

News From the "Neigh"bourhood

March

~ Dates to Remember ~

April

April 8
Public Riding session 5 begins
April 13
Youth Leadership session 5 begins

April 14
Good Friday - Office Closed

April 15 - 21
No Lessons

April 24
PARDS Annual General Meeting - 7pm

May

May 22
Victoria Day - Office Closed

June

June 10
FUND Ride

~ Stay In Touch ~



~ Rider Spotlight ~

Dakota Lynch

I have the privilege and pleasure of instructing a young man, Dakota, who I have come to know both through PARDS and our previous relationship as coworkers at Goodwill Industries. Dakota has Autism which affects his speech, literacy and comprehension skills. He joined the Therapeutic Riding Program to increase his self-confidence, participate in a recreational activity and give him opportunities for socialization.

Dakota is currently partnered with Risley and, together, they are working toward Dakota's current goal of participating in the Equine Canada Video Competitions. These competitions give riders the opportunity to compete with their peers on a national level with qualified judges scoring the test to determine ranking and offering extensive feedback which is then incorporated into the rider's lesson plans. The specific skill Dakota is working on to help him with this goal is his posting trot. A posting trot is a riding technique where the rider rises up in the saddle in time with the horse's gait. This makes trotting more comfortable, not so bumpy for the rider and easier on the horse's back. In order to perform a posting trot, Dakota needs to count the beat of the trot and find the rhythm to post in tune with Risley's strides. This takes a lot of coordination on the rider's part and is a great riding goal for Dakota as he has progressed to being able to trot the whole arena.

The social benefits Dakota has realized through his lessons and interactions with his horse and instructor are inspiring. He has developed a deep bond and empathy for his horse partner, always "checking in" with Risley to ensure he is happy and comfortable and even brings him carrots, which he prepares himself, to feed to Risley at the end of each lesson. Dakota also helps to untack Risley, eagerly anticipating the auditory sensation he experiences from detaching the Velcro fastener on the saddle pad before bringing Risley outside and turning him loose in the big pasture.

Dakota has many great attributes. He is cheerful, helpful, understanding and caring. I am very thankful to be able to support him in building upon these existing traits to become more engaged and active in all aspects of his life.



Practicing posting

~Abelone Peterson, TR Instructor

~ Upcoming Events ~

Pledge Packages are ready!



32nd ANNUAL FUND RIDE & COMMUNITY CARNIVAL

Saturday June 10, 2017

*RIDE, BIKE, or HIKE!!!
Collect pledges to Win Prizes!*



Fund Ride Participants:

9am Pancake Breakfast

10am Registration

5pm Appreciation Supper & Prizes

**Games, Archery, Face Painting,
Glitter Tattoos and more!!**

General Public Activities:

11am - 3pm BBQ Lunch & Carnival



Call 780-538-3211 or visit www.pards.ca for more information

~ Honouring Our Past as We Look Toward Our Future ~



There are so many people who have contributed to make the move to our new facility a reality. We recognize and appreciate all those donors and sponsors that specifically supported this project, but we can not truly share our story without remembering that throughout our 33 year history, there are many heroes who made it possible for PARDS to grow into the organization it is today. Without our rich history, we wouldn't be looking toward our bright future.

In 1983, a group of equine enthusiasts and physio therapists heard about a couple of therapeutic riding centres that had started up in the Peace Region.

After visiting the facilities and learning more about the practical skills required to run a program, they determined that they wanted their community of Grande Prairie to create a similar program to support children and adults with disabilities living in the area. In October of 1984, Kay Griffiths, Ruth Finch and Cheryl Kuhn took the lead and developed the organization now known as PARDS.

In those early days, PARDS operated out of 3R Stables, owned by Ed Lightfoot, with volunteers and borrowed horses. Within a few years, PARDS moved to the Tissington farm (now Wedgewood Estates) before moving once again to lease space from Evergreen Park and operate out of the Lewis Hawkes Arena. In 1992, Ed and Terri Haberman made a tremendous gift of 20 acres of land where we could build our very own facility. Chris DeWit provided \$100,000 toward the construction and the remaining funds required were raised through donations and gift-in-kind materials and labour. In January of 1994, the first lesson was offered out of the new PARDS. For over 20 years, our current home has served the community well. From 5 riders at inception, steady growth now sees over 350 therapeutic riders in our arena each year. The Haberman Family continues to support PARDS through providing letters of support and words of encouragement as we enter into our next phase. Their original gift continues to give as well, as we are able to sell the land to help fund our future.

Thank you to all who have supported our very special riders for so many years. Without you, there could be no us. Your generosity lives on through each and every rider, past, present and future, who are able to develop and grow beyond what they ever thought possible because you believed in their potential and the benefits of therapeutic horsemanship.



Tom Brown 1000 Mile Ride



Ed & Terri Haberman & Family

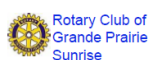
Robert & Ruth Finch



Dean & Sheilah Swanberg

Bowes Family

Karen Blais



☞ Glen's Graders ☞ McLeod Family ☞ Sanjel Corp. – Staff Fund ☞ 1266823 AB Inc. ☞
 ☞ Diamond J Equine Services Ltd. ☞ Sheepo Fencing ☞ Roy Bickell ☞
 ☞ Evaskevich Family ☞ Joe Peskunowicz ☞
 ☞ St. Gerard School -Leaders of the New World ☞
 ☞ AccuPro Real Estate Appraisal & Consulting ☞ Bryan Tink & Family ☞ Roy Borstad ☞
 ☞ Charlie & Marilyn Cramer & Family ☞ Wade Mayer ☞ DTA Christmas Carollers ☞

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP DATES ARE HERE!

Week 1 July 17 - July 21

Week 2 July 24 - July 28

Week 3 July 31 - August 4

Week 4 August 14 - August 18

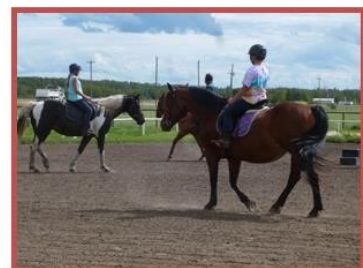
Week 5 August 21 - August 25

PARDS summer camps provide an inclusive environment where children and youth of all abilities are encouraged and supported to identify and build on their own strengths as well as recognize and appreciate the strengths of others.

Our Youth Summer Camp is full of fun and friendship. It is also full of all kinds of learning and personal-discovery hidden within the games, activities and adventures. It's a fantastic way to learn the basics of horse care, riding, horsemanship, and much more. The last day includes a horse show where campers celebrate their achievements and friends and family are invited to come and watch and then join in a BBQ lunch.

Youth Summer Camp is open to children between the ages of 6 (as of January 1 of camp year) and 14, of all abilities. Campers spend each day practicing and learning the basics of horse care and horsemanship through activities, lessons and hands-on learning; as well as games, group activities and crafts.

For more information and registration forms, please visit our website at www.pards.ca, or contact the PARDS office at 780-538-3211. A **completed registration form** and **payment** is required to secure your camp space.



~ Volunteer Spotlight ~

Larry Brown

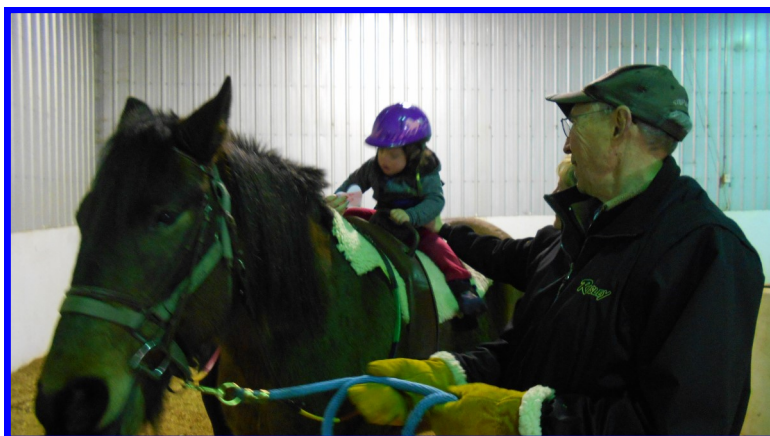
Larry, a grandfather of 5 year old twins and a 25 year old, has been volunteering at PARDS since 2000. He is no stranger to volunteerism. Over the years, he has been the President of the 5 Mile Hall Association, volunteered with the Boys Ball Club in addition to his long time support of PARDS riders as a lesson volunteer.



Larry enjoys the camaraderie of the staff as well as meeting interesting people who also volunteer at PARDS, but mostly it is the involvement with the riders that keeps him coming back. He is a peaceful, calm and encouraging man who makes our riders feel relaxed and comfortable during lessons. He thrives on seeing how happy the riders are and the progress they make throughout each session. He is driven to help people with disabilities as Larry grew up with a brother and nephew with Down Syndrome. He says volunteering at PARDS makes him appreciate life more fully.

Larry is an experienced horseman himself, which makes him an excellent volunteer in lessons, leading horses. Larry is also always ready to lend a hand keeping the barn clean between lessons or getting the horses ready for lessons.

Larry has been a great supporter of PARDS for years. He offered his own horse Princess as a free lease to PARDS and Princess was a welcomed addition to the therapeutic programs during her time with us. With a great eye for horses and knowing what PARDS may be looking for, he always kept his eyes open and PARDS informed for suitable prospects. One day, he watched a four year old child crawling on, under and around a darling Fjord pony and knew this might be a good match for PARDS. He wrote letters of support to sponsors and finally encouraged Encana to come on board with PARDS. Our gentle Fjord, Encana, has been with us now since 2002. Larry has worked for Risley Equipment for a number of years and shared his passion for PARDS with them, which lead them to sponsoring Risley, a Bay Quarter Horse X Morgan Gelding in 2013.



Larry has participated in PARDS annual FUND Ride as a rider himself, collecting pledges in support of PARDS Therapeutic Programs and is always on our list to call when we have ticket sales opportunities such as the Dream Home Lottery. We appreciate everything Larry offers and gives to PARDS and our riders; we can't thank him enough!

~ Abeline Peterson, TR Instructor

~ Volunteer Opportunities ~



32nd ANNUAL FUND
RIDE & COMMUNITY
CARNIVAL

Saturday June 10, 2017



PARDS FUND Ride & Community Carnival

Volunteers are needed to help with pony rides and games at the Community Carnival.

Volunteers are also needed to help with the ride in Registration, Check Points and Set-Up & Tear Down.

Please contact the PARDS office to sign up

PARDS Summer Camps

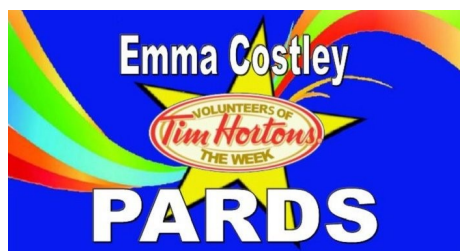
Volunteers are needed as leaders and sidewalkers during our 5 weeks of camps (daytime availability required)

Please contact the PARDS office to sign up

~ Our Fabulous Volunteers ~



Kasandra is a casual staff member that feeds the horses on weekends and holidays, but she also volunteers regularly as a lesson and barn volunteer. Kasandra is an early bird volunteer at PARDS, helping with the morning chores and often coming in earlier than required "just because". She brings horses into the barn for lessons, feeds, grooms, organizes, prepares the arena for lessons and tidies up the barn and tack room. Her attention to detail and work ethic shine through in everything she does. Kasandra also volunteers leading and side walking in lessons and in cart driving lessons. Kasandra can often be seen at many of our fundraising events as well, such as selling tickets and helping with FUND Ride She is a volunteer that goes above and beyond. We appreciate you more than words can describe Kasandra. Thank you!



This year, on top of a busy school schedule, Emma has been on call for when we have regular volunteers away. As a casual volunteer, we are able to call her to come lead and side walk in lessons and Emma often stays longer to help in the barn when she sees us shorthanded. Emma also volunteers for birthday parties and most recently has offered to sell Dream Home tickets at the mall for PARDS. Emma is always eager to help if available. Thanks Emma, it's so nice to have you on our team!

~ Donor Spotlight ~

In 2009, 8 John Deere dealerships joined forces to pool resources and over 38 years of expertise to create the best experience for all their customers as PrairieCoast Equipment. PrairieCoast Equipment(PCE) is passionate about much more than John Deere quality and helping their customers perform better, they are also passionate about helping their communities. Part of the mandate they set for themselves was to make a positive difference in the communities in which they operate and they definitely take that commitment seriously! Regionally, PrairieCoast has made supporting the Breakfast Clubs of Canada a priority through their Green Apron Project.



Locally, PrairieCoast supports the regional initiative through a partnership with Montrose School which sees them feeding 150 students each Friday. PCE hosts Kids Club for children under the age of 12 and one of the benefits of this Club is enjoying the annual Christmas party which includes coloring, wagon rides and lots of fun! These Community Champions have other local initiatives that they are passionate about supporting and we are so pleased that PARDS is among them.

PCE recognizes that PARDS provides a unique service that nobody else does, they understand the benefits of therapeutic horsemanship and truly believe that PARDS is an important part of the community and worth supporting. They have offered their assistance in a variety of unique and creative ways; from providing equipment and manpower to groom our outdoor arena to donating auction items for our Dine & Dance event and even inviting us to be the beneficiary of their Garage Sale BBQ in 2016. Showcasing their support for PARDS programs to the community, we saw a team of 4 PCE golfers purchase passports & attend the KMSC Golf Tournament on PARDS behalf last year! They have partnered with us for our Gator raffle for the past 2 years, this year customizing the unit with decals, 28" mud tires and aluminum rims; making it a unit to be highly sought after! To help ensure the raffle is a great success, they display the Gator, transport it to events and invite us to sell tickets in their booth at the Agri Show and Home Show. Anytime we find ourselves invited to participate in one of their events, we not only benefit from the exposure and community awareness, but we have a truly GREAT time doing it! Many of their staff members also take books of tickets to sell to friends and family, they sell tickets at the dealership and they further promote the raffle at all of their in-store events. PrairieCoast Equipment is truly invested in our success!

We can't say enough about the staff and management at PrairieCoast Equipment. Recently, when we reached out to them asking for letters of support for a recent funding application for our new facility, the response was overwhelmingly positive! The people at PCE are some of the best and we sincerely thank them for their support. This company lives by their mission statement, "PrairieCoast Equipment is dedicated to improving performance and making a positive difference in our communities"; it's not just words on a plaque.

~Jenn Ash, Community Engagement Coordinator

~ PARDS Gator Raffle ~

PARDS is excited to announce that **Prairie Coast Equipment** has again partnered with us for this year's Gator Raffle!

This year's raffle is even bigger and better with even more prizes.

1st Prize

John Deere RSXi860 Gator

- ♦ Power Steering
- ♦ 3500lb WARN Winch
- ♦ 28" Mud Lite Tires with Aluminum Rims
- ♦ Sports Seats and LED Light Bar
- ♦ valued at \$24,161.55!



With its four wheel independent suspension system and a top speed of 97km/hr this unit will take you anywhere you want to go!

2nd Prize \$1000 cash

3rd Prize \$500 cash

Tickets may be purchased at
Prairie Coast Equipment
Keddie's Tack & Western Wear
Lefty's Café
Global Pets
Barton's Big Country
Al's News
J. Adams Autobody
The Muffler Man
Wapiti Shooters
Commandeur Mechanical
Bezanson Store
PARDS office

Also new this year you may purchase tickets online at www.pards.ca under the News & Events tab!

Online tickets may be purchased by Alberta residents only

~ Our Equine Partners ~

Encana (Bramber's Zeus)

Encana is a Brown Dun Norwegian Fjord Gelding, and he stands at 13.1HH. Encana was born in 1998.

Encana started service in 2002, and his purchase was made possible thanks to a generous donation from Encana Corporation.

Before starting work at PARDS, Encana was a pack horse. Encana was trained to be ridden right here at PARDS. Encana's spiky mane, fuzzy coat and soft velvety nose can stimulate a client's tactile senses. His rhythmic motion and fun, bouncy trot causes riders to focus on his movement. This can have a particularly calming effect on clients with autism.

Encana is famous around the barn for his 'smile.' If you come for a visit and give his nose a gentle tickle, he just may respond with his big toothy grin!



~ Just Horsin' Around ~



Q: Where did the newly married horses stay on their honeymoon?

See answer below

Why can't horses vomit?

Horses have a number of key physiological differences to ensure that any food they ingest takes only a one-way trip. For example, the muscles of the equine lower esophageal sphincter are much stronger than in other animals, making it nearly impossible to open that valve under backward pressure from the stomach. Also, the equine esophagus joins the stomach at a much lower angle than in many animals, so when the stomach is distended, as with gas, it presses against the valve in such a way that holds it even more tightly closed. And, located deep within the rib cage, the equine stomach cannot be readily squeezed by the abdominal muscles. Finally, horses have a weak vomiting reflex---in other words, the neural pathways that control that activity in other animals are poorly developed in horses, if they exist at all.

So why did horses evolve this way? At some point, the need to retain food in the stomach must have been a more important survival mechanism than the need to eject toxins. Because horses are built to graze---to take in very small portions at a time as they feed throughout the day---and because they are fairly fussy about the plants they browse, it's possible that they never needed to vomit because they would consume toxic doses only rarely.

A: In the Bridle suite



PARDS Annual General Meeting
Monday, April 24, 2017 at 7:00pm
8202 84 St. (1km north of 68th Ave on 84th St)

Everyone is welcome to attend
Light refreshments will be served

2016 Financial Statements and 2017 budget will be presented for approval and we will be sharing an update on the progress of our New Facility Capital Campaign. Board elections will also be held.

Bylaw Review - please see PARDS website
to view proposed bylaws
www.pards.ca under news and events

All current members of PARDS are eligible to vote at this meeting. 2017 memberships will be available to purchase at the meeting - \$10 Individual, \$20 Family and \$25 Corporate.

Learn, share and be an important part of the decision making process. Our riders are counting on you!

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact us at 780-538-3211 or email info@pards.ca

Please R.S.V.P. to ensure enough snacks for all!