

HOOFBEATS

Monthly Newsletter from the Jester Park Equestrian Center

April 2015 • Issue III

www.polkcountyiowa.gov/equestriancenter

BROWNIE

LESSON HORSE OF THE MONTH

Brownie has been working at JPEC now for over a year and has become a reliable member of our pony string who give out great memorable birthday parties and will carry the smallest of riders safely. She also fits perfectly in with our Therapeutic Horsemanship Program and is the perfect size for children. Brownie is a "grade" pony (more or less a mutt!) and is 13-years-young. She also knows how to drive and pull a cart and we're excited to get a cart that will fit her so she can teach other people to learn how to drive! If you're ever out here make sure to say 'Hi' to our favorite brownie colored (but not flavored) pony!



APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	Open House Event
5	6	7	8	9	10 Iowa Horse Fair	11 Iowa Horse Fair
1 Iowa Horse Fair	TRP Session 2 Begins	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Trail Clinic	27	28	29	30	1 No Lessons	2

- **Therapy Session 2 Begins**
- **Special JPEC Sponsored Events**
 - Spring Open House
 - Easter Fun Event
- **Outside Events**
 - Iowa Horse Fair

Find a detail calendar of events of all the happenings at JPEC on our facebook page!

REMINDER!

Therapeutic Horsemanship Program - Session #2 begins on April 13th

"Our riders don't need perfect, the just need possible."

JPEC Therapeutic Horsemanship Program Motto

JPEC VOLUNTEERS

The Heart of our Program!

The volunteers that help out in our Therapeutic Horsemanship Program are the powerhouse of the program! Our volunteers help the instructor by giving the student individual attention, so that the instructor may run the class as a whole! Volunteers hold different positions, such as leaders or side walkers! A leader is responsible for the horse. They assist the student in communicating with the horse. A side walker aids the student. Some students need some assistance sitting on the horse until they can build their muscles to hold themselves up, and some students need help understanding the instructions, or remembering the rules to a particular game! Our volunteers participate in our classes because they love helping students and horses build a great relationship!



Student and volunteer discussing part of the lesson on our Lessons Horse of the Month!

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THE GAMES WE PLAY

Benefits of Games and Activities to Therapeutic Horsemanship Riders.

At Jester Park Equestrian Center, we use games to help teach principals of horsemanship! Our students use the games provided to practice their horsemanship skills, while completing specific tasks. These games can consist of patterns using the ground poles, vertical poles, cones, and barrels; or may include some extra props, such as: balls, beanie babies, rings, or hula hoops!



Beanie Babies enjoy their picnic as the rider retrieves more animal friends!

Games can encourage horsemanship skills, or can be used to promote good posture and stretching. One game that is particularly popular is the beanie baby picnic! Beanie baby animals are spread around one end of the arena, and a barrel is placed at the other with a picnic table cloth. The objective of the game is to gather beanie babies, one at a time, and take them to the picnic! When picking up or setting down a beanie baby, the student must ask the horse for a "Whoa." Once the beanie baby is sitting balanced on the saddle, the rider may ask for the "Walk-On." The rider must then navigate the course of obstacles, including ground poles, and serpentines to climb the pretend hill to reach the picnic! Once the animal is safely eating lunch with their friends, the rider may continue back around the arena to gather more animals!

This game encourages the principals of stop, start, and steer for picking up and carrying the animals to where they belong. When reaching to pick up the animal, students must stretch and reach for it, sometimes crossing the midline, sometimes switching hands. This promotes balance and helps students to stretch their muscles. The animals are also placed so that they can be picked up from the right or the left, and may be placed on either side of the barrel. The instructor may also change rules of the game so that riders must pick up an animal on their right, with their left hand, encouraging a cross of the midline stretch!

Photo Right: Jack (back) and Diamond (front) aren't bothered by the props used in games! Sometimes they play with the toys too!

