



Annual Report

December 2022



From the Free Rein Board Chair

Now is the time for reflection on the past year and anticipation for the new year before us. Here at Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding we have much to proudly reflect upon. We have been in operation since 2000; that is 22 years now of serving the community of children and adults with physical and/or emotional challenges. Our caring and service for this community has resulted in an increase in clientele each year. Our staff and volunteers always go beyond expectations in their care and concern for students. The result is a double-edged sword – we are grateful and pleased that we are receiving increased referrals but it also means that our resources are being stretched.

Those familiar with Free Rein know that no client is turned away for inability to pay for lessons. Our lesson cost is \$170 per hour; however, no client is charged more than \$50 per hour and most (93%) are on a sliding scale scholarship. In order to save sponsorship and donor contributions solely for clients, this past year Free Rein has applied for grants for equipment from a variety of sources. We have been quite fortunate to receive funding for much needed equipment including a specialized therapeutic riding saddle, adjustable reins, microphones for instructors, a TheraPlate therapy platform which will aid in horse care, a vaulting surcingle with handles which allows riders to improve their core, balance and stability and a hay steamer which keeps our horses healthier.

In addition to new equipment, this past year has solidified a partnership with the Wounded Warrior program. Free Rein is now being used as a component of the 12-week Project Odyssey Wounded Warriors of

Asheville mental health programming. In November 2022, Free Rein hosted a group of twelve female Wounded Warriors who participated in a therapeutic ground horsemanship program. Further information about this is included later on in this issue.

Now, the anticipation for the new year. Some things will remain the same – our staff and volunteers making sure each client is treated as an individual with an experience that brings them joy and accomplishment. Our equine partners who devotedly work with their “Individual Client”. Free Rein will continue to explore new equipment and methods of instruction to enhance our program for students. In the forthcoming year, we are anticipating horse care supplies to increase exponentially. We have asked for donations for horse care and will continue to do so since without healthy, well cared for horses, Free Rein would not exist.



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Free Rein’s Mission is to serve the community by strengthening the spirits, minds and bodies of children and adults through interaction with horses.

Free Rein’s Vision is to provide interactive horse-human experiences to an inclusive community which enrich life skills, promote personal well-being and build lasting relationships.

Free Rein’s Values
We offer a positive experiential, collaborative environment that heals and cares for our community, participants and horses through mutual respect, positive atmosphere and personal growth.

We welcome a new Board member, Leslie Cooperman, who has a medical background and has also been a rider for 30 years.

We anticipate needing more equine help with the increased referrals. Free Rein is always aware of how hard our herd works and the need to keep them healthy and fresh. We have a surprise in the works so look for an announcement in the future regarding an addition.

I personally would like to see more community contact. We are actively working on gaining more business sponsors and individual donors. To facilitate this, one of my goals in the next year is to develop a video which reflects what Free Rein accomplishes. We intend to increase community exposure by having

some “barn events”. We had our first “Saddle Up” event with a small gathering of sponsors and donors last Fall which was highly successful. Our intention in the future is to have more gatherings on site with demonstrations.

Both the reflection and the anticipation of what Free Rein Center has and will accomplish is a moment of pride for all of us involved, whether it be the Board of Directors, our devoted Volunteers, our amazing, capable Staff, our fabulous Herd, and a huge component of our success is the sponsors and donors devoted to ensuring Free Rein continues to be able to provide quality services.

I hope everyone had a Happy Holiday season and a Happy, Healthy New Year to you all.

Free Rein Center and Wounded Warriors Partnership

Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding and the Wounded Warriors Project Odyssey program partnered for the third time for a one-day, two-hour therapeutic experience with horses. Project Odyssey is a component of the Asheville Wounded Warriors organization. The Project provides a 12-week mental health program that uses adventure-based learning to help warriors manage and overcome their invisible wounds, enhance their resiliency skills, and empower them to live productive and fulfilling lives. The program includes a five-day mental health retreat in a workshop-style format. This is where warriors living with PTSD and other invisible wounds are challenged to step outside of their comfort zone.



The retreat opens them up to new experiences that help them develop their coping and communication skills. After the mental health retreat, participants work together with WWP to continue developing the skills they have learned, achieving their personal goals, and making lifelong positive changes.

On November 15th, 2022, a group of twelve all female Wounded Warriors participated in Free Rein's therapeutic ground horsemanship program. Some participants had never been around a horse and some had limited prior contact with horses. Upon arrival to Free Rein, everyone from the Project and the personnel from Free Rein met to introduce themselves and talk through what was going to happen that afternoon. Many of the participants were excited to have the exposure to therapy horses but some had trepidations. After welcoming and introductions, Brittany McCathern, Free Rein



Program Director, explained safety protocols including prey and flight mentality of horses; body language of the horse; and how emotions and energy from a person can affect the horse's response.

Current and former Free Rein Board members and Free Rein staff acted as equine managers for the group. Two participants were assigned to a specific horse and equine manager. The managers were only allowed to intervene if there was a safety issue. The Warriors had to work together with their horse to accomplish the goals for the afternoon. First, the horses had to be haltered. Brittany then explained and demonstrated various pressure and release techniques. Exercises performed by the Warriors addressed flexion of the head and neck; backing the horse using a direct pressure method; yield and disengagement of hind quarters and ground tying. Finally, participants and their horse had to complete an obstacle course using the taught skills and developing effective teamwork between the two Warriors and the horse.

At the closing of the experience, participants were asked what was challenging for them and how they overcame that challenge. They were also asked to complete a questionnaire. The following are some of the comments received:

1. What was the biggest thing you learned from today's session?
 - a. To be patient, to learn to be taught
 - b. Horses are pretty cool, calm and collected and are great at following if you lead correctly
 - c. The biggest challenge... was sharing my horse with another warrior because I was excited and greedy-but it was better doing it this way.
2. Based on your prior answer, how can you apply that to your daily life?
 - a. Be patient with self and learn that it's okay not to be okay in the moment.
 - b. Check in with your feelings
 - c. I can't live in fear anymore.

For everyone who shared this workshop, whether a Wounded Warrior or a member of Free Rein, it was an emotionally moving experience. These women had been in combat situations, had been injured, carried emotional damage and by the end of the day were smiling, proud, hugging each other and their horses.

Free Rein Center is proud to be a continuing feature in the Wounded Warrior Project Odyssey.



Halloween Barn





Free Rein Presents our 6th annual
Halloween Barn
 Saturday, October 29, 2022 from 2 to 4pm

Rockbrook Camp Riding Facility
 3460 Greenville Hwy, Brevard 28712

Horses love Halloween as much as we do and want to show off their costumes to everyone. Come on out and join us for some spooky fun!

Free admission - donations welcome.

Free Rein Programming

In 2022, we served 214 students, 20 TVS adults and 25 Wounded Warrior adults and nine private adult riders through equine therapy. Free Rein has achieved this with fourteen equine partners, 114 volunteers and 6 staff.

As we reflect on the past year, we are proud to know that Free Rein's personnel has adapted and enhanced the programming where needed. Our programming is fluid and entirely client centered. We adjusted our session length to be able to serve more clients. Each Spring and Fall we offer a six-week session, then a subsequent four-week session. We are able to provide for those on our waiting list through the second session. This has been important over the past year, due to emotional challenges among our community. Since Covid-19, Free Rein has seen an increase in school and private referrals for anxiety disorders. We have adjusted our individual work with students with this disorder to meet their specific needs.

We look forward to growing our programs, as we support our Community's needs!



Free Rein Staff

Brittany McCathern, *Program Director*

Roberta Brownlee, *Office Manager*

Megan Johnson,
Horse Care Coordinator

Instructors

Toni Garrett
Kara McCarson
Mary Stoehr

Thank you to these
local businesses for
profit sharing with us!



Watch for these again in
2023



2022 Board of Directors

Carter Heyward, *Director Emeritus*

Susan Kish, *Board Chair*

Andy Bullwinkel, *Vice Chair*

Porsha Smith, *Program Chair*

Connie Edmands, *Secretary*

Jim Garrett, *Treasurer*

Linda Felderhoff, *Volunteer Chair*

Sharad Creasman

Leta McDonald

Cindy Wilson

PLANNED GIVING

Bequests

These make up the majority of planned gifts. Anyone can make a bequest to a nonprofit through their will or estate plan. You can allocate a specific amount of money to give after you pass, such as a lump sum or a percentage of your total wealth, or you can choose to give the remainder of your estate to a nonprofit after all of the other bequests are paid. Because your gift doesn't go to the organization until after your lifetime, you can change your mind at any time, thus providing maximum flexibility.

Charitable Gift Annuities

This is an agreement in which the donor gives a significant gift to a nonprofit, receives a tax deduction at the time of the gift and then receives payments from the nonprofit during their lifetime. The nonprofit may invest the money and after the donor's death, the nonprofit can use the remaining funds.

Donation of Stocks of Appreciated Assets

This is one of the most beneficial ways for giving, allowing you to receive favorable tax treatment. A donor who gives us a gift of common stock held longer than one year avoids capital gains taxation on the transfer, so the full value of the contribution goes to Free Rein.

Donate Through an IRA

If you are age 72 or older (70 ½ if you reached 70 ½ before January 1, 2020) you may be interested in lowering your IRA withdrawal's income and taxes. Through an IRA Charitable Rollover, you can transfer up to \$100,000 a year directly from an IRA to a qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit such as Free Rein. The transfer amount will not be included in your taxable income, and the transferred amount can count toward the required minimum distribution (RMD).

Outright Gift of Cash or Check

A cash gift by check is one of the most common and easiest methods for making an outright charitable contribution. Besides a possible deduction on your tax return, a major benefit is seeing the immediate results of your generosity. When you make a cash gift, you are demonstrating a strong commitment to help support Free Rein's mission and vision and are contributing to its success. (Checks payable to Free Rein, Inc. may be mailed to P.O. Box 1325, Brevard, NC 28712)

Welcome to the Herd Gus!

Breed: Welsh Pony Cross

Age: 18

Color: Paint

Height: 12 hands

Gus is owned by Rockbrook Camp for Girls. He started with Free Rein in the Fall of 2022. His calm and laid back personality has already won over volunteers, instructors and participants. His small, yet sturdy build allows him to be utilized in various aspects of our program.



Welcome to the Herd Jasper!

Breed: American Paint Horse

Age: 21

Color: Sorrel/White

Height: 14.3 hands

Jasper was used at Keystone Camp as a lesson horse in his younger days, teaching Hunt seat lessons. Then he was purchased by an individual and was used as a family horse. Jasper could be found doing lower level cross country; he was also used in our local parades. After his career in lower level cross country, Jasper was used as a family horse for grandchildren to learn to ride. In Summer 2022, Jasper was used for Rockbrook Camp as part of their herd. Staff, volunteers, and riders fell in love with his personality and capabilities under saddle. In Winter 2022, Jasper was donated to Free Rein from Steel Creek Farm.



We look forward to implementing Jasper into our program in 2023!

Thanks to Gloria Clouse for photos of Jasper.



HEROS

**Helping Equines
Reconnect Our Spirits**

**Our herd consists of
hard working
equines that change
lives one hoof beat at
a time. They require a
considerable amount
of love and care to
keep them in optimal
working condition to
best serve our
participants.**



Our annual cost for horse care is about \$42,000!

Costs Include:

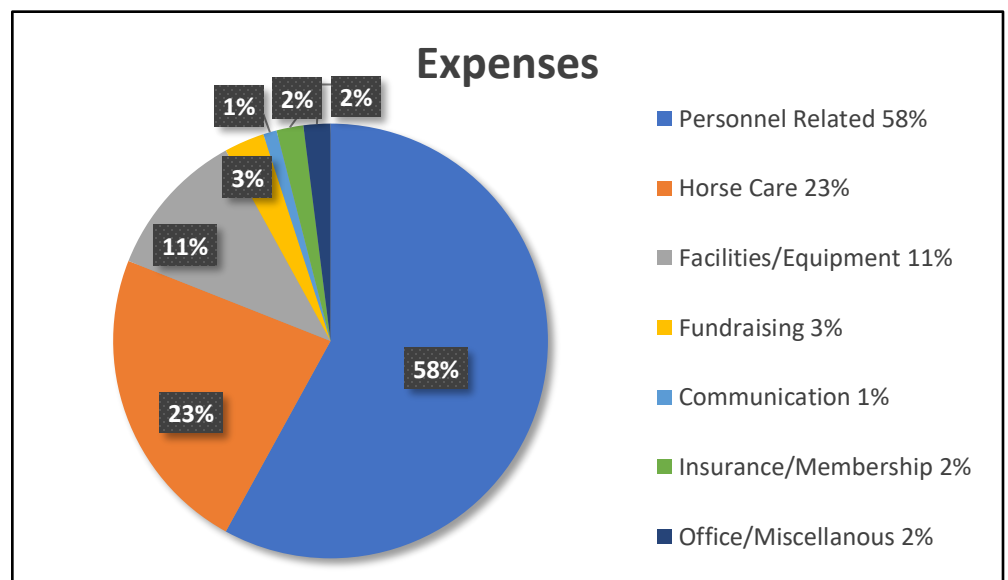
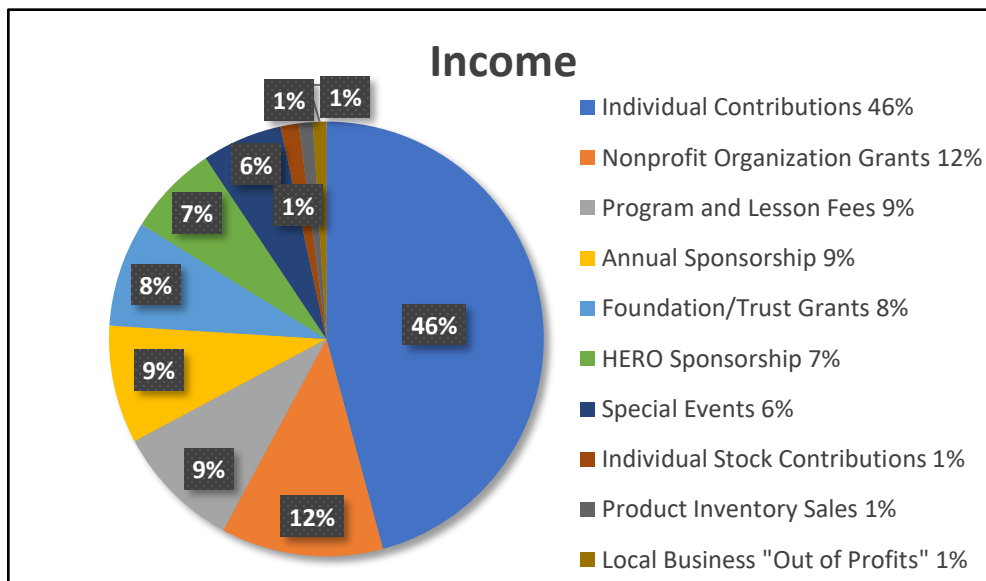
**Hay ~ Grain ~ Supplements ~ Shavings ~ Tack & Supplies
Vet care & medications ~ Farrier Services ~ Other general care**

Become one of our HEROS!

Financial Reports – 2022 ANNUAL BUDGET

This year, 2022, has been a rewarding year thanks to all of our generous donors. The continued support of **hundreds** of generous contributions from our community, sponsors, volunteers, donors and parents allowed us to meet all our financial obligations. We have received several grants from private foundations, community foundations, service clubs and family foundations. In lieu of the “Mane Event”, this year we had an exciting new event inviting our sponsors out to the BARN to see what Free Rein is all about! It is our hope that more business sponsors will step up and contribute to our organization in the future. Finally, we are very appreciative of Rockbrook Camp for their partnership in providing space for our programs.

The accompanying charts show our 2022 income and expense distribution.



Thank you to all our sponsors and donors for supporting Free Rein.
Without you we could not do the work of changing lives, one hoof beat at a time.

Diamond Level



Platinum Level



Gold Level



Silver Level



Copper Level



Our Valuable Donors

Amazon Smile	Falls Landing Restaurant	Lynda Hysong	Doug & Paula Poad
Anonymous	Linda & Kevin Felderhoff	KLF Wood Designs	Ellen Ramsey
Gerry Azzata in Memory of Peg Hall	Robert & Candice Fernandez	Cathy & Kirk Kaempfer	Bobby Reese
Stephen & Lynn Bartosh	Sally & Ben Ficklin	Betty Kendrick	Reunited Crossfit
Nancy Beale	First Citizens Bank	Susan & Doug Kish	Rockbrook Camp
Big Frog Custom T-Shirts & More of Asheville	First United Methodist Church Foundation Fund	Karl & Kathy Klepfer	Rogow Family Fund
Peggy Bogardus	Lauren Fishbein	Ken & Alane Klink	Colleen Rose
Marcia Bonica	Amy Fisher & Erik Wahus	Maureen Kozioziemski	Leah Rosenheck
David Bradley	Fisher Realty	Frank Kralik	Robert & Jeanne Rupp
Trula & Dan Branon	Caroline & Edward Fitzgerald	Lake Toxaway Charities	Shawn Rupp
Brevard Insurance	William & Calista Foisy	Bruce & Barbara Livengood	Sacred Heart Catholic Church
Brevard Yoga	Food Matters Market	Looking Glass Realty	Susan Sasser
Broad Street Wines	Annette Fox	Mary Love	Sasser Family Foundation
Marjorie & Robert Brockway	Laura Lawton Fraser	Bromlery Lowe	Lynette Seegers
Jeannie Brown	Sherri Frisbee	Rebecca Luckie	Dorothy Semans
Roberta & Gary Brownlee	James Garrett	Vanessa Lynch	Gina & John Skelton
Andy & Cindy Bullwinkel	Jim & Toni Garrett	Anna Mack	Karen Smith
Care Solutions Mobility	Elaine & Jim Goar	Candace Mailhot	Joelle & David Smith
Catherine Carver Companies, LLC	Teri Goodail-Komar	Carol Martin	Porsha & Nathan Smith
Daphne Chalaron	Phyllis Gramke	Charles Martin	The Square Root
Gretchen Charbonneau	Gillian & William Greenwood	Jennifer Mason	St. Marie Financial Advisors LLC
Charlie's Tire Center	Davie & Kerry Guice	John & Barbara McArthur	Aleen Steinberg
David & Mary Choate	William Hagler	Kara & J.C. McCaron	Gina Streed
Jerry & Gloria Clouse	Laurie Abrams Hall	Brittany McCathern & Austin McCall	Denise & Brian Stretcher
Howard & Sandy Coleman	Shirley Hallblade & David McClellan	Rahn McCrady in Memory of Tom Pitts	Brian N. Stretcher, Attorney at Law
John & Donna Aiken-Colflesh	Hampton Inn Brevard- Pisgah Forest	Ysleta & Victor McDonald	Roya Tahmassebi
Elizabeth & Daniel Colston	Richard Harmon	Linda & Stanley McGuffin	Julie Tallman
Connestee Falls Realty	John & Sandy Hemmer	Lynn Frazier McManus	Jennifer Tierney
David & Sue Corby	Claudia & Bryan Henderson	Metcalfe Compounding Pharmacy	Sarah Tomaka
Brenda Brown Doroski	Marcia Henderson	Steve & Lynda Muench	Transylvania Vocational Services
Dugan's Pub	Jennifer & Ray Henley	Andrea Muirhead	Valley Agri Supply, Inc.
Robert Dulin	Carter Heyward	Nelson's Feed	Vescovo Neighborhood Eatery
Laine Dunbar & David Hancock	Elizabeth Hill	Network for Good	Nancy Wacławek
Connie Edmands	Pamela & Jimmy Hill	Neumann Law Firm	Richard & Wendy Warwick
Elevate Physical Therapy	Kathleen & Jim Hopke	O.P. Taylor's	Ella Weinkle
Etowah Valley Veterinary Hospital	Scott Hricsina	Barbara Odum	Steven Weisberg
Bob & Marti Euneman	William & Donna Huffman	James O'Neal	Wild Morel
Richard & Joy Evans	Dave & Donna Hunter	Mary Ann Osborne	Adam & Cindy Wilson
Executive Planners NC	Hunter Power Sports	Valerie Osborne	Women of St. Philips
		Lisa Patty	Dennis & Christine Wood
		Cody Pelletier	
		Pepsi Co.	
		Pisgah Forest Rotary	

Path Int'l (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) is a federally registered 501(c3) nonprofit, formed in 1969 to promote safety and optimal outcomes in equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with special needs. Free Rein has been a PATH Certified Center since 2001.

Free Rein Center for Therapeutic Riding and Education – P.O. Box 1325 – Brevard, NC 28712 – (828)883-3375 – FreeReinCenter.org