

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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First ever Valvoline Instant Oil ChangeSM “Donation Derby” helps kids heal with horse therapy

Local business celebrates expansion and ponies-up for local horse therapy

Louisville, Ky. – You don’t need an all-star jockey, a prize winning thoroughbred or a fancy hat to take part in the Valvoline Instant Oil ChangeSM first ever “Donation Derby” on April 9. Just drive in for an oil change and a local business will pony-up funds to help kids who [rely on horses to conquer behavioral disorders.](#)

Kentucky-based [Valvoline Instant Oil ChangeSM](#), the nation’s second largest quick-lube chain, celebrates the grand opening of five new Louisville area service centers by raising money for [Opening Gates](#), a local non-profit horse therapy group. Valvoline Instant Oil Change service centers launch the “Donation Derby” in honor of a local third grader, Ethan Vaughn, who is working to overcome behavior issues associated with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and excel in school. Ethan has the [help of his friend, Bear](#) - an Irish Draught elite show jumper who was imported from Ireland, abandoned by his owners, and rescued and trained by Opening Gates.

On Wednesday, April 9, all five new Louisville area Valvoline Instant Oil Change locations will offer \$24.99 conventional oil changes (usually \$39.99) and donate \$10 per oil change to Opening Gates (up to \$3,000 maximum). Valvoline Instant Oil Change’s goal is to raise \$3,000 for [Opening Gates](#) so they can contribute money needed to buy a shed to provide shelter for the horses and additional space for kids and horses for therapy tasks. Valvoline Instant Oil Change service centers will also treat Ethan, his parents and twin sister to a day at the Kentucky Derby to watch the “most exciting two minutes in sports!”

Ethan’s Story:

Ethan is nine years old and was adopted from Guatemala. In first grade, he was diagnosed with ADHD, one of the most common neurobehavioral disorders in children. Ethan was having trouble paying attention and controlling impulsive behaviors in school – so his mother turned to horse therapy.

Ethan was paired with Bear, a stubborn horse that had been severely abused. Bear rejects people if they are too loud or hyper. While caring for Bear and doing therapy tasks with him, such as [Pony Pages](#) (reading sessions that teach kids the body parts of horses with index cards), Ethan learned to control his emotions and refrain from outbursts because he didn’t want to upset Bear. Just 10 weeks after beginning horse therapy, Ethan now knows how to control his behavior and is excelling in school.

Local Business Gives Back:

“Valvoline Instant Oil Change is based in Lexington, and we call Kentucky home. We’re thrilled to celebrate our expansion in Louisville with our ‘Donation Derby,’ which gives back to the community by raising money for a fantastic organization that helps local children like Ethan,” says Michael Middleton, Louisville Area Manager for Valvoline Instant Oil Change. “This derby is our way to thank the people in the Louisville area for trusting their car care to us. We built this company on family values and we earned America’s trust, one car and one city at a time. We may not be the Kentucky Derby ... but I can guarantee the ten hours of the “Donation Derby” are the most rewarding 600 minutes in car care!”

“Donation Derby” Details:

Come meet Ethan and his therapy horse, Bear, as they demonstrate the [horse therapy tasks](#) that help children thrive. Ethan and Bear will be at the Valvoline Instant Oil Change center in Jeffersonville, Ind. (2514 Allison Lane) on Wednesday, April 9 from 10 a.m. to noon.

- **What: “Donation Derby” Fundraiser for Opening Gates horse therapy group at five new Valvoline Instant Oil Change locations** offering \$24.99 conventional oil changes (regularly \$39.99) with **\$10 from each oil change going to Opening Gates horse therapy group.** The five new locations are:
 - 2514 Allison Lane, Jeffersonville, Ind.;
 - 154 Franks Drive, Madison, Ind.;
 - 1220 Old Ekron Road, Brandenburg, Ky.;
 - 3721 Charlestown Road, New Albany, Ind.; and
 - 1861 Gardner Lane NW, Corydon, Ind.

- **When: Wednesday, April 9**

- **Prize: The first 20 people** to get an oil change at each of the five new Valvoline Instant Oil Change locations will receive a **free Kentucky Derby Pegasus Pin**, which features an image of Louisville’s skyline in a changing kaleidoscope of colors, depending on the angle at which it is viewed. The 42nd edition of the pin provides admission to numerous festival events, including the Chow Wagon at Waterfront Park.

We can make a pit stop in your newsroom with Ethan and his family - OR - join us April 9 to interview a Valvoline Instant Oil Change expert about the expansion into Louisville. At the “Donation Derby,” talk with Ethan and his family about how this fundraiser will help many local children work with horses to conquer behavioral disorders and lead more productive lives.

About Valvoline Instant Oil Change:

Valvoline™, a brand of Ashland Inc. (NYSE: ASH), has been serving American motorists for over 140 years. In addition to commercial and industrial lubricants, the Valvoline family of products includes Eagle One™ appearance products, Car Brite™ car restoration products, Zerex™ antifreeze, SynPower™ performance products, MaxLife™ products created for higher-mileage engines, and NextGen™ motor oil created with 50 percent recycled, re-refined oil. With approximately 900 locations throughout the United States, Valvoline Instant Oil ChangeSM is a leader in serving the quick-lube market, and is looking for franchisee partners to establish a presence for the brand in markets across the country. For a list of all Valvoline Instant Oil Change service center locations and hours of operations, visit vioc.com.

About Opening Gates:

Opening Gates has been a not-for-profit organization offering counseling services to residents of Southern Indiana since 2008. Its mission is to promote growth and learning to individuals and groups through equine assisted counseling in the natural setting of the horse farm. For more information, visit www.openinggatestherapy.org.

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Fast Facts about Horse Therapy (Hippotherapy):

Horse therapy has shown to be very effective for people with depression, attention-deficit disorders, anxiety, autism, dementia, and many other related disorders. [Kentucky has the highest percentage of ADHD diagnosis \(18.7 percent\) than any other state in the nation,](#) according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Therapy horses give people immediate feedback about their actions and body language through mirroring. Kids, like Ethan, learn to act and react appropriately. A popular therapy task at Opening Gates is "[Hole-In-One,](#)" where a group is tasked with moving a horse into a square without touching or bribing the horse in any way. This task works on teamwork, frustration and problem-solving.

- Hippotherapy, or equine assisted therapy (EAT), is a physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy treatment strategy that uses equine movement for emotional growth.
- Horse therapy has proven to build confidence, improve communication, and provide personal insights.
- People in hippotherapy use feelings, behaviors, and patterns to better understand the horse and themselves.
- The horse's walk provides sensory input through movement, which is rhythmic, and repetitive.
- Equine therapy should always be performed by a certified Equine-Assisted Therapist.

(Sources: American Hippotherapy Association, Equine Psychotherapy, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

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