

Welcome To the Team, Jay:

It is with great pleasure that Mounted Eagles welcomes our fourth horse into the program! Jay is a nineteen-year-old Registered Rocky Mountain breed gelding. Here's a little bit about the breed: The Rocky Mountain Horse exhibits a natural ambling gait, called the single-foot, which replaces the trot seen in a majority of horse breeds. The extra footfalls provide additional smoothness to a rider because the horse always has at least one foot on the ground. This minimizes movement of the horse's topline and removes the bounce of a two-beat gait, caused by a moment of suspension followed by the jolt of two feet hitting the ground as the horse shifts from one pair of legs to the other. Jay has completed a 90-day trial period with the program where we found that the program is a fit for him and he is a fit for us. This is standard procedure when bringing a new horse in as a member of our equine staff. The Chiropractor indicated he is a "young 19-year-old" which is a good thing to hear! He has been dubbed "black beauty" by some of his riders. Expenses for Jay's trial period were paid with funds from the Jeannine Hemmerich Memorial Fund. Jeannine, who is the mother of our Executive Director, Lynn Fairbanks, passed away in 2021. Jeannine was a strong supporter of Mounted Eagles. We are very grateful to Lynn's father, Earl Hemmerich, for making Mounted Eagles the recipient of these funds. Please give the warmest welcome to Jay and a heartfelt "thank you" to Lynn. to pass on to her family.



Board Happenings

The Mounted Eagles Board of Directors recently had their strategic planning meeting. Many topics were discussed such as budgetary needs, the successes of the past year and how to improve the program going forward. The board addressed the need for an increase in volunteers in order to meet the needs of the growing number of riders. This is the first time in MANY years that the program has had a waiting list for riders, what a BLESSING! Mounted Eagles would love to turn this blessing into reality. In order for the program to serve the growing number of participants, we must increase the number of Volunteers in the program as well. With the number of participants increasing, there is also the potential of the need of a fifth horse. Funds for this horse and its care are a topic of discussion for the board as well. We are excited about our growth and want to be able to fulfill our promise to serve our special clients with an adequate number of horses and volunteers.

Mounted Eagles is a 501(c) non-profit organization.

Our Mission Statement: Mounted Eagles enhances the lives of program participants, volunteers, and the community by providing a safe and enjoyable environment where individuals with special needs benefit from therapeutic, developmental and educational equine-assisted activities.

It's Pizza Sale time!!!

Once again Mounted Eagles will be partnering with Giovanni's Frozen Pizza for our pizza sale fundraiser. Beginning March 6 at our Rider Banquet we will be selling pizzas for \$10 each. Riders, caregivers and volunteers will be selling through April 7. Our goal is to sell 1,000 pizzas. Last year we had a phenomenal sale selling 1,013 pizzas!!! Seller incentives will again include convertible riders and sessions with the Mounted Eagles horses. New sellers are encouraged!

Community Education Insight Program Dances!!!

Mounted Eagles is thrilled to be partnering with Community Education ISD 181 to bring back the Insight Program dances. If you are familiar with the Insight Program you know that before COVID these dances were held monthly on Monday nights at Cragun's Legacy Pavilion. We are excited that we are able to hold quarterly dances at this time. The dances will be held on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. The first dance will be a Valentine's Dance on February 10th. Music will be provided by Tami Lu Smith of StageOne. Tami Lu plays all the best dance tunes and knows how to get people on the dance floor. These dances are for consumers 18 and older and must be accompanied by a caregiver. Admission is \$7 for consumers and staff. Mounted Eagles will be volunteering at the dances and are looking for people to help. Contact Lynn if you are interested.

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Such a momentous occasion to be celebrating 30 years of service in the Brainerd Lakes Area. It is hard to believe the program began in our founder's backyard with one horse and two riders. In the last three decades we have grown from two riders to forty-three. The site of our program has changed from Susie Bailiff's backyard to Spirit Horse Center's beautiful facilities. Mounted Eagles has embarked on many different community events to enhance the success of the program from chamber outings to local fundraisers. Mounted Eagles has overcome many obstacles in the last 30 years and intends to achieve many more accomplishments for the next 30 years. Thank you, Susie, for making your vision a reality for so many individuals.

WE'RE OFF TO A GREAT START FOR 2022 THANKS TO THESE MAJOR DONORS

\$10,000 Brainerd VFW

\$5,000 Cygneture Title

\$5,000 Lakes Area United Way

***\$3,200 Jeannine Hemmerich
Memorial***

\$2,500 Trinity Business Partners

***\$2,000 Mille Lacs Electric
Cooperative***

***\$1,000 Merrifield Marathons
Snowmobile Club***

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTES

As we embark on 2022 Mounted Eagles looks forward to working with our participants, their families and our volunteers. We strive to make lesson day meaningful and impactful for all involved. With the addition of Jay, our fourth horse, we will be able to expand our lesson slots and move toward weekly lessons for some our newer riders who currently are coming every other week. There are some exciting partnerships that have become available to us and we look forward to exploring more ways we can support the Brainerd Lakes Area through therapeutic horsemanship and equine assisted activities. These opportunities help us further our mission!!

Toward the end of 2021 we became aware of significant rate increases at our facility of 84%. This includes the board and care for our horses as well as fitness and training. Spirit Horse Center is very generous to our program in many ways, however, with the rising cost of utilities, competitive wages for quality employees and hay they too are faced with higher expenses. In an effort to manage these expenses our Board of Directors made the difficult decision to increase our lesson fee to \$40. With that increase we have increased our number scholarship recipients and will be asking everyone, especially scholarship recipients, to fully participate in fundraisers to help us sustain our program. We are grateful for the generous donors who stepped up at a time when we needed it most. We appreciate all of our donors and sponsors who donate year after year to support us. *Lynn Fairbanks*

Read-N-Meet

SPOTLIGHT ON WAYS TO HELP

MOUNTED EAGLES IS IN NEED OF BARN VOLUNTEERS TO ACCOMMODATE OUR GROWING PROGRAM! JOIN OUR DEDICATED COMMUNITY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SOMEONE'S LIFE. WE ARE IN NEED OF INDIVIDUALS TO ASSIST WITH LESSONS DURING ALL THREE OF OUR RIDING DAYS. WHETHER YOU HAVE HORSE RELATED EXPERIENCE OR NOT, PLEASE CONSIDER VOLUNTEERING WITH US TODAY. MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT IS 16 YEARS. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED OR YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED, FILL OUT OUR VOLUNTEER APPLICATION AT WWW.MOUNTEDEAGLES.ORG



MEET OUR COMMUNITY

She had a dream! She believed in that dream! She made that dream come true! 30 years ago Susie started bringing her dream into reality, she KNEW horses could help individuals with special needs. She KNEW how special horses are and how they connect. She KNEW there could be lots of 'firsts' for those who couldn't walk, talk, follow directions, if they could only bond with a horse. She KNEW they would "mount up as with wings like eagles". And so they did!

It seems only fitting to spotlight Zac Lively, since he was one of the first two riders who started the program in Susie's back yard 30 years ago. Zac has enjoyed meeting several new horses and many great volunteers during his time with us and is currently enjoying riding Kyd every week. Thanks to Zac's mom and dad for having faith in Mounted Eagles and keeping Zac involved.

A Different Point of View!

At Mounted Eagles we understand that parents and caregivers are doing their best. We get the struggle of trying to make the right decisions for our kids, and we certainly understand the desire to ensure we aren't rewarding bad behavior.

With individuals and horses alike, we receive problem behaviors as information. We approach these behaviors with curiosity and try to respond to them as the areas that need the most focus. We don't see behaviors as attention-seeking, but **connection-seeking** and individuals who have endured trauma literally need safe, healthy connections to heal. This is why we beg parents and caregivers...***don't take away the barn.***

We get that the individual's behavior may have been completely unacceptable over the past week, and sending them to the barn just feels wrong. *Why should they be able to do things they enjoy, when they have been completely disruptive?* But, that is what makes equine-assisted activities so unique.

Yes, they enjoy it, but it isn't completely recreational. The fact that they enjoy it means they are active participants in activities at the barn and thus active participants in their healing...and we won't get to the behaviors by skipping this essential therapeutic service. The barn is where individuals understand there are good people in this world, reliable people that care about them, regardless of their past or current behavior.

The connection provided by horses ignites the trauma-healing power of relationship, making the barn the place they may need the most when they are exhibiting dysregulated behaviors.

The activities at the barn focus on body attunement, emotional awareness, self-regulation, boundaries, respect, independence, and self-worth. These are all the ingredients to help an individual process how they are feeling and empower them to choose a healthy response to those feelings.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 10:	Community Ed Dance at Cragun's Legacy Pavilion
March 6	Rider's Banquet, First Lutheran Church, Brainerd
March 6-April 7	Giovanni's Pizza Sales
March 23	Volunteer Training
April 11	Annual Membership Meeting
May 12	Community Ed Dance at Cragun's Legacy Pavilion
June 22	Volunteer Training
June 25	Arts in the Park
July 23	Annual Raffle Starts

The Mounted Eagles' *Mane Tales* is a Quarterly Publication of Mounted Eagles, Inc.

Lynn Fairbanks, Executive Director; Susie Baillif, Sr. Instructor

Board of Directors; Gladys Behymer, Chairperson; Christine Bergin, Vice Chairperson, Kalynn Ruis, Secretary; Aggie Stroot, Treasurer; Eva Froehle, Board member, Newsletter Editor; Mara Lundquist, Board member

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Visit our website at www.mountedeagles.org or call 1-888-828-9920



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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