

# Winnies and Nickers

Pretty Pony Pastures

January 2009

Volume 4 Issue 1

## Happy New Year

We hope every one had a great holiday and have made New Year Resolutions that you will keep longer than one week.

With the new year, we need updated **Rider and Volunteer Release** forms on file. Be sure to complete it in its entirety, including the weight of the rider. If you do not know the rider's weight, a scale will be placed near the sign-in table for your use.

A 2009 **Sign-Out Calendar** is on the sign-in table. Please write the rider's name on the date(s) that riding will be missed. A year ago, we put into effect a policy that **you will be charged for a riding lesson if a call is not placed at least two hours before class time.** The call must be placed to the hot line 248 245-0014. We understand that emergencies happen, but when a rider misses a class, but we do not know, we then have horses and volunteers that are uncertain if they are needed for the class. Some of our volunteers travel an hour to get to our facility. We need our volunteers to keep our classes running smooth, but, they can get frustrated if they show up but the riders do not. Also, **if three classes in a row are missed, the rider may lose their riding spot.**

**Keeping warm**—during riding classes can be difficult if the rider is not dressed for the weather. **Gloves**—If your rider forgot gloves, we have extra in one of the helmet drawers. Please return after use. **Knit hats**—The rider may wear a knit hat under the helmet IF the helmet still fits. *The rider may need a bigger helmet for it to fit correctly.* A better idea is a **helmet cover**. The warm fabric wraps over the helmet and the rider's ears. They can be found at local tack shops.

To help keep the wind and cold out of the arena, we are asking that everyone enter through the barn door and the side arena door. **Do not enter the arena if a lesson is in progress.** You may wait in our *heated* tack room.

## New Rider/Parent and Volunteer Guides

We are working on a new Rider/Parent Guide as well as a complete Volunteer Guide that can also be used as a training guide.

The Rider/Parent Guide will include important information, like handouts on a proper helmet fit. We will also include the Riding Guide that we use to evaluate the riding level of our riders. Ever wonder what a rider has to do to be a Novice Level 2 rider? The folder that it comes in will also be handy to keep the exercise sheets and other information that will be passed out during the course of the year.

The Volunteer Guide will include pictures and descriptions of all our horses as well as tips and suggestions when leading or side walking during a class.

### Calendar of Events

**Jan. 17—Michigan State Dressage Clinic**  
*No classes.* Clinic will be at the MSU Pavilion from 12:30 to 5:00. It is *free* for auditors. Any rider who is interested in improving his/her seat is encouraged to attend.

**Feb. 7—4-H Horse Benefit Clinic** *No classes.* This year's topic is *Sprucing up Your Showmanship and Hunter Under Saddle.* Clinic is held at MSU (11:00 am to 3:00 pm.) Cost—\$10 in advance, \$12 at the door.

**Feb. 13—15— Mid-Michigan Horse Expo** Featuring Stacey Westfall. (\$8.00/ under 12 free). Schedule in Saddle Up! Magazine.

**Feb. 21—PLHA Square Dance** Usually held around 8:00 pm to midnight. Lazy J Ranch. See flyer posted in the arena for details or visit [www.plha.info](http://www.plha.info).

**March. 13—15— Michigan Horse Council Horse Expo 2009** (\$12/ 15 & over; \$6/ 14-6; under 6 free). Dollar off coupon and schedule in Saddle Up! Magazine.

## New Riders and Volunteers

In spite of the cold December, we still had new riders and volunteers join our Pretty Pony Pastures family.

Welcome to riders Carly and Cate Evans, and volunteers Kaitlyn Montone and Kim Churchwell.

We would also like to thank Kaitlyn's dad, Keith, for the horse skull that he donated to our program. It will be very useful when we study the horse's mouth and how they eat as well as how to properly bit the horse.



## Pretty Pony Pastures

P. O. Box 86  
Davisburg, MI 48350  
Phone: 248.634.7276  
Hot line: 248.245.0014  
Email: Linda@prettyponypastures.org

## Horse Shows



We have had several questions about horse shows just before our holiday break.

This year we are going to try to attend several of the 4-H Horse Shows. We would like to encourage our riders to participate if possible. There are guidelines set by 4-H as to the ages and classes of riders. Our requirement is that a rider takes three ribbons in Showmanship (non-riding class) before riding in an equitation class. This requirement does not apply to dressage, trail, or gymkhana classes. The requirement for those classes are that a rider is at a Novice Level 3.

We will also have our own Giddy-Up Go Horse Show this year. **ALL riders regardless of level** are allowed to participate in our horse show. We will set up the classes that same as last year so that each class represents a level of riding. The horse show will take place in July or August.

Please let us know if July 25, August 8, or August 29 works best for you.

We realize that no matter what date we pick, it will not work for all our riders, but, we would like to set one so the most riders can attend.

## January Birthdays

The following riders and volunteers have birthdays this month.

- James O'Reilly
- Callie Keller
- Steve Schreiber
- Becca Harrison
- Jonathon Knapp
- Amy Miljour



Wishing you a happy birthday and a great year.

## Weather Reminder

If this is winter, than spring has to be just around the corner! Please be aware that the weather at our farm may be a lot different than the weather in your neighborhood. We are closed if:

- Temperature or wind chill is 20<sup>0</sup> or less.
- Traveler's advisory is in effect
- Snowfall of 4 inches or more (check to see if our drive is plowed)
- Winds gusting to more than 30 mph
- **Severe** weather warning (snow, ice, wind, temp, storm)



If you are using weather.com to check the weather, be sure to enter our zip code **48350**. Weather patterns change from area to area and our temperature can be as much as 10 degrees colder than the city.

If in doubt, please call our hot line at **248 245-0014**. We try to post closings as early in the day as possible usually by 8:00 am on weekends and 4:00 pm on weekdays.

If your roads are bad, if your area is not safe for travel, just call and let us know that you are not coming. It's always wise to play it safe.

## New Year Goals

Did you make goals for the new year? How about your rider?



We will be asking you and/or your rider for their riding goal. We have several riders who could be, should be, would be riding at a higher level. We will encourage *all* riders to stretch a little this year and move up a partial level on their riding ability.

We have also been given a few *Goal Setting for Students* books from Accent on Success. John Bishop, the author and owner, of the company read about our facility and sent us the books for our use and review. They are written at middle school level so we will start with those students, as well as our high school and adult riders.

We also have set some goals:

- Provide handouts for all those *things* we teach during class—parts of the horse, saddle, exercises, etc.
- Increase the number of riders to 100. We are now at 60 riders. Many of you have been very supportive the last few months after my contract job was terminated, stating that we should be providing riding classes full time. After reviewing our costs, we would need 100 riders. You can help us reach this goal. If you like what we do here, please take some flyers and pass them out to other potential riders. (If you don't like what we do, please talk to us.)

We are also looking and encouraging more schools to take part in our classes during the day, as well as scout troops on Saturday.

Let's make 2009 the best year ever!