Ogle County Regional Planning Commission

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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT
APRIL 19, 2012

The regular monthly meeting of the Ogle County Regional Planning Commission was held on Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 6:00 P.M. at the Old Ogle County Courthouse, Third Floor County Board Room # 317, 105 S. Fifth St., Oregon, IL.

The Order of Business is as follows:

1. ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF A QUORUM.

   Chairman Funk called the meeting to order at 6:03 P.M. Roll call indicated that five members of the Regional Planning Commission were present: Chairman Lloyd Funk, Paul White, Wayne Reising, Max Baumgardner and Cody Considine. Ron Colson and Tom Smith were was absent.

2. READING AND APPROVAL OF REPORT OF JANUARY 19, 2012 AS MINUTES.

   Chairman Funk asked for any changes or corrections to the report of the January 19, 2012 meeting of the Ogle County Regional Planning Commission; hearing none, Chairman Funk declared the minutes approved as read.

3. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

   There was no "Unfinished Business" for consideration.

4. NEW BUSINESS

   A. DECISIONS (CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

   #1-12 SPECIAL USE - Brian & Jodi Horner, 3261 S. Daysville Rd.., Oregon, IL for a Special Use Permit to allow a recreational facility which will include wedding receptions, banquets, business parties and special events in the AG-1 Agricultural District on property described as follows and owned by the petitioners:

   Part of the N1/2 of Section 23 Oregon-Nashua Township 23N, R10E of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 15.88 acres, more or less
   Property Identification Number: Part of 16-23-200-003
   Common Location: 3261 S. Daysville Rd.

   Mr. Reibel reviewed the Staff Report. The LESA score of 178.5 indicates a Low Rating for protection (LE = 63.5; SA = 115). He read the The Natural Resources Review by IDNR stating protected resources that may be in the vicinity of the project location.

   Brian Horner was present and explained that the property is an old homestead with a barn that has been fixed up inside. He continued that the previous owners

held special events and he would like to continue this use. He stated that the facility would be a unique site for the Oregon are to provide space for weddings, Christmas parties and like events in a natural barn setting.
Mr. Funk asked if the petitions will be applying for a liquor license. Mr. Horner responded that a liquor license has been approved contingent on zoning approval.

Mr. White asked if the septic on the property is capable of handling the proposed events. Mr. Horner responded that there are three buildings on the property and there are three separate septic systems. Mr. Reibel asked if the petitioner has been in contact with the Ogle County Health Department. Mr. Horner responded that he has been working with both the county and state health officials.

Mr. Baumgardner questioned the "For Sale" sign on the property. Mr. Horner responded that he recently purchased the property and the sign has not been removed yet by the realtor.

Mr. Considine asked if the petitioner purchased the church located near the barn. Mr. Horner responded that the church was sold to someone else along with one hundred acres. Discussion ensued regarding the history of the property.

Mr. Baumgardner stated that this petition is pretty straight forward in regards to the two previous permits.

Mr. Considine made a motion to recommend approval of Petition No. 1-12 Special Use as it does not go against the Comprehensive Plan, it will be a great and unique resource for the County, and the LESA score indicates a "Low" rating for protection; Seconded by Mr. Baumgardner. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#1-12 AMENDMENT - J. Pease Construction Co., Inc. Profit Sharing Trust, 5435 Bull Valley Rd.., Ste.130, McHenry, IL for an Amendment to the Zoning District to rezone from AG-1 Agricultural District to R-1 Rural Residence District on property described as follows and owned by the petitioner:

> Part of the SE1/4 of the NE1/4 and part of the NE1/4 of the SE1/4 of Section 14 Byron Township 25N, R10E of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 20.0 acres, more or less
> Property Identification Number: Part of 04-14-200-002
> Common Location: 10400 Block of N. Hoisington Rd.

Mr. Reibel read a letter from Fox Development requesting that this petition be continued to the May meeting due to the fact they are unable to attend the Byron Township Meeting before the Ogle County meetings.

Mr. White asked if there would be recommendations from the County Highway Department next month. Mr. Reibel responded that there would be recommendations from the County as well as the Township. He added that Mr. Pease would be working to resolve access issues during the next month as well as attending meetings.

Mr. Baumgardner made a motion to continue Petition No. 1-12 Amendment for one month to the May 17, 2012 meeting; Seconded by Mr. Reising; The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#2-12 SPECIAL USE - Amy & Todd Branham, 8613 N. Limestone Rd.., Rockford, IL for a Special Use Permit to allow an equine-assisted counseling and equine psychotherapy facility; and horse riding instruction (lessons) in AG-1 Agricultural District on property described as follows and owned by the petitioners:

> Part of E1/2 GL1SE1/2 of NE1/4 of Fractional Section 5 and part of W1/2 GL1 S1/2 of NW1/4 Fractional Section 4 Monroe Township 42N, R2E of the 3rd P.M., Ogle County, IL, 11.03 acres, more or less
> Property Identification Number: 12-05-200-023 & 12-04-100-004
> Common Location: 8613 N. Limestone Rd..

Mr. Reibel reviewed the Staff Report. The LESA score of 201.6 indicates a Medium rationg for protection (LE = 87.6; SA = 114). The Natural Resources Review by IDNR states there is no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project location.

Donna Casper handed out a flyer explaining the counseling that is being proposed. Ms. Casper explained that she met Amy Branham eight or nine months ago when Mrs. Branham took a rescue horse from her. She explained that she has been unable to get zoning approval in Winnebago County to do this type of therapy on her property because she is in a residential area. She continued that after meeting Mrs. Branham they decided to seek approval to provide the counseling on Mrs. Branham's property. Mrs. Casper stated that Mrs. Branham currently trains and boards horses and that she also works well with children. Mrs. Casper stated that she is presently works for Winnebago County Children's Home and Aid. She went on to explain the purpose of Children's Home and Aid. She explained that counseling done with animals is a proven method in getting children interested and willing to open up and receive the counseling that is needed. She stated that this therapy will be used with children and their families.

Mr. Funk asked that the representatives of the petition introduce themselves and explain their role in the request.

Amy Branham will be the owner of the facility. She stated that she already provides riding lessons and she will be helping in the care and management of the horses and operating as she does now.

Lori Casey is a neighbor and friend of Mrs. Branham. She explained that she will be helping in the organization, support and spreading the word of what the facility has to offer if the petition is approved.

Mr. Baumgardner asked if the women have done this type of therapy before. Mrs. Casper stated that she has counseled before and has been working with foster children. She is certified in pet assisted therapy and hypno therapy. She further explained her counseling experience.

Mr. Baumgardner asked if the children will be lead around on the horses by the counselors. Mrs. Branham explained that at this time they will not be working with any physically handicapped children because the insurance is too expensive. She explained that the children will begin by learning to groom and care for the horses which will build self esteem and eventually they will ride on their own.

Mrs. Casey explained that a specific program guide will be set up for the counseling. She continued that several ideas including learning about brushes and tack and the physical areas of the horses along with much more background education will take place before the children begin working with the horses.

Mr. Baumgardner asked where the clients will come from. Mrs. Branham stated that clients will be referred by the Children's Home and Aid. She explained that services like this are hard to come by and once the word is spread there should be no problem finding clients.

Mr. Reising asked about the number of participants. Mrs. Branham stated that there may be up to eight clients seen each day. She stated that they will be closed one day per week. She continued that the therapy would be somewhat seasonal and there would not be a high volume of people at the property at any one time. She explained that due to their location neighbors cannot see what is going on at the property and therefore should not be disturbed by the use.

Discussion ensued regarding the pasture on property and where the training would take place.

Discussion ensued regarding impact of future development near the property.

Mr. White made a motion to recommend approval of Petition No. 2-12 Special Use along with all the recommended conditions. He stated that this is an acceptable use in the agricultural area and will serve a unique need for the area; Seconded by Mr. Baumgardner. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#2-12 AMENDMENT - Larry Pontnack, 6309 E. Brick Rd.., Oregon, IL for an Amendment to the Zoning District to rezone from AG-1 Agricultural District to I-1 Industrial District on property described as follows and owned by the petitioner:

> Part of Lot 2 of the subdivision of GL 4 and GL 5 of the NW1/4 Fractional Section 3 Pine Rock Township 23N, R11E of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 8.0 acres, more or less
> Property Identification Number: Part of 17-03-100-008
> Common Location: 6309 E. Brick Rd..

Mr. Reibel reviewed the Staff Report. The LESA score of 210.1 indicates a High Rating for protection (LE = 76.1; SA = 134). The Natural Resources Review by IDNR states there is no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project location.

Mr. Pontnack passed out a non-objection letter from the adjoining property owner. He explained that his plan is to move over to the undeveloped property and expand. He stated that he does not own a junk yard and would like to consider it a restoration yard. He stated that he would like to construct another building that he will use for parts purchased from Kishwaukee Auto Parts. He stated that he has about eight semi trailers with the purchased antique auto parts. He stated that he also has considered doing outside storage for things like RVs. Mr. Pontnack stated that he always works to stay in compliance with zoning and keeps the property clean. He continued that he has never had any problems with other agencies such as the EPA. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Pontnack stated that he unsure of the number or size of buildings he may construct in the future.

Discussion ensued regarding what Mr. Pontnack does and the history and future of his business.

Mr. White made a motion to recommend approval of Petition No. 2-12 Amendment. He stated that the adjoining property is already zoned I-1 and the petitioner has a proven record of compliance. He continued that the area residents and Pine Rock Township have no objections and that the use will increase the value of the property with minimal impact with the reduction of crop land being small; Seconded by Mr. Considine. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#3-12 SPECIAL USE - Larry Pontnack, 6309 E. Brick Rd.., Oregon, IL for a Special Use Permit to allow storage of antique/old automobiles and parts thereof in the I-1 Industrial District on property described as follows and owned by the petitioner:

> Part of Lot 2 of the subdivision of GL 4 and GL 5 of the NW1/4 Fractional Section 3 Pine Rock Township 23N, R11E of the 4th P.M., Ogle County, IL, 8.0 acres, more or less
> Property Identification Number: Part of 17-03-100-008
> Common Location: 6309 E. Brick Rd.

Mr. Reibel reviewed the Staff Report. The LESA score of 210.1 indicates a High Rating for protection (LE = 76.1; SA = 134). The Natural Resources Review by IDNR states there is no record of State-listed threatened or endangered species in the vicinity of the project location.

Mr. Funk asked if the unused corner of the property will be farmed until the petitioner is ready to occupy it. Mr. Pontnack responded that he has an agreement with the neighbor to plant corn on the property until he is ready to occupy it.

Mr. Reising made a motion to recommend approval of Petition No. 3-12 Special Use subject to the recommended conditions of the Staff Report, by basically repeating the prior motion that the petitioner has a proven track record, that Pine Rock Township has no objections and it is not interfering with existing crop land; Seconded by Mr. Baumgardner. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

5. OTHER BUSINESS (CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

A. Review and discussion of Comprehensive Plan update

Mr. Reibel explained that the copies of the Comprehensive Plan he is passing out is in its entirety and is ready for review. He explained that the previous reviewed chapters have also been updated and this is the copy the members should be working from. Mr. Reibel briefly explained the goals and objectives that are located at the end of each chapter.

Mr. Baumgardner stated that he does not object to the plan but questions if the County has ever used it in planning for economic development.

Mr. Reibel explained that the plan is used as the foundation for the decisions made by the Planning Commission in the form of recommendations to the County Board. The County Board's decisions are supported by the Plan.

Mr. Baumgardner read a paragraph from the Comprehensive Plan and explained his confusion regarding economic development and over-expenditures of the County in the past five years.

Discussion ensued regarding the purpose of the Comprehensive Plan and how it relates to economic development and decisions made by the Planning Commission and County Board.

Discussion ensued regarding how the Comprehensive Plan is used to make decisions for development in the County that will be beneficial for schools and other like identities. It was explained that the Comprehensive Plan is used as a guide for the direction of future development in the County but is not responsible for seeking means of economic development for the County.

Discussion ensued regarding the intention of the Comprehensive Plan to preserve farm land and develop land from urban areas outwards.

Discussion ensued regarding how the Comprehensive Plan is used by potential developers coming to the County and how it could be used by an Economic Developer if one was hired by the County.

Discussion ensued regarding the statistic and beneficial background information that is included in the Comprehensive Plan. Further discussion ensued regarding how this information was compiled.

Discussion ensued regarding maps included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Funk suggested the members review the Comprehensive Plan over the next month and return ready to discuss it at next month's meeting.

B. By-Laws of the Ogle County Regional Planning Commission

There was no discussion regarding the proposed By-Laws of the Ogle County Regional Planning Commission.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

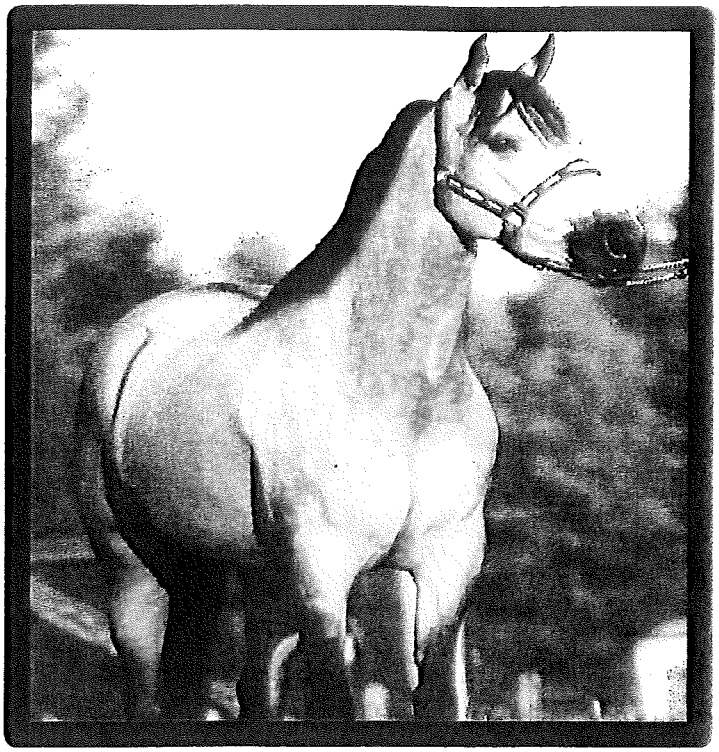
7. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 P.M.

(Next meeting May 17, 2012 at 6:00 P.M. at the Old Ogle County Court House, 3rd Floor County Board Room #317, 105 S. Fifth St., Oregon, IL)

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Reibel
Planning & Zoning Administrator

BRANHAM EXIBIT
4/19/12



Alternative Counseling Solutions, INC.

Utilizing Pet Assisted Therapy/Equine Therapy/Music & Nature, In Psychotherapy

4879 Forest Drive
Rockford, IL
61109
(815) 289-9212

DONNA KASPER (Director)
CREDENTIALS: **NCC**, NATIONAL CERTIFIED COUNSELOR

LCPC, LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR

ILLINOIS LICENSED CHILD WELFARE WORKER

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES FOSTER PARENT TRAINER

DELTA SOCIETY CERTIFIED
In Pet Assisted Therapy Skills

AMERICAN HIPPOTHERAPY
Level 1Therapist in Equine Skills/Treatment Principles

A former foster parent to numerous children in the area for 18 years. Currently the Director of Family Centered Services at Children's Home and Aid.

Board Members:
Warren Heinke (former VP of Children's Home and Aid)

Barbara Majernik (former Associate Director at Catholic Charities)

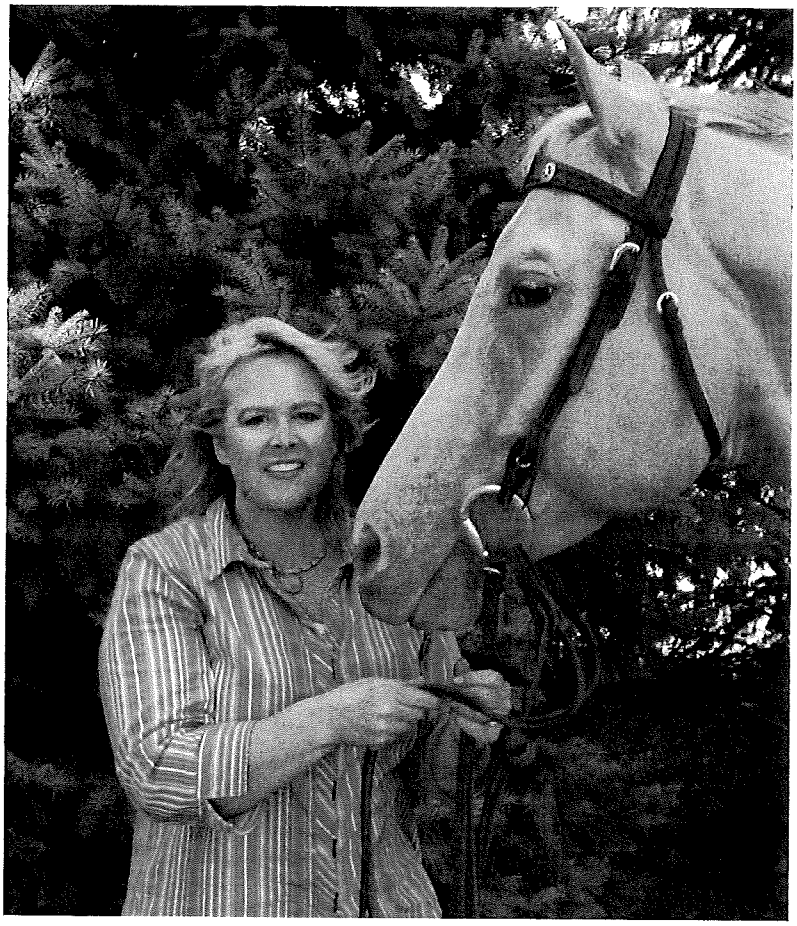
Marlene Shoeneck (DCFS Foster Parent and Foster Parent Trainer)

Amy Branham

Amy has lived in the Northern Illinois area for over 35 years. She is an outstanding member of the Community and embraces the ideals of an upstanding citizen. Amy is always willing to go above and beyond to help others while at the same time bettering the world around her.

Various things have sculpted the person that Amy is today including mentors, training horses and working with people eager to learn.

Family and friends are vitally important and is the core of Amy's foundation. She has been married for almost 18 years to Todd and has 2 amazing boys (Jimmy and Austin). Amy was an Operating Engineer for almost a decade prior to the start of her family. Never too far from the "working world" Amy always stayed involved with real estate, decorative painting and training horses. Surrounding herself with positive friends who are creating a difference is essential to making the world a better place.



Amy is involved in several activities on a daily basis which include horses, school functions and community organizations:

Horses—Amy was given her first pony at the age of 2 ½ and she then went on to breaking ponies at the age of 9. She is very diverse in her riding styles comprised of English, Western, Trail, Reining, Jumping, Showmanship, Speed and Driving. Throughout the years Amy has rescued and rehabilitated hundreds of horses, dogs, and cats. From a very young age Amy has always enjoyed helping people learn to ride and take care of horses. She believes that their experiences can help to foster positive decisions and dedication for people wanting to grow in their personal life.

School Activities—When not working with horses, Amy actively volunteers at the local schools in both Monroe Center and Stillman Valley. For the past 7 years, she has generously given of her time through being a room mom. If the school needed an extra hand then they always knew who they could call. Likewise, she's coached t-ball for the 1st grade league in Stillman Valley.

To educate the students at the elementary school Amy has been known to bring her horses to give a hands-on example of these beautiful creatures. Learning by doing is something Amy prides herself on and tries to pass along her vast knowledge of horses to those that are willing to learn.

Community Organizations—Community is an important part of Amy's life and she is involved in several community organizations. Amy donated her artistic talents to create a one-of-a-kind mural for the women and children's shelter in Rockford. She has also hand-painted works of art to donate to silent auctions and fund-raisers throughout the area.

Another Community Organization that Amy holds in high regard is 4-H. Helping 4-H students has always been important to Amy and she's assisted with various training clinics for the youth in Northern Illinois for over 25 years. There have also been numerous 4-H Fair shows and clinics which Amy has willfully given her time to help the children with their horse projects.

Hours of Operation: 10:00 AM-7:00 PM Mon-Fri
10:00 AM-5:00 PM Sat
Sunday 1:00-4:00 PM

5-10 sessions a week
(Depending on number of clients)

Pet/Equine Assisted Therapy Sessions (1 hour for 8 weeks)
Individual sessions will be based on the client's needs/diagnoses, this is an example of a treatment plan for a child diagnosed with adjustment disorder or poor self-esteem. Interventions are based on Cognitive/Behavioral Therapy.

Week 1: Intake paperwork with child and parents
Begin mental health status exam/diagnoses

Week 2: Finish mental health status exam
Introduce child to the animals
Trust building activities

Week 3: Go over treatment plan with child and parents
Begin interaction with animals (based on treatment plan)
Trust building activities

Week 4: Assist client in becoming able to recognize needs and feelings and express them in constructive, respectful ways while interacting with the animals. (ex. Grooming a horse) At this time client maybe ready to attempt some actual riding. Give child homework to learn about the animal he or she chooses to work with.

Week 5: Use role-playing, modeling, and behavior rehearsal to teach the client to become open and responsive to praise and encouragement through interaction with the animals (possible riding). Discuss homework assignment.

Week 6: Meet with parent and discuss progress/or lack of. Provide parents with useful interventions. Child will identify negative automatic thoughts and replace them with positive self-talk messages to build self-

esteem while interacting with the animals. (ex. Training one of the dogs to do a new trick) Give homework assignment.

Week 7: Appropriate problem solving using role reversal with one of the animals. Formulate a plan that leads to taking action to meet the client's emotional needs. Explore interests and long-term goals with client.

Week 8: Review client's feelings, improvement, and insecurities. Assess for additional sessions. Allow client to spend time with each of his or her favorite animals. Process the last eight weeks with the parent and provide recommendations. Recommendations could include moving on to riding lessons, working with another animals better suited to the child's needs, additional psychotherapy sessions or outside recommendations such as: mentoring services, summer riding camps, special children's groups.

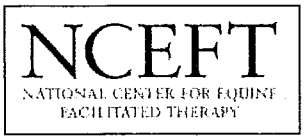
Equine Psychotherapy

Equine Therapy Assocations

American Hippotherapy Association Inc. (AHA, Inc.) promotes the use of the movement of the horse as a treatment strategy in physical, occupational and speech-language therapy sessions for people living with disabilities. Hippotherapy has been shown to improve muscle tone, balance, posture, coordination, motor development as well as emotional well-being.

Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association aims to get professionals in the clinical and human development fields to accept EAP as a valid and effective approach, and to actively use it with their clientele. This benefits those in the equine fields by opening up greater possibilities for doing what they love, namely working with horses. This benefits those in the clinical and human development fields by providing a powerful, effective, interesting, and fun therapeutic alternative. Most of all, this benefits the clients and participants, because, as those of us working in the field see all the time, it works! The growth and learning of all involved is intense and rewarding.

North American Riding for the Handicapped Association Since 1969, the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association, Inc. (NARHA), has provided Equine Assisted Activity and Therapy (EAAT) programs in the United States and Canada through its network of nearly 800 member centers. Each year, dozens of new centers initiate new programs and more than 38,000 individuals with disabilities benefit from activities which include therapeutic riding, hippotherapy, equine assisted psychotherapy, driving, interactive vaulting, and competition.



The National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy (NCEFT), located in beautiful Woodside, California, has provided equine assisted therapy and activities to individuals with special needs for 37 years. NCEFT is a non-profit, California 501(c)(3) corporation that improves the lives of children and adults with disabilities by providing equine-assisted therapy and equine assisted activities and promoting research and education in the field of hippotherapy.

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Description

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What is equine therapy?
Why are horses used for therapy?
Animal assisted therapy
EAL vs. EAP
Equine therapy programs
Equine Assisted Therapy
Troubled teens and horse therapy
Therapy Associations

Want to help your child? Call **866-777-0799** and find a program for your son or daughter today.

What is animal-assisted therapy?

How do horses help kids with emotional and behavioral issues?

Animal-assisted therapy for troubled teens

What's the difference between horse back riding and equine therapy?

Equine therapy for children with Asperger's and Autism

Equine therapy for disabled children

Animal-assisted therapy for special needs children

Wilderness Programs

Mom and son find help through therapeutic riding

How equine therapy helped a troubled teenage girl

Other forms of animal assisted therapy

- Bovine assisted therapy
- Canine assisted therapy
- Elephant assisted therapy

Boarding schools with horse riding therapy

What is Animal Assisted Therapy?

Equine assisted psychotherapy is an emerging form of therapeutic intervention in which horses are used as tools for clients to gain self-understanding and emotional growth. Equine assisted psychotherapy is a type of animal assisted therapy, a field of mental health that recognizes the bond between animals and humans and the potential for emotional healing that can occur when a relationship is formed between the two species.

Equine assisted psychotherapy involves equine activities set up and facilitated by a licensed mental health professional, often with the help or standby support of a horse professional. These activities are most often performed on the ground (rather than riding), and include such things as grooming, feeding, haltering and leading the horse. During the process of working with the horse, the therapist and client engage in talk therapy, processing feelings, behaviors and patterns. The ultimate goal for the client is to build skills such as personal responsibility, assertiveness, non-verbal communication, self-confidence, and self-control.

Why use horses for psychotherapy? One reason is because horses need a lot of care. A client can put aside his or her own troubles in the immediate job of caring for the horse. Horses are large and strong, which challenges a person to overcome his fear in order to work with the animal. Horses mirror moods, too; they respond negatively to negative emotions, teaching the client that his behavior can affect others, and making it necessary to modify behavior in order to work successfully with the animal.

Much can be learned from simply observing horse behavior. Horses can be stubborn or defiant, playful or moody. They have a variety of "herd dynamics" such as pushing, kicking, biting, squealing, grooming one another, and grazing together. In the process of describing the horse and the interactions between the horses, clients can learn about themselves and their own family dynamics.

Equine assisted psychotherapy is thought to be an effective short-term therapeutic approach for both individuals and families, addressing a number of mental health problems, including behavioral issues, depression and anxiety, low self esteem, eating disorders, ADD/ADHD, post traumatic stress disorder, and relationship problems. While there is a need for research to support anecdotal evidence of the effectiveness of Equine assisted psychotherapy, this type of animal assisted therapy is slowly gaining support among mental health professionals.

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Want to help your child? Call **866-777-0799** and find a program for your son or daughter today.

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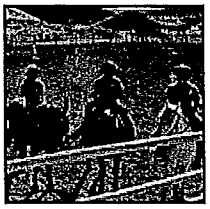
Welcome to Equine Therapy



A Horse Is A Horse Is A . . . Therapist?

Troubled teens nationwide are reaping the psychological and emotional benefits of "equine therapy," namely, the use of horses to help treat a variety of physical and psychological problems. Equine therapy programs are now widely used in residential treatment settings, as a component of outpatient therapy, or in gang-intervention programs and a growing body of evidence shows that horses have a lot to offer humans.

Equine therapy is practiced in most countries in the world. Originally used to help people recover from traumatic injuries, it became widely used as a therapeutic tool for the physically handicapped. Most recently, equine therapy has become accepted as a useful tool in treating a wide variety of psychological and mental disorders.

There are many physiological and psychological benefits documented in people during interactions with animals. These include lowered blood pressure and heart rate, increased beta-endorphin levels, decreased stress levels, reduced feelings of anger, hostility, tension and anxiety, improved social functioning, and increased feelings of empowerment, trust, patience and self-esteem.

Therapists say that young people who ordinarily shun physical and emotional closeness with other people can often accept it from a horse. The child-horse bond can develop mutual trust, respect, affection, empathy, unconditional acceptance, confidence, responsibility, assertiveness, communication skills and self-control. Effective communication with a horse involves patience, understanding, attention, forgiveness and consistency - abilities that any young person will find useful throughout their life.

Success stories abound. The January 2006 issue of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* included a study of the effects of a therapeutic riding program on at-risk and special education children. The results showed that an eight session therapeutic riding program significantly decreased anger in adolescent boys in a special education program and positively affect their mothers' perception of the boys' behavior.

The mother of an 8-year-old, whose psychotherapist recommended equine therapy for her mood disorder, said her daughter is noticeably happier and calmer for several days after her weekly ride.

In Arizona, a residential treatment facility for young girls suffering from eating disorders was featured on the television program *Inside Edition*. The facility's equine therapy program was credited with helping numerous young girls who had not had success with more conventional treatments.

Horses can also help keep kids out of gangs. A volunteer organization in a Philadelphia inner-city neighborhood has at-risk youth playing polo. Yes, the "sport of kings" is now played by neighborhood kids who might otherwise be spending their time hanging out on street corners or selling drugs. In this program, the youth exchange work at the stables for riding time. In order to play on

Horses Help the Disabled to Become Enabled

More Equine Therapy Articles

Sitemap

Home

the polo team, they must maintain a "C" average and attend all practices. They develop leadership and sportsmanship and gain a sense of self-respect.

Meanwhile, in Compton, a crime-ridden neighborhood in the heart of South Central Los Angeles, a youth equestrian club called the Compton Junior Posse has youth from ages five to 17 competing in amateur riding events throughout Southern California. In this part of town, it is harder to stay out of a gang than to join one. In order to ride, children must show their report cards to prove they are attending school. They clean the stables and groom the horses themselves.

Equine therapy is now an integral part of numerous treatment programs for young people suffering from addictions, anxiety, depression, mood disorders and other psychological problems. It is also known as "therapeutic riding," but keep in mind that it is not enough to just put a child on a horse. Many horses do not have the appropriate temperament to work with teens or young people. Make sure to look for a program where the therapists are specifically trained in equine therapy and the treatment program involves more than just riding lessons - some of the greatest benefits come from the simplest acts of grooming and caring for the horses.

More Information about Animal Assisted Therapy and Therapeutic Programs

Wild Teens, Wild Horses: Troubled Teens Get a Fresh Start by Taming Mustangs

Training mustangs has tremendous therapeutic value for defiant, aggressive and rebellious teens. Whereas teens tend to become withdrawn in traditional talk therapy, equine therapy encourages teens to let down their guard and open up. more...

A Girl and Her Horse: The New Therapy for Troubled Teens

Psychologists who specialize in adolescents tell us that the early teen years are a time of plummeting self-esteem and alienation for young girls. Taking care of animals is a natural way to help them connect with the world around them. more...

The Healing Effect of Horses on Teens at Turn-About Ranch

Working with horses can have a healing effect on teens suffering from anxiety and other mental health disorders. Turn-About Ranch, a residential treatment center for teens in Utah, features equine-assisted therapy prominently in its treatment program. more...

Turn-About Ranch Gives Kids a Second Chance in the Great Outdoors

Living in the country enjoying fresh air and nature can have a healing effect on those who suffer from a variety of disorders. Turn-About Ranch, a working ranch in Utah, has been successfully using that technique to help treat troubled teenagers for years. more...

The Many Faces of Equine Therapy

The equine therapy experience at Turn-About Ranch is different from other therapeutic horseback riding programs. Rather than simply walking a horse across an arena or teaching commands and discussing the communication process, students at the ranch have the opportunity to experience authentic trail rides and cattle drives (after learning the basics of caring for their horse, such as saddling and bridling, mounting and dismounting, and safety precautions). more...

A New Approach to Equine Therapy

New Leaf Academy of North Carolina's experiential approach to equine therapy helps teenage girls develop life skills pertaining to non-verbal communication, relationship skills, establishing personal boundaries, self-awareness and accountability, and more. more...

Service Dogs Enhance Quality of Life for Autistic Kids

Specially trained service dogs can provide a range of therapeutic and quality-of-life benefits to children with autism, Asperger's Syndrome, and other related conditions. more...

Equine Therapy: How Horses Help Troubled Teens Build Better Lives

For decades, horses have been employed in therapeutic programs throughout the United States, where they have helped thousands of people overcome serious physical and emotional challenges. For adolescents who suffer from social or developmental disorders, equine therapy can offer life-changing opportunities to work through internal struggles and rebuild positive interpersonal relationships. more...

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How do Horses Help Kids with Emotional and Behavioral Issues?

Kids with emotional and behavioral issues can be difficult to work with. Most of them are slow to trust adults, and may be unwilling to trust anyone at all. In addition, if the emotional or behavioral issues are caused by abuse, the child could be angry and prone to emotional outbursts. Cognitive therapy that includes an equine assisted program can be of great benefit to this type of person.

There are several aspects of cognitive/equine assisted therapy that work well with kids who have emotional and behavioral issues. One of the simplest aspects is diversion. When a young person is focused on grooming, feeding, or exercising a horse, his focus is no longer on his own issues and problems. Far from being a "means of escape", caring for the horse provides an often-needed respite for the person's emotions and intellect. It can actually help the person feel refreshed and energized because the mind has been allowed to "rest" from its current problems.

In order to properly care for a horse, new skills have to be developed. The process of developing these skills can help kids who are especially impatient, anxious, or have low self-confidence. Open communication between counselor and client is important when the client is learning new skills. The young person is reassured that learning these skills takes time, and it's ok if he doesn't get things right the first time. Skill development gives the young person a safe environment in which to make mistakes. He or she may have a parent or sibling who's very critical and unforgiving of mistakes, so equine therapy sessions can be an excellent tool for counteracting the criticism. Feelings of fear, frustration, or anxiety can be validated by the therapist, teaching the young person that these feelings are healthy while he's developing appropriate coping mechanisms. As the young person gets better and better at caring for the horse, his confidence often increases. Some of the skills, like learning to walk or tack a horse, can be learned fairly quickly and give the young person an immediate (albeit small) taste of success. This gives the therapist a tangible foundation upon which to build.

The open communication that's needed when learning new skills enables the therapist to "teach by example" as he communicates with his client. The young person will likely get frustrated, giving the therapist an opportunity to discuss - and model - appropriate ways to express emotions. The communication between the therapist and horse professional can provide this same kind of example as well. The young person may live in an environment where people yell when they disagree. During equine assisted therapy, the therapist and horse professional could provide real-life evidence that it's possible (and more productive) for people to talk instead of yell.

Spending an entire day at an equine assisted program will require some planning and scheduling, which is another benefit of this type of therapy. Many kids who have emotional and behavioral issues struggle with scheduling activities. For some, they simply don't like the structure; they want to do what they want, when they want. Scheduling tasks can help them begin to learn the benefit of setting and sticking to a schedule. For other kids, they like schedules but get very upset when the schedule is changed. Caring for an animal - even for a day - requires some flexibility. Animals can

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be unpredictable; if your horse makes a quick get-a-way through an open gate, your entire schedule has to be rearranged. Setting a schedule for the day can teach a young person how to set a schedule but also how to keep realistic expectations and how to rearrange a schedule when things don't go the way you'd planned.

A child's responses to the horses can also provide excellent insight into the child's opinions of self and of others, especially authority figures.

Equine assisted therapy offers kids with emotional and behavioral issues a safe environment in which to work through issues of fear, anxiety, self-doubt, and poor communication. By teaching the child how to work with and communicate with the horse, the therapist will be indirectly teaching the child how to apply these same skills in inter-personal relationships.

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What's the Difference Between Horseback Riding and Equine Therapy?

Therapeutic Horseback Riding is a form of physical therapy for people who have a range of disabilities including physical, emotional, cognitive, and social difficulties. Horses provide a tool for physical therapy, emotional growth, and cognitive improvement, in a unique format that is fun, exhilarating, and sometimes has the power to change a person's perspective on life! Besides the physical benefits derived from therapeutic riding, the contact with the animal is a powerful experience, and the strong bond that is sometimes experienced often has a profound, uplifting effect on people who are troubled or suffering.

Specially trained physical doctors, physical therapist, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and psychotherapists utilize specific activities on the horse, which are beneficial to the individual. The treatment occurs in a controlled safe environment where the individual's responses to sensory input and the resulting adaptive responses can be observed. This allows doctors to establish a baseline for neurological, physical, and sensory functions so that they may be able to judge a person's reactions and improvements.

Therapeutic Horseback Riding can benefit people with a wide range of individual challenges and disabilities, including:

- Autism
- Asperger Syndrome
- Amputation
- Spinal Cord Injury
- Brain Injury
- Developmentally Delay
- Down's Syndrome
- Emotion disabilities
- Seizure Disorders
- Cerebral Palsy
- Parkinson's Disease
- Learning Disabilities
- Stroke patients
- Visual and Hearing Impairment
- Speech Impairments
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Extended Grief
- Anxiety attacks and Phobias
- Cardiovascular disabilities
- Chemical and Alcohol Abuse
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Spina Bifida
- And others

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Because the gait of a horse when walking is a gentle, repetitive movement, it moves the rider's body in way that is very similar to the human gait; physically disabled riders often achieve greater flexibility, muscle strength, and balance. This type of therapy can improve balance, posture, mobility, reactive time, as well as improve problems such as emotional, cognitive, behavioral, communicative, and social malfunction.

Many riders, both able-bodied and those with challenges to overcome, form a strong connection to the horse that they cannot get from most sports. For example, for the rider confined to a wheelchair, the horse is his or her mobility and a means of transport. For individuals with emotional problems, the unique relationship that is formed with the horse can result in increased confidence, self-esteem, and patience. The sense of wonder and independence that is experienced while riding on a horse is universally beneficial.

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Equine Psychotherapy

Animal Assisted Therapy

Animal assisted therapy is a critical component of any residential therapy program. This type of therapy has proven to be very effective in the treatment of adolescents. Animals are a powerful tool that are used for emotional growth. Adolescents benefit both physically and emotionally from large and small animal therapy.

Residents are introduced to animal assisted therapy with small animals. Small animal therapy may involve dogs, cats, rabbits, alpaca and chickens. Residents learn about an animal's biology and psychology and learn how to take care of and nurture animals. Staff are trained to give support and guidance to residents to care for the physical and emotional needs of the animals.

Later in the program, residents are given the opportunity to participate in riding therapy. A professional therapist and a horse professional are integrally involved in this therapy. This type of therapy involves much more than riding a horse, in fact the focus of this therapy is not riding or horsemanship. In addition to learning about the horse's biology and how to care for the horse, the adolescent also learns to train the horse, and learns when to let the horse lead and when to take the lead. Riders are required to master many tasks before they ride a horse. These tasks include approaching a horse safely, speaking to the horse in an arena with an instructor, grooming the horse, watering and feeding the horse, putting on its saddle, cleaning the barn, taking care of all of the equipment (including the tack). These tasks build abilities in sequencing, (understanding antecedents, behaviors and consequences), behavioral and emotional control, (the more the resident exercises good cognitive control, the better his/her horse responds) communication, assertiveness, problem solving and long term memory enhancement. Residents will focus on tasks for the first half of the program. Only residents who have mastered the tasks involved in caring for the animals will be allowed to ride a horse during the second half of the program. The riding portion of the program will occur a few days a week and residents will always be accompanied by a professional instructor.

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What is Canine Assisted Therapy?

Canine Assisted Therapy involves social interaction, the experience of delight, and multiple therapeutic benefits derived from canine companionship. It is used with both children and adults, in hospitals, nursing facilities, rehabilitation centers, mental health facilities, elder care centers, boarding schools, and schools for special needs children.

Studies have shown that being around dogs, playing with them, and just handling them decreases stress, increases physical activity, relieves depression and anxiety, calms and motivates patients in hospitals and rehab centers, and helps normalize difficult situations. Groups of people that have benefited from Canine Assisted Therapy include nursing home patients, hospice patients and their families, special education students and children, autistic children, children with behavioral problems, prison inmates, teenagers and adults with substance abuse problems, senior citizens, hospital patients, and rehabilitation patients. Canine Assisted Therapy works particularly well for very young children and autistic kids who are not verbal because they are too young for talk therapy. It also works well for children that do not trust adults and children that have difficulty focusing and sitting still.

A child that is learning how to give a dog commands also learns how to appreciate the fact that other people would feel good if he (or she) did what was asked of him because he feels good when the dog follows his directions. Dogs also take a person's mind off their problems and off stressful events such as school tests, hospital procedures and operations, and stressful family visits and events. A dog cannot fail to cheer up a depressed person and will often trigger memories and offer comfort to elderly people. Working with a dog increases a person's activity level, encouraging walking and playing. People with physical challenges will find that their bodies relax under the touch of a dog, and the dog will motivate movement such as crawling, walking, moving limbs, and exercising muscles.

According to an article in the *Salt Lake Tribune*, Catherine Pomeroy, a teacher for students with disabilities, regards canine therapy as beneficial. "I love having the therapy dogs and their people come," she says. "Sometimes the kids don't respond to what we do with them every day, or to the same old thing. But they always respond well to the dogs. It's really hard to motivate some of them to do anything like crawl or open their hands. But they'll do it for the dogs." A dog is extremely effective for working with sensory impaired children. They not only enjoy the softness of the dog's fur, but the fact that the dog is alive, warm, and breathing is comforting and encouraging. Children love dogs so much that they are motivated to move, walk, crawl, and relax in cases where no other therapy has been successful.

herapy dog handler Deborah Nozawa says that the healing benefits she has witnessed derived from animal therapy is "miraculous." For example, a therapy dog named Cassi worked successfully with a visually impaired child that also had numerous other disabilities. The child started out curled up on a beanbag chair, and Cassie approached her gently and quietly, nudging her arm with her cold nose. The dog then pushed her muzzle under the child's clenched hand and licked her. Before long, the child opened her hand and relaxed it. Then Cassie lay down next to the little girl, and the child relaxed her hands even more and was able to pet the dog. Soon the child was smiling.

Canine-Assisted Therapy is also extremely effective with children who have emotional and behavioral problems. A dog will cheer up a depressed child, calm down a hyperactive teenager, focus a teen with Attention Deficit Disorder, and bring comfort to kids recovering from substance

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abuse. Kids must learn how to treat the dog gently and with kindness, and once they learn how, this behavior can be applied to the way they treat others and to the way they treat themselves.

Interaction with the therapy dog also provides valuable insight for counselors and teachers working with kids in a rehab program, therapy program, or special school. This includes observing not only how a child interacts with the therapy dog, but also how he or she interacts with the other kids in the program when it is time to do certain tasks such as brushing or walking the dog.

The relationships children have with therapy dogs offer an opportunity for teachers and therapists to instigate discussions about their feelings and reactions to other situations in their lives. Kids are often hesitant to discuss their feelings, but when they're asked to talk about their feelings toward their animal friends, kids usually find it much easier to open up. Kids form bonds with these special dogs and the dogs respond with unconditional love and affection. Because dogs are so open with their affection, the child feels nurtured and gains a sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Copper Canyon Academy, an all girls boarding school in Arizona, offers a Equine Assisted Therapy and Canine Assisted therapy. In addition to traditional and animal assisted therapy, Copper Canyon Academy offers girls college prep academics and extra-curricular activities and off-campus trips that promote further academic and personal growth.

Copper Canyon Academy's academic program, which is fully accredited by North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, is designed to maximize a students learning potential, a joy of learning, and also utilizes a unique credit recovery program. All academic classes are taught by Arizona Certified Teachers.

Learn more about Copper Canyon Academy >>

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PONTNACK EXHIBIT
4/19/12

John & Theresa Krueger
6354 East Brick Road
Oregon, IL 61061

April 19, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

We are neighbors of Larry Pontnack and we are in the process of purchasing the land directly adjacent to his MoPar City business operation. That land contract purchase with Carol Traina will be fully completed in 4 years.

Throughout the years that we have lived here we have enjoyed a mutual "good neighbors" relationship with Larry Pontnack and his MoPar City business operation.

We have no objection to the expansion of his zoning category and Special Use permit that is currently being considered by Ogle County. We feel that Ogle County needs growing businesses to provide tax base and employment opportunities.

Sincerely,

John & Theresa Krueger