



Nickers & News

**The Staff and Board of Directors
at Free Rein
wish You & Yours
a Happy Holiday Season
and Very Merry Christmas.**



It's been a busy autumn. This Fall Session, Free Rein served 75 individual students and their families. Our Community Outreach programs reached an additional 62 students from Rise and Shine, Transylvania County 4H Youth Development Program and the Agricultural and Environmental Studies class at Brevard College.

Our annual gala, The Mane Event, was a huge success thanks to all the diligent work of our fantastic board and volunteers. A big thank you to our wonderful guests, corporate supporters and individual donors. We appreciate you! Free Rein hosted the September Transylvania Chamber of Commerce After Hours and had the good fortune of being the featured non-profit organization at Brevard School of Music's First Monday Series in October.



Our Annual Haunted Barn was frighteningly fun with almost 100 folks stopping in to see our horses in their Halloween attire & play games. The fun didn't stop there. Our Volunteer Appreciation Party was held Friday, Nov 9th at one of our favorite venues -Creeside Market. Seventy of our dedicated volunteers turned out to enjoy delicious food and a roaring bonfire.

As we head into the holiday season, I want to express the gratitude and appreciation the staff & I feel for our students, their families, our volunteers, corporate sponsors, foundations and individuals which support us. At Free Rein we accomplish amazing things—miracles at times. We change lives but we're only able to do so because of you.

Warm Regards, Lelia Duncan, Executive Director

Upcoming Events

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Jan 31 | Spring Session Student Registration |
| February 18 | Student Registration Packet Deadline |
| Feb 23 | Volunteer Orientation 9 to noon New 1 to 2 Returning |
| Feb 25 through March 1 | Parent Orientation |
| March 4 | Spring Session Begins |



HORSES HELPING HUMANS HEAL

December 13th is National Day of the Horse

National Day of the Horse encourages people to be mindful of the contribution horses make to the economy, history and character of our country.

At Free Rein, we ask you to remember our herd and beautiful mission as you make your year end donations. Your generous support allows many children, youth and adults, reach their potential and lead more productive lives. Thank you.

STAY IN TOUCH - FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK
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Celebrating Fall Session with Success Stories from our PATH Certified Instructors



Brittany McCathern

Ryan joined us six years ago. At that time, he was a dependent rider requiring the highest level of support which means having two side walkers and a horse leader. Parker began three years later and was also a dependent rider. These two were matched and been working together this year. It's been fun watching the two teach and kid each other as they learn. Last Spring Session, we worked on two skills; introducing posting at the walk and two-point trot. Each skill is essential for riding horses and building leg and core strength. This session, the boys have improved dramatically. Now, they post at the trot on the correct diagonal. Through the strengthening of their own bond they have each deepened their bond with the horses and communicate with confidence. What's most exciting is that Ryan is totally independent using no support and Parker needs only minimal assistance.

**Small
Steps
Big
Strides
HUGE
Smiles!**



Rachel Evans

This fall session has been amazing. One of the most inspirational moments for me came when one of my students achieved a milestone. This was James's first session with Free Rein. During the first week, he cried and rode timidly for only three laps but by Week 8, James rode 20 laps and happily belted out, "Walk On". The hearts of the volunteers that worked with him as well as mine and his family's were filled to the brim. Great job James as well as all of our students who worked so diligently and their parents who support them.



Kara Franks

This is the third session for Gavin. He began as a dependent rider but now requires minimal support. He has increased his balance & core strength which was one of his main goals. He can now perform a two point position and can even trot. What's surprising is that Gavin is **only five**.

He's fun, easy going, loving and always happy. This session I've noticed how much more involved he has become not only with the horses but the team of volunteers that work with him.



Gavin



All Fun and Games?

Written by Porsha Smith

Porsha Smith is a Board member as well as the Chair of our Programs Committee. She is a retired speech pathologist who spent the majority of her career working with children who have significant cognitive delays. Currently she's working on her Active Animal and Therapy certification.

At first glance, an equine lesson may look like just fun and games. Poles, hooks, rings, hoops and bean bags are just a few of the tools used in our equine assisted activities. Games and Activities are important and make the lessons more fun for our riders as well as the volunteers and instructors.

Activities/games aide in teaching new riding skills, but always reinforce basic riding skills and are modified based on individual abilities. Participating in activities and games allows our riders to use skills that involve focusing attention, listening, following directions, problem solving and communicating. Interacting in activities also promotes social interaction and allows for opportunities to use social skills, learn "fair play" and practice turn taking skills. Physical participation in games helps riders increase their balance by reaching, leaning, tossing and carrying items. For many these activities allow them to use their riding skills in a functional way that enhances skills on an Individual basis. So what may look like just a game is skill building in disguise----Walk on!



Serving our Community!

Free Rein is expanding our program scope with a new focus called Community Outreach. It is our desire to reach out into the community and provide opportunities for children and youth to learn more about horses, how our traditional program works and how they can participate and benefit from the bonds formed with horses. Our first program, Say Whoa to Bullying!, with Rise & Shine was highlighted in our last newsletter. In October, we hosted 11 girls with the Transylvania County 4H Youth Development Program. They learned about Free Rein's mission and program and best of all had a hands on experience with grooming some of our herd.

In November, the Brevard College's Agriculture and Environmental Studies class joined us, learning about Free Rein's mission and purpose, horse care and taking care of geriatric horses in different circumstances. Our wonderful farrier, Benard Pelletier, explained the foundation of horses feet. If you're interested in your group or classroom participating please contact Brittany McCathern at Free Rein Center's Office.



MEET OUR AMAZING BARN VOLUNTEERS

Janet Pierce
Jerry Clouse
Sue Pare
Rich & Wendy Warwick
Joe Testerman
Becky Perono
Andy Bullwinkle
Jody Ralston
Janet Howser
Judy & Greg McCathern

Gordon Neal
Judy Patrickk
Barbara Norton
Joe LeMaire
Laura Dewitt
Cathey Murawski
Karen Shank
Morgan Grogan
Zoe Fisher
Janna Carlson

Barn volunteers play a MAJOR role at Free Rein because they take care of one the most important pieces of our program—our horses. Barn Volunteers help out in many capacities like: feeding horses, giving them a nice brush massage after a long hard day of lessons, leading them to the pasture as well as the joyful jobs of cleaning/bedding stalls, cleaning food & water buckets, filling water buckets, cleaning/filling troughs, filling hay bags, assisting with hay in the pastures during winter, upkeep/cleaning of the barn, cleaning and oiling tack and assisting with pasture clean up and much more. Our horses have special bonds with this deeply dedicated and committed group who show up rain or shine, hot or cold and everything in between. **THANK YOU.** This group truly is a team of unsung heroes. We are very excited to announce Amberly Ralston has been promoted to Horse Care Coordinator!

Be A Stable Supporter!

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Free Rein Center
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Brevard, NC 28712

We invite you to join our growing herd of Stable Supporters. Your monthly gift of as little as \$10 provides a sustainable foundation that directly supports our programs and those we serve.

Look for more details at
www.freereincenter.com/donate-now/stable-supporters.

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We thank our sponsors for their investment in our programs & those we serve.

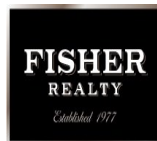
Diamond Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Copper Level



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