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Augusta County's premier equine-assisted therapeutic horsemanship program

Our MISSION is to serve those in Greater Augusta County with physical, emotional and developmental special needs through a wide range of therapeutic equine activities.

Spring/Summer 2024 Newsletter

Ride With Pride
P.O. Box 1203
Staunton, Virginia 24402



President's Report- Laura Martlock



Hello from Ride With Pride! We are excited to be in our 35th year of helping our neuro and ability divergent community members through equine assisted therapeutic activities. We have many marvelous events planned this year from fundraisers to clinics to new programs and we hope that you will join us for some of these. There is always something for you to do to be a part of the life-changing work at Ride With Pride. I have been a part of this organization for 33 years, and my, it has changed and grown! We have restructured and gone through difficult financial and operational times, as well as great growth and smooth sailing. Through it all, our focus and dedication to our clients and those in our community who need our services has never wavered. Those who become a part of this amazing organization have a gift for giving of themselves and an understanding of how our organization fulfills a deep need in our clients, whether that is physical, emotional or mental. I have seen our RWP volunteers go so much above and beyond to help others. But what many don't realize is, we do so because we get something from it, too. The joy, fulfillment, and knowing that you are really, truly doing something that changes people's lives are feelings that one seldom has an opportunity to experience. I am amazed and humbled every day by the RWP team and what they do. I am honored to be a part of this program. Thank you to every person who been a part of Ride With Pride's growth over the past 35 years. If you are looking for a fulfilling and rewarding opportunity, please contact us. If you are looking for fun things to do, watch our calendar! We are looking forward to seeing you all in 2024!

Volunteer Corner

Ride With Pride has the BEST volunteers! Their cheerful smiling faces greet our students and make them feel welcome. We have recently started using a new volunteer app called Wranglr that's made sharing and signing up for volunteer opportunities streamlined and easy! Why volunteer at Ride With Pride? Don't take our word for it!

Volunteer Sumter Hazzard shares: For most of my life I have been around horses, whether riding, teaching, grooming, mucking-the whole magilla! But I have found myself in an equine drought for the past several years and it has worn on my heart. When I retired last May, I sought out volunteer opportunities and found Ride With Pride. The first day there, Carolyn had me accompany her to the field to bring in a couple of horses. As I was leading my charge back to the barn, I had a "Moment"-my boot clad feet treading on farm dirt, smelling my favorite smells and having this gentle being walking quietly by my side. I was Home. I was "ME" again. I have found the loving and nurturing care provided to both horse and rider at RWP to be aligned with what I have been taught and practiced myself. And even though I am not riding myself, it's enough to groom and love on the horses and to see how the riders connect with their mounts. I feel truly blessed to be a part of such a rewarding, inspiring and gratifying program!

Thank you to Sumter and ALL of our amazing volunteers!



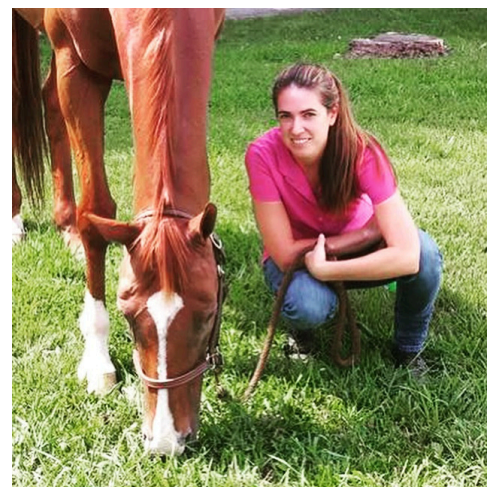
Nicker News from Carolyn Meyer, RWP's Director

Spring session officially began on March 11 and we excitedly welcomed back many of our favorite horses to the Ride With Pride herd and welcomed some new faces as well!



Meet **Micah**, one of our new guys! He's a grey quarter horse gelding. We like the QH breed because they are generally quiet in their demeanor, and are often built pretty stocky, allowing them to support a wide range of students.

*Scotty (L) and Micah (R),
new best buddies!*



Moose



We also welcomed **Moose** to the herd. Moose is an impressive Cleveland Bay gelding. He is extremely smart and very careful and patient. Moose handles a lot of our adult riders with ease.

We are still (always!) looking for new partners for our students!

Let us know if you have a horse that would be a perfect

therapeutic riding horse. For more information or to speak with us about a potential horse, email **Carolyn Meyer, RWP Program Director**, at info@ridewithprideva.org.



We've also been making waffles... FUR WAFFLES, that is! "Fur waffles" are a telltale sign that Spring is here to stay! We have been busy grooming all the horses and seeing their shiny coats emerge from under their warm wooly winter fur. I know I'm happy to shed a layer now that we are heading into warmer weather!

While fur waffles are an indication of a nice fuzzy coat, they can also tell us a little about our horses. Therapeutic horses are often older, and with older equines, we see conditions that can affect hair growth, such as Cushing's Disease. This is a common and fairly treatable condition with proper medication and management. These medications can be expensive so consider donating today to help us continue providing the best possible care for our amazing equine partners!

10th Annual Colorful 5K & Open House

Our 10th Annual Colorful 5K and Family Fun Mile was held on Saturday, April 20. We had beautiful weather and over 130 participants! We also hosted an Open House so everyone could meet the RWP horses, watch demos, and enjoy a fun day at the barn. Thanks to everyone who came out for both events!



Upcoming Events!

Save the Date



Annual Gala

Saturday, September 14 ~ 5:30pm
Best Western Plus Waynesboro



www.ridewithprideva.org

Ticket sales
begin
June 1!

Summer Session I- May 13 - June 17
Summer Session II- July 8 - August 16
Fall Session- September 9 - October 18

Steve Meadows Clinic- Saturday, June 15
(participant spots are full, but spots are available for auditors)

Christina Bailey Clinic- Saturday, June 29

Annual Gala- Saturday, September 14

Benefit Trail Ride- Saturday, October 5 -
Sunday, October 6

Student Horse Show- Saturday, October 26

For more info or to register for
one of these events, visit
www.RideWithPrideVA.org.

Lady's Story by Faye Giles

The Ride With Pride horses are the backbone of what we do. Without generous owners letting us use these amazing equines season after season, we couldn't serve the dozens of students that we get to each year. Here is one of their stories:

For several years, Lady has been my main trail riding horse. She has the sweetest personality and is always the one to greet you at the gate. She has always taken care of me and been a great horse to ride. And yes, who couldn't love that sweet face?

We have travelled and ridden in many Virginia State Parks, the George Washington National Forest, and Shenandoah National Park. We have also travelled locally and participated in community rides such as Fleetwood Community Center at Massies Mill, Glenmore Hunt Club, and many others. We even accomplished the Tevis Virtual 100 mile ride two years in a row.

Unfortunately, Lady started having changes in her navicular bone which made her unsuitable for long trail rides. Because Lady possesses a "can do attitude" combined with a pleasant personality, it was unfortunate that she was becoming a mere pasture ornament on the farm. This made me sad. Lady needed a job! I had seen a Ride With Pride advertisement on Facebook looking for student horses. Since I felt Lady was a kind and gentle soul, and good with children, this would be a perfect fit for her.

And a wonderful partnership it has been! Lady loves her job! When I brought her back to the stable in February, she settled in so nicely. She loves all the attention she gets, and of course not to mention all the treats! Having Lady at Ride With Pride has been a win-win for so many of us.

Firstly, for the student, it teaches so many skills which eventually manifests itself into confidence building, coordination enhancement, and leadership. Secondly, for Lady, it keeps her active and engaged. She is no longer moping around on the farm, she has a job! Thirdly, and personally for me, I feel blessed down to my core when I see how much the students love on her, care for her, and are learning from her. I can tell she loves it there and I know she gets the best care. WIN ! WIN! WIN!

Ride With Pride has definitely been a blessing for all of us!



This newsletter is made possible by a generous grant from the





Ride With Pride relies on our generous corporate and individual donors and sponsors. We are thankful for you! If you would like to donate to Ride With Pride, please return this form or visit our website at www.RideWithPrideVA.org.

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