

*Therapeutic Riding of Tryon*   
The Therapeutic Riding Program at **FENCE**

**VOLUNTEER  
HANDBOOK**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Therapeutic Riding of Tryon (TROT) at FENCE changes and enriches lives by teaching horsemanship skills to adults and children with physical, cognitive, developmental and emotional challenges in a safe, friendly and supportive environment.

## **ABOUT TROT**

The program was founded in 2004 through the efforts of Norm Powers and a small group of committed volunteers. In it's beginning year TROT had six participants, one instructor and three therapy horses. It has since grown to serve upwards of 40 participants all thanks to our dedicated community of more than 70 volunteers who share with us not only their time, but also their wonderful horses who are our 4 legged heroes!

TROT is a Premier Accredited Center with the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl). As such, we follow the standards set by PATH Intl. to ensure safe, effective teaching and a quality program.

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# **VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION**

## **Qualifications**

TROT volunteers who serve as active horse leaders or rider side walkers must be 16 years of age or older and should possess a positive attitude toward working with and around persons with disabilities. Leader and side walker volunteers should be able to walk and sometimes jog over uneven ground for up to 30 minutes and side walkers must be able to keep one arm at or above shoulder height for up to 30 minutes. Each volunteer must have adequate body size, strength and experience for the assigned task. All volunteers must be prepared to sign a liability release and confidentiality form.

All volunteers who want to be considered for possible horse leader and/or rider side walker duties must attend a Volunteer Training session and may be asked to take an assessment test. TROT staff will make the assignments for active leader and side walkers for a session. If a volunteer has any questions or is not comfortable with an assignment, he/she should discuss those concerns with the instructor or Volunteer Coordinator.

## **Responsibilities**

A volunteer should be able to commit for the entire session and should be punctual when arriving for duty. Please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to your scheduled time. Volunteers should abide by the safety guidelines and are responsible to the instructor.

## **Etiquette**

Volunteers must wear comfortable, sensible clothes – NO sandals, crop tops or dangling jewelry. During very warm weather, volunteers may wear shorts for comfort. Wear boots/shoes that you can jog/work in. Smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages, foul language, and crude, inappropriate behavior are cause for dismissal. Remember that lesson time is very special for the rider so any unrelated conversation should be kept to a minimum and all volunteer attention should be on the task at hand.

## **Duties**

Specific tasks are described later in this manual but, in general, volunteers assist riders with grooming, tacking and preparing their horses for class; horse leading or rider side walking during class (after completing proper training for such tasks); general barn duties; and assisting with special events, fundraising and other

administrative tasks. Qualified volunteers may also help transport horses to and from the program site. Note that depending on physical abilities, not all volunteers may be suitable for active class work.

### **Pets**

For safety reasons NO DOGS, LEASHED OR UNLEASHED, OR OTHER PETS are permitted in the vicinity of the TROT riding arena or Rosemary's Barn.

### **Dismissal Policy**

Any volunteer who engages in inappropriate, rude or abusive behavior toward humans or equines; who is determined to be engaging in substance abuse; or who uses coarse or insensitive language, shall be asked to leave the activity area. TROT reserves the right to bar any such person from future participation in the program.

### **Two Adult Protocol**

It is the policy of Therapeutic Riding of Tryon to have two adults with each student at all times. Please observe this protocol conscientiously.

## DESCRIPTION OF DISABILITIES

The following is a brief, non-medical description of some of the disabilities and conditions that volunteers may encounter in their work with TROT riders. This is not intended as a comprehensive explanation of a specific disability but rather as a general overview, along with an explanation of how therapeutic riding is a beneficial treatment aid.

### Cerebral Palsy

“CP” is a non-progressive disorder that is caused by brain damage before, during or after birth, which results in an inability to control parts of the body. It can be combined with other disorders such as mental impairments, learning disabilities, vision or hearing problems. It can be very mild or severe and is divided into three general categories:

- **Spastic:** this is the most common type and is characterized by abnormally high muscle tone. The muscles stay flexed and tense and the facial muscle involvement may affect speech. Balance is generally poor.
- **Athetoid:** slow, writhing movements that exaggerate their voluntary movements characterize this type. Their trunk lacks stability. Speech functions are frequently involved.
- **Ataxic:** these persons have uncoordinated movements, lack trunk stability, have poor balance and an unsteady gait.

**Benefits:** riding may improve balance, posture, coordination and the ability for the muscles to relax. It also strengthens weakened muscles.

### Down Syndrome

This is a birth defect in which an extra chromosome is present. Most persons with Down have poor muscle tone and possibly vision, hearing and respiratory difficulties. They have varying levels of mental ability.

**Benefits:** riding is a motivational opportunity to improve expressive and receptive language skills, gross and fine motor skills, balance, posture and coordination.

### Emotional Disabilities

“ED” is a congenital or acquired syndrome often compounded by learning and/or physical disabilities incorporating numerous other pathologies. In general,

emotionally disturbed individuals have trouble coping with every day life situations and interpersonal relationships. Behaviors such as short attention span, avoidance, aggression or paranoia may be exhibited.

**Benefits:** riding can provide structure to a disorganized thought pattern, increase feelings of self-worth and self-awareness and provide appropriate social therapy.

### **Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Autism is a cognitive disability characterized generally by self-absorption, erratic behavior, perceptual challenges and often communication difficulties. Individuals with autism may have average intelligence and physical development and can be very athletic.

**Benefits:** therapeutic riding is a chance for the rider to learn to trust the horse, to practice social skills and to increase their sense of responsibility. The horse also provides a motivational opportunity to work on speech and communication.

### **Learning Disabilities**

“LD” is a catch-all phrase for individuals who have trouble processing, sequencing and problem solving, but who appear to otherwise have normal intelligence skills. New learning generally takes time to be integrated and may need to be reviewed frequently to ensure retention.

**Benefits:** riding may increase attention span, group activity skills, cooperation, receptive and expressive language skills, posture and coordination.

### **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

“IDD” is a person who can be mentally impaired due to genetic disorders, brain damage, under-development of the brain or lack of stimulation. They may also have delayed physical and emotional development.

**Benefits:** riding helps to increase group activity skills, balance and coordination, posture, gross and fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination.

# **VOLUNTEER TIPS**

## **Getting to know your rider**

General approach and interaction. It is important to remember that every child or adult is an individual and wants to be treated with that understanding, regardless of having a disability or not. Each has their own learning rate, style of learning, unique personality and temperament. One must always look beyond the disability and into the person. Always provide them with the opportunity to be more independent.

Suggestions to help you relate to your rider.

- Relax and be yourself.
- Speak directly to your rider. Your attention should be on them and not on someone with them.
- Offer assistance when asked or when the situation obviously requires it. Do not overwhelm the rider with help when they can manage alone. When a person is trying to increase their physical activity, effort is necessary.
- Appreciate what the rider *can* do. Remember that the difficulties that the individual may be facing could stem from society's attitudes and barriers and not from the disability itself. People with disabilities generally do not view themselves to be as handicapped as society perceives them to be.
- If you are unable to understand what was said, do not hesitate to tell them. The barn is the perfect place to practice speech. It is always better to understand what was said than to dismiss it.

Our riders are some of the most interesting and fun people that you will meet. Information on how to specifically help your rider will be given to you once the schedule is in place. The Volunteer Coordinator and Instructors will help you to understand what needs may be unique to each student. If you feel uncomfortable with your role at any time, please feel free to ask as many questions as are necessary to help you feel more comfortable.

Always remember that you give the riders the joy of riding and the ability to achieve. This is an incredible gift made possible by the donation of your time and talent.

## **“HORSE SENSE – VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES”**

The following are pointers for volunteers while working around horses.

### **Approach**

When approaching a horse, speak in a low voice and walk to the head or shoulder slowly. Never approach from directly behind as he may not see you and could be startled.

### **Stall**

When haltering and retrieving a horse from a stall, ensure that the door is closed before you put the halter on.

When returning the horse to the stall allow the horse to go in and turn to face the door, again ensuring that the door is closed before removing the halter. When leaving the stall, ensure that the door is closed and latched.

### **Cross Ties & Grooming**

- Try to keep horses in the center of crossties to give maximum room on either side. If a tied horse pulls back, talk to him quietly and release the crosstie if necessary but only without endangering yourself or others. The crossties have quick release snaps at the halter end.
- When walking behind a horse, keep your hand on the rump and pass close to his body to let the horse know where you are.
- Do not squat or kneel beside a horse. Bend over to reach the low spots and stay on your feet.
- Do not pass under the horse's neck when tied or held. Never stick your head under or crawl under the horse's body.
- Avoid sudden movements, especially around the head.
- Many horses are sensitive around their ears. Work gently around the ears.

## Equipment

- Halters should fit comfortably and should be sized for the horse that wears it.
- Tighten the girth **slowly** and **gently** – do not pull up abruptly. Make many small adjustments to the girth as the horse relaxes. The instructor will check the girth for a final time before the rider mounts.
- If a horse is standing tied while being tacked, place the stirrups in the up position and hook the reins under one stirrup. This will keep the reins from flopping and getting loose enough for the horse to catch a foot in.
- Stirrups on English saddles should be run up at all times unless a rider is mounted. Do not lead a horse with dangling stirrups.
- Wipe bits off with a cloth after use. In cold weather warm the bit with your hands or by dipping in warm water before use.
- Return all tack to its proper place after use.

## Treats and Feeding

Never feed a horse from the hand. Treats such as carrots and apples can be cut up and placed in the specially marked treat bucket. Treats should only be given *after* a lesson, not before.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Please remember all information you may learn regarding a TROT student is PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL. It is the legal and ethical responsibility of all TROT staff and volunteers to preserve and protect the privacy rights of our TROT students.

We encourage you to learn about the riders you work with to better be able to assist and connect with them. If you have observations and insights based on your time spent with a student during a lesson which you believe would be helpful to share with the instructor or TROT staff, please do so at an appropriate time. Communicating about the students should be done outside of lesson times and never in front of them.

## **PROCEDURES**

**Upon arrival** at the FENCE equestrian center all volunteers should check in at the Farrier Shed to write their arrival time on the sign-in sheet, and put on their nametag. Cell phones and other personal belongings should be locked in the volunteer's car. If lessons are conducted at the Nature side of FENCE, then check in is at Rosemary's barn.

Volunteers serving as horse leaders should then proceed to the Chinquapin Arena , determine which horse will be used for their assigned rider, and ensure that the appropriate tack and grooming supplies are pulled from the tack trailer. Volunteers should visually check over the horse and make the Instructor aware of any cuts, abrasions or problems.

If the rider is present, one of the assigned volunteers should go to the reception area and escort the rider to his/her horse. One volunteer should be standing facing the head of the horse, or slightly to the side, at all times. The other volunteer(s) will assist the rider with grooming the horse and tacking up. At no time should the horse or rider be left unattended.

Volunteers should ensure that the rider is appropriately attired and fitted with a helmet and any other necessary equipment, such as safety belt, if needed, before proceeding to the mounting area. Ensure that all tack is correctly fastened and that the girth is tight. The Instructor will double check the tack and girth before rider mounts.

Before leaving for the day all volunteers should enter their departure time on the sign-in sheet at the Farrier's shed.

## **LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The primary responsibility of the leader is to control the horse.** The side walker(s) will monitor and assure the rider's safety. The assigned leader should take the horse from the barn to the mounting ramp. With the instructor's approval it may be appropriate that the rider leads the horse or assists with leading, in which case the leader should walk beside the rider ensuring that they are at all times in control of the horse. Once the rider is mounted, the leader should make sure that everyone is ready before leading the horse forward. Similarly, the leader should always ensure that the rider and side walkers are ready before resuming movement from a standstill.

Leaders will lead from the left side of the horse, holding the lead shank in their right hand about 6" to 12" from the snap. Excess lead should never be wrapped around the hands but folded in a figure 8 pattern and held in the left hand.

### **When in the ring**

- Keep your side walker(s) in mind when leading and allow enough room from the fence for them. Be especially careful when going through the gate.
- Maintain a minimum of two horse lengths between horses. Make a circle, stop or cut across the ring to avoid getting too close, but advise the rider and side walkers first.
- Always use a lead shank to lead a horse. Never hold onto the halter or bridle. Do not use a crosstie to lead since it has buckles on both ends, which could cause injury.
- Never wrap a lead shank or reins around a hand, wrist or body. Use a figure 8 pattern to hold the excess lead in the left hand.
- Do not allow lead or reins to drag on the ground. This could cause the horse or a person to trip and/or break the equipment.
- If the horse is being nippy while you are leading, step further back by his shoulder to eliminate his target
- Avoid loud, rough discipline with riders present. It may frighten them or the horse. Make a note of the behavior and inform the instructor so that it can be addressed at a more appropriate time.
- If the horse steps on your toe, count to five while pushing your weight into his shoulder. He should step off. They do not step on toes purposely so there is no need to yell, hit or otherwise scare the rider or horse.
- Lead beside the horse's head (about even with his eye). If your horse is not moving fast enough, ask the rider to give leg cues when possible.
- Never pull a horse by the bit. This could damage his mouth and gives them a mixed signal. If the lead rope is attached to the halter, gentle tugs instead of pulling may be effective.
- Horses should stand still when asked to stop. The leader should stand in front of the horse's head, facing the horse. Try not to hold the horse too tightly; this is a good chance for the horse to relax.
- Horses should not make sudden movements. Make gradual transitions from the walk to the trot. Avoid quick stops or starts and tight circles.
- Horses should keep their heads level. If the horse carries his head too high he will hollow his back and unbalance the rider. If the head is too low, this will pull the rider forward.
- If you need to stop, your team should come to the center of the ring to stop so as not to create a traffic jam on the rail, unless the instructor has given other directions.

## **SIDE WALKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

**As a side walker, your primary responsibility and concern is the safety of the rider.** The leader will control and monitor the horse.

### **Student arrival**

Riders should be greeted and escorted to pick up a helmet. You will then escort the rider to the horse and assist them as needed with grooming and tacking. Keep in mind that we are striving for independence. Some riders will require very little assistance or only cueing. Others may require extensive assistance. Ask the instructor if you have any questions regarding the amount of assistance needed.

### **When in the ring**

The side walker(s) will help the rider with balance and reinforce the instructions in the lesson. If there are two side walkers, one should be designated to clarify instructions, as too many people talking to the rider can be very confusing.

- There are different methods used with individual riders depending on their needs. During training you will learn the different holds that may be utilized. Your instructor will demonstrate to you how to best support your rider.
- Never offer more support than riders need, so that they may develop their muscles.
- Be sure not to lean on the horse or the rider since this pressure may unbalance the rider or irritate the horse.
- You may need to reinforce the instructor's directions, assist the rider in carrying out the directions, or direct the rider's attention to the task.
- Refrain from talking to the other side walker or leader unless it has to do with the rider's position, balance or horse. Any unnecessary talking distracts the rider, shows disrespect for the riding lesson and diverts the attention of the team.
- Keep the rider's attention on the instructions being given by the instructor.
- Help the rider to understand left and right when needed.
- If the rider needs help with controls, place your hand gently over theirs to demonstrate the task. This can also be done for leg signals as well.
- Unless the instructor requests otherwise, it is extremely important to maintain a position by the rider's knee while mounted. Being too far forward or back will make it difficult to assist with instructions or provide security / safety to the rider.

## THE HOLDS

**The Ankle Hold:** This hold is used for riders who do not need help balancing but still need support. Ankle holds help keep busy lower legs away from the horse's side and keep the sidewalker in the proper position.

Sidewalkers cup their hand just below the ankle bones with their fingers close to the horse and thumb on the outside of the ankle. Placement is important with this hold because too high (above the ankle bones) does not provide support and too low (on the heel) risks pulling off the rider's shoes or boots on accident.



**The Arm-Over-Thigh Hold:** This is commonly used hold to help secure unbalanced riders, beginner riders, and/or anxious riders among others. The sidewalker uses the arm closest to the horse, first placing their hand at the front of the saddle to grip the flap, then placing their forearm across the rider's thigh. The hand on the saddle ensures a consistent contact and placement of the forearm. The sidewalker must be careful not to place too much pressure on the rider's thigh or interfere with the horse's movement.



**Double Hold:** The double hold is a combination of the arm-over-thigh and ankle holds. Sidewalkers place their arm closest to the horse in a thigh hold, cross their opposite hand in front of them and do an ankle hold.

**Safety Belt:** If your rider uses a safety belt for stability, be careful to not pull down or push up on the handles as this can pull the rider off balance. It is likely that the arm you are using to hold the belt will fatigue after a while. When this happens it is best to switch sides with the other sidewalker. Ask the instructor to pause momentarily so the horse leader can bring the horse to a halt. Then you and the other sidewalker can trade sides, **only one of you moving out of position at a time**, both sidewalkers should not move simultaneously and leave the rider unattended.

### **After class**

Help your rider take off the tack and return it to the tack room or designated place, and make sure that the rider returns the helmet (and belt) to the proper area. It is then time to return your rider to his/her parent or guardian and briefly inform them on how the lesson went that day.

## **MOUNTING / DISMOUNTING PROCEDURES**

Mounting will generally take place at the mounting ramp. While waiting to mount, the leader will hold the horse away from the ramp while the side walker(s) stay with the rider. The instructor conducts mounting; volunteers assist as directed by the instructor.

### **When given direction from the instructor to proceed, the leader should:**

- Approach the ramp in the direction requested by the instructor, turning to face the horse just upon entering.
- Position the horse close to the side from which the mounting will take place.
- Do not put pressure on the lead rope, which may cause the horse to back up. If the horse should back up, do not pull; simply release pressure on the lead and go with him. He will stop.
- Allow the horse to relax, holding him quietly and not putting pressure on his head.
- Once the rider is mounted and the cue is given by the instructor and the rider to 'walk on,' guide the horse slowly out of the ramp while still facing him. Once the rider's legs are clear of the ramp or block, stop and wait for the instructor to make final adjustments.
- Lead the horse slowly and quietly to the ring once the instructor advises you to do so and/or the rider has said 'walk on.'

### **When given direction from the instructor to proceed, the side walker(s) should:**

- Escort the rider to the mounting area and await instructions from the instructor. Do not allow riders to wander off or to get on the ramp before the instructor asks for them.
- Assist the instructor from the offside as instructed.
- Support the rider as directed by the instructor.

### **Dismounting to ground**

Only the instructor or a person designated by the instructor may dismount the riders.

The riders should learn to dismount in the proper sequence. Side walkers can quiz the riders about this while waiting for their turn. The dismount sequence generally is:

- Drop stirrups (take both feet out).
- Place the reins on the horse's neck.
- Lean forward (hug) the horse's neck.

- Head and shoulders should shift to the right side of the horse while the right leg swings up and over the rump of the horse. Some riders may need assistance from the side walkers to help them swing the right leg over without hitting the horse.
- Rider lies across the saddle to balance, then slides to the ground, landing on both feet.

Occasionally the instructor may use a crest dismount with a rider. In such cases, the instructor will advise the side walker(s) if any assistance is needed.

Some riders may be dismounted at the ramp. If so, the process is similar to the mounting procedure. Follow the directions of the instructor.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

### **Emergency Dismount**

If a situation occurs during a lesson which impacts the safety of the rider, an emergency dismount may be called by the TROT instructor. The instructor will first ask all horse leaders to **HALT** the horses where they are. The Sidewalkers should then be prepared to execute an emergency dismount as follows:

- The sidewalker on the horse leader's side (the left) will become the primary person assisting the rider to the ground.
- Both sidewalkers will make sure the student's feet are out of the stirrups and communicate this to each other.
- The sidewalker on the side opposite the leader (the right) will assist the rider with getting their leg over the back of the saddle if needed.
- The primary sidewalker will then help guide the rider safely to the ground and **MOVE AWAY** from the horse.
- The horse leader will remain at the horse's head while the other sidewalker moves around to join the primary sidewalker and rider.
- The horse leader then carefully handles the horse and move them to an area directed by the TROT instructor.

### **Inclement Weather**

The decision to cancel class due to inclement weather will be made by the instructor. All riders and volunteers will be notified prior to the scheduled class time either by e-mail and/or telephone.

If sudden inclement weather occurs during class activities, the instructor has ultimate responsibility for riders, volunteers and horses. The instructor will notify riders and volunteers if classes for the rest of the day are cancelled.

### **Severe Thunderstorm / Lightning**

- Dismount riders and have volunteers escort riders to parent/guardian. Riders and parents/guardians may remain in the barn or the show office at the covered arena.
- Put horses in their stalls or trailers.
- Have all volunteers and staff stay in the barn or show office.

## **Tornado**

If a tornado is sighted:

- Dismount riders and send them with volunteers to cover. Get to the cover that is closest to you immediately. Go to the lowest area possible, preferably a ditch.
- Have horse leaders release horses in turnout or arena or Ring B, removing lead ropes and reins. Close gate.
- Instructors and horse leaders then take cover.

Parents/guardians should take immediate cover. The staff will get your child to the safest place.

If there is a tornado warning in the immediate area:

- Dismount riders and have volunteers escort them to parent/guardian.
- Release all horses in turnout, or arena or Ring B and close gate or put them in their stalls if instructed to do so.
- Have riders, parents/guardians, volunteers and instructors take cover.

## **In Case of Fire**

\*\* Call 911 as soon as fire is detected. Directions to the facility are located on the Bulletin Board by the show office and by the telephones located in the kitchen area and the tack room of Rosemary's Barn.

\*\* Fire extinguishers are mounted on the walls at both ends of the main aisle of Rosemary's Barn. There is a fire extinguisher in the show office and at the end of the barns near the covered arena.

- Dismount riders immediately and have a volunteer escort riders to parent/guardian.
- If necessary remove horses from barn and release in arena if appropriate. Remove reins and lead ropes. Saddles/surcingles may be left on.
- Keep road access clear for emergency equipment.
- All riders, visitors and personnel must immediately go to the meeting point, which is by the mounting ramp or show office (see evacuation plans).
- In the event of a fire while using the covered arena:
  - Dismount riders
  - Evacuate the arena
  - Release horses into Ring B, if appropriate. Remove reins and lead ropes.

# **EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

## **Information**

- A telephone is located inside the kitchen area of Rosemary's Barn on the right wall. Program Director will always be carrying a cell phone.
- Dial 911 for emergency assistance. Veterinarian and other important telephone numbers are posted by the phone or on the bulletin board, as well as directions to the facility.
- Fire extinguishers are mounted on the walls at both ends of the main aisle of Rosemary's Barn, at the infield barns near the covered arena, and the show office.
- No smoking or alcoholic beverages are permitted.

## **People Related**

- Human first aid supplies are located in a marked First-Aid container in the Tack Trailer, or if at Rosemary's barn the First-Aid will be in the Tack Room.
- All mishaps needing first aid treatment should be reported to the instructor and recorded on an Incident Report Form, which will be kept in the filing cabinet in the tack room.
- Completed Emergency Medical Treatment Release forms for both volunteers and riders are located in the filing cabinet in the tack room.
- If an accident, such as a fall or seizure, etc., happens while a rider is mounted, all riding stops until the instructor gives further notice. If such an emergency arises during lessons, volunteers may explain the situation quietly and reassure the clients.
- There should be no excessive talking or noise.
- Volunteers (leaders/side walkers) should stay with their own student and/or horse.
- The leader should stand in the halt position (facing the horse).
- The type of accident or results of any mishap will determine whether the instructor will dismiss or resume the class.

NO ONE, including parents, is permitted in the aisle or arena if an accident occurs. Only those summoned by the instructor may enter the area.

## **Horse Related**

Prevention is the best way to avoid accidents. Be aware of your environment and the horse's attitude. If the animal seems unusually distressed, irritated or sensitive, notify the instructor. Another horse may be substituted for that lesson.

If you do not feel comfortable leading a particular horse, tell the instructor immediately.

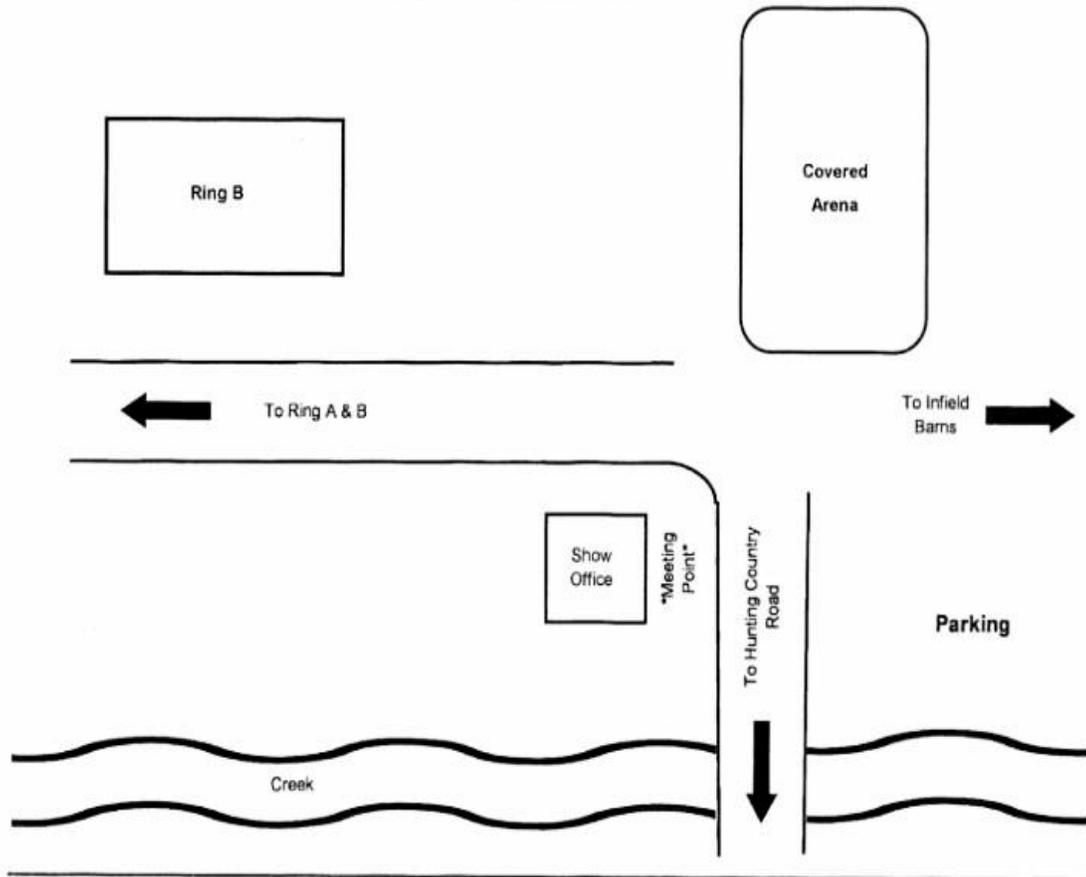
If the horse startles, misbehaves, or bolts in a lesson, it is the leader's responsibility

to control the horse and the side walker's responsibility to support the rider. It is critical that everyone remain calm and all other horses should stop. Try to settle the horse with pats and a calm voice. The leader shall make sure not to let go of the rope and avoid turning the horse in a tight pivot as you may unseat the rider. Side walkers should grab the front of the saddle in an over-the-thigh hold to secure the rider. This positions you in the safest place to move with the horse and the rider. It will be up to the instructor to dismount the client or continue with the lesson. This will depend on the severity of the horse's reaction and the reason. Try to determine what caused the problem so it can be avoided if possible.

If there is a horse emergency while a rider is mounted, it may be necessary to do an emergency dismount. Side walker(s) should make sure that the rider's feet are clear of the stirrups, put your arm around the rider's waist and pull them to your hip. All other horses should stop.

When moving a horse from an accident scene after an emergency dismount the leader should move the horse to a safe distance and turn it to face the mishap. The aim here is to enable the horse to witness what is going on.

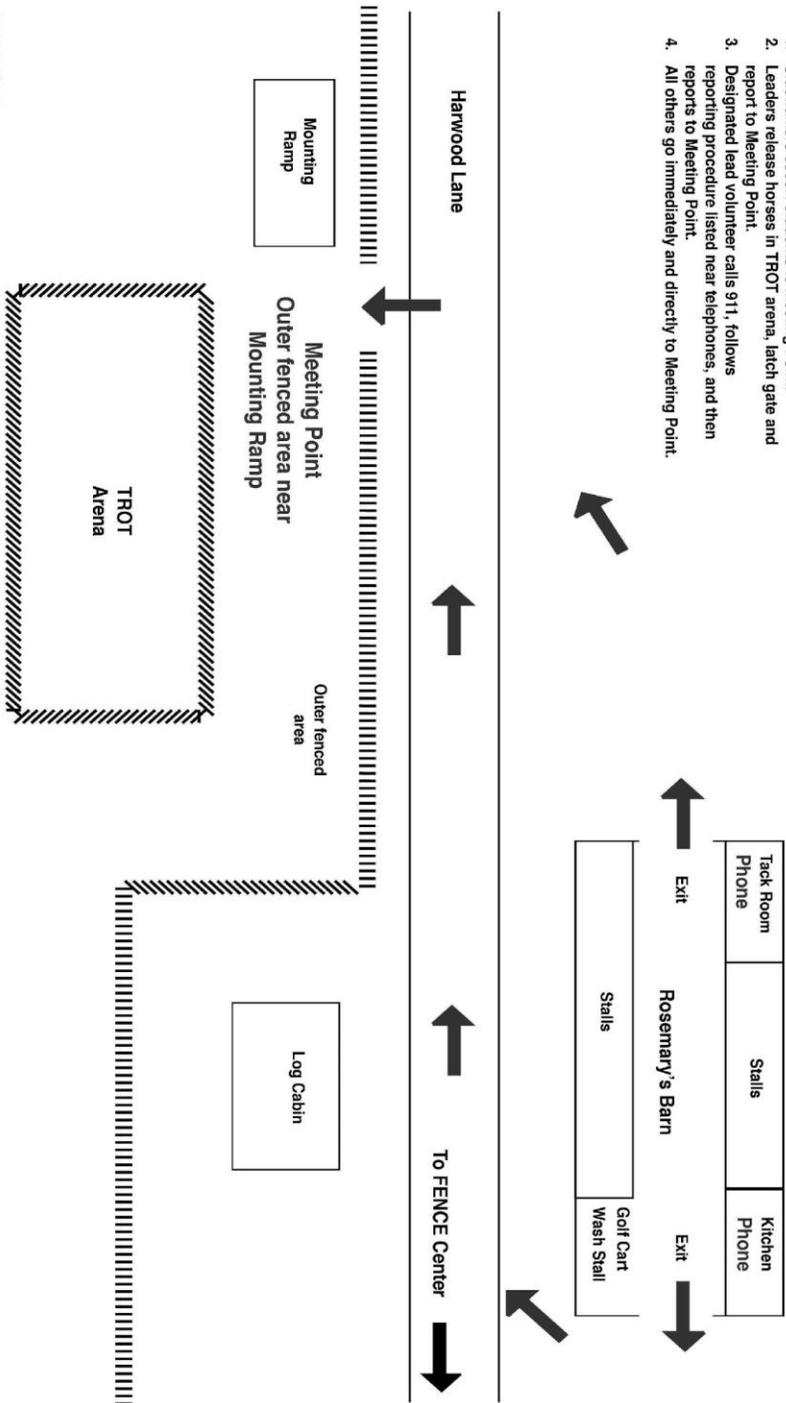
EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN



## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

In case of emergency evacuation of Rosemary's Barn:

1. Sidewalkers escort students to Meeting Point.
2. Leaders release horses in TROT arena, latch gate and report to Meeting Point.
3. Designated lead volunteer calls 911, follows reporting procedure listed near telephones, and then reports to Meeting Point.
4. All others go immediately and directly to Meeting Point.



Revised 7/8/2012  
Not to scale

## GROOMING SUPPLIES

	CURRY COMB	Brush the horse in circles to work up the dirt and hair.
	DANDY BRUSH (Hard brush)	Make short strokes to brush off the dirt
	BODY BRUSH (Soft brush)	Make long strokes to smooth the hair
	MANE & TAIL COMB or BRUSH	Start at the end of the hair and progress up as each section is tangle-free
	HOOF PICK	Pick up each hoof, while facing the rear of the horse, and pick out the foot going from heel to toe on either side of the frog

# **GROOMING DIRECTIONS**

## **Currying Your Horse or Pony**

Start grooming with the curry comb to loosen the dirt in your horse's coat. Curry in a circular motion all over the horse's body. Be careful over boney areas of the shoulders, hips and legs. Use a light touch in these areas. If your horse reacts by laying back his ears, or swishing his tail in agitation, he is telling you that the brushing is too vigorous. As well as currying, you will also be looking for any skin lesions or wounds.

## **Use the Dandy Brush to Whisk Away Dirt**

With the dandy brush, or hard brush, whisk out the dirt brought to the surface by the curry comb. Start on one side and move around the horse, brushing in sweeping strokes following the direction of the hair the way it grows. The dandy brush is more useful for cleaning the legs than the curry comb. This is a good time to check for lesions and skin irritations on the legs, knees, and pasterns.

## **Using the Body Brush**

A body or finishing brush will have shorter, softer bristles and may be used on the horse's face if you don't have a special brush. Gently whisk away dust from the broader areas on your horse's face, ears and throat. With sweeping strokes whisk away any dust missed by the dandy brush. The finer bristles help smooth out the body hair and leave your horse looking more finished.

## **Comb or Brush Out the Tangles From the Mane and Tail**

With a mane comb or brush, comb out the mane and tail. Start at the bottom of the strands and comb downwards in sections until you can smoothly comb from the top of the mane or tail, right to the bottom. When combing the tail, stand to one side and pull the tail gently over to you. This way you are out of the way should the horse kick. A grooming spray that detangles hair is nice to have and makes combing out the long stands easier while cleaning, shining and protecting the hair.

## **Cleaning Your Horse's or Pony's Hooves**

Cleaning out your horse's hooves is very important. Face the back of the horse and slide your hand down the foreleg, squeezing the back of the leg along the tendons just above the pastern until the horse raises its hoof. With the hoof pick pry out any dirt, manure or anything else lodged in the frog or sole of the foot, working from the back to the front of the foot on either side of the frog. Gently place the foot down on the ground and continue until all four feet are done.

# **SAFETY POLICIES**

## **Natural Hazards**

TROT has identified the following natural hazards at its activity area:

- Poisonous snakes, namely copperheads. Non-poisonous snakes also exist near the activity area.
- Biting and stinging insects, including ground bees prevalent in late summer.
- Poison ivy and poison oak.
- Other equestrian riders, horses, deer and wild animals. People walking dogs.

## **Manmade Hazards**

TROT has identified the following manmade hazards at its activity area:

- Operation of equipment near the activity site, including tractors, trucks, grading equipment, trail clearing equipment and vehicular traffic on driveways.

## **Operation of Facilities**

TROT makes every effort to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Signs are posted at either end of the barn/arena area to advise approaching drivers that TROT is in session.

## **Operation of Equipment**

Only authorized TROT or FENCE personnel may operate the golf cart and leaf blower.

## **Natural Disasters**

TROT has determined the following possible natural disasters for its geographic area:

- wind storms
- flooding
- winter icing
- tornadoes
- severe thunderstorms

Recognizing all of the above, TROT has adopted the following policies:

- The activity area shall be inspected at the beginning of each class day for the above hazards, or any other natural or manmade condition that could cause injury to equines or humans.
- TROT has provided all volunteers with written descriptions of emergency

procedures in the Volunteer Handbook.

### **Hazards Specific to the Use of Equines**

All TROT volunteers and program participants should be aware of the potential hazards of working around equines, including kicking, biting, bucking and rearing caused by a fear-inducing incident, and that such behavior may occur during class while participants are mounted.

### **Conduct of Personnel, Participants and Guests**

TROT requires all volunteers and program participants to abide by the following policies:

#### **General Guidelines**

Neither volunteers nor program participants are allowed to carry cell phones during a class. The instructor may, at his/her discretion, carry a cell phone in case of emergency. A working cell phone or conventional phone shall be available at all times within easy reach of the activity area.

No dogs, leashed or unleashed, are allowed at the activity area during classes.

Any volunteer, program participant, program participant's relative or guest who engages in inappropriate, rude or abusive behavior; who is determined to be engaging in substance abuse; or who uses coarse or insensitive language, shall be asked to leave the activity area. TROT reserves the right to bar any such person from future participation in the program.

Side walkers and leaders shall keep talking, either among themselves or to the rider, to a minimum during classes. In emergency situations, such volunteers should follow the directions of the instructor.

#### **Protective Headgear**

All program participants and personnel are required to wear properly fitting ASTM-SEI approved protective headgear for equestrian activities while mounted. In the event that such approved headgear cannot be worn by a program participant, TROT follows PATH International guidelines for alternate ASTM-SEI approved headgear, or non-approved headgear, as follows:

- Use of alternative helmets must be adopted only after a written evaluation by an appropriate licensed/ credentialed health professional stating such non-approved headgear is necessary and recommending which type is appropriate for the participant.

- Alternative helmets which are not ASTM-SEI approved may only be used when there is a leader and two side walkers with the rider in an enclosed, safe arena; or in a direct treatment therapy session by an Occupational, Physical or Speech/Language Therapist.

### **Attire**

Riders: TROT encourages all participants to wear appropriate apparel during program activities. Such apparel includes riding breeches, jodhpurs or chaps and riding boots or hard-soled shoes with heels. Riders who do not already have such standard riding attire shall be encouraged to wear long pants or jeans, hard-soled shoes with a heel, or athletic shoes during class.

Volunteers: Attire should be consistent with safety and with an educational environment. Preferred attire is either riding clothes or long pants or jeans and hard-soled shoes. Halter tops, bare midriffs, sandals, dangling jewelry or other such attire for women; and bare chests or cutoff t-shirts for men, are not allowed during activity times. During very warm weather, volunteers may wear shorts for comfort.

### **Tack**

TROT requires the use of safety stirrups for all mounted program activities. Peacock stirrups are preferred, but other approved stirrups with safety features may be used at the discretion of the instructor.

It is the policy of TROT that all tack and equipment shall be inspected by the instructor or by qualified personnel or volunteers prior to each day's program activities. Any tack that is found to be in disrepair shall be immediately removed from program use. Special attention should be given to donated tack.

## HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read, understand and agree to comply with the rules and policies in Therapeutic Riding of Tryon's Volunteer Handbook. I acknowledge that failure to comply with TROT's policies may result in dismissal from my role as a volunteer at TROT.

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Printed Name

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Signature (Parent or Legal Guardian if Minor)

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Date

***Thank you for your willingness to serve with us! We couldn't provide this program to our community without the help of our volunteers and we appreciate having you as part of the TROT team!***