

# *Raemelon Therapeutic Equestrian Center*

## **VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Thank you for your interest in volunteer at Raemelon Therapeutic Equestrian Center. The following are descriptions of volunteer opportunities available to you. Please note that each area has training and/or shadowing requirements. The goal of the RTEC volunteer program is to create a safe and enriching environment for you and the students we serve.

### **Volunteer Guidelines**

1. All volunteers must sign a Volunteer Agreement and Liability Release Form
2. Youth volunteers must be at least 15 years old.
3. Volunteers between the ages of 15 and 17 will only be scheduled in groups of two. It is at the discretion of RTEC to schedule the youth volunteers.
4. All rules and regulation of RTEC must be followed at all times. Violation of RTEC rules and regulation can lead to expulsion for the volunteer program.
5. **General Rules:**
  - a. No horse play on the grounds
  - b. No one should enter a horse's stall or pasture without permission from a RTEC staff member.
  - c. Do not feed the horse unless directed to do so by a barn staff member. The horse are on regulated diets and treats can lead to a horse nipping.
  - d. No alcohol consumption
  - e. No smoking near or around the barns
  - f. Youth volunteers may not invite friends or sibling to accompany them during their scheduled volunteer time.

### **HORSE LEADERS, SIDE WALKERS and BARN HELP:**

All volunteers involved in horse care and/or lessons must wear proper footwear and attire. Foot wear must be a solid toed leather shoe or boot. Please dress in a presentable manner, you are representing RTEC. No short shorts, tube tops, spaghetti straps or mid-drift shirts.

## **BARN HELP**

1. Volunteer barn help assist in the care of the horses. This ranges from cleaning stalls, leading horses to and from the pastures, to cleaning the aisle ways, water buckets and tack
2. You must shadow an experience barn volunteer of a staff member before starting as volunteer barn help.
3. Do not handle or enter a horse's stall you have not been properly trained to handle.
4. Only perform the tasks you have been properly trained to do.
5. No horse play! The barn should be a sanctuary for the horses, loud noises and running are not permitted.

## **HORSE LEADERS**

6. Not everyone is suited to be a horse leader. Please respect the instructors and barn manager's judgment on who is suitable to be a horse walker and which horses an individual is best suited to work with. This is for the safety of the student, volunteer and the horse.
7. Please be at the barn 30 minutes prior to your class time.
8. Horse leader must have prior horse experience.
9. Horse leader needs to be able to groom and tack your horse.
10. Horse leader needs to be able to **safely handle** the horse through out your scheduled class time.
11. Remember to lead from the left side; position your right hand just under the snap on the lead line and fold the extra lead in your left hand.
12. **DO NOT WRAP THE EXTRA LEAD LINE AROUND YOUR HAND OR WRIST**
13. Maintain a steady comfortable pace and walk beside the horse's head. Keep right arm flexed at the elbow and relaxed.
14. Keep all corners and circles large so your student will not lose their balance.
15. As a horse leader your first responsibility is to the horse. If your student does not have side walkers you need to be aware of what your student is doing before you try to do it for them. And know that the student's safety must always come first. If you have side walkers it is their responsibility to help and aid the student while you take care of leading the horse
16. If the horse should shy or balk do not try to discipline or pull him. Wait until the horse relaxes, then move his head slowly to one side or the other and encourage him gently to go in a slightly different direction. Do not look your horse in the eye and try to pull him towards you, look ahead and walk on.

17. Horse leader needs to be able to untack and groom horse after class.
18. Time required is at least 1 ½ to 2 hours per class.
19. If at any time you do not feel comfortable or you feel you cannot safely lead a horse please tell the instructor or volunteer coordinator right away. Remember it's the student's safety that comes first not your pride.
20. Remember to keep an elephant's length between you and the horse in front of you. Keep room between the horse and the walls or items you might pass for the side walkers. (Remember you have a long large animal at the end of the lead line.
21. Falls are rare but do happen. If it is your student and they have fallen off your horse please move your horse safely away towards the middle of the arena, allow the side walkers to stay with the student till the instructor gets to them. If it is not your student stop your horses immediately. Your first concern is your horse and rider. NEVER let go of your horse. If there is a loose horse let someone else catch it. Remember to stay calm and reassure your horse, as they may get excited if there is another horse loose in the arena. Look towards your instructor for advice in this situation.

#### **SIDE WALKER:**

1. Please arrive at the barn at least 20 minutes before scheduled lesson.
2. Remember to ask your student's name and know your horses name, and what kind of hold to use for your student, and to walk next to your student's knee. (not in front of or behind your student)
3. Do not fiddle with the horse or equipment as this will distract both horse and rider, and may become a safety hazard.
4. Please remember to keep all conversations towards the student and not with another side walker.
5. Need to be able to assist your student during class times when needed.
6. Side walkers need to be empathetic to students needs, and be able to deal with all different disabilities.
7. Remember that the side walker is an extension of the riding instructor.
8. We want to encourage the student to learn and do as much as possible on their own. Try not to do the work for them. However, if they are having difficulties, feel free to assist them.
9. PLEASE NOTE: try not to over help or over ride the instructor's verbal instructions to your student. This is often the hardest thing to learn, when to help and when not to help. If in doubt, always check with the riding instructor.
10. After the instructor dismounts your student you may assist them to their parent or guardian.
11. If your student should fall off, do not move him, have horse move away. Stay with your student till the instructor can get to them, remain calm and wait for the instructor to attend to your student.

## **ARENA SAFETY**

When bringing the horse into the arena walk them around 2 times and then line up in the middle of the arena and wait for instructors to check tack and equipment. Then listen to which student the instructor wants to mount and how they will mount the student. It's important to do these things in a timely manner as it affects each student's riding time.

**Mounting and dismounting is to only be done by an instructor.** When assisting in mounting the student as the leader please listen closely to the instructor. Position yourself in front of the horse, facing the horse, and holding onto the lead rope with one hand and sometimes the halter with the other. (Your instructor will let you know which horse to do this with.) Walk backwards through the mounting ramp. Feel free to talk and calm the horse, do not pat the horse on the head, but softly stroke his neck if he becomes uneasy. Most dismounts are done in the center of the arena. Students that are non ambulatory may dismount from the ramp. Your instructor will advise you of this. Please give your horse and rider plenty of room when you come to the middle to dismount safely. **If you are the horse leader do not take horse from arena till all students are dismounted and the instructor gives you permission to leave.**

## **Ground and Maintenance Volunteers**

**Raemelton requires an immeasurable amount of maintenance. We rely on volunteers to help keep the facility neat, clean and in good working order.**

**Maintenance includes but is not limited to the following jobs:**

- **Brush Hog pastures and trails**
- **Mowing (rider and push)**
- **Trimming**
- **Weeding and landscaping**
- **Fence repair**
- **Gutter cleaning**
- **Painting**
- **Arena and Viewing room housekeeping**



