of year again! We are gearing up for our Special Olympians to come ride on Monday afternoons. They will be starting on January 17th and ride from 2:30 until 5:30. If you would like to volunteer during this time please let Jennifer know.

We will be hosting the Area Games again this year on April 2nd. This means that we will have athletes from two other facilities and will need



We will be hosting the Area Games again this year on April 2nd. This means that we will have athletes from two other facilities and will need

about 20 extra volunteers that day to coordinate everything. Keep this in mind and as the time draws near we will post a sign-up sheet.

SPEED LIMIT

Please remember as we get back into our regular session that the speed limit coming in and going out of our facility is **5MPH**. This is for the safety of our riders. Our horses are great, but sometimes they can catch something out of the corner of their eye and it startles them. If you are running late, there is nothing that can be done, so please drive safely for everyone involved. Remember—if you are kicking up dust—slowing down is a must!



SPRING BREAK



We will close for Spring Break when the public schools close. This is the week of March 7th through the 11th. We are not planning on closing for either of the Saturday's that week. If any of our Saturday families are going out of town, just let us know and we will re-visit the schedule at that time to see if we should close due to lack of attendance.

TEEN HOURS

We are very pleased to be an organization that is recommended by the schools for a student to utilize to get their “Bright Future’s Hours” with. We want to remind people of some of the ground rules:

1. No cell phone use during program—no texting friends, etc, even while in the barn. (You can call your parents to come pick you up when away from the arena.) Phones are to be left on the volunteer table.
2. You are to sign in and out of our volunteer book. We cannot sign off on your hours until we verify them with our sign in sheets. (We will not give you more hours than you actually worked.)
3. You are here to work. There may be adults that have down time, but they are not here getting hours for a school program. You can take a break, but sitting around for more than 10 minutes is not getting the job done.
4. We try to have a list of chores on the table in the barn. If you are not side-walking, then please consult this list to see what else needs taken care of.
5. Appropriate clothing are t-shirts or tank tops—no spaghetti straps (you will be sent home), no short shorts and be sure to wear tennis shoes.

We love having you here and most everyone has proven to be very hard workers. This is just a friendly reminder for after the break.



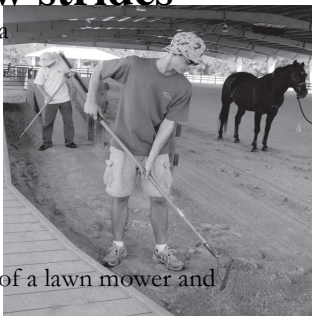
TEEN VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

McSweeney brothers take new strides

by Lexy Khell

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he roar of a lawn mower and



weed whacker fills senior Morgan McSweeney and freshman Devin McSweeney’s ears during their day of volunteering at InStride. Once a week, for

position at the handles of lawn equipment, they help with the horses and games out on the field. “There we go out with the horses, two or three horses or four at a time,” Devin said. Completing his brother’s thought, Morgan added, “They have little field areas, like soccer fields. Instead of picking weeds or weed whacking, we actually help with the program, where we walk next to the horse while the kids are riding.”

In addition to walking next to the horses, to ensure the children’s safety, Morgan and Devin also have the opportunity to interact with kids while side walking. “We have little game stations set

volunteering at InStride. Once a week, for nine hours, Morgan and Devin give their time to this organization and lend a hand in any way they can.

InStride is an equine assisted therapy non-profit organization, dedicated to helping people with mental and physical disabilities by using horseback riding as a treatment. Riding the horses helps improve the rider's balance, strength and rhythm. In addition, the rider is emotionally Strengthened through horseback by the success of overcoming fears and improving self-esteem.

Volunteering at InStride is "pretty much all of the grunt labor possible," Morgan said. The brothers are hard at work hacking down trees, cleaning pathways, fixing broken fences, feeding and taking care of the horses and their stalls, in addition to the "default" tasks of weed whacking and mowing.

Their routine is fairly consistent, Devin said. They get there at 7:45 a.m., pick up their list of tasks, and start working. "One of us mows. The other one weed whacks until lunch time. Then we have lunch, and after lunch, one of us mows and one of us weed whacks, usually switched," Devin said.

What draws them back week after week to pick up the weed whacker again? "It is not the weed whacking and mowing," Devin said. Because of their work, they enable the organization to dedicate its time to the more important things. "If we do it, then the therapists can help the kids and don't have to spend their time mowing," Morgan said.

In the summer, both Morgan and Devin continue volunteering once a week, but the program changes. InStride brings their horses and therapists and creates a summer camp program at Oak Park, an extension of their service for the disabled.

Instead of resuming their normal

also have the opportunity to interact with kids while side walking. "We have little game stations set up. [For example,] they have to throw a ring onto a little hoop, or we have one where they roll dice, and it's like a race. Whatever you roll on the horse is how many steps you take, so you have the two horses racing each other. We help them with the rings or pick up dice," Morgan said.

The interaction and experiences they are able to share with the kids are both of the McSweeney brothers' favorite part. "Seeing the progress of the kids and building relationships with them is cool," Devin said. "You go in after the first couple of times [and] they'll be like, oh! And call your name," Morgan added.

Working at InStride has introduced them to situations outside of their typical norm, and as a result, they both have come away from the experience with something more than just a stack of signed community service hours. Devin said, "I became more grateful for being healthy, seeing all of the kids with disabilities. I can do things, such as weed whack and mow, that other people can't."

Morgan agreed, adding that he's learned a strong work ethic. "It gets very hot over the long days of weed whacking and mowing. [It builds a] work ethic, [a] sense of optimism and it [teaches you] practical tasks, such as how to string a weed whacker, how to fix a lawnmower and how to repair fences," he said

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

We want to thank all of our volunteers that helped out during the Holiday Break. As you know even though we have no therapy there are still horses to feed and stalls to be cleaned. With your help it eased our work load and gave us some down time as well. It also gave Sue and Lori more time to ride and work with the horses. **THANKS!**

Here's to a great NEW YEAR!



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