



The Apple Tree

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There is no better exercise for your heart, than reaching down and helping lift someone up.

Pam Brown

HELLO SPRING!!!! Welcome back instructors, instructors in training, students and volunteers. The horses have missed you. According to Dr. Huck, they compensated with food! There are some portly and very fluffy horses looking for a conditioning program. Thanks to Betsy Rigdon herd manager, arrangements have been made and are in progress to get our four footed beasties fit and slim. Right now the horses are a little “rusty”. They know all the tricks and love to play with the volunteers, walking too slow or too fast. It’s a game. Our herd has thrived through the winter and grown fat and lazy. Like us humans, it’s time to lose a few pounds, shed that winter coat and get in shape. Lad, Ace, Li’bit, Nibbles, Doc, Siri, Babe, Arielle, Cookie and the rest would be happy to have company. Please come visit the MVTH barn and bring friends or your organization to visit lessons or arrange a private tour of the facility. Everyone is welcome for a visit and to see that “miracles happen in stables”.



Mississippi Valley Therapeutic Horsemanship is due for re-certification with the North American Riding for the Handicapped (NARHA) external accrediting agency. Tina Collins, Program Director has everything under control! Paperwork has to be filled out on every rider and volunteer. Please see Tina if you feel like helping with barn or office work. (Of course the last time I was at the barn, Tina was hard at work on horseback working on her backriding certification!) Tina, we appreciate all the efforts you have made to organize this wonderful program. Keep up the good work.

Volunteer Workshop and Certification



Saturday, February 19 was a great day at MVTH!

Volunteers old and new came together to brush up on duties and skills in grooming, tacking, mounting and leading just in time to be ready for lessons. In order to enter the arena with a horse and rider, volunteers and staff must be trained on NARHA's standards and be checked off by an instructor in each area they would like to work. There are lots of ways to lead a horse, tack or groom. The training sessions and checklists have been designed to ensure that the horses at Mississippi Valley are handled the same way each time. All signals are clear and each volunteer gives the same signal for the horse to "walk on", "TAA-ROTT" or "whoa". It's not often one finds horses as talented as ours that know sign language as when a rider signs for his/her horse to walk on!

Linda Farrow and Jerre Hall treated everyone to a yummy lunch, and then volunteer awards were given. There were two birthday girls in the house (Miss Betsy and Miss MaryAnn) so there were

TWO cakes! What a great day of fun and fellowship!



Purina Expo, Farmington MO

What a great turnout at the Civic Center in Farmington to see the many booths filled with horse related materials. Guests were also treated to demonstrations of duck herding dogs, breeds of horses and lectures on nutrition and herd management. Shopping was also fun at the many booths filled with clothing, saddles, bridles and horsey treats. Our thanks goes to all of the volunteers who worked on the booth for MVTH. It was lovely and in a premiere spot. Eddie and Linda Farrow, Tina Collins and Andrea Stroup were busy passing out volunteers to let everyone know of the services offered at MVTH.





From Tina Collins, Program Director

It is the season of Spring at Mississippi Valley! And I do love Spring! To me, Spring is hope reborn. This is the season that brings new beginnings, endless possibilities, and sets the stage for the appearance of miracles. At MVTH, we expect miracles to happen at our barn. However, these miracles are not instantaneous or gratuitous. Consider this quote:

"I have found in life that if you want a miracle you first need to do whatever it is you can do - if that's to plant, then plant; if it is to read, then read; if it is to change, then change; if it is to study, then study; if it is to work, then work; whatever you have to do. And then you will be well on your way of doing the labor that works miracles." author, Jim Rohn

Simply stated, if we do not sow in the spring, we will not reap in the autumn. Okay, let's be honest here; sowing is hard stuff. There's the physical work, the expense of seeds, and the time necessary to do the labor. I know MVTH is feeling the effects of this spring planting. I know there are days when the time, money, and efforts given just plain hurt. I know the mud and mess sometimes necessary to tread through is less than pleasant. I also know you are sowing during the season of MVTH's spring.

You are the laborers for Miracles. Without your efforts, there would be no new beginnings, no endless possibilities, and no hope for miracles at our barn. For that, I want to genuinely thank you. Most of all, I want each and every person to know that I admire you for expecting miracles and doing the work needed to make them happen.

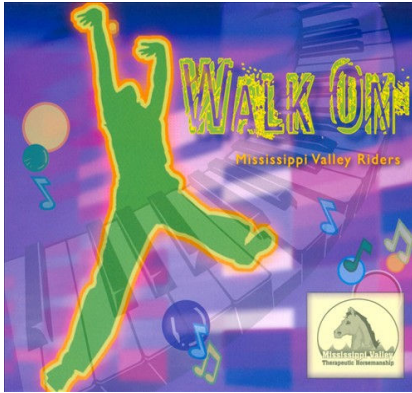
I wish you all the celebrations of Spring and hope you do whatever it is that you can do!

Nobody Rides For Free



To help out with expenses, we have brightly colored tee shirts with Lad, Ace and Nibbles on the front. Shirts are available from Riki Erlbacher, Jamie Mayfield and Grayson Erlbacher. How very true, nobody rides for free. All the profit from these shirts goes to MVTH to help with the expenses incurred in supporting a herd of horses.

Have you heard it? MVTH CD, "Walk On"



Thanks to rider parent, Shawn Asmus and Friends and of course the MVTH riders who participated in this wonderfully creative and inspiring project, MVTH has its own rider's musical CD and a new fund raising project!! Next visit to the barn listen up, you may even hear it playing! Check the bulletin board at the barn to see how to purchase a copy!

Spring Session Schedule

Lessons have begun. You will find a schedule at the end of this newsletter. Jerre Hall, our board member in charge of volunteers is always happy to take names of people who love horses and wish to contribute to the fun at MVTH. Email her at jerrehall@charter.net.

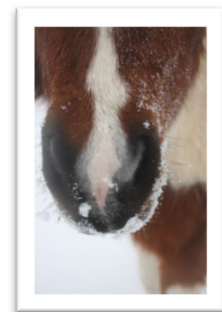


We have an endless wish list of items. Fly spray, brushes, 18" English all purpose saddle, box fans, medical supplies, able bodied volunteers who can help Eddie Farrow with the mowing and fence mending. Bottles of drinking water are appreciated by the volunteers and students alike as are popsicles.

While I am asking, your donations of cash are appreciated too. Donations are tax deductible and necessary to keep MVTH running.

To all of you who did not forget us this winter and sent gifts to aid our cause, we thank you so much.

THANK YOU BOARD OF DIRECTORS for the heaters in the arena area! It is amazing to see how the horses and riders have been able to forget winter and enjoy working in the indoor heated arena! To all of you who worked so hard installing them, we say a huge thank you.



FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK: It has been very rewarding to go to the barn and see so many returning volunteers, six new instructors in training and new faces joining the team. With Tina Collins as our program director, MVTH is on the road to greater successes. At the Volunteer Workshop it was especially gratifying to see everyone working as a team showing the true spirit of Mississippi Valley Therapeutic Horsemanship.—Linda Farrow



Expect
Miracles

Our facility is top notch. No one comes to visit and leaves unchanged. Our horses are so enjoyable, our volunteers so dedicated. Head instructor, Mary Freeman is always happy to have new names added to our list of riders who help to make the magic of Mississippi Valley Therapeutic Horsemanship.