

Upcoming Events

Dec. 17 Christmas in the Barn

Jan. 15 Volunteer Appreciation

April 24 Casino Royale Night

From Lisa Kafka, Executive Director

Our success at Exceptional Equestrians has led to a full schedule of year-round therapies. This year, we had 30% more riders than ever before, helping 133 children, teens, and adults with disabilities.

In order to continue to meet the needs of the community, we will need to boost our annual charitable financial support. Reliable funding support for our programming and operating expenses will allow us to continue to be here for those individuals and families of Northeastern Wisconsin in need.

Thank you to all of you who include Exceptional Equestrians in your annual charitable giving.



Herd News

Meet the latest addition to our team. Deedee is an American Quarter Horse mare. She works in our therapeutic riding groups and in our adaptive program. Deedee was previously a cowboy horse out west herding cattle on the range.



Changing Lives

When she first brought her son Ethan to Exceptional Equestrians, Sarah De Zwarte knew “within five minutes” that hippotherapy was what he needed. “He was able to do things we were hoping and praying he would be able to do again,” she recalls. “He had been through hours and hours of other therapies. Once we started hippotherapy, we saw improvement fast.”



Improvements in his strength, hip flexion, balance, and core allowed two-year-old Ethan to sleep better and to be able to play again, which are so important to brain function, Sarah explains.

And perhaps what’s best about hippotherapy is that Ethan doesn’t even realize it’s work. “Of all the therapies and activities, he’s most interested in riding. He gets a big smile when we talk about it,” Sarah remarks. “He only says basic words—Mom, Dad—but he can say the names of the horses—Tia and Dakota.”

“Exceptional Equestrians has given Ethan and our family a better quality of life,” says Sarah. “Hippotherapy does things other therapies don’t do. It’s been life changing.”

Girl Power

Our Girls Rule! program was selected for a \$6,075 grant from the Women's Fund of Greater Green Bay. Girls Rule! is an innovative way for early adolescent girls to work on emotional growth, social behavior, communication, and problem solving by interacting with horses.

The program offers a unique and memorable experience. Directed by licensed clinical social worker Stephanie Senogles, Girls Rule! is part of Exceptional Equestrians' equine-assisted learning program.

"Good communication and interpersonal skills are critical to developing friendships, self-confidence, and a sense of self-worth," said Senogles. "During Girls Rule! group sessions,

we work on all of these traits and skills."

The Women's Fund award funds scholarships for girls in Brown, Oconto, and Kewaunee counties to participate in Girls Rule!

The program is offered to all girls in grades 3 to 5. Schedules, registration, and scholarship applications are available on our Web site.



Girls learn communication skills by helping their blindfolded partner lead a horse through an obstacle course.



Reminders for Riders

- ✓ Be sure your vehicle is parked well clear of the entrance as well as the wheelchair path from Country Kids. You may use the canopy drive up for drop off and pick up only.
- ✓ Early registration is encouraged for group therapeutic riding classes. See schedules at the front desk and online, and note deadlines.
- ✓ Scholarships are renewable April 15.
- ✓ Donations of arts, crafts, and game supplies are welcome.

Showing Off

Our exceptional riders took center stage at our 16th annual Horse Show August 23rd. Approximately 220 people attended, including 40 Exceptional Equestrians riders and 24 of their siblings. Three television stations covered the event.



Volunteer of the Year

For his exceptional dedication to helping kids in our therapeutic riding groups for seven years, Jonathan Anderson is our 2014 Volunteer of the Year.



A former EE rider himself, Jonathan has made giving back a priority throughout his high school and college years. Now a surgical technician, Jonathan goes above and beyond as one of our most reliable volunteers. He is a great help in the riding arena, arriving early to help set up, and he is always friendly and very kind to the kids.

"It's fun getting to know the kids," Jonathan explains. "I like horses, and I am proud to help the community."

In November, Jonathan was selected for the Prevea Health "Heroes Among Us" award for his outstanding service to the kids at Exceptional Equestrians.



EXCEPTIONAL EQUESTRIANS

Exceptional Equestrians is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization governed by a board of directors.

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Our mission is to provide a family- and community-focused program for individuals with special needs with an emphasis on therapeutic equine-assisted activities.