



# Heaven's Gait Ranch Therapeutic Riding Center

## Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is PATH International?**
  - Our team at Heaven's Gait Ranch includes dedicated members of PATH International, the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship. PATH International was founded in 1969 as the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) to promote equine assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) to individuals with special needs. Today, PATH Intl. has over 800 member centers throughout the world who help and support more than 62,000 men, women, and children with special needs each year through a variety of programs.
  
- **What are Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT Education)?**
  - Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT Education) include any specific center activity -- such as therapeutic riding, mounted or ground activities, grooming and stable management, shows, parades, demonstrations etc. -- in which riders, participants, volunteers, instructors, and equines are involved.
  
- **What is therapeutic riding?**
  - Therapeutic riding is an equine assisted activity for the purpose of contributing positively to the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social well-being of individuals with special needs or disabilities.
  
- **What are the benefits of therapeutic riding?**
  - By enhancing a person's balance, posture, muscle control, and social skills, therapeutic riding has been proven to help people with physical, emotional, and psychological needs.
  - Participating in activities at Heaven's Gait Ranch is a wonderful option for those who love nature and animals. By offering services in a nonclinical environment, families and individuals often feel more at ease, learning and growing together in a natural environment.
  
- **Who can participate?**
  - HGR is proud to serve both children and adults with special needs or disabilities. Children as young as four may participate in therapeutic riding.
  - We are also honored to serve our US Military Veterans. We are thankful for our generous donors who help sponsor and subsidize our Equine Services for Heroes.
  - Individuals with head injuries, Cerebral Palsy, Autism, Down Syndrome, hearing impairments, visual impairments, Multiple Sclerosis, seizures, speech & learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory integration dysfunction, depression, and PTSD are all encouraged to inquire and apply.
  
- **How does one become a rider at HGR?**
  - All those who are interested in participating in the equine assisted activities at HGR must apply by completing the rider registration forms found on our website. These forms include a physician's statement and medical release. HGR reserves the right to determine whether mounted or unmounted equine activities are safe and appropriate for each applicant.



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- **How long is a lesson?**
  - A typical lesson at HGR is 45 minutes long.
- **What Equine Services for Heroes are offered at HGR?**
  - Formerly called *Horses for Heroes* by PATH International, our Equine Services for Heroes include both mounted and unmounted opportunities for military veterans to grow at Heaven's Gait Ranch.
  - US Military Veterans may participate at no charge.
- **Why should veterans join this program at HGR?**
  - With compassionate eyes, a calming demeanor, and a comparable gait, horses have the unspoken ability to forge a powerful relationship with veterans. Through gained respect, mutual trust, and physical contact, horses not only crave companionship, but they also seek leadership. As herd animals, they understand the beautiful dynamic of working within a team that bonds together. As incredibly intelligent animals, they also love challenges, and they are not afraid to push their potential and enhance their abilities.
- **How much does a lesson cost for each program at Heaven's Gait Ranch?**
  - Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT Education) for Individuals with Special Needs or Disabilities:
    - \$35.00 for a 45 minute group lesson
    - \$45.00 for a 45 minute private lesson
  - Therapeutic Riding for Individuals with Special Needs or Disabilities:
    - \$35.00 for a 45 minute group lesson
    - \$45.00 for a 45 minute private lesson
  - Equine Services for Heroes
    - US Military Veterans ride for FREE at Heaven's Gait Ranch.
- **How do the prices at HGR compare to those at other PATH Member Centers in Wisconsin?**
  - Charges for therapeutic riding and other equine assisted activities vary not only throughout the country but also within the state of Wisconsin. While some PATH Member Centers in Wisconsin charge up to \$65.00 for a 45 minute group lesson, we recognize that families with loved ones with special needs or disabilities often feel overwhelmed by the growing costs of quality care. Therefore, as a 501(c)(3), Heaven's Gait Ranch is committed to provide exceptional and personalized therapeutic riding lessons and services at a substantially lower rate than those at similar facilities. We are only able to do this through the kindness and generosity of our donors. We believe in good people, and thankfully good people also believe in our mission.
- **I love horses. How can I get involved?**
  - Please contact Margaret Mary at 920-400-0628 to inquire about volunteer opportunities.
  - Those with horse experience are encouraged to apply so that they can be trained as grooms, lead walkers, or side walkers at HGR.



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- **I like horses, but I don't know much about working with them. What other ways can I get involved?**
  - There are a variety of volunteer opportunities at Heaven's Gait Ranch. Some of them include working with the horses, while others do not. By filling out a volunteer application, our team at HGR can work to align your interests and abilities with our program needs. From grooming and tacking before lessons to coordinating special events or writing grants, we are so thankful to those who can offer their time and talent in support of our mission.
  
- **I love your mission at HGR, but I cannot commit to the time commitment of weekly volunteering. How else can I help?**
  - Aside from inquiring about other volunteer opportunities on site, please consider supporting us in a very important and meaningful way. Through the generosity of our donors and sponsors, we are able to provide exceptional and personalized therapeutic riding lessons to all of our participants at a substantially lower rate than those with similar programs. To show our gratitude to our US Military Veterans, we offer our services to them at no charge. We are only able to do this with the help of kind people like you. Heaven's Gait Ranch is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization which means all donations are tax deductible. Our website outlines donor level classifications and sponsorship opportunities, as well as a "wish list" of items or services the program needs to grow. Please contact us to learn more about how you can make a difference.