

Nickers & News

Happy Holidays from our barn to yours



Upcoming Events

DEC 10	Holiday Barn
FEB 25	Spring Session Volunteer Info/Orientation Session
MAR 13	Spring Classes Start
MAY 13	Spring Classes end
MAY 13	Spring Horse Show & Open House



Notes from the Hayloft...

Time for a look back on 2016 (our 16th year and another great year at Free Rein Center)...

- ♥ Served 139 individuals - 24% more than in 2015 and another record high !!
- ♥ Grew our TVS program by 32%
- ♥ Held our 1st annual Spring Horse Show
- ♥ Celebrated the start of construction of a covered riding facility
- ♥ Held our 2nd annual Haunted Barn event - a frighteningly good time
- ♥ Our Mane Event Gala was a big success... and lots of fun, too

Look for more details about the last three things inside

Our instructors are putting together another fun Holiday Barn event, scheduled for Saturday, December 10th from 1-3 pm. It's free & open to the public, so come out for a good time. Pictures of the family/kids with Santa and Mrs. Claus can be obtained for a \$5 donation to Free Rein Center.



Please consider making a deductible gift to Free Rein Center as the year comes to a close and you get your tax affairs in order. Your support means a lot to us and the people we serve... we couldn't exist without it !!

We at Free Rein wish you and your loved ones a safe, happy, and healthy holiday season and a prosperous new year.



Doug Poad
(Chair of the Board)

Fun Horse Facts - Breeds (Part 1)

Both man and nature have created horse breeds with a wide variety of characteristics (size, speed, stamina, etc.). According to some sources, there may be more than 350 breeds of horses in the world. Some are very common (but much loved) and some only have a few individuals remaining in existence, like the Abaco Barb, a horse with Spanish origins whose eight remaining individuals live on Great Abaco Island in the Bahamas. Then, there's the Bashkir Curly horse (shown here), which has an interesting benefit for folks who are allergic to horses - many people are not allergic to them. But just imagine how hard it must be to remove those cursed burdocks from their curly locks.



Covered Riding Facility Update

The new barn structure is up & the covered arena posts are in. It's so large that it took two pictures joined together to show it all. Richie and his team have been working very hard... and it sure shows.



Jennifer Rouse, Michael Rosenthal, our instructors, and the whole herd of volunteers did a great job adjusting to the changes required to work around such a large construction project.

We look forward to its completion and the opportunity to hold classes in such a fine facility. It will, of course, cost more but we think our supporters will realize how much better we'll be able to serve our participants and help us make it happen.

We may never have to cancel a class due to weather again.

The Mane Event a Big Success



Our 2016 Mane Event Gala was a big success, even if you only

base it on the comments of many of the almost 160 people in attendance. We raised more than \$38,000 to help us continue serving so many individuals who get so much out of their participation in our programs.

Big thanks to:

- ♥ Dr. Denise Stretcher and her team of hard working volunteers who planned and executed the event.
- ♥ Duke & Bird for their classic "auctiontainment"
- ♥ Everyone who attended
- ♥ Hunnilicious & the Bold Grey Mares for beautiful music
- ♥ The businesses and individuals who donated so many great live and silent auction items

The 2017 Mane Event Gala will be held on Saturday, October 14th. Mark your calendars now.



Our "Fund the Feed" drive raised enough to pay for all of next year's grain and hay.



Meet Another Great Volunteer

Claire Oppenheimer

Claire (shown at left - leading the horse) started volunteering at Free Rein Center in the fall 2015 session. Let's start with her thoughts about her experiences at Free Rein Center, which explain the big smile on her face.

"When I wake up on a Tuesday morning the first thing I think of is the weather. Please don't let there be rain, snow or anything that will prevent my going out to Brevard to spend time at FR."

I get in the car and drive the 45 minutes there, and at about the halfway mark, as I'm heading down the other side of the mountain, all the stresses of the world melt away. By the time I reach the FR parking lot, the day is just perfect, even if it is cold, gray and windy. I have arrived in a small corner of heaven and someone is always there to greet me with a smile or a hug. If that's not reason enough to volunteer there, I don't know what is."

I started volunteering at FR after a personal loss. I was the one who needed to heal. Now it seems, that between myself, the clients and the horses, it's hard to tell who is benefiting more."

Claire found us on the internet, proving that some online matches really do work out well. During the last session, Claire shared the joy of one of our TVS students "graduating" from just grooming horses to actually riding. Milestones like this are the icing on the cake of serving at Free rein Center.

In addition to enjoying the gains made by some of the students she works with, Claire says that one of her fondest memories of her time at Free Rein Center is the feel of Moe's (her favorite horse) head when he leans it on her shoulder. In addition, she has enjoyed making new friends in the other volunteers, instructors, and staff.

When asked about what she would tell somebody that asked you, "Why should I do it?" - she simply replied, "Why wouldn't you?" Thanks, Claire - we would just be a barn with some horses without you and our other volunteers.



Meet One of our Riders

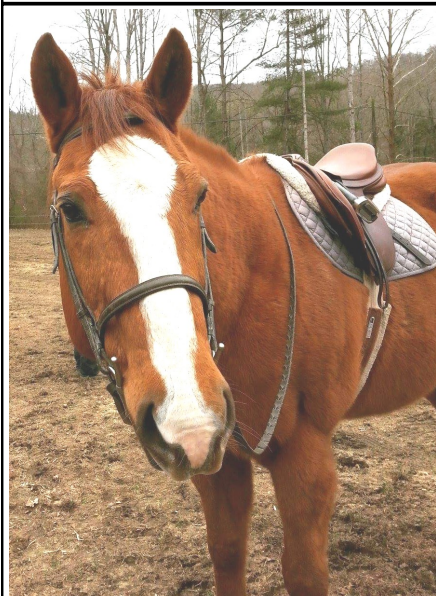
Olivia Cantrell

Almost everyone at Free Rein Center refers to Olivia as “Sweet Olivia” because she is so darling. It’s hard to find her without a smile on her face, or making one show up on someone else’s.

Olivia’s Occupational Therapist recommended Free Rein Center when Olivia seemed to be getting bored with traditional therapy. According to Olivia’s Mom, Brandie, *“It became harder to keep her occupied with physical therapy because she would become frustrated and she was starting to realize that she couldn’t use her arm and hand as well as other people. Free Rein was a great fit for her because it takes her mind off of her disability while allowing her to improve on things like balance and using her right hand. She loves animals, and riding a horse was like a reward for her instead of work.”*

Olivia started riding at Free Rein Center in the spring of 2014. She first worked with Mr. Pumpkin (below) and it was love at first sight... in both directions. Brandie feels very comfortable that her daughter is in good hands, *“It is a one of a kind opportunity for Olivia because she may never have had the chance to ride a horse otherwise. They always make sure that she is safe and the volunteers are happy and always ready to help.”*

Brandie goes on to say that, *“Most importantly, her participation has given us the ability to find a type of therapy that is both fun and helpful to her. There was a time where we could not get her to participate in therapy until we found Free Rein. Being able to be outside, build confidence about what she can accomplish physically, and help her to use her right side gives us peace of mind that we needed to know she is improving.”*



Meet one of our Horses

(by Kara Franks)

Registered Name: Cool Creation

Barn Name: Dude

Nickname: Doodlebug

Breed: Paint (a breed first recognized in the 1960’s)

Color: Chestnut

Age: 28 (somewhere around 82 in human years)

Height: 16.1 Hands - about 64.5” high at the withers (shoulders)

Sex: Gelding

Favorite Treat: Carrot pancakes

Favorite Quote: “Where there is kindness, there is goodness and where there is goodness, there is magic “

Walt Disney



Not much is known about Dude’s past. Stories tell of him reining and racing barrels, but we can’t verify them.

He is now a senior citizen amongst horses and had a strenuous lifestyle that has now caught up with him. He has arthritis in his back end that makes him stiff. A little walking around, lots of standing in the sunshine, and being groomed are a few of his most favorite things.

His personality makes him a perfect addition to our Free Rein Center herd. Sweet and patient, he is a great teacher for any beginning rider. At 16.1, his size can be a little intimidating but one look at his gentle face will tell you that he would never do anything to endanger any friend that he makes. He loves taking life slowly now and introducing timid people to the world of Free Rein Center.

Please enjoy this newsletter - packed with fun and interesting information about **Horses Helping Humans Heal**

Contact us at 828-883-3375 / freerein1325@gmail.com

Free Rein Center is a qualified 501(c)(3) public charity.

Gifts and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by current tax law.



Click here to "Like" us on Facebook to stay current about Lois & Clark and what's going at Free Rein at:

www.facebook.com/freereincenter

Shop at AmazonSmile

and Amazon will make a donation to:

Free Rein Center

Click here to get started

Get started today

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

You shop - Amazon Gives... to Free Rein !!

Shop at Amazon.com - buy what you would have bought - pay what you would have paid - and Free Rein gets .5% of the amount of your purchases. Click on the image above or go to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/31-1740563> to learn more or get started using your Amazon login.

You will need to identify Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding and Education as your chosen charity... get in touch if you need help.

A Few More Pictures From The Mane Event Gala



Duke & Bird Play to a Packed House



Willie Farrell & Carter

Pictures can't really capture the spirit of the event - having fun while doing good !!



Porsha at the Chuckwagon



Marti at Bubbles & Baubles



Haunted Barn at Free Rein Center

Rachel Evans, one of our dedicated instructors, coordinated the second annual Haunted Barn on

October 28th. More than 100 people enjoyed seeing volunteers and horses in costumes, Halloween treats, and the activities for the young'uns.

Some of the costumes were a little scary, but most were just a whole lot of fun. All-in-all, it was a great event for the whole family.



Many thanks to all who made it happen and made it fun.

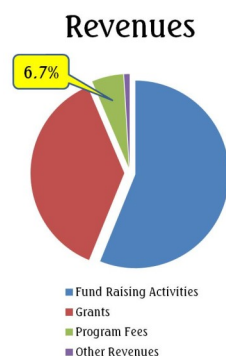
Some Key Free Rein Facts & Figures

Free Rein's 2016 annual budget was just under \$120,000.

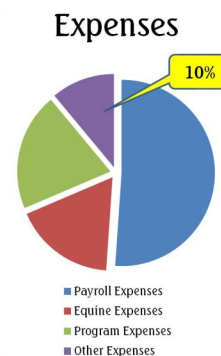
As shown below, less than 7% of our revenues come from our student-riders' user fees. We work hard to focus the resources provided by them and our generous supporters on program-related expenses. Just over 90% of our expenses were program direct in 2015 - a very good ratio, indeed.



Resources - the Ins and Outs



Only 6.7% of revenues come from user fees ~~~~~ Indirect Expenses are only 10% of total expenses



It costs a little more than \$100 for each student's one hour class. Our published cost per class is only \$50, but most of our students are subsidized by scholarships based on financial need. We collect less than \$20 per student for each one hour class - the rest we make up with grants and gifts.