

SHEPARD MEADOWS THERAPEUTIC RIDING CENTER FALL / WINTER NEWSLETTER

Volume II, Issue 3 – January 2020

PARTNERSHIP BUILDING AT THE CENTER

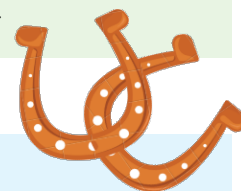


We enthusiastically welcome two new partnerships for youth programming!

The Bristol Boys & Girls Club and the FOCUS Center for Autism & The Fresh Start School. Both new initiatives focus on Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) in an unmounted format. For FOCUS the program is two-fold including a vocational component. Working with a PATH, Intl Certified Instructor in a small group format, the experiential lessons are aimed to promote emotional and social well-being, serve as character education, and promote the social skills and leadership of youth and children.

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Welcome to our newly appointed Volunteer Coordinator, Sister Ann Frances Thompson, FSE, MA, MT-BC. Sister Ann has a background as an educator and music therapist, as well as a PATH Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor. She spent most of her career in Michigan, and she even founded a camp dedicated to driving miniature horses (hello Little Bear). She succeeds Amy, who will be focusing her time as an instructor for both our ground and riding programs as well as working closely with our herd on their daily care and exercise regimes.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

This winter a new board member was added, Mr. Jason Warnke, who is a self-employed financial planner and founder of the Oak Bridge Group in West Hartford. He and his wife and three children live in Avon. In his spare time, he loves staying active. “I enjoy playing basketball and golf, as well as working out at the gym on a regular basis. In 2008 I completed my first and only full marathon.” Jason was introduced to Shepard Meadows last fall and has been an active supporter ever since. We look forward to having him share his expertise with us.

VETERANS OPEN HOUSE AND PROGRAMS

On Sunday, November 3rd we held our first Veterans Open House to introduce Veterans and their families to our programs. Programs are free to Veterans and begin with a dedicated unmounted horsemanship program that may lead to riding – depending on interest.

Several individuals and families attended, with two families beginning their sessions during Winter II. Their participation has brought us all much JOY! We ask all our friends to continue to share information about our programs to friends and family so that we can reach more Veterans in 2020.



GRANT AND FOUNDATION UPDATE

Over the past few months we have been busy writing grants to support our programs; focusing on our unmounted horsemanship programs for youth, and the scholarships to support them. We thank the Roberts Foundation, The Barnes Group, The Main Street Foundation, American Savings Foundation, the Rotary Club of Avon-Canton, and Thomaston Savings Bank Foundation, Inc. for their financial support and commitment to our organization.

WINTER HORSEMANSHIP PROGRAM

This winter we welcomed a record number of participants to our unmounted Horsemanship Program.

Participants learned about prey animal behaviors, non-verbal communication, haltering, leading, longing, feed, grooming, as well as health and nutrition.

We look forward to expanding this ever popular and impactful program throughout the year.

SECOND ANNUAL HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

We welcomed over 200 visitors to our Second Annual Holiday Open House on Sunday, December 8th. The farm was gorgeous, snow covered, and the sun was bright! Hot cocoa, crafts, farm tours, it was a wonderful day, with Bart even getting down to roll and demonstrate his snow angel making.





FUN FACT!

Horses on average have **205 bones**. In comparison, adult human beings have 206 bones.

These 205 bones include:

- ✦ 54 bones in the vertebral column
- ✦ 36 ribs
- ✦ 1 sternum
- ✦ 34 bones in the skull
- ✦ 40 bones in the front legs
- ✦ 40 bones in the hind legs

EQUINE INFO

February is National Dental Health Month – Did you know horses need their teeth done too?

An adult male horse has 40 permanent teeth, and typically mares have 36 to 40 teeth. Like humans, horses have two sets of teeth in their lifetimes. The baby teeth, called deciduous teeth are temporary. They will begin to be replaced by adult teeth around the age of 2 1/2. By the age of 5, most horses have all their permanent teeth.

Horses have their teeth floated once or twice a year depending on the horse's age. Floating is the practice of filing off any sharp edges or hooks that may form on the edges of the teeth. Horses' teeth grow and change. This is why you can tell a horse's age approximately by its teeth. Did you ever hear the phrase "Don't look a gift horse in the mouth?"

HERD UPDATE

This past fall we welcomed three new herd members – Bart, D.J. and Little Bear. Bart is an 18-year-old Shire cross who is an experienced fox hunter from the Hudson Valley, NY. He will partner with our Veterans and Community riders. He has adjusted well and enjoys the attention of all. D.J. came from Kentucky and is on free lease from the same owner as Moses. He's a Quarter Horse/Paint cross who adores groundwork. He's still in training for our riding program and is being exercised to strengthen him for spring. Finally, Little Bear arrived in late November. We had been searching for the right mini for our programs, and we finally found him! He's a 36 inch, 13-year-old dapple chocolate who rides and drives. He's settling in and has been introduced to our participants in program this winter.



CONGRATULATIONS TO BOTH AMY DEGUMBIA & KATIE ROGERS

Kate and Amy became certified Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International (PATH) Therapeutic Riding Instructors, Amy in October and Katie in December. Ride on!

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RECORD SETTING WINE & WHISKEY FUNDRAISING GALA — SOLD OUT!



On October 4th, friends of Shepard Meadows, both old and new, came together to celebrate our mission at a fun-filled western-themed wine and whiskey tasting gala. The event sold out and we raised over \$30,000 in support of operations.

Save the date for 2020; it's Saturday, October 24th!

CONGRATULATIONS TO LIZ LEFRANCOIS

She's been a part of Shepard Meadows for over ten years and in a variety of ways, from volunteer to board member, gardener to rider, she's always just a phone call away when we need help, and now she is being recognized by our association, PATH, Intl. She is the **Region 1 Volunteer of the Year!** She'll receive her award at the Regional Conference in April in New Hampshire and then she's on to Nationals (we hope)! Thank you, Liz, for all you do for Shepard Meadows.

EMILY NOW DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

Emily took on her new role in November without missing a beat! She's been with the center for two years, beginning as an Instructor, then as Program Coordinator. Most everyone knows Emily as she is usually their first point of contact with the center and its programs. She's responsible for the herd's health and welfare, leading and directing instruction, and managing our programming. She hit the job at a gallop and is working to meet our targets in Therapeutic Riding, Veterans, Youth and Community Programs.



Emily and Liz

BLACKSMITHING OPTION ADDED TO VETERANS PROGRAM

We are so fortunate to have a working blacksmith shop on the farm. Now it's open nearly every Friday! Board President, Veteran, and resident blacksmith, Dave Desmarais has started a blacksmithing option to our Veterans Program.



2020 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

- Unmounted Winter I | Jan. 4 to 29
- Unmounted Winter II | Feb. 1 to Feb. 26
- Spring | March 23 to May 16
- Summer I | June 1 to June 27
- Summer II | July 6 to August 1
- Summer "Camp" Equine Experience I | Aug. 10 to 14
- Summer "Camp" Equine Experience II – Aug. 17 to 21
- Fall | Aug. 31 to Oct. 24

SAVE THE DATES

- Paint Night
Saturday, March 14th
West Hartford Art League
- 2nd Annual Horse Show
Sunday, May 31st
- Movie in the Meadows
July TBA
- Annual Gala
Saturday, October 24th
Double Tree Hotel, Bristol