



Brigadoon Bulletin



Riding for the Disabled Association Brigadoon Centre Newsletter

May 2011

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Welcome to 2011

Welcome to 2011 (and our first Newsletter for the year!), all our riders, parents, carers, friends, staff and volunteers – both old and new. It was a well deserved long break over the hot summer for our riders, staff and horses, but with the weather cooling down, it has been the perfect time to get 'back in the saddle'. Even our horses have been standing at the paddock gates this past term, just waiting to come out and see everyone. It's been so good to see the RDA Brigadoon family coming together again. There's a buzz about the place lately, with some new faces (some are furry) and some exciting things planned for the coming year. Stick around because Term 2 is going to be too much fun to miss!

Term 2 Riding Time-table

Monday	3.30 and 4.30
Wednesday	10.00, 11.00, 12.00, 2.15, 3.30 and 4.30
Friday	10.00, 11.00 and 12.00
Saturday	9.00, 10.00 and 11.00

Term Dates 2011

Term 2 will commence on Saturday 7th May and finish on Friday 8th July.

Happenings over the Summer Break

Bush Fires

The bush fire in the Brigadoon/Herne Hill Area on 5th and 6th February was near enough to the SEC to raise the alarm of our RDA volunteers and horse checkers. Volunteers who live locally were on-site and ready to commence emergency evacuation procedures for our horses. The noise and commotion from the low flying water-bombers had our horses feeling a little uneasy, but after they were moved from their paddocks up to the arena, they calmed down beautifully and spent the entire day and night there grazing on a banquet of hay. The next day, when the fire was being well contained, they returned happily to their paddocks.

Thank you Kay and Charlie Grubb, Carol Spatcher, Sarah Sheedy and Tony and Rachel Pountney Cheshire for looking out for the horses during the fire; your presence must have been a great comfort to them.

Tack-Shed

If you have been scratching your head lately and getting that strange feeling that something is missing at RDA, well you'd be right! Our little tack-shed exploded during a freak storm on Christmas night, but fortunately nothing else was lost or damaged. Thanks to Marci from the SEC, the alarm was raised and our scattered horse equipment was rescued by Marnie Butler, her Christmas house guest and Jane, Michael and Zoe Danzi. Thanks to a hard working little group of volunteers, the tack was reorganised in a temporary home in the club-house and then moved into the new tack-shed in the stall area. Many thanks to PP and CS Danzi Pty. Ltd, for their kind donation of the new tack and to all of our volunteers and our Christine, who helped re-organise the gear.

We are still trying to arrange funding for a new, larger tack-shed, to accommodate our expanding collection of necessary horse equipment, and we hope it won't take too long to attract it.

New Stalls

The construction of several additional horse-stalls commenced over the break. Our thanks and appreciation goes out to Phil Wyndham from the Swan Rotary Club who has been working on these for our growing brood of equines.

Horse Checkers

Every day during the three month break, despite the sizzling heat out at Brigadoon, one of our faithful horse checkers (or perhaps more appropriately – horse carers) made the trek out to the paddocks to make sure that all of our horses and ponies were safe and in good health. Thank you to Fiona and Brittany Fairhall, Marnie Butler, Janet Coetzer, Trudy Teunisson, John and Fiona Mahony, Sarah Sheedy, The Holt family, Jacqui Frey and Tony and Rachel Pountney Cheshire for your time and care. 'Neighs' of love to you all from the horses and ponies who knew, just by your regular presence, that someone was looking out for them and that they had not been abandoned.

A very special thanks goes to the Holt family, who come out every Sunday to clean and re-fill the horses' troughs. This is hot and tiring work, but it is integral to the health of our very special equines. (You guys get an extra loud 'neigh'.)

EFL Training Course

One of our volunteers, Rachel, along with one of our much loved RDA ponies, Kazza, participated in a 5 day ground work clinic - Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) - held at RDA Capricorn over the summer break. EFL promotes safe interactions between horses and people that have proved to be empowering and therapeutic for both children and adults. The EFL course focused on interacting with the horses and ponies while on the ground and the children that took part in the sample lessons were thrilled to be able to learn such skills as leading, grooming and understanding horses' body language. This newly developed course has enriched Rachel's knowledge of working with horses and children in a therapeutic setting, and will benefit her as an RDA volunteer at Brigadoon.

Our Horses

The Return of Poppy and Sparky

Poppy and Sparky have returned from their summer holiday! Actually, they have been away having some training with Kirsty Kirwan and Kyla Foo, and now they are fresh and ready for the year ahead. Thank you to Kirsty and Kyla for the time they have spent with them both over the break.



Sparky



Poppy

New Horses for 2011

This year there is a priority for us to obtain some reliable, weight bearing horses for our older riders. There is some specific criteria that a potential RDA horse or pony needs to meet in order to be appropriate for the kind of work we do and our coaches are very thorough in their testing of each horse that comes through. We have recently acquired 5 new horses who are looking good to become part of our regular herd. Stay tuned for the next Newsletter to find out more about the new kids on the block.

Thoroughbred In Foal For Sale

Amber is a beautiful thoroughbred mare who has been part of our herd for over 6 months now and she is in foal to a pure Andalusian Stallion. Amber has a beautiful temperament but unfortunately she has turned out to be unsuitable as an RDA horse. We would love to find her and her foal a suitable, loving home and they are currently for sale. To view Amber or to find out more information on her and her foal, please go to www.cavaletti.com.au and search "Amber".

Our Coaches

Coaches and Trainee Coaches

Our regular coaches are Sarah Lamb and Kirsty Kirwan. Diane Bennit has coached some classes for us during term 1 and the ever reliable Christine has relief-coached many classes this term also. We welcome a new coach to the ranks, Brenna, who will be taking the classes on Saturday (we'll be telling you all about Brenna in our next newsletter).

We have four keen and capable horse women currently training in Level 0 RDA Coaching. They will be assisting coaches and taking some parts of the lessons. We are very supportive of our trainee coaches, Kyla Foo, Sarah Sheedy, Jacqui Frey and Lynn-Ann Bentink, and we appreciate the enthusiasm and knowledge that they bring to their lessons. We look forward to welcoming them to our team of qualified RDA coaches sometime in the near future.

Appointment of New Volunteer Staff

Horse Welfare Officer

We are pleased to announce the appointment of our new Horse Welfare Officer, Jacqui Frey. As a horse owner for almost her entire life and a volunteer with us for the past year, Jacqui is a very knowledgeable horsewoman and we are so fortunate to have her step into this super important role. Thank you Jacqui for your commitment to our horses.

Maintenance Man and Wednesday Centre Host

Please welcome two new volunteers to the centre, husband and wife team Denis Killackey and Irene Killackey. We are delighted to receive Denis's kind offer to be our much needed maintenance man and with Irene taking on the role of Wednesday Centre Host, we are confident that our centre is going to run smoother than ever. Thanks to Irene, our volunteer and family facilities sparkle mid-week, and thanks to Denis, our hay trolley now rolls along so smoothly that it can almost take the hay out to the paddocks by itself!

Volunteer Days and Training

March Volunteer Day a Success!

Saturday 5th March was our Volunteer Day and we had a very encouraging turn out of both new and current volunteers. The day was spent orientating first timers to the centre and its facilities and bringing all of our horses up from the paddocks for some gentle exercise in the arena. Some of our regular volunteers were even able to enjoy a ride on one of our horses. We were so proud of our horses and how calm they were, despite the obvious excitement of being brought back into work after such a long break. The success of this first event bodes well for the new riding year.

PD Days for Volunteers

During 2010, our volunteers participated in 2 professional development days, facilitated by Christine O'Neill's daughter Rachel, who was trained by El Cabello Blanco and has operated her own Adalusian breeding stud for the past 10 years. Rachel is a keen proponent of the Parelli System of Natural Horsemanship and it is this approach that she shares with our volunteers during the PD days. These days have been well received by our volunteers, who enjoy learning Natural Horsemanship techniques, and by our horses, who enjoy the special attention and the chance to do something out of their regular routine. We plan on organising more of these PD days throughout 2011, to promote the natural horsemanship approach to catching and handling horses safely, and to keep our horses mentally sharp and engaged. So volunteers, stay tuned!

Fundraising Events

Carols 2010

Last year's Carols by Candle-light event was a great success and we would like to thank our volunteers who came along to sell candles and collect donations. Without the kindness of volunteers giving their time at these events, we would not be able to raise the much needed funds to keep our horses looked after and centre running. To all who came and shook a tin or sold a candle, you were Christmas angels to our horses and our riders. Thank you!

Andalusian Canteen Day

We ran a canteen for the Andalusian State Championships on 3rd April at the Pony Club grounds SEC, just beyond our centre. The kind donation of food and beverages from volunteers, parents and friends of RDA, meant that this fundraiser was 100% profit for the centre.

Suncorp Competition

Nikki Hollins, our Fundraising Co-ordinator, applied to Suncorp for their Sunshade Competition and we were successful. Our new sunshade will come in very handy when we attend events at other venues and when we host events at our centre. It will be wonderful to have a gazebo to protect our riders and volunteers. Suncorp have also given us a year's supply of sun cream. So don't forget to Slip, Slop, Slap when you are riding and volunteering at the centre. Thank you Suncorp.

Horse Feed Donation

Thank you Milne Feeds!

We recently received a large donation from Milne Feeds of Pony Maintenance Cubes and Chaff/Hay Replacer – 40 bags in total! This kind donation of such high quality horse feed will go a long way to ensure that our horses are extremely well nourished in the coming months. How wonderful it is when companies like Milne Feeds are so willing to support our organisation and make it a whole lot easier for us to continue doing the special kind of work that RDA does. Information about the products from Milne Feeds that we are currently feeding our horses can be obtained at the centre.

Scottish Masonic Charitable Foundation

The Scottish Masonic Charitable Foundation is one of our centres major sponsors. Last year they granted us \$10,000.00, to assist with our horse maintenance expenses. In the past they have donated Bally K, installed our concrete paths and hosted our 2010 Christmas Party. Our President, Jane Danzi, was invited to attend the SMCF's launch and she came away hugely impressed with the work this charitable foundation has achieved and warmed by the bond that SMCF members clearly feel for RDA Brigadoon, as we do for them. We are incredibly grateful to the SMCF for their continuing support and friendship and hope this will continue into the foreseeable future.

RDA and World Meningitis Day

RDA Brigadoon recently joined Hands for Meningitis to promote World Meningitis Day and help spread awareness of Meningitis and the signs and symptoms. Please visit The Meningitis Centre website www.meningitis.com.au and facebook page [The Meningitis Centre](#) to learn more and view the *Joining Hands for Meningitis* movie - produced by our centre's president, Jane Danzi - which includes our centre's participation photo (your child might be in it!).



RDA Brigadoon volunteers, riders and horses, Joining Hands for Meningitis

Important Information for Everyone

Paperwork

All riders, volunteers and coaches are required to fill out new registration and declaration paperwork this year.

Riders must also have a medical form completed and on file in the centre. Please confirm that you have a medical form in our records or have one completed and returned quickly. Forms are available from the centre.

Volunteers under 18yrs of age must have a parent/guardian sign their registration form. Volunteers/Coaches over 18yrs of age must have a working with children clearance and we must have a record of your WWC registration in our files. Please ensure that your WCC is up to date and that we have a record. WCC forms are available at post offices.

If any of your contact details change, please write your new details on a piece of paper and leave it in the office for us, with your name clearly marked on the top. We need to be able to contact you if sessions are cancelled, problems arise at the centre or we have information to give you. Also, we need to know who we should contact if an accident occurs.

Sign-in books

All riders, volunteers, coaches, family members and visitors must sign in and out of the property during every visit. This ensures that we have a record of your attendance to our property if you have an accident and need to make an insurance claim. It is also a vital tool if an emergency occurs and everyone on the property needs to be evacuated.

There are two sign in books, one on the kitchen table (which is sometimes moved to the table on the verandah outside the kitchen) and another on the table in the big shed with the boots and hats. It does not matter which book you use, as long as you register your visit. Please note - this includes volunteers coming in on non-riding days to tend to the horses.

Riders' Sessions

In the past there has been some confusion about how long a riding session is and what happens during that time. We set aside 1 hour for every riding session; however, this is not one hour of riding time. It includes time for the coaches to catch up on any important information before mounting their riders, mounting and dismounting time and approximately 40mins of horse contact time. Sometimes a rider's horse contact time will include unmounted interactions with horses, such as grooming.

It is important that all riders arrive on time for their riding sessions to allow for a calm and stress free start to their session.

Riders' Fees

A reminder that all riders must pay \$75.00 for rider registration at the beginning of their 2011 riding year. This registration insures the rider for the calendar year. This registration covers the rider at any RDA centre around Australia so if you move, your registration will go with you.

We realize that registration has increased dramatically this year but this is beyond our control. Registration is set by RDAA and RDAWA. We forward your registration to the RDAWA office and they pay it to RDAA.

Riding sessions are \$15.00, unless the term is paid in advance and then sessions are \$12.00. If you are likely to miss a lot of sessions because of health issues or you have appointments booked or holiday plans, paying \$15.00 per session may be cheaper for you. However, if you will be attending most sessions, then it is cheaper to pay the term in advance.

The centre appreciates every one paying their fees promptly because this helps us to cover our horse related expenses. Did you know it costs at least \$3500 each year to care for each of our horses? Times that by 12 horses.

Please Let Us Know

Riders

It is really important that all riders contact their coach if they are unable to attend a riding session. Coaches arrive several hours before a riding session to prepare the horses and lesson plans, and if you are not attending a session, the coach spends her time bringing in and preparing your horse unnecessarily.

Volunteers

It is also very important that you contact your coach if you are unable to attend a session. Sessions cannot run if we do not have enough volunteers - it is just unsafe. If a coach knows you are not coming, she can alter her lesson plan or cancel the session if she doesn't have enough volunteers.

Find Us On-line

We're on Facebook

Yes, you read that right! Thanks to the computer savvy of Kelly Mansfield and Jane Danzi, you can keep up with all the latest RDA news on Facebook. There are on-line discussions to take part in and a photo gallery of all of our horses is currently being put together. This is a great way to connect with other riders, volunteers and parents, and is fast growing into an excellent resource for all things RDA Brigadoon. If riding sessions need to be cancelled we will post a notice on Facebook along with all other important news. So, LIKE the page and spread the word.

Also, the RDA Brigadoon website has received a facelift. Check us out at www.rdabrigadoon.com.au and enjoy our improved functionality and fresh new look (there's even a new section just for kids!).

Important Contacts

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