

ROCK RANCH NEWSLETTER

EMAIL:

RIDEROCKRANCH@GMAIL.COM

PHONE:

605-940-2243

WEBSITE:

WWW.RIDEROCKRANCH.ORG


ROCK RANCH
Est. 2016

Welcome to Our Newsletter!

We are excited to reach out to you via our first ever Rock Ranch Newsletter! It is our goal to highlight some of the amazing things that are taking place here, keep you informed on all of our programs, and share with you any details on upcoming events or special programming. We would love to hear your feedback about the newsletter, and what you would like to see in future issues!

Interested In Volunteering?

Rock Ranch depends on volunteers to help us serve others. From lessons, Senior Saddles, and Girl Scout Troops, to maintenance and repairs. You can find our volunteer application on our website, or simply give us a call!



New Counseling Cabin Provides a Place For Healing



In the fall of 2025, Rock Ranch opened the doors to our brand new Counseling Cabin! This cabin is located west of our main arena between two of our pastures. The cabin provides a quiet, peaceful, and private space for our Equine Assisted Counseling clients to observe the horses in their natural habitat. The addition of the cabin has allowed us to run our growing counseling program concurrently with our lessons for kids, Senior Saddles, and a variety of other activities, while keeping those sessions private and confidential. We were blessed to have the financial support from the Lyon County Riverboat Foundation as well as Seed for Success to help

us construct this beautiful cabin. In 2025, Rock Ranch provided over 165 counseling sessions to kids, adults, families, and groups from around the tri-state area. We are seeing continuous growth in this program year after year as more people are seeking help with their mental health. Last year, Rock Ranch provided over \$19,500 in financial assistance to help offset the cost of sessions for our clients. This is something that we are proud of, and something we know we need to keep available. If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about our Equine Assisted Counseling Program, please don't hesitate to contact us!

For 2026, we are anticipating a need of \$25,000 in charitable support in order to help us continue to provide financial assistance to those seeking help with their mental health.

Senior Saddles Events Bring Joy to Seniors From Around the Area

This spring and early summer Rock Ranch welcomed eight groups from around the area for our Senior Saddles experience. We consider this a "field trip" for seniors, and it provides them with an opportunity to see our facility, learn about what we do here, meet our horses, reminisce about their

youth growing up on a farm, and spend time around horses. We have had several individuals over the age of 90 get on a horse and go for a ride around the arena! This program will continue to keep us busy as we have 12 additional groups on the calendar for late summer and early fall.



Charitable giving allows us to keep this program priced at a very nominal fee. Last year charitable giving made up more than \$20,000 of the true cost to host them.

Theme for 2026

Each year since our inception, we have operated under a Biblical Theme. For 2026, we have selected the following verse. We are resting in this theme this year and will be sharing it with all who enter our doors!



Summer Lessons at Full Capacity

The summer months at Rock Ranch are always a busy time, and this year was no exception! Our summer lessons were once again at full capacity, and we had the privilege of hosting 70 youth during the 10 weeks of lessons. At the start of each lesson, the students work with their volunteer on grooming and tacking their horse. They learn about the different grooming tools, and what the tools are used for. Once their horse is groomed they move on to saddling. We talk with them about the importance of the correct placement of the saddle pad and saddle, and then the students learn how to attach the cinch "belt" so that their saddle stays in place. Our goal is to teach the students basic horsemanship skills - how to get their horse to go, stop, turn, etc., while incorporating fun activities and games into the lesson. Jessica, our lead instructor



and barn manager, loves setting up games/activities in the grove during the summer months. This gives the students the opportunity to be

outside in nature, experiencing all of God's beauty, while continuing to develop their horsemanship skills.



Each one of our lessons is subsidized by charitable giving, and more than \$30,000 is needed annually to help keep this program affordable or even free to those in need.

Rock Ranch Launches Teaching Resources

Countless hours were put in by Co-Founder, Marie LaRock, in developing a curriculum for our lesson program that is both fun and full of practical learning techniques. This curriculum is now available to the public, and can be found on our website under the "For Teachers" tab.



For a nominal fee, materials can be downloaded. Ideally, they can be used by other horsemanship facilities or even teachers to use with their own students. The curriculum consists of games/activities that work on social/emotional skills, life skills, cognition, and it also includes some back to school and animal games/activities. As more curriculum is developed, it will be added to our website. We encourage you to visit our website to preview the lesson plans, and encourage you to spread the word to those who could benefit from it! All proceeds from the sale of the curriculum go to Rock Ranch.

New Registration Format for Winter 2027 Lessons

With the increase in popularity of our riding lessons for kids, we are working to streamline our registration process. Starting with registration for our Winter 2027 session, parents will be directed to the main page of our website to register their child(ren).

With the click of a button, a Google Form will pop up asking for information pertaining to their child, as well as contact information for parents. The Google Form will only allow a set number of registrants. Once we are "full" parents will have the option of placing their child(ren)

on our waiting list with the click of another button, also located on the main page of our website. Registration for Winter 2027 lessons will open on **October 1st at 8:00 a.m.** Please reach out if you have any questions regarding this new process.



Our Herd of Horses Keeps Us Going

Our herd of horses is why we are able to do what we do here at Rock Ranch! Each one of them plays a vital role in our programming. Some of our horses are used strictly for our Equine Assisted Counseling Program. These horses play a key part in the sessions as they come to represent people, feelings, emotions, or objects for our clients.



They show up each and every session, and we continue to be amazed at what they can do! Several of our horses are used for both our student lessons and the therapy program. We take this into consideration when scheduling them as the mental toll that they experience from the therapy sessions can be just as exhausting for them as the physical part of the lessons can be.

Each one of our 14 horses requires about \$2,200 annually. This includes their food, shelter, therapeutic and veterinary support. This totals approximately \$30,800 of equine charitable need annually.

Numbers Increase Again in 2025

2025 was another record breaking year as we welcomed over 3,300 participants and visitors to Rock Ranch! Make sure to check out the 2025 infographic on page 5 of this newsletter!

Flag Pole Installed in Time to Celebrate America's 250th

Days before we celebrated America's 250th Anniversary the flag pole, pictured below, was erected on the grounds at Rock Ranch. We are proud to fly our nations flag, and are reminded of the freedoms it represents and the sacrifices that were made for those freedoms. You can even catch a glimpse of this new addition from the highway south of Rock Ranch!



We Would be Honored to Have Your Support

It is because of the generous financial support from individuals, families, businesses, and foundations that we are able to continue to do *AMAZING* things here at Rock Ranch! We are constantly humbled by the love and support that is shown to us in so many ways, and we appreciate all of it!

If you would like to make a gift to Rock Ranch, or are considering a gift, know that we can process those through our website (www.riderockranch.org), the Venmo code listed below, or feel free to send something through the mail. Know that any gift, big or small, is very much appreciated and helps us to continue to do the work God has invited us to do at Rock Ranch.

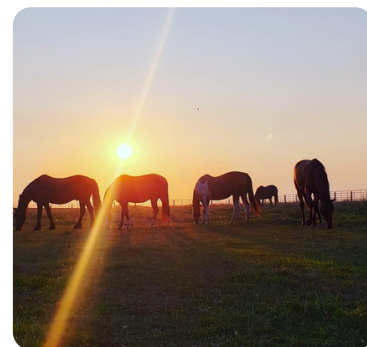


venmo

Mindfulness With Horses Sessions Scheduled for Fall

Mindfulness with Horses sessions are scheduled for August 15th, September 19th and October 17th from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at Rock Ranch. These sessions were first introduced last summer by Brenda Ling, one of our Equine Assisted Counselors, giving individuals time to reconnect with themselves in the stillness of our herd of horses and the serenity of nature. These sessions are open to those 18 years of age and older, and to all levels of experience with mindfulness and horses. You can expect to spend time with horses (no riding), optional reflective/spiritual prompts and journaling, and quiet observation and personal time with the herd.

We are grateful for the financial support of the Avera Hearts and Healing Foundation to help keep the cost of these sessions



affordable for all. The cost is \$25 per session. Spots are limited - contact us at 605-940-2243 to register!

Pray for Us!

Above all things, we ask that you continue to pray for Rock Ranch - our staff, volunteers, horses, and participants. Pray for our programs, that they will continue to provide joy, smiles, full hearts, as well as peace, healing, and strength. Pray that we can continue to spread the good news of Jesus Christ to all who enter our doors. All praise, honor, and glory be to God our Father for the gifts he has given us. We are blessed and we are grateful!



ROCK RANCH

Est. 2016

2025



RIDEROCKRANCH
STUDENT LESSONS

705+

COUNSELING
SESSIONS

165+

SENIORSADDLES
GUESTS

75+

GIRL SCOUT
LESSONS

45+

WOMEN'S
LESSONS

230+

SPECIALGROUPS
GUESTS

300+

VISITORS

180 0 +

TOTAL VISITORS
AT ROCK RANCH

3300+



45

ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS



1,90 0+

VOLUNTEER HOURS



13

HORSES IN THE PROGRAM



34

NEW DONORS

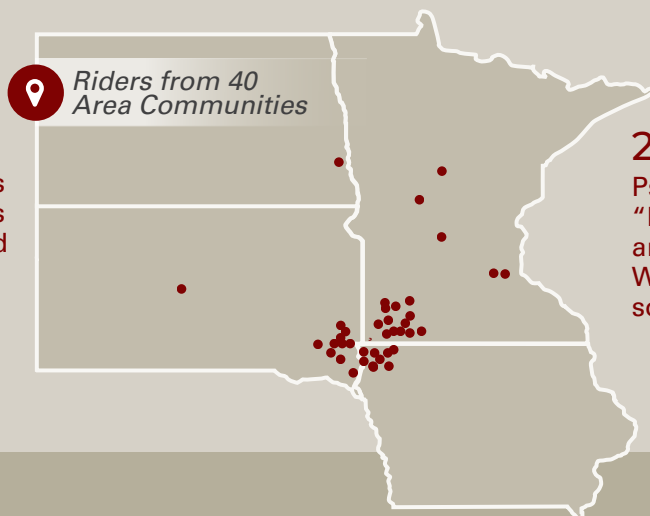


8

TEAM MEMBERS

Mission

Rock Ranch provides opportunities for persons to improve themselves physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally while learning the art and skills of horsemanship in a Christ-filled setting.



2025 Inspiration

Psalm 139:11

"I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well."

RIDEROCKRANCH.ORG

#RideRockRanch