

SWAN CENTER OUTREACH GENERAL PROTOCOL AND SAFETY RULES 3.18.17MR

Welcome to Swan Center Outreach. We ask that all visitors review the following protocol and safety rules, and become familiar with them.

WAIVERS

All guests, volunteers and employees of Swan Center Outreach, must fill out and sign a liability waiver, as soon as they arrive at the Center (unless one is already on file).

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

All volunteers are required to fill out a *Volunteer Program Registration* form before volunteering.

SIGN IN/SIGN OUT

Volunteers must sign in and out, on the CDR (Center Daily Report), every time they work at the Center. This enables us to keep track of volunteer's hours, and provides the volunteers with a way to make comments and suggestions.

COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS

Volunteers, who wish to accrue community service hours, must inform an instructor, before starting the volunteer day. We cannot sign off on hours in advance. We can only sign for hours after they have been completed.

TOURING THE PROPERTY

Guests and volunteers may not tour areas of the Center, or leave the general feeding areas, without the approval of an instructor.

MINORS

Parents or guardians may not drop off their children, without notifying an instructor that they have arrived.

Parents or guardians may not pick up their children, without notifying an instructor that they are leaving.

Volunteers, ages 9 to 11, need to be accompanied by an adult when they come to volunteer, even if the adult is not volunteering. The adult must stay in close proximity of the child at all times.

Unaccompanied minors may not leave the designated feeding areas, to use the restroom or to go to another part of the property, without permission from an instructor.

MEDICATIONS

Volunteers, who need to bring medications to the Center, should leave all medications in their locked vehicle; or in the care of an instructor, if the medication may need to be administered quickly by another person, in case of a medical emergency.

It is important that all medications be kept safely out of the reach of the animals and children. Anyone taking medications, which may cause drowsiness, will not be permitted to work with the animals or operate equipment.

SMOKING/ALCOHOL

Smoking and the use of alcohol or recreational drugs is not permitted anywhere on the Center property. Individuals who arrive at the center under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs will be asked to immediately leave the property.

PERFUMES/COLOGNES

Volunteers should refrain from wearing perfume or perfumed products, because this can cause an adverse reaction from the animals, and it could also cause another volunteer to have an allergic reaction.

EARRINGS/BODY PIERCINGS

For safety reasons, volunteers may not wear any visible body piercings, or dangling earrings. Volunteers should also avoid wearing loose fitting bracelets, rings and necklaces.

CLOTHING

- For safety reasons, volunteers should refrain from wearing long, loose, flowing garments, which could get caught on equipment or could spook the horses.
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes are recommended. Sandals and flip-flops are not permitted.
- Pants, which stop at the ankle are recommended. Due to the nature of the volunteer duties, shorts and pants that drag on the ground are discouraged.
- Cropped tops are not permitted, because hay can be abrasive to the skin when carrying it against the bare stomach.

HELMETS

- It is recommended that volunteers wear helmets, when interacting with the horses.
- **Volunteers under the age of 15** are required wear helmets, when interacting with the horses.
- All riders are required to wear helmets.

SAFETY RULES

- Never enter a stall or horse paddock, without an instructor's permission.
- Do not climb over the fences, on any of the farm equipment, or on the hay-stacks.
- Be kind, patient, and calm when working with the horses. Do not yell at or hit a horse.

- Horses sleep standing up. Always alert a horse, with your voice, whenever you approach it.
- Do not run or scream near or around the horses.
- The correct way to go behind and around the horse is to place your hand on the side of its hindquarters, then maintain contact with its body as you step around it.
- Stand clear of the horse's head, to avoid being hit with it, if the horse swings it around.
- Do not stand where you might get slapped in the face, with the horse's tail.
- Never walk under the horse's neck, when it is tied.
- Do not squat down next to the horse, or go underneath its stomach.
- Do not run outside the fence when horses are tied on the fence.
- When tying a horse to the fence, do not stand behind the horse next to it, because if it should kick out at your horse, you could accidentally get kicked.
- Do not wave objects around a horse's head, unless as a training exercise.
- Don't stand between the horse and an open gate or stall door.
- Before releasing a horse into the paddock, turn the horse so that its head is facing you and the gate you will be exiting from. Then as you release the horse, step backwards through the gate, to avoid being kicked when the horse runs off.
- Do not offer food items to the horses, outside of their normal feeding routine, without permission from an instructor.
- Do not allow horses to nudge you or demand to be fed or touched.

LEADING THE HORSE

- Never lead your horse anywhere, without an instructor's permission.
- Never try to lead or hold a horse by the bridle or halter.
- Never loop or tie a lead line around your hand or any other part of your body.
- Hold the lead rope, firmly clasped in your hand, with your thumb facing your body.
- Keep at least one arm's length between you and your horse, when leading it.
- The proper position for the horse's head, when you are leading it, is next to your shoulder.
- Never walk directly in front of the horse, when leading it.
- When leading the horse, look where you are going. Do not look at your horse or down at the ground

- When leading a horse along the fence, never walk between the horse and the fence.
- If you need to change the side you are leading the horse from, stop your horse and have them stand still. Reach under the horse's chin and place the top of your hand on the opposite side, then move their head out of your way. Then walk in front of the horse to the other side.
- When you are leading a horse past other horses, maintain a safe distance and call out "horse passing."
- Never lead a bridled horse by the reins. If the horse has a halter/bridle combination, unhook the reins from the bit, and clip it to the halter part. If you do not have a halter/bridle combination, then keep a halter on underneath the bridle, so you can clip a lead line to it if necessary.

GROOMING THE HORSE

- It is advisable to wear a helmet when grooming.
- When you finish grooming, do not leave the grooming boxes, lead lines, or halters on the arena fence or ground. Place all dirty grooming tools back into the tote they were in, and put them in the equipment room for cleaning.
- Do not use the same grooming tools on two different horses, because certain skin and hoof conditions can be transferred from one horse to another.

Saddle Groom

Thoroughly groom the chest, saddle and girth area with a curry comb, then smooth the hairs on the horse's back and girth area, (from the neck towards the tail) with a body brush. If you need to use a mud brush on areas caked with mud, be careful not to brush too hard, as this could irritate the horse's skin.

Full Groom

Thoroughly groom the horse's body with a curry comb, then smooth the hair (from the neck towards the tail) with a body brush. If you need to use a mud brush on areas caked with mud, be careful not to brush too hard, as this could irritate the horse's skin. Do not brush or comb the **tail or mane** if it is dirty. This can cause the hairs to break.

HOOF CARE

- When picking the horse's hoof, always point the hoof pick away from your body.
- Hold the horse's hoof securely, to prevent the horse from snatching it away. If the horse does snatch it away, immediately pick the hoof back up and hold it again. The horse should not put its foot down unless you say, "OK".
- When you finish picking the horse's hoof, place it gently on the ground, and be aware of where your feet are.

SADDLING/BRIDLING

- If you must put a saddle on the ground, place it pommel side down, and never leave it close enough to the horse, that it can chew on it or step on it.
- Before saddling, always check the blanket and the girth, for anything that may irritate the horse.
- Never leave a horse with a saddle on its back, without fastening the girth first.
- If a saddle has a front and rear girth, always fasten the front girth first. When de-tacking, unfasten the hind girth first.
- Never tie a horse by the reins, when it has a bit in its mouth.
- Never leave a horse unattended, when it has reins attached to the bit.
- Never leave a saddled horse in a stall or the round pen, without being tied.
- The stirrups on English saddles must be put up when not riding.

RIDING

- Check your girth before every mount-up.
- Do not mount or dismount between two horses, or between the horse and a fence.
- If a rider needs to dismount, or falls off, while others are riding in the arena, all riders should stop.
- Sit up straight and pay attention, when on your horse. Do not lean off the side of your horse. (If your horse spooks or jumps to the side you could fall off.)
- Keep both of your feet in the stirrups at all times.
- Hold onto the reins at all times.
- Don't pull hard in the horse's mouth or jerk on the reins.
- Be careful that you do not wave or drop anything, in front of the other horses.
- Do not ride closely behind another horse, and keep some extra space between mares (female horses) and geldings (male horses).
- Call out "horse passing," whenever passing another horse. Leave 2 horse length spaces in front and back, and 1 horse length space to the side of the horse you are passing.
- Do not let your horse put its head down to eat, drink or bite a fly, while you are mounted.
- Do not let your horse paw at the ground or fence, while you are mounted.
- Do not flap reins, crop or any other objects that may spook your horse or the other horses.

- Do not move the reins unless you are delivering a message to the horse.
- Trotting and cantering are not permitted in the arena, without permission from an instructor.
- Trotting or cantering down hills is not permitted.
- Do not wear a belt, if you are jumping in a western saddle, because it could get caught on the saddle horn. Girls should be careful that the saddle horn doesn't get hooked under their bra.
- Always make sure everyone is clear of a jump before going over it.
- If you fall off your horse - let go of the reins and make sure you are clear of any other horses. If you are not, roll out of the way. If you are not in any danger of being stepped on by other horses, lie still and try not to cry or scream, as this will only make things worse. Take a couple of deep relaxing breaths, and decide whether or not you are hurt. If you are not injured, get back on your horse!

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Swan Center Outreach

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