

# The Lead Line



Welcome to The Lead Line, the new e-Newsletter from  
Stable Hands Equine Therapy Center!  
Volume 2 – August 2020

## Stable Hands' Management Plan for COVID19

Our return to programming will begin carefully with our first session since March set for mid July, 2020. To ensure the health and safety of our clients, families, staff and volunteers in regard to COVID 19, Stable Hands will implement the following management plan:

- Anyone with symptoms should not enter any Stable Hands building and should not be on the property. If anyone with visible symptoms does try to attend, they will be asked to leave for the safety of everyone else.
- We will allow a maximum of two caregivers/parents/relatives in the observation area during class unless prior arrangements have been made. Masks are recommended but not required. Signage will direct everyone for social distancing and chairs will be spaced apart. Visitors will not be allowed at this time except for prior approval and necessity.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be prominent. Staff will wash hands/use sanitizer station before and after contact with potentially contaminated surfaces and after sessions.
- Students will wash hands/use sanitizer before and after classes.
- Equipment will be wiped down between classes.
- Bathroom facilities will be wiped down periodically during class times.
- Snacks and refreshments will not be available in the Activity Center until further notice.
- Group gathering will not be allowed before or after classes for the safety of all involved.
- Stable Hands is making the following updates to our COVID policy in response to Governor Tony Evers mask policy effective as of August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 until further notice:
  - Visitors to Stable Hands, parents and caregivers will wear a mask in all buildings\*
  - Riders are encouraged to wear masks, but for students who cannot or will not wear a mask, it will not be required indoors
  - Volunteers will wear masks during inside classes\*
  - Instructors will wear a mask for mounting, dismounting and any contact within 6 feet of the rider. From a distance, they are not required to wear a mask so that instructions (and response to riders) is not impaired
  - Overhead doors to the arena may be opened to improve air exchange
  - **\*Exemptions according to Governor Evers Mandate** Certain individuals are exempt entirely from the face covering order, including individuals under the age of five and individuals who have trouble breathing, a medical condition, intellectual or developmental disability, mental health condition, or other sensory sensitivity that prevents the individual from wearing a face covering.

## Volunteer spotlight – Beth and Wayne Cooper

Meet Beth & Wayne Cooper! They have been valuable volunteers at Stable Hands since 2012!! Beth is an experienced Horse Leader and Wayne is a well-seasoned Side Walker in our Therapeutic Riding classes. They also volunteer at events, help with hay and are reliable members of our Ranch Hand team! Over the years they have really helped build the Stable Hands family to be what it is today. They've built great relationships with many of our staff, other volunteers, riders and of course our horses too!

Beth and Wayne, thank you for being kind, reliable and hardworking volunteers. You really do make a difference!



## A Blessing on a Horse- A Letter from the Sondelski Family

Rydan first started riding at Stable Hands in Spring 2018. He developed a love of horses in Summer 2017 while we went on a trail ride on vacation in Hayward, WI. He was initially scared to go and his aunt Sherri, had to talk him into going. She asked him to be brave like she had to be when riding a mule at the Grand Canyon. He loved the trail ride so much he asked to go again the next day (which was unusual at that time for Rydan to specifically ask to do something). We made it happen and went on another trail ride the next day. It was amazing the calmness and confidence we saw in Rydan after each ride. When we got home to Wausau, we started to look at different options in the Wausau Area as owning a horse was not in our future. We found Stable Hands online, which was exactly what he needed.

Rydan struggled with mood regulation, sensory processing, and attention deficits associated with his medical diagnoses when he first started riding at Stable Hands. Working with the staff, volunteers, and therapists at Stable Hands has made such a difference for Rydan. Riding has helped Rydan in his confidence, mood, and particularly sensory processing.

When he first started at Stable Hands, Rydan was sensitive to different textures and preferred smooth textures. When riding, Rydan is presented with different textures from the feel of the horse's hair, the texture of the reins, and the helmet and clothing he wears. He is presented with different pressures on his body and abdomen as he adjusts to the horses walk and sway. Outside of the arena, Rydan has gradually become more tolerant to different textures, and clothing has become less irritating to Rydan's skin. Riding also presents Rydan with different scents/odors, further challenging his senses.

Being around the horses has an amazing calming effect on Rydan. He looks forward to each session. Initially Rydan loved being around the horses most, but over time, Rydan has made an incredible connection with the volunteers and staff at Stable Hands. The drive to his session typically includes excitement as we discuss, which horse he will ride and who will be his volunteers. Upon parking, he promptly gets out of the vehicle and runs to check the board, get his helmet on, and then go to the arena. No prompting needed. Initially Rydan was shy when entering the arena, but the wonderful staff have a welcoming manner that brings out Rydan's confidence and personality. We continually see less shyness not only at the arena but in other social environments as well. Rydan's favorite horse is Tango because he is wide like a couch and "you have to watch him closely while riding because he will eat anything." Rydan particularly enjoys going on a "trail ride" outside and trotting during the sessions.

While COVID-19 has delayed our return to the arena, Rydan is ready and grateful to start again in July. Riding at Stable Hands has been a true blessing for the whole family and has promoted important growth in Rydan.



## Equine Spotlight – Snickers



This is Snickers. Snickers was a beloved member of the Stable Hands herd for many years. His last day with us was July 7, 2020. He was 23 years old when he peacefully passed away, surrounded by his closest humans and his Equine buddies nearby. Snickers had a calm, gentle personality and brought so many smiles to staff, students and volunteers through his years with us.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view a photo album dedicated to Snickers and the many wonderful years he spent with us.

## Hold your horses! Did you know....?

Horses aren't measured in feet or inches, like humans. They are measured in Hands.



1 Hand = 4 inches.

The world's tallest horse is 20.3 hands tall! That's 82.75 inches or **13.79** feet! This massive Belgian gelding goes by the name Big Jake.



## Equine Sponsorship Program

One of the most important parts of our Equine Assisted Therapy program is the animals; most people do not realize the costs for their care and maintenance. Generous donations from our Equine sponsors help make the miracles happen for our clients.

**Stable Hands Equine Sponsors** help to provide the necessary funding to keep our wonderful herd happy and healthy. In addition to the finances required to keep them healthy and fed, there is also the cost of manpower hours to exercise, groom and care for the herd. Sponsorships are very important as they help to support the backbone of our program: our wonderful therapeutic riding.

We have both Private and Corporate Sponsorship options available starting at just \$25/month. Please contact Diane Abitz @ [dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com](mailto:dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com) for more information on sponsoring a Stable Hands Equine!

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Current Session: July 13-August 20

Therapeutic Riding Volunteer Sign up links:

- Monday 1:00pm: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0544ACA929A4F85-monday2>
- Tuesday 6:00 & 7:00pm: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0544ACA929A4F85-tuesday3>
- Wednesday 10:00 & 11:15am: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0544ACA929A4F85-wednesday3>
- Thursday 6:00 & 7:00pm: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0544ACA929A4F85-thursday3>

Next session: August 31-October 8

Please watch your email or our “Stable Hands Volunteers” Facebook group for updates.

## Private Riding Lessons

Did you know that Stable Hands offers Private Riding Lessons to the general public?

Private lessons are available at a rate of \$35 per 45 minute private lesson. Semi-private lessons are also available at \$30 per person per lesson. Use one of our horses or bring your own!

Contact Diane at [dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com](mailto:dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com) or Sue at [sdoede@hotmail.com](mailto:sdoede@hotmail.com) to get set up with one of our PATH Certified Instructors!

## Upcoming events

**September 25-27**

**Stephanie Mosely Rider Biomechanics Clinic**

Contact Julie for more info: [bayhorses2@gmail.com](mailto:bayhorses2@gmail.com)

**October 24-25:**

**Emily Kemp Horsemanship Clinic**

Contact Morgan Hengel for more info:  
[morgansislo97@gmail.com](mailto:morgansislo97@gmail.com)

## Current donation needs

- Hand Sanitizer
- Hand Soap
- Disinfectant Wipes
- Tissues
- Bottled Water
- Pyranha Fly Spray (yellow bottle)



**Email our Program Director, Diane,  
for more info!**

[dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com](mailto:dabitz@stablehandstherapy.com)

*This newsletter is brought to you by:*

*Morgan Hengel, Chief Editor*

*Claire Brooks, Designer & Editor*

*Sara Geotsch, Editor*

Click to  
visit us at:

Our website

Facebook 

Youtube 