



ST. CROIX TRAIL BLAZERS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 12 | AUGUST 2018

It's Special Olympics Time!

Riders have been busy perfecting their riding skills the past 10 weeks for Special Olympics Minnesota Equestrian competition on Friday, August 17 in North Branch.

We have 26 riders competing this year and they'll be competing in the Western Equitation, Working Trail, Barrels, and Pole Weaving! Please wish them good luck!



MISSION

Trail Blazers mission is to provide horseback riding, training, and competitive sports opportunities to individuals with special needs in a safe learning environment through adaptive equine experience.

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Rider in the Spotlight: Luke

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

Luke: I began riding horses when I was just 3 years old at a stable in Pennsylvania ran by the Easter Seals Society. My parents saw the benefits in me and I have been riding ever since. I took a 2-year break as a young adult and started again with the opening of the Jasmine Meadows stable.



SCTB: What is your favorite thing about riding?

Luke: Riding makes me feel better all over but especially makes me feel happy.

SCTB: Do you play other sports?

Luke: In addition to horseback riding, I like running, biking, kayaking, and playing basketball.

SCTB: What horse(s) do you ride?

Luke: Billy is my favorite horse to ride but I sometimes ride Rowdy. I first rode Sven but he is no longer at the stable.

SCTB: Anything you want to add?

Luke: I live in Grant, MN and work at Document Destruction through Merrick, Inc.

Who are the St. Croix Trail Blazers

I was doing some information gathering recently for a grant and then Sylvia and I were emailing and she suggested an article relating to who we serve, where we come from, etc. Little did she know I had recently done my research!

We currently have 47 riders ranging in ages from eight to 45. Some of the special needs or disabilities we have experienced are Down syndrome, autism, Asperger's, pervasive developmental disorder, brain injury, seizure disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, intellectual disability, fetal alcohol syndrome, anxiety, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, delayed fine/gross motor skills, cerebral palsy, attachment disorder, and depression. Our riders come from Apple Valley, Arden Hills, Blaine, Cottage Grove, Edina, Hastings, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Mahtomedi, Maplewood, Mendota Heights, Minneapolis, North Oaks, Oakdale, Shoreview, St. Paul, Stacy,

Stillwater, White Bear Lake, and Woodbury, Minnesota, as well as Hammond, Wisconsin.

Kellie Grayden is our Program Director and her main jobs are managing the care and training of the horses, instructing, overseeing instructors, volunteers, doing rider evaluations, and pasture care. There are four other instructors – Sara, Kjerstin, and Brandy. When Kellie has the night off, these ladies are instructing, feeding, and doing chores. I am your Executive Director and Special Olympics Minnesota Head of Delegation. I can honestly say I've done just about every job here...well with the exception of instructing and driving the tractor. I leave that to the proper people!

We have 18 volunteers who graciously offer their time to help with various chores and offer extra eyes during lessons or helping behind the scenes in other ways away from the barn such as the

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newsletter. These people come from Hugo, Isanti, Lino Lakes, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Shoreview, Stillwater, and Woodbury, Minnesota, as well as St. Croix Falls and Hudson, Wisconsin.

We have a wonderful group of families, staff, and volunteers. We are one large "family" of sorts brought together by a special need or disability.

"Every great story happened when someone decided not to give up."
Spryte Loriano

I believe this is who the St. Croix Trail Blazers are. We are a great story of families who never give up.

Karen

Summer Giving Gala

The St. Croix Trail Blazers' Summer Giving Gala proved to be a success



despite the very warm weather on June 30. Bones Brother provided wonderful food,



the DJ played great tunes, there was a great assortment of items to bid on



in the silent auction including signed sports memorabilia, and everyone had fun with

the games whether it was the Ring Around the Rose' wine toss, balloon dart game,



picking a duck in the duck pond, fishing at the pond, or the 50/50 raffle.



Thanks to everyone who helped pull this event together.



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Thank you

Acapulco
 Ace Hardware
 Action Rental
 Alfresco Casual Living
 Amber Ruth
 Awaken for Wellness
 Betty June's
 Big Time Sports Auctions
 Bones Brothers
 Bonnie and Gary Grayden
 Brick and Bourbon
 Cub Liquor
 Daily Grind
 Dairy Queen
 Diamonds on Main
 Fiesta Cancun
 Haskell's
 Heritage Embroidery
 Houle's Farm, Garden and Pet Store
 Jake's City Grille
 Jeannie Heckel
 Judd Sather Photography
 Karen Harjes
 Karen and Charles Malmskog
 Kellie and Anthony Grayden
 Keri Nelson
 Knoke's Chocolates
 Kowalski's
 Krueger's Christmas Trees
 Lake Elmo Inn
 Landsted LLC
 Liquor Time
 Mad Capper
 Mai Little Cake

Majestic Oaks Golf Club
 Mallard's on the St. Croix
 Michael and Lisa Lindvall
 Minnesota Vikings
 Mongolian BBQ
 Nacho Mama's
 Northern Brewer
 Northern Vineyards Winery
 PD Pappy's
 Papa Murphy's
 Phil's Tara Hideaway
 Pony Express Auto Wash
 QuickFire Pizza
 Red Cow
 Rose Floral
 Running Aces
 St. Croix Valley Recreation Center
 Sean Ecklin, Edina Realty
 Simonet's Furniture
 Speedcult
 SportsClips
 Starbucks
 Stillwater Bowl
 Stillwater Equine Vet Clinic
 Stillwater Escape Company
 Stokes Jewelry
 Susan and Stuart Grubb
 The Heights Indoor Golf
 Tremblay's Sweet Shop
 Valley Bookseller
 Valters Aviation
 Ziggy's

Scholarship Funding

Do you know we have scholarships available? If you need assistance or know someone who would like to

participate in our program but needs financial assistance, please tell them to contact us at karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org.

Duckweed Invasion

On driving north as we approach Jasmine Meadows our road passes between two ponds. Anyone who has taken this drive recently is aware that the ponds are both very green in color, and to me they look like pea soup. Some might write it off as just another pond filled with algae, but this is not the case. The green comes from Duckweed (*Lemna Minor*). Small amounts of Duckweed generally can be found along the edges of lakes and streams, but it will not grow where there is current, as on a river or stream, or where there is wave action as there would be on a large lake. In small ponds, though, it can take over.

Duckweed is a small green floating plant with one to three leaves that are each only a little more than an eighth of an inch in diameter, making this one of the smallest floating plants. It has tiny roots that hang beneath the plant, and there can even be some inconspicuous flowers.



As small as it is, it has the ability to reproduce quickly, so under the right conditions the plant will spread rapidly. One source estimates that it "is possible for a new Duckweed plant to be produced every 24 hours. This means that in just two weeks, a single parent plant can result in up to 17,500 plants!"* This being the case, we can understand how our ponds can become so totally green.

Duckweed is a favorite food of some ducks, hence the name; and there is little doubt that it was by ducks carrying seed or

small plants on their feathers that the Duckweed first was introduced to our ponds. Because the ponds contain large amounts of decaying matter, and because they are located in farmland, the Duckweed has a more-than-adequate supply of nitrogen and phosphorus. The result is a pond surface that looks like it is covered by a carpet of green.

While small amounts of Duckweed can be very beneficial, it is another matter when it takes over. Now the sunlight cannot pass beneath the weed cover to reach plants below the surface, so there are few larger plants. Also the conditions are modified in such a way that animal

and insect life is affected. One person has observed that, since the Duckweed has taken over, we are not seeing as many turtles sunning themselves on the logs. The ducks that used the nest boxes in the early spring,

and the ones that hatched this year are no longer seen on the ponds either. All of this may change as we move into the fall season, and once again for a few weeks then and next spring, the ponds will be Duckweed-free until it takes over once again. In that season we hope that the Wood Ducks, Mallards, and Hooded Mergansers will be back, the frogs will join the chorus of spring, and life below the surface of the pond will thrive once again, if only for a season.

Harlan Baxter

**SAVE
THE
DATE**



Stuart and Susan Grubb are planning a Halloween Party to benefit the Trail Blazers on **Saturday, October 27.**



New Email Addresses

We've updated our email!

You can reach these people now at separate emails:

Karen: karen@stcroixtrailblazers.org

Kellie: kellie@stcroixtrailblazers.org

Keri (treasurer):

keri@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

Website: www.stcroixtrailblazers.org

Facebook: [St. Croix Trail Blazers](https://www.facebook.com/St.CroixTrailBlazers)

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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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