

SPRING IS HERE!

When the warmer weather first touched Grande Prairie for a couple of weeks in March, Sheri (PARDS Head Instructor) and Jessica (PARDS Instructor), quickly took advantage of the good temperatures to give many of the horses some much needed baths - including the minis (Petunia's hair went so curly)! We were all glad that we bathed the horses when we did, because the following week, the air got chilly again and the skies opened up to lay down another blanket of snow...but that didn't last long before it warmed up again and melted away.

So now we're all enjoying another round of warm weather, even though it is a bit muddy, and if you were to see some of the horses now, you'd never know they had a bath at all - they do love rolling around in the mud!

We completed our Winter Therapeutic Session and are well underway with our Spring Session, which started on the week of March 14th, 2010. We have seen some really good progress from our riders, who are having a good time - as are we!

We're also excited for the spring weather to finally settle in, because that means that summer will be right around the corner... and so will our Integrated Summer Day Camps! Yay! For all who are interested, we are accepting early registrations (please see page 2 for more information).

Executive Directors Note

Well it is that time of year again, time to wake up from our long winter's nap (or at least get over the desire to have one) and gear up for a very full few months. We are working very hard on this year's Fund Ride preparations to bring you THE best event yet! We will have live entertainment this year as well as continue our PEP Games so that all of our wonderful riders can come out, have fun and enjoy the day with us... after all, you are why we hold the event in the first place! We are also continuing the tradition of including Grande Prairie's enthusiastic ATV community in our days events... all of the trails are completely separate, but the rest of the day's festivities are combined so we can all come together and celebrate our community's commitment to helping PARDS enhance the lives of individuals living with disabilities through equine assisted therapy and by building a community that supports growth and success for all of its members. Pledge sheets are now available at the PARDS office as well as at the businesses of our truly wonderful sponsors; Keddie's Tack and Western Wear and Stojan's Power Sports and Marine in Sexsmith.

Another bit of exciting news is the introduction of PARDS Equine Facilitated Wellness (EFW) Program. This program has been a very long time coming and we are so thrilled to finally be able to offer it. The program incorporates self esteem building, relationship building, boundary development, anger management and assertiveness training into a fun and proactive series of classes. Our ultimate goal with the program is to create a natural environment promoting acceptance of self & others which can be easily translated back into everyday life. Please give our office a call to find out more information and how to register!

We are also in the process of developing a new PARDS video which will premier at this year's Annual General Meeting. We are so excited to be having this produced so we can share our story and our vision with all those in the community that are not familiar with who we are or what we do. It also gives us the opportunity to treat many of our riders like the STARS they are! Please join us at our AGM to get the first look at this exciting project!

As many of you know, we offer a Public Riding Program, Integrated Summer Day Camp and Public Horse Boarding to generate income in support of our Therapeutic Programs. Please keep us in mind if you or anyone you know finds they are in need of any of these services.

Happy Spring! See you at the Fund Ride!

Special Points of Interest

- **PARDS Annual General Meeting** will be held April 26, 2010 at PARDS, 7:30 pm. All members and the Community at large is invited and encouraged to attend!
- **Pledge sheets are now available** for everyone who is interested in participating in our **Annual Fund Ride and PEP Games** which will be held on **Saturday, June 5, 2010**. If you would like to help as an event volunteer, please contact our office for details!
- **Riders and Boarders:** PLEASE remember to check your mailboxes each week.

RIDDLE: If a king sits on gold, who sits on silver?

Therapeutic Lessons

We finished our Winter Session 2 on March 4th, had a week off for our riders so they could enjoy the Arctic Winter Games. We're off to a great start with Spring Session 3, which started March 15th.

Public Lessons

We finished Session 2 of our Public Riding Program and began Session 3 on February 20th.

If you are interested in riding, we are taking registrations now for Session 4 which will be starting on April 17th.

PARDS Integrated Summer Day Camps

We are now accepting registrations for Summer Camps. There are three weeks to choose from:

August 9-13, August 16-20 and August 23-27, 2010

Register early to secure your spot.

Final schedules will be confirmed 2 weeks prior to the start of sessions.

All Therapeutic & Public Riding Sessions and Summer Camps are scheduled on a first-come-first-served basis.

There are limited spaces available, so be sure to book your session early to avoid disappointment!

Please visit our website www.pards.ca for more information and to download registration and membership forms, or call us at the PARDS office: 780-538-3211.

Upcoming Events

25TH ANNUAL FUND RIDE & 2ND ANNUAL PEP GAMES ~ Saturday, June 5, 2010 ~

PARDS 25th Annual Fund Ride will be held in conjunction with the 2nd Annual PARDS' Extraordinary People (PEP) Games on Saturday, June 5th, 2010 at the future site of our facility at Evergreen Park. We've been busy bees getting things organized to make this event even better than before.

Fundraising pledge sheets are available now at our office for everyone who is interested in participating as a horseback rider, walker, cyclist, ATV rider, or the PEP Games. It's never too early to start collecting pledges! Great for individuals and groups, whether it is with friends and family or as a business supporting your community.

If you would like information about the many volunteer opportunities for the Fund Ride and/or PEP Games, or to make a donation to the event, please call us at the office 780-538-3211 or email us at volunteer.pards@xplornet.com.

13TH ANNUAL DINE & DANCE ~ Saturday, November 20th, 2010 ~

Keep polishing those dancing shoes! PARDS 13th Annual Dine & Dance fundraiser will be held on Saturday, November 20th, 2010 at Five Mile Hall. More details will follow as we get closer to the date. Please contact our office for sponsorship information or to donate a prize for our live or silent auctions at 780-538-3211, or send us an email to info.pards@xplornet.com.

Straight from the Horse's Mouth: Special Fiddle

Good day, everyone!

My name is Special Fiddle. I used to race around the track...always to the left it seems... Now I am living the life of a different kind of luxury here at PARDS, helping our wonderful riders learn to be free and excited about achieving independence.

Got to go now - my pasture buddies and I are going to head off and play.

Take care!

Looking for Horses

PARDS is on the look-out for horses for our Therapeutic Riding Programs. It takes a very special kind of horse to be a part of our programs, and this is what we are looking for:

- * Up to 15hh
- * Strong, stocky build
- * Clean bill of health
- * Calm, kind and social nature
- * A horse that would enjoy being a part of the work we all do here at PARDS

If you or someone you know is interested in donating a horse or discussing possible arrangements, please contact Sheri by calling 780-538-3211 or emailing horses.pards@xplornet.com. Charitable tax receipts are available for donations.

PARDS Wish List

It looks like PARDS' refrigerator has seen better days.... If you're upgrading your kitchen appliances, and have a refrigerator (with freezer) you are replacing that is still in good working order, please consider donating it to PARDS. It would be especially helpful to us with summer camps coming up, for keeping our campers' lunches and drinks cold, carrots for the horses crunchy, and cream for coffee cool.

Please contact us at the office: 780-538-3211.

Every May and June we do a big grounds clean-up here at PARDS. To assist with this, we are **seeking the use of a small or medium sized farm tractor.** If you or anyone you know has some time to help us with their equipment/machinery during this time, please contact us at the office: 780-538-3211.

PARDS is currently looking for the following items:

Square and Round bales of hay - ideally Timothy & Brome mixed with 25-35% Alfalfa

Fuel or fuel card donations - diesel and natural gas

Durable black hose

150 gallon water troughs

Winter coolers, rain sheets and fly sheets, size 78-80 blankets

Western saddle covers

Western bridles

Rainbow reins

Halters and leads

Horse toys and exercise balls

Our Community Continues to Give from the Heart

PARDS would like to extend a heart felt *Thank You* to our most current Donors!

**The following organisations and individuals have helped us greatly
by donating Cash, Gifts-in-Kind and/or Labour:**

Alberta Paraplegic Society; Aurora Spring Water; Bale Express; Carol Balcome; Grande Prairie Fire

Extinguisher & Safety; Diana and George Krahn; Jennifer Longille; Roy McAusland;

Students of Peace Wapiti Academy; Drey Russell; and Garry Walker.

Thank you all so much!

The cost to run our therapeutic program per year, per rider is \$1,700.00. The fees from registrations total \$450.00. This leaves a difference of \$1,250.00, for which PARDS fundraises to keep our services accessible to our riders. Our cost to care for our equine staff is \$4200.00 per year for each of our therapeutic horses.

If you or someone you know is interested in being a sponsor of a rider or a horse, or would like to make a donation to help

make a difference in your community, please contact our office at 780-538-3211 for more information.

Did you know? If you want to know how old a horse is, all you need to do is to count its teeth!

Current Volunteer Opportunities...

PARDS THERAPEUTIC RIDING SESSIONS

Would you like to make a difference by getting directly involved in our Therapeutic Riding Lessons?

On Mondays through to Thursdays we are seeking Volunteers to help during lessons with the following:

- Leading horses around the arena
- Supporting Riders as a Side Walker
- Maintaining the barn/labour

Even if you don't have much experience with horses but have a love for them and for helping your community, it's very easy to learn, and our experienced instructors will show you how.

If you have an hour or two to spare each week, or more, and are looking for a fulfilling experience, please contact us.

PARDS Bingo!

Please contact Gayle at 780-538-3211 to sign up to Volunteer for any of the following dates (or any future dates):

Sunday, April 18th, 2010 (afternoon)

Monday, June 21st, 2010 (evening)

Friday, July 16th, 2010 (afternoon)

Monday, August 2nd, 2010 (evening)

Sunday, August 15th, 2010 (evening)

Wednesday, September 1st, 2010 (afternoon)

PARDS Casinos!

Volunteers are needed for all positions. Please contact Gayle at 780-538-3211 to sign up to Volunteer for any of the following 2010 dates (or any future dates):

Tuesday, August 17th, 2010

Wednesday, August 18th.

MAINTENANCE & CLEAN-UP TIME AT PARDS!

Every May and June are PARDS' big maintenance & clean-up months, and there's lots that needs to be done! We're looking for Volunteers to help with:

- Maintenance
- Repairs
- Fencing
- General clean-up

Summer Day-Camps at PARDS!

We're looking for Volunteers to help us during our summer camps! If you are interested in volunteering during any of the following weeks, or would like some more information please call us!

Camp Tamarack: July 5th-9th, 12th-16th, and 19th-23rd.

PARDS Integrated Summer Camps: August 9th-13th, 16th-20th and 23rd-27th.

**We hope you have enjoyed PARDS Spring Newsletter!
Keep an eye out for our next issue in the Summer!**

Answer to riddle: The Lone Ranger!

Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (P.A.R.D.S.)
*has been offering equine assisted therapy to children and adults with physical,
intellectual, behavioural and emotional challenges
since 1984.*

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