

Nickers & News

Spring is in the air... enjoy !!



Upcoming Events

MAY 6	Volunteer Appreciation Picnic (at Las Praderas)
MAY 13	Spring Classes (make-up week) End
SEP 11	Fall Classes Start
OCT 14	Mane Event Gala at Connestee Falls
NOV 11	Fall Classes end



Notes from the Hayloft...

Our new year is off to a wonderful start, as we welcomed Cecily Timmons as our new Executive Director. Look inside for a more complete introduction.

Our spring session is serving 67 individuals - another good sized group.

Rockbrook Camp's new covered riding facility is coming along nicely. Here, you can see the 90' x 180' covered arena and the 10 stall barn. The barn is really nice and even has real stairs to the hayloft. The camp expects to start using it this summer and we will be able to use it starting in our fall session. We're really excited about this wonderful new facility.



Photo taken April 6th, 2017



Please consider making a deductible donation to Free Rein Center. Your support means a lot to us and the people we serve. In fact, we couldn't exist without it !!

With this issue, we are changing the publishing schedule for our newsletter to Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter - still quarterly, though.

Doug Poad
(Chair of the Board)

Fun Horse Facts & Interesting Breeds

Knabstrupper horses were bred in Denmark as far back as 1671. Established in 1812, it is one of the oldest breed registries in Europe. The breed almost disappeared in the early 1900's, before three Apaloosa stallions were brought to Denmark to infuse new blood. This was a logical step, as both breeds are thought to have developed directly from the venerable spotted horses of old Spain. Like Apaloosas, Knabstrupper come in a variety of colors. Some have very few spots at all. Three types of Knabstrupper have evolved, each with its own talents. The Baroque type excels as a carriage and dressage horse. The sport horse type, which has been developed by crosses with Danish Warmbloods and Trakehners, is also found in the dressage ring, as well as eventing and show jumping. The pony type has the willingness and people-loving personality to do anything asked by its young rider.

A BIG Welcome to Cecily Timmons, our new Executive Director

It has been more than seven years since Free Rein Center has enjoyed the leadership of a professional manager. Since then, we have grown just about as far as we can without having one. So, late last year we started looking for someone who could consolidate our gains and help take us to new heights. We found that person in Cecily.

Cecily has demonstrated a keen appreciation of Free Rein Center and how she can fit in and help us move forward. Jenn Rouse, our Program Director and Cecily are gelling into a very effective team. She's been a big hit with everyone she's met and has 'settled into the saddle' very nicely.

Cecily brings great nonprofit experience in a variety of roles in different organizational settings, along with a deep appreciation for how horses can help humans heal. She says that, *"Horses helped me soar in ways physically and emotionally. They reflected my emotions, challenged my needs, and ultimately pushed me out of my comfort zones. I learned what it felt like to both trust and be vulnerable in another being, to be both humbled by power and to feel limitless. Because of these experiences, I know first-hand what the outside of a horse can do for the inside of a person."*



Cecily checking out our signage with Lois & Clark



Lacey greeting Cecily on her first day at Free Rein Center.

She earned a bachelor's degree from Trinity College in Hartford, CT and a master's in professional communication from East Carolina University. She is currently working on her Ph.D. in Communications through Clemson University.

Cecily lives in Hendersonville (Laurel Park) with her husband Jason, their two daughters Clara and Alice Elizabeth (who was just born on April 7th), and two beagle-mix furry family members. We welcome them all to our Free Rein family.

Meet Another Great Volunteer

Bruce Rodgers Livengood ("Rodge")

Rodge has been volunteering at Free Rein Center for 4 years. Donna Hunter, our board Vice Chair, talked to Rodge and his wife, Barbara, about getting involved when they moved to Connestee Falls full time. Rodge says that he has, *"always enjoyed children and working with animals"* and there is no better place to combine those two interests than Free Rein Center.

Shown serving as a horse leader at left, Rodge has worked 3-4 hours per week in a couple of classes during most sessions. He says that his most rewarding experiences have been with some of our adult riders with developmental disabilities and *"earning their trust."*

When asked what he enjoys most about volunteering at Free Rein Center, Rodge covers several different aspects when he says, *"Seeing the progress of the students over time, interacting with some of the parents who are so appreciative and getting to know the horses' individual personalities."* Students, horses, and parents... seems like Rodge enjoys the very foundational elements of what we do at Free Rein Center - and for whom we do it.

Rodge echoes a consistent theme with many of our volunteers when asked the question, What would you tell somebody that asked you, 'Why should I do it?' He said that you should *"Start in order to help our students and continue for your own benefit."* Time spent with the horses, with the students, and in the beautiful setting at Free Rein Center is truly good for everyone involved.

Rodge also invests his time and energy in volunteer efforts at St. Philip's Episcopal Church in Brevard. He and his wife, Barbara, live in Connestee Falls.

Meet One of our Riders

Amber Fields

Amber started riding at Free Rein Center when she was in elementary school, when one of her therapists recommended it and helped get her started. She rode for several years before deciding to stop, but started again after she started working at Transylvania Vocational Services (TVS). Now, she is one of more than 20 individuals from TVS that participate at Free Rein Center each session.

Asked about Amber's feelings about Free Rein Center, her Mom, Tracy, says that *"She absolutely loves it and looks forward to it. I believe it makes her feel confident about things she can or cannot do."* While Amber says she doesn't really have a favorite volunteer, she does seem to have developed a special bond with Toni Garrett, who Amber says, *"is very helpful for me when I come to Free Rein Center."* When it comes to horses, Amber says that Cassie is her favorite.

Tracy says that coming to Free Rein Center *"...makes her feel good about herself, and helps with her balance. It would always make my day to see her so happy about going to ride Cassie. First thing in the morning she would be smiling ear to ear because she knew it was Free Rein day. I think it has given us hope, to see her so happy."* For her part, Amber likes giving her horse *"yummy apples & snacks."* and says that, *"I've been riding a long time and it's my favorite. I like winning awards when I get to ride."*

When asked what she'd tell other parents, Tracy said, *"It is a great place for your special needs child or young adult to go to, and the volunteers are caring, and always willing to help and teach these children."*



Amber having fun at TVS's Lifeskills Program.



Amber greeting the horse she will be working with.



Meet one of our Horses

(by Kara Franks)

Barn Name: Moe
 Nickname: MoeMoe - Mosely
 Breed: Oldenburg (a Warmblood breed from Germany)
 Color: Chestnut
 Age: 22 (somewhere around 73 in human years)
 Height: 16.1 Hands - about 64.5" high at the withers (shoulders)
 Sex: Gelding
 Favorite Quote: "It's not where you go, it's who you meet along the way" The Wizard of Oz



Moe was donated to Sweet Briar Farm around the age of five. Jumping wasn't his thing so they used him for riding lessons. Sweet Briar sold him to Rockbrook Camp, who leased him to St. Andrews College during the school year, where he did some of the hunter lessons but really excelled in their dressage program. After many years at St. Andrew's, and as he got older, he could only work in the beginner dressage lessons but still came to camp at RBC in the summers. Three years ago, he retired from St. Andrews and came home to RBC for good. After a year of one-on-one time with his 'adoptive mom' (Instructor Kara Franks), we decided to put him into our program at Free Rein Center where he quickly became a favorite with the kids and instructors. Even though his size can be a little intimidating, his quiet demeanor seems to quickly put everyone at ease. Although he loves his new life and his new job, every now and again he enjoys a walk, trot and canter down memory lane with one of our instructors doing some dressage work with him.



Moe at our Holiday Barn event.

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

Contact us at 828-883-3375 / programs@freereincenter.com

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

Volunteer Appreciation Picnic



We appreciate our volunteers every day - there would be no Free Rein Center without these hard-working, dedicated folks. Our 10th annual volunteer appreciation picnic will be held at Las Praderas on Saturday, May 6th. The picnic will start at 5:30 and end when we stop having fun.

Pretty Little Goat will bring their beautiful music and we'll have our usual spread of picnic grub.



Volunteers and their family are welcome, so let Jennifer know you want to come by calling the office or sending her an email at:

programs@freereincenter.com.

Sponsor's Corner

If you get a chance, please thank the following folks who have supported Free Rein Center this year.

- ♥ **Appalachian Golf Cars** (Sapphire) - Mary Lou & Clark Hickock again donated the use of a four passenger golf car for us to use during the spring session while the new facility is under construction.



Sponsorship of Free Rein Center's people and programs.

- ♥ **Land Rover Asheville** (Mills River) - Gold Level.



- ♥ **Charlie's Tire Center** (Brevard) - Bronze Level.



- ♥ **Hampton Inn Brevard** (Pisgah Forest) - Bronze Level.

Links above (sponsor names) are active in the email version of this newsletter.

Welcome, New Board Member

We welcome Bill Buchler to the board of directors. Bill was elected to the board at our annual board retreat in February. He and his wife, Nancy, live in Connestee Falls. Both of them volunteer in classes at Free Rein Center, too. Bill retired from Improvements Catalog - part of Cornerstone Brands.

He joins the following board members.

- ♥ Doug Poad - Chair
- ♥ Donna Hunter - Vice Chair
- ♥ Elisabeth Illg-Reyes - Treasurer
- ♥ Nancy Wacławek - Secretary
- ♥ Carter Heyward
- ♥ Ron Schleich
- ♥ Porsha Smith
- ♥ Dr. Denise Stretcher

Coming Soon - a New Website

Cecily and Doug are working on a new website that will include better & more informative content and work better across different platforms (i.e. tablets & smartphones). We hope to have it done and launched by the time our next newsletter is published, so check it out in the next month or two at www.freereincenter.com.

