

# ST. CROIX TRAIL BLAZERS

## NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 23 | FEBRUARY 2022

### Staff Appreciation Picnic

Sunday, October 10, 2021, was perfect for our Staff Appreciation Picnic. Thank you to Jacki Bambenek, Lisa Farley, and their families for taking the time to plan the day. We enjoyed lunch, playing games, visiting, and singing karaoke. Thanks to Eric from Ick's Karaoke for giving his time to provide the music.

Besides our five instructors, we currently have 21 volunteers. St. Croix Trail Blazers relies on these incredible people to care for our horses, make sure lessons happen, and getting "chores" done in and around the barn. Thank you for giving us your time and having a caring and compassionate nature!



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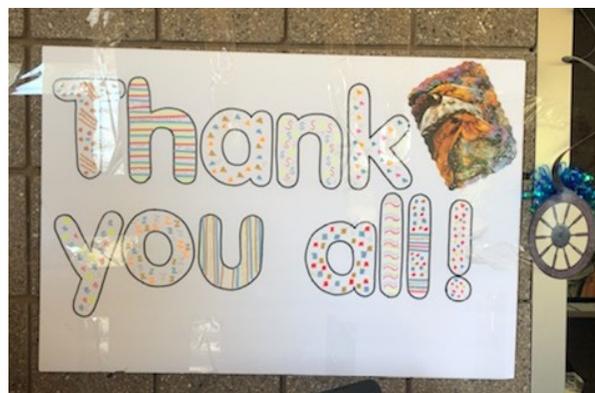
### MISSION

St. Croix Trail Blazers' missions are to provide horseback riding, training, and competitive sports opportunities to individuals with special needs in a safe, learning environment through the adaptive equine experience and provide therapeutic riding and activities for active duty or veteran military personnel to enhance their physical, emotional, and social well-being.

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## Rider in the Spotlight: Annalise

SCTB: How long have you been riding with St. Croix Trail Blazers?

Annalise: Started riding in 2014.

SCTB: What horse(s) do you ride?

Annalise: I ride many different horses but my favorite one is Diezel.

SCTB: What is your favorite thing about riding?



Annalise: I love it when I can trot with the horse.

SCTB: Do you have any hobbies?

Annalise: Puzzles, Legos, and ride bike with my parents.

SCTB: Do you play other sports?

Annalise: The other sports I do in Special Olympics are Bocce Ball, Poly Hockey, and my favorite is Swimming.

## Rider in the Spotlight: Lake

SCTB: How long have you been riding with St. Croix Trail Blazers?

Lake: Since 2014.

SCTB: What horse(s) do you ride?

Lake: I ride Rowdy, Mister, Diezel, Nova, and Titan. I used to ride Jag and Billy.

SCTB: Do you have a favorite horse?

Lake: My favorite horse is Nova.

SCTB: What is your favorite thing about riding?

Lake: Just seeing the horses and being with them.



SCTB: Do you have any hobbies?

Lake: Watching Tik Tok, YouTube, and movies. I like going for car rides. I love petting cats. My favorite barn cat is Tigger.

SCTB: Do you play other sports?

Lake: Not anymore. I used to play Special Olympics flag football, track, and alpine.

SCTB: Anything you want to add?

Lake: I have a very strong attraction to horses. I love them and they help me. They can sense when something's wrong, they can read people's feelings.

## When is it Too Cold to Ride?

Living in Minnesota, we get to experience some really cold temperatures. Unfortunately, because of these cold temps, we have to occasionally cancel

lessons. St. Croix Trail Blazers' policy is to consider cancelling when the temperature

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hits 0°. Here is why and the factors looked at when we make the decision.

Riding when the temperature is so cold can be harmful to humans and horses alike. Not only can it be uncomfortable for people in terms of keeping warm, but cold temperatures are a known asthma trigger. If it hurts your nose or lungs to breathe that cold air, it's probably too cold for a horse.

Horses are naturally designed to manage winter weather by growing winter coats, and the coat insulates the horse by trapping and warming air. Horses also consume more hay in the winter because as hay is digested, it creates heat. Where the problem begins is if a horse becomes sweaty or wet when the temperature is so low. Their coat doesn't dry which affects its insulating ability and increases heat loss creating an inability for the horse to maintain its body temperature. When a horse is unable to maintain its body temperature, many things can happen such as hypothermia and colic, which can be fatal.

A horse's respiratory system warms and humidifies air by the time it reaches the lungs. When a horse is made to exert itself, it inhales quickly and deeply, and the body doesn't have time to warm the cold air. The fluid that lines the airways evaporates faster than it can be replaced. This dries

out the airway causing inflammation and constriction. An increase in mucus production and thickness adds to more airway restriction. All this potentially damages lung tissue and creates more problems in already compromised respiratory tracts. The impairment may lead to chronic breathing issues.

Besides respiratory concerns, another important factor is the need to increase the horse's warm up time because muscles, ligaments, and tendons take longer to loosen and limber. Essentially

what this means is increased time walking to reduce the risk of injury.

The scheduled lessons are also considered. Are they walk only, walk/trot, etc. A horse becoming sweaty and wet is more likely when it is doing more than just walking. Wind chill is also factored in along with the temperature.



In the event your scheduled lesson is cancelled, every effort will be made to reach you by phone, text, or email. A message will also be posted on Facebook.

While it is important to keep horses moving in the winter, it is equally as important to keep human and horse best interests at the forefront.

Stay warm!

## Make-Up Reminder



If St. Croix Trail Blazers cancels your lesson, you will have a make-up lesson. **You have 30 days to schedule that lesson with Kellie.** Please do so by email so there is a written record: [kellie@stcroixtrailblazers.org](mailto:kellie@stcroixtrailblazers.org).

Thanks!

## Our Email Addresses

You can reach these people at their email addresses:

Karen: [karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org](mailto:karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org)

Kellie: [kellie@stcroixtrailblazers.org](mailto:kellie@stcroixtrailblazers.org)



Please remember to check your spam or junk folder for any updates from St. Croix Trail Blazers.



If you bring a new rider who joins the team, we'll give you \$50 off your next month's fee!

\*\*\*Rider must pass evaluation with instructor.\*\*\*



*Special People Needing Special Horses*

### Contact Us



Email: [karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org](mailto:karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org)

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St. Croix Trail Blazers is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service.

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