

The River Rock

Stepping Stone Farm LLC

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

From our family to yours...

Merry Christmas

And

Happy New Year



Coming Events

December

5 Flying Colors 4-H meeting 6pm Cory's house

21 farrier

25 Christmas

January

8 4-H Horse Awards Banquet

16 Flying Colors 4-H meeting 6pm

February

14 Valentine's Day and judging for valentine contest (see p.2)

20 Flying Colors 4-H meeting 6pm

25 Tack Sale—Ingham County fairgrounds, Mason

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING FOR THE RIDERS ON YOUR LIST

Here are some great Christmas gift ideas for the riders on your list:

- Winter riding boots
- Grooming supplies
- Helmet
- Horse show clothing
- riding lesson coupon book \$250 (pay for 10 lessons get 1 free)
- Stepping Stone Farm t-shirt or hoodie
- Books about riding and horses
- Riding lesson gift certificates (any amount)
- Pony (It's on their list already, you know)
- Crop or dressage whip
- Winter riding gloves
- Horse magazine subscription
- Toe warmers and hand warmers

NEW FOR 2012—SSF RIDING LESSON JOURNALS

Welcome to a new way to record and remember all of your riding adventures! Designed just for our riders, Stepping Stone Farm now offers **Riding Lesson Journals** so our riders can track their progress as they learn to ride.

Preview a copy of the journal in the tack room and give us some feedback before December 20.

Just in time for the new year I will email out a pdf file of the pages of the journal to any current students that would like to start a journal. Periodically special pages will be offered for students to add to their journals.

This is a great addition to our riding lesson program and a wonderful way for riders to get the most out of their riding lessons.

HOW TO SURVIVE WINTER RIDING

Now, all of you know I'm not at all a winter person. But I know that riding all winter is possible! I know, I've done it, many, many times.

I also know that winter comes just before spring. And spring is when horse shows start. And I know that if horses don't work all winter they get silly (or stupid) in the spring. It's a veterinarian diagnosed disorder called "spring fever".

I also know that every spring I find myself teaching my riders things I know I already taught them in the fall, before they took the winter off from riding.

So even though it conflicts with my instinct to hibernate all winter, I will be out there teaching lessons in the cold. And I'd love to have you join me!

Here are a few ideas to help combat the cold:

- Dress in layers. Yup, bring on the long-johns
- Wear a turtleneck or scarf (tucked in) so cold can't get down your neck.
- Tuck in your shirt so cold can't sneak up behind you.

- Toe warmers! These are wonderful little heat packets that keep toes warm in really cold weather. They make great stocking stuffers.
- Insulated boots and warm socks.
- Warm gloves, non-slip kind.
- Drink hot cocoa to warm up after you ride. Or for parents, while you watch. It's in the tack room and free of charge.
- Curry comb a horse to get the blood flowing, yours and his.
- If all else fails...clean a stall!

At least once in his life, every horse deserves a little girl who loves him.

SHOW THEM THE LOVE

Now's your chance to show that special four-legged someone just how much you care.

This Valentine's Day Stepping Stone Farm will host our first annual Valentine card contest.



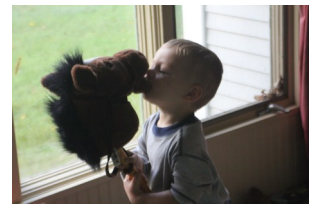
Make a special Valentine card for your favorite horse. Or make one for each of them. Be creative and show them how much they mean to you.

You can drop cards off at the farm or mail them in. We will collect all the cards and post them in the barn for everyone to see.

Then we will choose winners from different categories and prizes will be awarded.

Cards will be accepted anytime between January 1 and February 14.

The fine print: Any and all chocolate valentines may be eaten by the management.



HOMESCHOOL RIDING CLUB RIDES AGAIN

The first year of our new Homeschool Riding Club was a great success! Thank you to all who joined us.

We had 30 students join in one of our first level sessions and 8 students in our level 2 class.

Students enjoyed learning about horses through riding, workshops and take-home activities.



Our winners for the free riding lesson drawings were:

Julianne Patak

Noel Fox

Molly Williams

Congratulations!

We plan to offer a spring session of Level 2 in March and April of 2012. Level 2 is open to any riders who have completed our Level 1 HRC class.

Stay tuned for dates and details.

BIG LITTLE NEWS

We've got some big news about a little something...

Our family is expecting a new baby in the spring! Due to arrive around May 20, baby will arrive just in time for Mama to enjoy some nice riding weather.

Hopefully baby will cooperate and I will be able to teach until he or she arrives. And I'm sure baby will learn to tag along to horse shows very quickly.

PRETTY PONY PICTURES

Thank you to Sommer Engelter for capturing some treasured memories for our riders on Pony Picture Day.



FARM FIX-UPS

Thank you to Steve Ruppel for fixing our barn door and painting our sheds. Your work is much appreciated.

Check out our new elastic crossies and tie rope.

There is also a new and improved heater in the tack room. Please keep the door closed to keep the heat in.



CONGRATULATIONS CHAMPIONS

Some Stepping Stone Farm riders were rewarded for their dedication and hard work this show season. Congratulations to Kylie James, Alyssa Ruppel, Britney Ruppel, and Makayla Thrush who were awarded prizes at the Fieldstone Farm awards ceremony.

Seth was maybe just a little more proud of Alyssa's trophy than he should have been.



Remember—Winter school horse lease special- \$75 for one month lease- November—February



FUN ON THE FARM

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our HorsePlay games and Farm Picnic. We hope you all had a wonderful day of fun on the farm.

We still have a few leftover dishes from the picnic, so if you are missing something please let us know.



FUN IN 4-H

4-H offers many opportunities for fun with friends and horses. Flying Colors 4-H Club is accepting new members. We are a horse-based club, but members participate in a variety of other projects as well. Come see what great things 4-H has to offer you. Next business meeting is January 16 at 6pm.