



THE JOYRIDERS
THERAPEUTIC RIDING ASSOCIATION
 Prince Edward Island, Canada



“THE WHINNY”

Issue #12
 NOVEMBER 2013

OUR MISSION

is the enhancement of the physical, emotional and social well-being of children and adults with disabilities through various forms of therapeutic riding.



Stephanie Compton



Lauren MacIsaac



***FROM THE EDITOR'S
 DESK***

Typically, the fall issue of the *Whinny* covers our spring and summer adventures. And so this issue does. But of course I had to open with the news that Stephanie and Lauren qualified as CanTRA Assistant Instructors in September.

Our candidates have worked very hard with Kathy Barrett, their mentor, for two years, volunteering, studying and practice teaching. They took their exam at Cavalier Riding Club, Riverview, NB.

Our next issue will include interviews with both Stephanie and Lauren by *Whinny* Roving Reporter Sally Russell Warrington. In the meantime, congratulations from all of us!

Daphne Davey

NEW HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAM PROVES POPULAR

This summer, we piloted a new Horsemanship Program, at Kathy and John Barrett's farm in Hunter River. The program was designed to bring in candidates with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other conditions for whom riding was not possible or desirable. Our young clients enjoyed six weekly lessons during which they learned to interact with Miniature Horses, developing grooming and leading skills, and negotiating an obstacle course. They also got to drive in a cart.

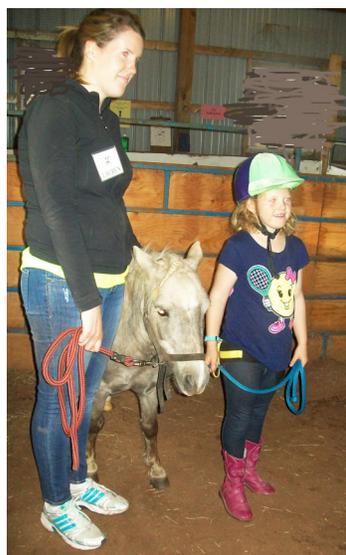


Trish shows Cassie how to brush Daisy's mane.

The two Minis used for the lessons were Daisy and her son, Lightning. Both are well trained for being handled and for driving in harness. Thanks to their small size, the confidence of each participant clearly increased from start to finish of the program. One or two actually got in the saddle on Cue (who looked enormous, compared to the Minis!) at the end of the session.



Mini owner and program helper Chelsea, in the driver's seat, takes Carly for a spin in the cart with Daisy.



Lauren coaches Sophia on how to lead Lightning.

The same benefits will result just as much from working and bonding with the horses on the ground as in the saddle: building of self-confidence, learning care and concern for the horse, controlling behaviour around the animals, increasing cognitive skills, and much more. Above all, we wanted them to have fun!



Jessie and Daisy take the cross rails with ease.



Michael likes his achievement certificate.

Our six summer participants were Sophia Allen, Bronwyn Gibler, Carly Lewis, Cassie MacLeod, Lucas Metcalfe, Jessie Trainor and Michael Tutty.



HEY, JOYRIDERS!



Don't miss our
CHRISTMAS PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2013

1:00 – 4:00 pm

Malcolm Darrach Community Centre
1 Avonlea Drive, East Royalty

- * Pot-luck dinner (1:15 pm)
- * Lots of awards
- * Door prizes
- * Who knows? Possibly Santa!

This is a very popular annual event, so do plan to attend.

PLEASE RSVP BEFORE NOVEMBER 24 TO

DEENA ROBB

894-5750 / deena.robb@gmail.com



SEE YOU THERE!



DIRECTIONS

From Charlottetown, go east on the St. Peters Road and cross over the by-pass (KFC on corner). Look on the left for some new apartment buildings overlooking the creek. Take the LH turning lane onto MacRae Drive. Take the first R onto Avonlea Drive, and you're right there. If you get lost, **phone 626-6525**.

WEBSITE MAKE-OVER!

Check us out at www.thejoyriders.ca

AN OPPORTUNITY NOT TO BE MISSED

Jane James from British Columbia is a CanTRA examiner and a founding member of Para-Equestrian Canada. She kindly offered to come over to PEI for a clinic while she was in the Maritimes on a personal visit this summer. Naturally, we said yes, please!



Chief instructor Kathy Barrett with Jane James.



Hannah, Cue and Virginia all assisted at the clinic.



Jessie tries his hand at traffic control in the new Horsemanship Program this summer. Jessie learned to groom, lead, and do a trail course with the Miniature Horses.

THE JOYS OF RIDING

by Sally Russell Warrington

Whinny Roving Reporter



Ask a parent or care-giver about the Joyriders and the answers are completely positive and enthusiastic.

I asked Gary, grandfather and carer of Cassidy, 14, what coming to Joyriders has meant for her. “Oh, she’s a different girl. It has improved her confidence a hundred per cent. She loves two things, horses and camping, and this program has been wonderful for her.” He smiles and adds, “We are so grateful for all the volunteers and teachers, so grateful that they allow this to happen for us.”



Cassidy (left) and Brody (far right).



Brody’s foster mother echoes these sentiments. “Brody’s self-esteem is so much improved since he’s been coming to Joyriders. He just loves it and so do we.”

Volunteers and teachers have also noticed how Cassidy and Brody experience an almost instant transformation when they are mounted. They focus and concentrate on the riding.

Barbara, mother of 16-year-old Patricia, in her second year with the Joyriders, reports that they had to wait two years for Patricia to get into the program. Their neighbour had horses, and the little girl loved to go out and pet the animals and feed them apples. She was in love with horses, but her mother — not so much. Then Patricia joined the program. “It’s just perfect for her style of learning,” Barb says. “It’s carefully structured, repetitive and slow. She enjoys it so much and looks forward to it each week. It was well worth the wait and I’m a big horse fan now.”



Patricia (left) and Paul with friends.



A similar answer comes from Marlene, mother of Paul. She has seen many years of benefits for her son. He first came when he was only a teenager and then transportation became a problem and he had to stop. Now, almost thirty years later, he has rejoined the program and his Queens County Residential Services worker brings him. “He sits slumped over at home or in the car,” Marlene says, “but on Duchess he sits up so straight. He looks good on a horse. When he comes home, he always says, ‘Go again, go again.’”

As we conclude this season of Joyriders, may we all be echoing Paul’s sentiments.

SOMETIMES JOYRIDERS MAKES ME CRY

Thoughts from a volunteer helper

It has been a persistent dream of mine to work with horse people who offer those with disabilities a chance to experience the pleasures of the company of horses. Last year, that dream came true when the Joyriders agreed to take me on as a volunteer. My time with this extraordinary group has been blessed beyond anything I could have imagined.



Douglas and volunteer Anna share a moment with his favourite horse, Duchess.

Observing the instructors and veteran helpers is a privilege. Their choice of the name “Joyriders” is an important clue to the kind of people they are – human beings who bring joy to the lives of others – and they have been doing this with horses and riders with disabilities for more than thirty years. They are horse professionals of the highest order, passionate and knowledgeable about horses, riding, and that combination with the riders. They are also keen observers of human nature and psychologists of distinction. Their patience in these areas is phenomenal.

Whether it’s a Tuesday or Thursday afternoon or Saturday morning, they arrive early at the riding arena (a wind-proof, indoor one) to prepare for the riders.



With help from Elaine, Barbara handles hellos with two horses at a time: Tanner and Cue.

We are all ages, from seventeen to seventy. We are men and women. There is riding equipment to check, clean and arrange, particular to each rider. The horses are brought in to be groomed, tacked up and warmed up by practicing walking, trotting and halts. A simple PA system is put in place. Orange juice, cookies, hot chocolate are set out in the viewing room. The arena is raked, special signs hung illustrating the dressage letters. It is a delight to see a rider’s eyes light up when she is instructed to “Change direction at A, the Alligator,” or he is told to “Begin to trot at F, the Fox.” The pictures are pleasing and friendly. Like the atmosphere.



Paxton gets to know her mount, Jewel.

When the riders arrive, two or three to a lesson, everyone, whether instructor or helper, seems pleased to see them. Many get and give hugs. The helpers all wear name-tags, a custom that increases the friendly atmosphere. Riding helmets, gloves, belts, boots are fitted. Exercises on the Wackies (warm-up “horses”) are an active and helpful way to begin. It is a busy but ordered time.



Patricia warming up on “Wacky George” for her ride, leads her side-walkers, Butch McGee and Frank McClosky, in a fitness routine.

Mounting can be a little anxious for some of the riders, but the instructors and horses are so calm and reassuring that this manoeuvre is soon accomplished. It takes a leader and one or two side-walkers for each rider. Sometimes an assistant instructor works one on one with a rider under the chief instructor’s supervision.

Whatever their disabilities, the riders enjoy being on horseback. They focus on the activity, they smile. The horses are patient and companionable. The riders learn to command them to walk, trot and whoah, and to steer. The horse responds to the rider, not the leader, and so for a short time each week this rider is not *dis-abled* but rather *en-abled* to participate in an activity with a large, imposing animal.

Sometimes I get choked up with joy witnessing these activities. I can’t always hold back the tears. I blow my nose, pretending to have an allergy. But I am weeping with joy. Most of our riders might be considered people who could easily be ignored, voiceless, not worth going to a lot of trouble for. It isn’t a matter of food, clothing, shelter – basic human rights. Yet here are people willing to work hard, expending considerable time, energy and money to give those on the periphery of life the chance to ride horses. What a testimony to the human capacity for generosity!

Joyriders? Yes, indeed.



Tanner and Hannah, both volunteers with the program.

PARA-EQUESTRIAN CANADA
Coast-to-Coast Video Competition
November 15, 2012 / Judge: Lisa Minon

Class #6A

- 1st - Rachael Loggie
- 2nd - Hannah MacLellan
- 3rd - Ryan MacNeil
- 4th - Douglas Roper
- 5th - Marc McKearney
- 6th - Cody MacDonald

WELL DONE!



One to provide moral support, one to do the work? Gilles Richard and Butch McGee prepare the arena for the Jane James clinic in June.

PROGRAM TEAM

Chief instructor (CTRI)

Kathryn Barrett

Assistant Instructors (CTRAI)

Stephanie Compton	Trish Helm-Neima
Daphne Davey	Lauren MacIsaac
Debbie Gormley	Gilles Richard
Marg Gray	

Physiotherapist

Trish Helm-Neima

Also part of the Team

Joan Leslie, *Equipment Manager*
 Deena Robb, *Volunteer Coordinator*
 deena.robbs@gmail.com
 Julie Scales, *Rider Coordinator*
 juliescales@msn.com

VISIT THESE WEBSITES!

www.thejoyriders.ca
www.cantra.ca
www.disabilitytodaynetwork.com
 (CanTRA channel under Partners tab)

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2013-2014**

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<i>Vice-president</i>	Valerie Paton
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<i>Ex Officio</i>	Kathryn Barrett <i>Chief Instructor</i> Trish Helm-Neima <i>Physiotherapist</i> Deena Robb <i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>

“THE WHINNY”

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SUBMISSIONS are welcome! Why not write something for the next newsletter, or send a photo or drawing?

PHOTOGRAPHS are by Daphne Davey unless otherwise credited. Thumbnail photos of Daphne Davey and Deena Robb are by annmacneill.com.

The Whinny is also posted on our website.

CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

Please forward address or email changes to the editor.



Santa, Barbara Gillis and Elf (Marg Gray) at the Joyriders 2012 Christmas Party.

**A MERRY CHRISTMAS, EVERYONE
and
A HAPPY NEW YEAR!**