

# NEWS FROM THE “NEIGH”BOURHOOD

## February

### ~Dates To Remember~

#### **February**

February 13 - 14

No Public Lessons

February 15

Family Day - Office Closed

February 15 - 18

No Therapeutic Lessons

February 20

Youth Leadership Session 4 begins

February 20 - 21

Public Session 4 begins

#### **March**

March 7

Therapeutic Session 4 begins

March 25

Good Friday - Office Closed

March 26 - 27

No Public lessons

March 28 - 31

No Therapeutic Lessons

#### **April**

April 9 - 10

Public Session 5 begins

April 14

Youth Leadership Session 5 begins



### ~Keep in the Know~



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# ~ Community Engagement ~

## Great 'Neigh'bour Campaign

We are excited to announce our

**"Great 'Neigh'bour" campaign with the goal of raising \$10,000!**

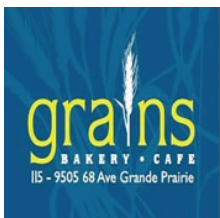
This campaign will run from February 1-29, 2016 and helps to fund PARDS programs, directly impacting our therapeutic riders.

So far, we have partnered with 24 local businesses for this campaign and hope to build awareness and support our programs throughout the Peace Region. You can participate in this campaign by donating \$2 to PARDS through the purchase of a "Great 'Neigh'bour" card on which you can write your name. It will be proudly displayed at the business, recognizing your contribution, throughout the month of February. Keep your eyes peeled for your chance to support PARDS!

**Thank you for your support!**



North & south



Clairmont



Vacation Kennels & Doggy Daycare



# ~ PARDS' Programs ~

PARDS offers a variety of programs but ultimately seeks to accommodate. We don't fit the client to a program, we find what fits for the client. It might be a combination of programs, a modification or a brand-new program altogether. Each month in our newsletter we will highlight one of our unique programs.

## *Therapeutic Riding is beneficial to people of all abilities for a variety of reasons.*

A walking horse moves a rider's pelvis and torso in a similar fashion to the movement experienced when a human walks. It is the only known replica of this action.

For this reason, riding can play a crucial role in normal muscular and balance developments because, while riding, the rider's muscles are constantly responding to the movement of the horse. The horse's swinging, repetitive movement improves balance, coordination, strength and muscle tone while also mobilizing the joints.

Each client that comes in first goes through an assessment process. We establish goals, go over any other therapy they may be undergoing, establish the physical, emotional or intellectual challenges and work out which horse would be best suited. If it turns out that a client shouldn't ride for health reasons, we work diligently to find an alternative program.

Therapeutic riding is offered to clients aged 3 and up. Clients who participate in riding lessons must have a clinical diagnosis. Our therapeutic client base encompasses a wide spectrum of disabilities classified under the scope of Physical (includes riders with limited mobility, delayed fine and gross motor skills, low trunk control/core strength, undeveloped balance, etc.), Developmental (includes riders with limited cognitive capacity, autism spectrum disorders, traumatic brain injury, etc.), Sensory (includes riders with visual, auditory or speech impairment) and Nonvisible (includes riders with learning disability, epilepsy/seizure disorder, ADD/ADHD, anxiety, a variety of psychological disorders, etc.).



For more information on the benefits of Therapeutic riding, please visit our website



Click [here](#) to visit our website



# ~ Rider Spotlight ~

11 year old Zayda began participating in PARDS programming in the summer of 2015 as a part of summer camp. During her days in camp, she participated in riding, horse care, barn work, and a new addition to camp, Youth Leadership. She was a quiet and reserved young lady, but to her instructors it was obvious she was full of energy and compassion and a longing to be included. They watched as Zayda separated herself from games, choosing to remain quiet rather than join in on activities with her peers. She would watch the other children as they learned and participated in activities. Zayda struggled with a severe stutter, one that made her extremely self-conscious and inhibited her communication with children of her age. She felt that because of this stutter, her peers would judge her instead of getting to know her, so she would keep to herself. Her mother had hoped that by bringing her to camp, she would learn to open up and make friends, regardless of her speech challenge. As summer wound down and the camps came to an end, the Youth Leadership facilitator who had worked with Zayda throughout the week spoke with her mother and offered her the opportunity to enroll Zayda in the weekly Youth Leadership program where she could continue to improve upon her social skills and self confidence in a safe, non-judgemental environment.

Through a series of groundwork activities designed to teach individual life skills, Zayda, along with her equine partner, has learned new and innovative ways to communicate while also learning to be more comfortable with herself as well as how others perceive her. She has learned techniques to deal with conflict in a positive and respectful way. For example, she recalls doing an activity entitled "Horse in the Box". Zayda and another participant were required to move a horse named Becky from somewhere in the arena to stand in a box at the other end. The participants were not allowed to touch the horse, bribe the horse or frighten the horse in any way to achieve their goal. At first, Zayda and the other participant attempted to make Becky move away from them by waving their arms around and trying to force her to walk towards the box. They quickly realized that not only was she not going to move away, she was falling asleep! They then began to try to close in on Becky's personal space, but quickly realized that without touching her, she would not move. Zayda noted to her partner that they were both trying to move Becky opposite directions at the same time and they agreed they needed to change tactics. After nearly half an hour of trying and much discussion of strategy, Zayda and her partner decided to step into the box themselves and call to Becky gently and quietly. She immediately came towards them and followed them into the box without an issue. Upon discussion, the participants hypothesized that Becky did not initially obey their wishes because they were attempting to force her into something she did not want to do, but when they allowed her to choose and asked her gently to come to them she had no reservations about complying. This led to a discussion about friendships and relationships with others and how others might react if Zayda and her partner were to push them into something they didn't want to do, as well as how the activity changed when Zayda and her partner communicated with each other to work towards the same goal.

Zayda has since participated in 3 six week sessions of Youth Leadership. Her speech has dramatically improved, enough that she is able to communicate to a point where she only struggles a little with certain letters, specifically the letter M. She is more open and vocal, and participates willingly in activities. Her mother, Rebecca (not her real name) has stated that Zayda has "...always been caring, but has become more understanding of others' points of view in a discussion, which previously would have quickly turned into an argument." Rebecca also says she sees more empathy from Zayda, and her participation in the program has given her better strategies to engage with peers, especially those she doesn't know. Zayda herself has noted that she has more confidence in herself, she feels a deep connection to the horses and that she felt that she was holding back who she was but could now be herself and be happy with it, something she could not comfortably do for the majority of her life. She recently wrote a short letter to the staff and volunteers of PARDS to let them know how she felt about the programs she participates in (Youth Leadership and Therapeutic Riding). She wanted to write a letter so that we could share it with all the staff and volunteers in the hopes that she could convey what the program and the support of the staff and volunteers has given to her and helped her achieve.

Although Zayda has made incredible improvements in her confidence and communication, she still works towards a new goal. The confidence she worked so hard to achieve still eludes her in more public places like her school. This gives her new motivation to continue in the program and work towards bigger, better goals. As well as Youth Leadership, Zayda also participates in the Therapeutic Riding program, which continues to help develop her confidence and allow her to grow.

*See next page for Zayda's letter and photo*

Dear, Pards

I feel when I come to pards I feel confident and that no one will make me feel bad about myself.

When I come to my lessons, and get on Molson's back I feel a sense of freedom and he takes all the worries away.

The instructors and volunteers are caring, kind, and patient. They make me feel like I fit in and they encourage me to do my best. Pards is one of the places that I feel like I belong and it is a safe place to me.

Sincerely  
Zayda



Here, Zayda is pictured after helping with a PARDS lesson demonstration at the Prairie Dusters Drill Team event "Animals for Autism". During the event, Zayda was the lucky winner of a draw and decided to come out to our barn to share her good fortune with her horse friends!

## ~ Volunteer Spotlight ~

### Judy Moynihan



Judy is one of PARDS' valuable volunteers who we would like to thank for coming to PARDS and contributing so much to the lessons and riders' experience.

Judy came to PARDS over 5 years ago hoping to volunteer with our horses. As a physiotherapist, Judy was interested in the concept of therapeutic riding and just had to give it a try. She hoped to gain some knowledge; learn about the horses and programs and make a contribution to the lessons in some way. As a leader in lessons, Judy shared that she feels she has improved in her knowledge and has become an integral part of the riders' learning experience.

Judy has been a part of lessons for quite a while and says she feels like she is a valuable part of all of her rider's growth and learning and she enjoys seeing them advance their skills.

Judy also speaks of her grandson, a regular at PARDS' summer camps. Judy shares "he LOVES the summer camps; they bring out the best in him."

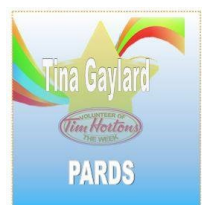
When asked what she enjoys most about volunteering at PARDS, she says that she loves the horses, the riders and the staff. Together they form a wonderfully easy camaraderie. Judy says that volunteering at PARDS has made her much more comfortable around and knowledgeable about horses as well as made her more aware of the large community support for PARDS that exists.

We are truly appreciative of Judy's contributions to PARDS!

# ~ Volunteer Stars ~



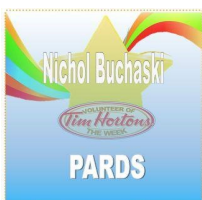
PARDS would like to acknowledge and thank Carol for her continuing commitment to PARDS Dine & Dance event. Carol has been active in the Dine & Dance for many years. Each year and this year being no exception, she continues to collect donations from businesses and individuals that over the years she has built a relationship with. Carol shares information about PARDS that the community values and in turn they generously support our event with their donations and/or attend the event with her. This year Carol helped immensely with the set-up of the Silent Auction adding her decorative ideas, making the auction eye catching and organized which allowed the auction to be an important part of this successful event.



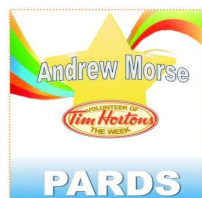
Glitter, beauty and ambiance; all words that can describe what Tina Gaylard brought to our 18th Annual PARDS Dine & Dance "Rivers of Change". Tina has been a member of the Dine & Dance committee for a number of years, offering her creativity and hours of dedication and hard work that continues to bring our theme and venue to life. As well, last year Tina designed a way to track our auction sales at the event on the computer, keeping things well organized and save time. PARDS is fortunate to have Tina working with us. Thank you Tina!



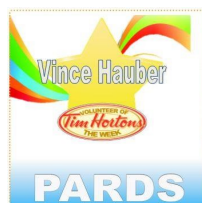
Thank you so much to Sue for being a part of this year's 18th Annual PARDS Dine & Dance. Sue has helped with the Dine & Dance in past years and this year Sue sat on the planning committee and was a fantastic support with her ideas and hard work. Before the event Sue was out in the community gathering donations from local food businesses to provide a midnight luncheon. After an evening of auction excitement, socializing and dancing; Dine & Dance attendees thoroughly enjoyed her hard work preparing and presenting an amazing meal. Thank you again Sue!



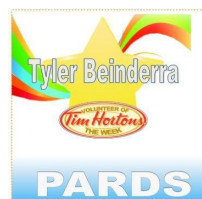
Nichol started volunteering with PARDS this past fall helping with our annual Dine & Dance. Shortly after, she began leading in lessons and helps to saddle horses for lessons as well as with grooming. Nichol is ready to jump in wherever needed. She was a huge help with PARDS bottle drive, held this the weekend of January 2, donating both her time and truck. She has volunteered to help with our scheduled "Dime At A Time" pickups and is looking forward to volunteering at FUND Ride. Thank you Nichol!



Andrew was a great help over the Christmas holidays volunteering for our "Dime At A Time" Bottle Drive. He volunteered his time over the New Year's weekend collecting bottles from local businesses and delivering them to the bottle depot. Thank you Andrew!



Vince donated preserves to the 2015 annual Dine and Dance, helping to make our live auction item, "A Taste of Home" a great success. Vince volunteered his time in December to collect recyclables when we were short trucks, without a thought, even at -20 degrees; further donating the use of his trailer for our "Dime At A Time" bottle drive, collecting recyclables, towing the trailer to the depot and helping to unload. We were so appreciative to be able to call him when a truck was needed last minute and his backup skills with that trailer! Thank you Vince!



Tyler donated both his time and his truck over the Christmas holidays to volunteer for our "Dime At A Time" bottle drive. He generously shared our Bottle Drive poster over social and spent time driving to different businesses collecting recyclables as well as helping with the drop off at the depot. Thank you Tyler!

## ~ Equine Partner Spotlight ~

### Rajah

PARDS newest equine member is 6 year old Rajah; a beautiful dapple grey Arabian gelding, generously free leased to PARDS by Laura Lindsay of Sexmith, Alberta .

This sweet boy may only be 6 years old but his gentle, loving character and experience as a family gymkhana event horse has made him a great candidate for our lesson programs. This little Arab has a beautiful rhythmic trot perfect for students learning how to post and his small size will make him a favourite by our volunteer side walkers.

Rajah has enjoyed every moment of his trial period and has recently taken on a few of his first students.....This beautiful boy is continuing to capture the hearts of many and enjoying every minute of it !

Thank you Laura for placing him with us and welcome to the team Rajah!

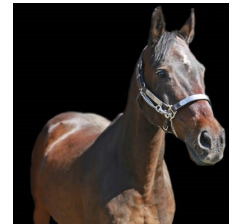


## ~ Did You Know? ~

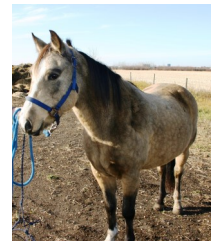


Rajah is full Arabian

The Arabian horse breed can be found in almost all horses' ancestry, being one of the most ancient breeds there is.



Windsor is half Arabian



Finale carries distant Arabian genes

## ~ Test Your Horse Sense ~



We are introducing a new feature in our newsletter to test your horse sense. Each month we will ask a question and you can watch for the answer on our Facebook page.

Did you know it is important for horses to have their hooves cared for?

**This month's question:**

How often do horses need to have their hooves trimmed and why?



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# ~New Facility Update~

## A Facility for the Future



PARDS' new therapeutic riding centre will be a multi-use facility, designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities, as well as offer a wide spectrum of new programs to meet community needs. Over twice our current space, this facility will be built on 55 acres of treed land outside city limits and adjacent to Evergreen Park. The small, outdated buildings to which we've adapted will soon be replaced by a larger, brighter,

modern community-oriented centre with the capacity to host a diverse number of programs and many more participants. The facility is going to open up PARDS' ability to positively impact the region, in a big way.

Check out the "Look How Far We've Come" photo album for more pictures on our Face Book page to see the facility to date.



Reception area with viewing windows



Instructors looking out to arena



window looking into classroom/kitchen



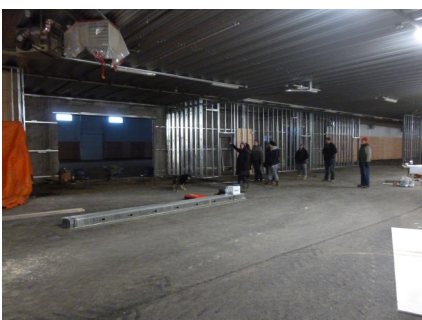
Rider entrance area



Arena



Mezzanine area for viewing



PARDS arena entrance



wash bay—divides PARDS/boarder stalls



full length view of barn