

Grace Lake Ministries



Therapeutic Horsemanship

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Visit our website:
www.gracelakeministries.org

Welcome to Grace Lake Ministries Therapeutic Horsemanship Program!

This handbook is designed to give our riders an overview of Grace Lake and our program policies and procedures. Please read through this manual and let me know if you have any questions.

What is our mission?

Grace Lake's mission is to provide therapeutic horsemanship to people with disabilities and others in need of hope and healing in a Christian environment.

Grace Lake's vision is to glorify God by inspiring our riders and their families to go beyond their limitations; being a representation of God's love in our community and beyond; and reaching as many people as we can effectively serve in need of hope and healing.

Why is our program a ministry?

Grace Lake is a God centered program. Our goal is to facilitate the development of wholeness into the lives of the people that we serve. We believe that wholeness begins by knowing and following Jesus Christ. We strive to provide an atmosphere of people with hearts purified by God through which He can work to bring hope and healing to those in need. We trust in God to lead us down the path that each individual needs to reach their full potential. Only God understand their needs and how to meet them.

Who do we serve?

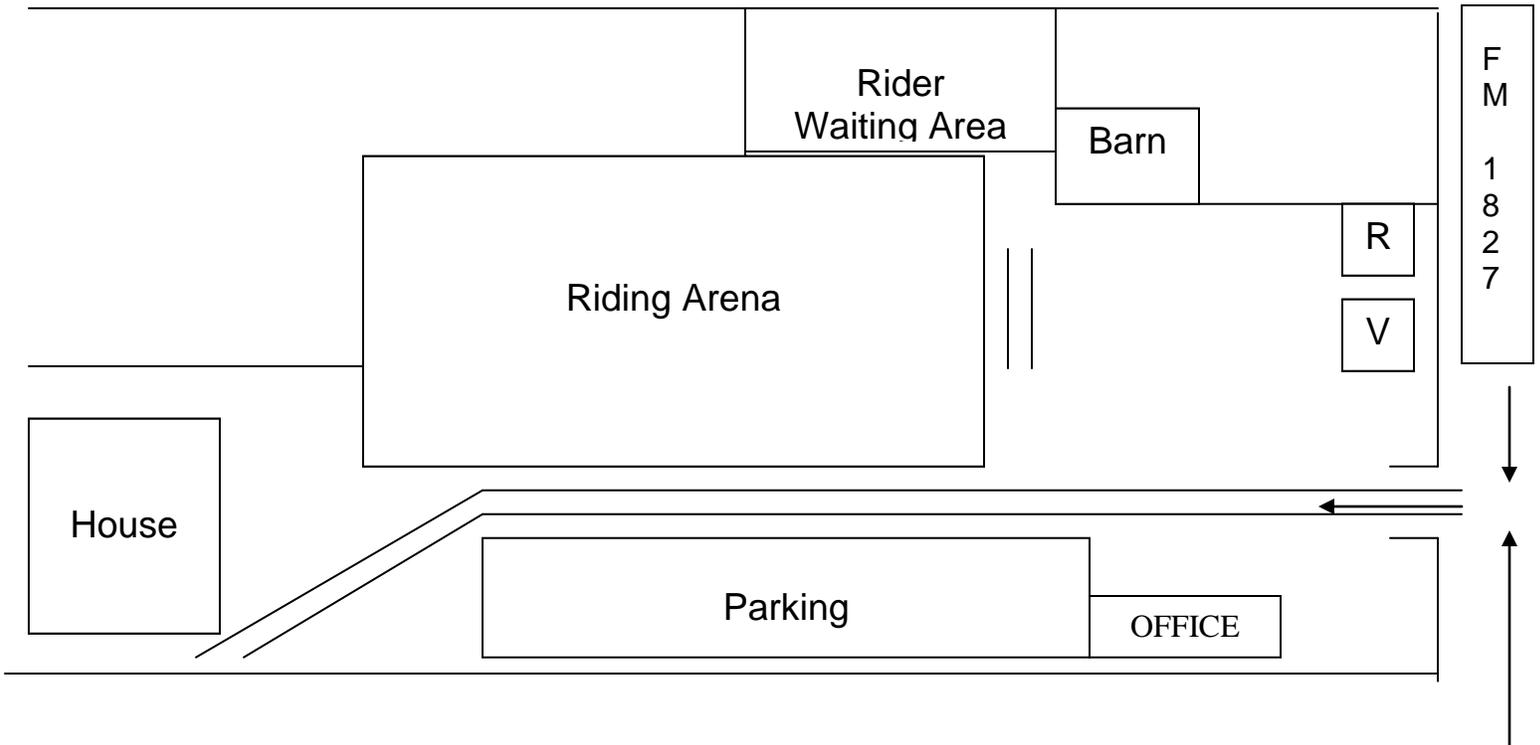
We serve anyone in need of hope and healing. This includes children and adults, people with disabilities and people without disabilities, youth with obvious social problems, and youth without obvious social problems.

How are horses used to bring wholeness into people's lives?

Our horses receive special handling in "natural horsemanship" techniques. Our goal is to bring the horse and rider into a perfectly harmonious relationship. This can only be achieved through respect, communication, kindness, and trust. These "natural horsemanship" techniques coupled with a loving heart encourage the horse and rider to begin working like partners to achieve the feeling of oneness. Eventually it feels as if the horse responds to the mere thought of what you want to do.

This is the kind of relationship that God desires to have with us, perfect unity. The learning process begins as the rider begins building a relationship with the horse. The rider begins to see who they are and understand how they relate to others. Success with the horse is only achieved as they overcome these personal barriers. In some amazing way, God has given these horses the ability to help us heal those areas.

GRACE LAKE MAP



R = Wheelchair Accessible Restroom

V= Volunteer Building (Emergency Phone and directions are located inside)

|| = Mounting Ramp

* Please park in the grassy area to the left of the driveway after entering the gates.

* We have a designated waiting area with chairs. We ask that visitors and family members stay in this area while classes are in progress to minimize distractions.

*The trashcan is located in a barrel labeled "TRASH". Please throw your trash in the trashcan.

In Case of an Emergency

In the event of an emergency, please follow the instructor's directions. A telephone and emergency information is located in the Office and Volunteer Building for dialing 911.

BARN RULES

1. Show respect to all animals, people, and to yourself.
2. Family members and visitors, please watch from the waiting area during class time.
3. Keep our facility clean. Put your trash in the trashcan inside the barn.
4. Do not climb on hay, gates, or fences.
5. Do not feed horses.
6. Pet the horses in the pen at your own risk! Horses may bite!
7. Do not enter any horse pens without permission from a staff member.
8. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their children.
9. Pet the cats and dogs at your own risk! They may bite or scratch. No picking up or chasing dogs or cats.
10. Have a good time, grow, and give God the glory!

We ask that all riders be mindful of the fact that Grace Lake facilities are located on private property. Access to the property is limited to specific class times and scheduled events.

A THERAPEUTIC RIDING CLASS

Lessons are grouped together in sessions (10 weeks for Spring and Fall and 5 weeks for Summer Session). Each lesson is 45 minutes long and held once a week.

Lessons are tailored to meet the specific needs of each rider. Lessons may include the following:

1. Prayer time: All family member, riders, and volunteers present at the time are welcome to participate.
2. Grooming and tacking the horse.
3. Leading the horse and ground work to learn to control the horse from the ground.
4. Stretching tight muscles, practicing mounts and dismounts, and learning other riding skills on the Equicizer.
5. Riding: This may include body awareness activities, stretching exercises, riding skills instruction, navigating through an obstacles course, games, and trail rides.
6. Unsaddling and grooming the horse.

Go to the calendar tab on our website for the current session dates.

Please email Holly for lesson availability at gracelake@dfwair.net.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Each person at Grace Lake plays an important role in the success of the rider. In a class, the instructor is in charge. Please show respect to the instructor by allowing them to do the instructing. Instructing is the responsibility of the instructor only. Parents and volunteers have a valuable perspective to share, and we encourage you to share with us before or after class. We ask that you participate in the lesson only in the role assigned to you or upon the specific request of the instructor. We put prayer and time into developing specific goals and lesson plans for each individual rider. Enjoy watching as God's plan unfolds with your child.

To minimize distractions and maintain a safe environment for our riders, we ask that all family members and visitors sit in the Rider Waiting area. Please no running and jumping on the mounting ramp. This may scare the horses.

If you or your family members are interested in volunteering, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Shelley Egger at admin@gracelakeministries.org. Your help would be appreciated!

NO SHOW AND CANCELLATION POLICY

1. Please arrive a few minutes early for your class. We want you to get the full benefit of your scheduled appointment. Riders that arrive 15 minutes or more after their scheduled lesson will not be able to ride that day.
2. We will consider you "absent" if you have **notified us at least 3 hours before your scheduled lesson time** begins. Otherwise, we will consider you a "no-show".
3. **If you will be absent, please call 972 837-4621 as soon as possible** so that we may alert your volunteers. If you get voice mail, please leave a message. By letting us know that you will be absent, we can let your volunteers know so they can plan their day. Please don't be a "no-show, no-call"!
4. Excessive absences (3 or more) or no shows (more than 1), will be subject to losing your class slot.
5. Riders who have been awarded a scholarship for the session and have excessive absences (3 or more) or more than 1 "no-show" will be subject to forfeiting the scholarship and being ineligible for future scholarships.
6. There will be no refunds for missed classes. Payment for the session is expected regardless of absences and no-shows.
7. Due to our schedule, it is not possible to schedule individual make-up classes for absences and no-shows.
8. If Grace Lake must cancel a class due to weather or other circumstances, we will schedule a make-up class at the end of the session. Grace Lake offers 3 ways to keep you updated on weather cancellations; our website calendar, email

messages via Remind, and text messages via Remind. In order to receive emails and texts from Remind, you must sign up.

9. If you have dates that you already know you will not be able to attend, please send an email to the director at gracelake@dfwair.net.

“No-Shows” and excessive absences result in:

Decreased effectiveness of this type of therapy due to lack of continuity

Decrease in recruiting and retaining volunteers

Unnecessary tacking and untacking of our horses

Inefficient use of staff and volunteers

Go to the calendar tab on our website www.gracelakeministries.org for cancellations and the current session dates.

DRESS

It is important that you dress safely and comfortably.

1. Boots with a heel are recommended but not required. Closed toed shoes are required.
2. All riders are required to wear a helmet when mounted. We provide a variety of sizes of helmets. We recommend that you purchase your own.
3. Long pants are recommended. Please do not wear slick material pants.
4. Please do not wear big or priceless jewelry as it can easily get lost or caught on something.
5. It is common for the temperature to feel significantly different at the barn (colder or warmer). Therefore, we suggest that you wear layers. This means wear warm clothes (sweatshirt, jacket, gloves) that can be taken off if you get warm.
6. Wear clothing that you don't mind getting dirty!

PAYMENT POLICY

The cost for the session is based upon the number of classes in the session and the number of riders in the class.

Please note that our payment policy allows payments to either be made in full at the first lesson of the session or be divided into three payments at the first of each month for Spring and Fall sessions only.

Riders must have their balance paid in full for previous sessions before registering for the next session.

Please place your payment in the black lock box located inside the barn or mail to Grace Lake 9611 FM 1827 Anna, TX 75409. Payment can also be made online through our website www.gracelakeministries.org.

There will be a \$25.00 fee for checks returned for insufficient funds.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We have an amazing group of volunteers. They are busy people that take time out of their week to be a blessing to our riders. I frequently hear our volunteers say that they get as much benefit from working with our riders as the riders get from riding. Our volunteers are the heart of our program. We coordinate over 40 volunteers to sidewalk and lead horses per week to operate.

As riders of our program, we ask that you respect our valuable volunteers by:

- *Giving as much notice as possible if cancelling a scheduled lesson.* Volunteers are here for you. If you are not coming, they don't want to come either. Also, much preparation and planning goes into each lesson (lesson plan, horse prep, arena prep, coordinating volunteers, driving time etc.). Please cancel 24 hours or more before your scheduled lesson when possible to save our volunteers and staff hours of time planning.
- *Attending your scheduled lesson.* We understand that people get sick and things happen. Please remember, that when you sign up for a session there are up to 5 people working their schedule around your lesson each week. Because of this, there are no make-ups or refunds for non-weather related absences.
- *Being on time.* We are all here to see progress. Being late denies your rider significant learning opportunities.
- *Showing the volunteers you appreciate their investment.* They want to know that the time they give is making a difference in the rider's life.

Grace Lake could not provide our services without volunteers that are committed, punctual, and passionate about therapeutic riding. Please show your appreciation by giving them the same in return.

NO HORSE TREAT POLICY

Due to some of our horses being on a special diet, Grace Lake requests no feeding treats of any kind to the horses (or other animals on the property). Thank you for your support in ensuring the health and safety of our wonderful therapy horses!

Also, **Like us on Facebook** where we will post fun class pics! If you have pictures or Grace Lake successes that you post on Facebook, please share them on the Grace Lake Ministries Facebook page. Your stories are key to educating our donors, encouraging our volunteers, and growing our community supporters who are vital to our program!

Grace Lake is a 501©3 non-profit organization. Approximately 2/3 of the costs of operating our program come from fundraising and individual contributions. Community involvement is vital for our operation. You can make a difference by telling others about us!