

Equul Access, Inc. (Hutchinson, MN) has had a wonderful first half of 2009. Our spring was the busiest to date! In March and April, we piloted a program with a local school. A group of 12 children with IEP's visited during their school day. While at the farm, they rotated through three stations - ground work, mounted work and reflection/scrapbooking. "It was like their disabilities disappeared," said one of the school's special education staff who assisted with the activities. The program was a success and a fall program is now in the works.

Equul Access has also collaborated with Central Minnesota Jobs and Training to be a workplace for youth and seniors. These individuals are paid through CMJT to work for our program! So far we have worked with 4 people and are really enjoying this new venture.

CJ, our first program horse and the 2006 NARHA Region 6 Horse of the Year, is retiring this year. We will be having a retirement party for him sometime in July!

Free SPIRIT Riders (Fond du lac, WI) has introduced cart driving as a component of programming for a participant who is too heavy to ride one of our program horses. The horse she is using for cart driving was donated along with the harness and cart. This student helped to clean the leather harness and cart she is now using weekly to improve her skills.

We continue to have 2 classes of independent riders who are working on a "Horse Show" presentation for our 19th Annual Ride-a-Thon which will be held Saturday, August 15 at our facility.

Currently we are offering 85 service hours per week.

YOU ARE ALL INVITED!!! **Freedomfarm (Waverly, MN)** is VERY busy getting ready for the 2nd Annual Freedomfarm Polo Event, Saturday, July 25. It will be held at BlackBerg Ranch, just west of Watertown, MN. \$10 Admission includes a Kids Match, Feature Match, Carriage Rides, Petting Zoo, Pony Rides & Kids Craft Tent! There will be food available for purchase. Gates open at 11:00 am. Visit www.freedomfarmMN.org for more info.

With Freedomfarm's Summer Session as the largest class to date, we have our hands full!! So we decided to make a new video this summer.

We hope all of you are having an awesome summer!

Mounted Eagles (Motley, MN) has experienced a fulfilling first half of the 2009 calendar year. We have 63 riders currently participating in our program and have acquired many new volunteers. The new volunteers have been a huge asset to our success and we value and appreciate them so very much. Our horses are, as always, continuing to give their dedication and care to help the riders. We are blessed by the families and caregivers who share their special people with us and make us part of their families.

We just completed our third annual benefit horse show and it was a great success. Spirit Horse Center was the host and we had quite a turn out for the dressage schooling show. We are so grateful for all the participants in the show and for their continued support.

We're looking forward to the second half of 2009 because we know there will be new adventures for all!

Good luck to all and God Bless!

North Country R.I.D.E. (Esko, MN) has had a busy first half of the season and we are looking to be busier in the second half of the season.

We had 27 riders this spring, 44 for our first summer session and so far 59 are signed up for our second summer session.

We have started up Special Olympics this year and have two riders who are very excited to be going to a competition later in August. They are practicing hard and are able to do the course independently.

I am proud of everyone here. Our volunteers are working hard to make the place look its best, get horses in shape and ready for class and help riders to achieve their goals. Our riders are also working hard and many of them are becoming independent riders. So far thirteen of our riders are either semi-independent or completely independent. Many of them are also volunteers as well helping with grounds work, side-walking, leading and one rider is even working on becoming an instructor.

Our fundraising committee is working on some fund raising ideas for this fall. Currently we are selling a book called "My Champion" by S. K. Carnes with all of the proceeds going to support our program.

Project Astride (St. Joseph, MN) has started its 24th year of operation! Where has the time gone?

The program received a grant from Centra Care in April for a "Sure-Hands Lift" and it was installed in early June. We are schooling the horses to it and hope to have it in regular use soon.

Project ASTRIDE recently was featured in The St Cloud Times Health section. It gave us some great community visibility.

The program has added 3 new horses to the herd and retired two others.

The program has developed a new partnership with Friendship Ventures of Annandale. We are piloting a program to offer horse experiences to their program campers. So far it's been a successful adventure! Our Avon Hills facility has allowed us the ability to plan for some new and exciting programming!

We hope everyone is having a great summer. Fortunately the economic crunch has not deterred our riders from participating.