

Nickers & News

Summertime,
when the living is easy.



Upcoming Events

SEP 8-10	Mountain Song Festival (we'll be there)
SEP 11	Fall Classes Start
OCT 14	Mane Event Gala at Connestee Falls
OCT 27	Haunted Barn & Movie Night at Free Rein Center
NOV 11	Fall Classes end



Notes from the Hayloft...

It's been very exciting to watch Rockbrook's new covered riding facility take shape over the last several months. It was even more exciting to see Rockbrook's staff and campers using it during their first session. That means that we are only weeks away from holding our classes in the new facility.

Watch for more news about how we'll be using this great new facility to serve even more folks in upcoming issues. This fall session will be devoted to allowing our horses & volunteers to get used to it and developing plans for how to best use it in 2018 and beyond.



Rockbrook's new covered riding facility
(photo taken July 6th, 2017)

We are very pleased to report that Free Rein Center has recently been awarded grants from Lake Toxaway Charities, The Sasser Family Foundation, and Pisgah Forest Rotary Club. Our deepest gratitude goes out to these partners in serving our riders and their families. While we're mentioning grants, thanks to the Episcopal Church Women of St. Philips Church for a grant we received a little earlier this year.

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 !!

Doug Poad

(Chair of the Board)

Fun Horse Facts & Interesting Breeds

The Gypsy Vanner Horse - shown above pulling a Vardo, a traditional wagon that has been used by British Romani (Gypsy) people as their home since 1850. Although it looks and sounds like a very old and well-established breed, Gypsy Vanner horses were only recognized as a distinct breed in 1996, when Dennis & Cindy Thompson created the Gypsy Vanner Horse Society (GVHS). The GVHS is the world's first registry to recognize a breed of horse developed by the Gypsies of Great Britain/Ireland and the only such registry founded on an in depth study of British/Irish Gypsies and their horses. As wildly improbable as it seemed, their research confirmed that one of the most magnificent breeds of horse the world has ever seen was not recognized, did not have a name, and was not understood outside the world of the Gypsies. The Gypsies created this breed from a variety of English and Irish breeds such as the Cob Horse, Dales Pony, and even larger draft horses like Shires and Clydesdales.

We can finally say that “we’ve got you covered”

The great covered riding facility pictured on the front page started back in 2014, when representatives from Rockbrook Camp and Free Rein Center got together to dream, put their dreams on paper, and turn those dreams into a goal. Jeff and Sarah Carter, owners of Rockbrook Camp, turned the goal into a plan and Richie Case and his crews made the plan a reality. Dreams really can come true.

This is exciting on many levels. Children with autism do not deal well with changes to their schedules and routines, so not having to cancel classes due to rain will help us serve them better. It will give us the opportunity to offer evening classes and add new programs for different individuals and groups and maybe even add a few weeks to the length of our sessions. These possible changes will not happen this fall, as we all get used to the new facility. We’ll keep you posted.

Rockbrook Camp started using the new facility this summer for their camp sessions. Our riders will start using it in September, when our fall session begins. We’re all very excited about this new page in our history.



The old stable had to come down to make room for the new.

No big changes are in store for this fall session, though, as we get used to the new facility and plan for best using it. While the new facility brings many exciting opportunities, it will also bring a challenge, in the form of increased monthly rent we pay to Rockbrook Camp. That’s a challenge we will work hard to meet in order to serve more people, more effectively.



The day that construction began - with Richie doing some demolition.



It was exciting to watch the buildings start to take shape.



Ingrid in front of the new riding facilities at Free Rein Center.

Meet Another Great Volunteer

Ingrid Findlay

We first met Ingrid (and vice versa) three years ago at our booth at one of Brevard’s street festivals. She started volunteering at Free Rein Center right after that and has been with us since then. She is one of our younger volunteers, but has made a wonderful impression on our instructors, participants, and other volunteers with whom she works.

She is an impressive young woman, having been selected to be part of the North Carolina Governor's School this summer. In addition, she and a teammate won 1st place in the biology category at the North Carolina Student Academy of Science for their work on researching bees in Transylvania County.

Ingrid recently observed that “Free Rein has taught me that progress looks different for everyone and that’s really a beautiful thing. Some of my fondest memories are simply moving from a thigh hold to an ankle hold on a rider, hearing them laugh after trying a trot, or receiving a high five after a lesson for a job well done.”

When asked what she’d tell someone considering volunteering at Free Rein Center, Ingrid said, “I have been volunteering at Free Rein Center for three years, and have found it to be an unparalleled experience. It is truly remarkable and incredibly rewarding to witness first-hand the positive impact on the lives of the youth utilizing this important service. I have met and worked with children of all ages, some of whom even attend my high school. I find great joy in interacting with these children, and helping them through these new and exciting experiences. This is a two-way exchange, in which I have so much to gain from these children and their perseverance. I feel that I walk away from every session having learned something new. Free Rein has taught me skills that have furthered my ability to communicate and engage with adults, children, and animals alike.”

Meet One of our Riders

Cameron Maney

Cameron has faced more physical and developmental challenges than any child should ever have to face, including a stroke when he was only two years old, Autism, and low muscle tone. He started riding at Free Rein Center in 2014, after his Mom (Jodi) heard about our programs from one of our volunteers in her Jazzercise class (our thanks to that person for representing Free Rein Center so well!). The volunteer told her that therapeutic riding might be a good thing for Cameron.

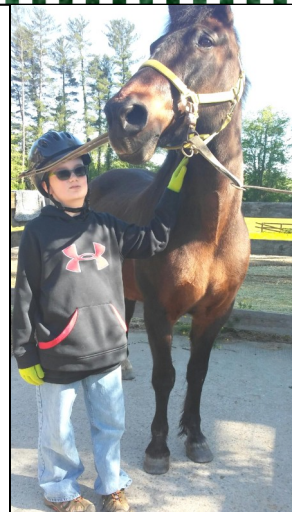


Cameron enjoying his time on Danny.

Jodi couldn't agree more, saying "He has an extreme love for animals and what better way to build his muscle and his confidence than putting him on a horse and letting him just be a 'normal' kid. Cameron loves all the activities but his most favorite is just being able to hug his favorite horse, Danny."

She went on to say, "Since Cameron started riding I can tell a difference in him not being as shy and being more confident in who he is. He has built more muscle and can actually keep his weight off the seat when trotting which was a huge challenge for him in the beginning."

Jodi mentioned that. "Cameron was disappointed recently when Danny couldn't be ridden due to asthma. He loved his new horse Buddy but really did miss Danny. The last day of the session Cameron wanted to say goodbye to Danny in the pasture. He yelled Danny's name and to our surprise, Danny came trotting over to allow Cameron to scratch him and nudged Cameron as if to say goodbye. Cameron was super excited and the smile on his face said a thousands words. He told people that story for days. Free Rein Center is not just Horse Back Riding therapy to my family. It has been an amazing journey to watch our child grow and learn more about himself than we would have ever thought he could before he got into this program."



Cameron getting ready to "mount up."

Join Us For Our "Mane Event" Fall Gala

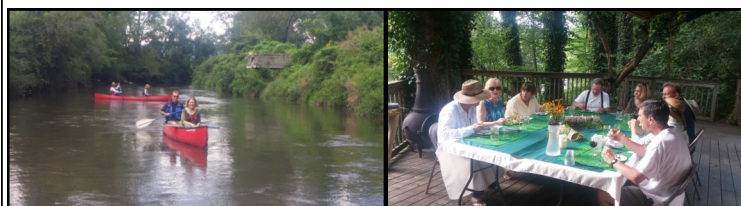


Circle Saturday, October 14th on your calendar and make plans to join Lois & Clark (our spokes horses) from 6-10 pm to have fun and make a difference.

Folks tell us that our gala is one of the most enjoyable fund raising events they attend and the gala committee is working hard to make this year's event even better. Hunnylicious, a high energy Mother/Daughter duo will entertain us and Conneestee Falls' chef and his team will be cooking up some great food.

Get your holiday shopping started with some of our great auction items, like Park-hopper tickets for Disneyworld, First Class Tickets on the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad, Golf at Lake Toxaway or Conneestee Falls, kayak/zip line trips in the Green River Gorge, beautiful art by talented local artists (including Lucy Clark, Cathryn Cooper, Ann Dergara, Paula Poad, and more), an hour long airplane ride, and much more.

Tickets are \$75 each and may be purchased by calling our office at 828-883-3375 or at www.freereincenter.com (go to the 2017 Gala page on News & Events). We expect a sellout crowd this year, so don't wait until the last minute to get your tickets.



A popular auction items, the French Broad Dinner Cruise will be offered again, thanks to Jaime's Creole Brasserie, Headwaters Outdoor Outfitters, and The Duckpond Pottery.

Members of Free Rein's board will again serve our guests appetizers and wine on the deck after the river trip - followed by dinner and dessert. Everyone has a great time.

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

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



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.

So What ?

We who are immersed in the mission of our organization get to see the real impacts of what we do up close and personal. We often tell our donors and supporters a lot of *what* we do and fail to adequately convey the *"so what"*. We have many anecdotal stories, like:

- ♥ an 8-year-old child with autism who asks his mother, "where are the horses" one morning on the way to our barn when she had only ever heard him say, "Momma."
- ♥ an adult with MS who had to use a wheelchair to get around, but started using a walker after only 3 months of weekly riding increased her core strength & balance
- ♥ a mother who said the first time she ever saw her daughter acknowledge another person was in one of our classes

We are doing two things to improve our ability to better understand and convey the "so what" in the near future. First, we are conducting scholarly research on therapeutic riding's outcomes for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with the help of Dr. Michael Solomon. Second, we are rolling out a new tool to assess progress and impact made during the course of a session, which will give us deeper insight into what therapeutic riding means for our students and their families.

Sponsor's Corner

If you get a chance, please thank the following sponsors of Free Rein Center's programs - and the people we serve.

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



ABOVE & BEYOND



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

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



- ♥ **First Citizens Bank (Brevard)** - Copper Level.

- ♥ **Riversong Veterinary Clinic** - Copper Level.



- ♥ **Fisher Realty** - Copper Level

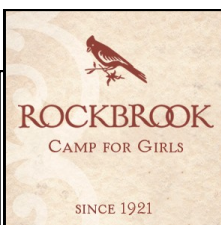
Links above (sponsor logos) are active in the email version of this newsletter.

Welcome, New Board Member

We welcome Al McCoubrey to the board of directors. Al was elected to the board at our May board meeting. Al is an architect and lives in Conne-tee Falls with his wife, Linda Clark.

He joins these members.

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



We are pleased to recognize Rockbrook Camp as our Diamond Host Sponsor. Thanks for being a great partner and offering us the use of such a fine facility.

Coming Soon - a New Website

We're still working on a new website that will include better & more informative content and work better across different platforms (i.e. tablets & smart-phones). We hope to have it done and launched by the time our next newsletter is published. Watch our website and Facebook page for more news on this as it develops.

