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VISITOR'S GUIDE AND MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

EDUCATION, MAPS AND NEED TO KNOW NUMBERS



FINDING STRENGTH WITH SWIFTSURE

BY ANN HARRISON

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SWIFTSURE RANCH

Wood River Valley is home to a large number of nonprofit organizations but few reach as far as the Swiftsure Ranch Therapeutic Equestrian Center. Since the early 90s Swiftsure has been showing off one of the best traits of our valley—connection. Located just south of Bellevue, their mission is to empower individuals of all abilities to gain strength and freedom through therapeutic equine connections. Over 300 participants of all ages and abilities pass through the gates each year, welcomed every day by the herd of 20 horses that call Swiftsure Ranch home.

In 30 years of operation, their programming has expanded to service diagnoses that didn't even exist when they began. Through collaborations with entities like Higher Ground, The Senior Connection, Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind and Camp Rainbow Gold, Swiftsure's activities and therapies reach far beyond the 191-acre ranch.

The day-to-day life of families with members of different abilities is challenging physically, emotionally and financially. Swiftsure's annual budget of approximately \$700,000, funded through the generosity of our small community, allows the programs to be free to all participants whether it's through a direct referral or part of its many collaborations. This is pretty unique—there are few programs anywhere in the country that can offer such profound transformations at no cost.

Experiences at Swiftsure are genuinely magical and range from making social connections for the first time with a horse, building core strength and feeling the freedom of movement, to completely transforming an entire family.



For participants and volunteers, Swiftsure is a social, positive and vibrant place they may never have known they needed, but can't wait to return. It's a place where they can be released from the constraints of their diagnosis.

"A freak skiing accident and spinal cord injury took me from an active, able-bodied life to one bound to a wheelchair with almost no functional mobility. It felt as if my identity and all the things that brought me joy in life were gone. Swiftsure was the first place that began to change how I felt about that. To participate in something so fulfilling to so many people is extraordinary. It feeds your soul."

-Teresa Hakuri



The physical benefits are easy to measure: participants that have never walked are able to feel the freedom of movement astride a horse, build strength and enjoy a stroll along the 5 miles of trails. The social connections are also apparent as friendships are built between the horses and participants. And while the cognitive elements show as students are learning, the emotional piece is harder to define. Yet, as many participants have expressed, it has a profound impact.

Participants find strength, freedom and connection each time a lesson or camp takes place, thanks to the dedication of the staff, volunteers and thousand-pound therapists—the herd of specially trained therapy horses.

**IT TAKES A HEART LIKE YOURS
AND A HERD LIKE THEIRS
TO FIND STRENGTH, FREEDOM
AND CONNECTION**

Unlike most organizations, when the sun goes down and the lights are turned off, the ranch is still breathing. Each element of the facility feeds the work they do and without proper care, they cannot provide their services. Just like any ranch, whether they are in full operation or not, fences need mending and horses need tending.

To take a virtual ride with Henry, a lovable member of the Swiftsure herd, and see what's involved in caring for the 190 acre ranch, read the 2019 Annual Report.





SIGNATURE EVENTS

Cowboy Ball Put on your best cowboy duds for sensational live music, fantastic cocktails, and a delectable meal. Every July Swiftsure Ranch hosts one of the liveliest dinner/auction events in the Valley. This year it will be held virtually so you can dance like no one is watching.

Swiftsure Derby A race for Strength, Freedom and Connection. As with any family, the herd as Swiftsure loves a good competition. Choose the horse you want to sponsor and make a donation to get them to the finish line first. The winning horse gets a spa day treatment, and all who ponied up on his/her behalf are entered into a raffle for lots of great prizes.

Saddle-Up Challenge The week before Cowboy Ball is your chance to saddle-up for strength, freedom and connection. Sign up to challenge yourself to your own goal for horseback riding, biking, running, or swimming. Your entry fee gets you one entry into a raffle for multiple prizes and **every hour** you spend in the "saddle" earns you more entries.

Blazing Pumpkins Ever wanted to chuck a pumpkin with a catapult? ... Shoot an apple through an air gun? ... This event is the place to make all those dreams come true. Hosted at the Ranch in October, this yearly celebration is fun for the whole family!

For more information visit swiftsureranch.org.

GET INVOLVED

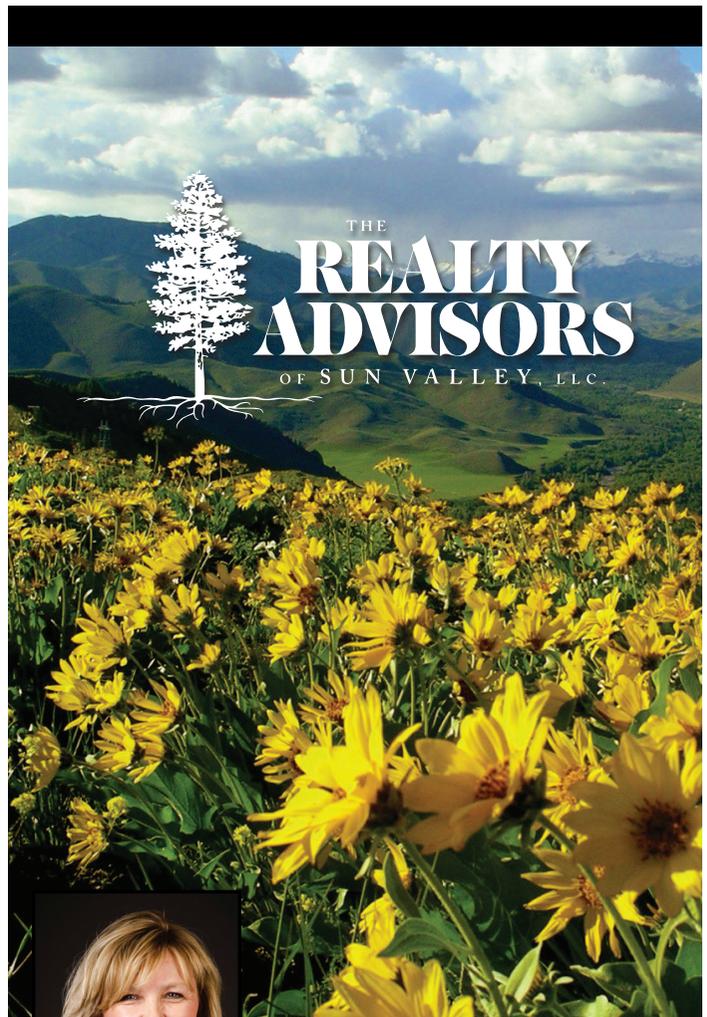
Donate Private donations cover the operating costs of the Ranch so you can give knowing that your whole gift will bring strength, freedom and connection.

Become a Swiftsure GEM The Swiftsure GEMs Club (Giving Every Month ... c'mon, that's pretty clever) is a passionate and determined group of supporters who care deeply about making a difference. By investing monthly, you're joining a community dedicated to sustaining Swiftsure's mission.

Volunteer Swiftsure could not provide service to over 300 participants free of charge every year without the devotion of our tireless volunteers! They rely on our volunteers at many levels to ensure that their riders are safe, the horses are happy, the fundraisers go off without a hitch, and the lessons remain available to all. All volunteers are welcome!

Follow on Social Media By following Swiftsure on social media, you show your support of all that the Ranch represents and help them spread the word.

@SWIFTSURERANCH



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Testimonial Buyer 'Zillow.com'

"Susan Radford is five ★ stars in every category. Her dedication, knowledge and commitment in helping us find a home in the Wood River Valley was unstoppable. Not only is she an outstanding agent who loves her job and cares deeply for her clients, but Susan also has the resources and knowledge to close the deal. We would recommend her to anyone because she is committed, motivated, understanding, and fair in every aspect of the home journey."