

Ranch Updates

- New WCR Logo and NEW Program
- Thank You to Donors – Wern Valley & 2021 Horse Sponsors
 - Sponsor a horse opportunity
- Property Update – Big Ass Fans (installation help needed)
- Quick updates: Horse Conditioning (need volunteers) and 2021 Program Sessions
- Volunteer Opportunities

WCR staff and volunteers are excited to begin our 2021 Season. We are looking forward to seeing you!

New LOGO! New Program!

Equine Assisted Services--Therapy-Learning-Horsemanship

Did you notice? At the top of this newsletter is our new logo showing that our services are not just therapeutic riding, but equine assisted services – therapy, learning and horsemanship. WCR will continue to offer horsemanship skills in the riding program and equine assisted learning for education (e.g. a school IEP) and personal development.

And now we are excited to expand our services to offer equine facilitated psychotherapy and counseling! This program is a mostly ground-based program where the participant, working with a licensed/certified professional team and our horses, work to provide healing opportunities for things like depression, substance abuse, trauma and relationships. With the departure of our previous partner, Honey Creek Counseling, we are able to continue this program with its former team as a WCR offering.

Thank You to Donors

Wern Valley Sportsmen event donation: Thanks to the work of Jim Caughey and Tom Hoffman through the Fox River Christian Church sportsmen's ministry, WCR received more than \$1,500 for WCR programs. The January 9 pheasant hunt, hosted by Wern Valley Sportsmen's Club, was attended by 75 hunters on a beautiful, sunny Saturday.

WCR Horse Sponsors 2021 - THANK YOU!

Our therapy horses are essential to what we offer – interaction with amazing horses for children and adults with special needs and mental health concerns. Each horse can cost between \$1590 and \$2900 to annually support their care and health needs – things like hay, grain, and supplements; farrier, dental and veterinary services; vaccines; fly spray; grooming products; and pasture/shelter upkeep.

Thank you to the horse sponsors who have already signed up for 2021: An anonymous donor is sponsoring **Grace**, one of our mental health horses. **Oliver** is being sponsored by Vic Hren in honor of his granddaughter, a volunteer at WCR. **Luka Jo** is being sponsored by Lisa Froemming in honor of her friend and co-worker Marty Hren. Lisa selected Luka for his previous career as a jumper as it reminds her of her youth and a horse she had. Marie Michaels is sponsoring **Mickey**. Marie became a WCR volunteer just last summer!

There are still horses available for 2021 sponsorship and a few are highlighted below. Your sponsorship gift of \$1,600 will go a long way to "make a difference" for the horses and programs of Willow Creek Ranch. Please contact WCR at (414) 791-2509 or wcrvolunteercoordinator@mail.com if you would like more information or are interested in being a 2021 sponsor for **Slapshot, Calibur, Gator, Pixie, Toby, George, Rusty, Tucker, or Hank and Patrick** (our mini donkeys).

Available for Horse Sponsorship: CALIBUR has been part of the therapeutic riding program since its beginning in 2007. He is a former barrel racing/pole bending athlete. Calibur is used for more independent riders and, while usually patient, he can teach participants horse behavior and strengthen their skills to focus on him. At 20+ years old, Calibur is showing some signs of age and requires special therapies himself! Born June 2000, American Quarter Horse, Palomino. Son of WCR horse Grace.



Big Ass Fans - Help Needed for Installation and Electrical

Because of YOU and your generosity, we exceeded our Giving Tuesday goal of \$5,000 to provide two Big Ass Fans for our indoor arena! Thank you -Now our indoor arena will be more comfortable for participants and horses with improved air circulation, cooling in summer and creating a breeze to deter pesky flies from bothering our horses and participants.

The next step is installation and electrical. WCR is looking for use of a mechanical lift to reach the 14' ceiling height to install the fans and their steel frame to the trusses and an electrician to run the wiring to each fan to power them up! Please contact wcrvolunteercoordinator@mail.com if you can assist with installation and electrical needs.

Quick Updates

Watch for more news on the following activities at WCR.

. **Program Horses** – March conditioning. As our new riding season approaches, we need to prepare our horse partners for their program work. This is a conditioning program to exercise, groom, train/re-train the horses – Volunteers needed to work with the horses. No experience is necessary. Contact WCR if you are interested.

. The 2021 Horsemanship **lesson schedule** has been established. New this year is 4-week sessions (rather than the former 6-week sessions). We felt this would better accommodate our riders' schedules of school and vacations. Sessions begin April 5. Forms and complete schedule listing will be available soon.

. **Volunteers** are always welcome to be a part of WCR. No experience needed for our programs – we gladly offer training for whatever part of our programs may interest you.

Current Volunteer Needs: winter chores (grooming, blanketing, cleaning horse shelters); spring horse conditioning (horse exercise and training); horsemanship program volunteers (helping during lessons as groomer, sidewalker and horse leader).



Available for Horse Sponsorship: RUSTY came to Willow Creek Ranch in July 2019 with some serious health concerns. He did not come with a lot of information on his past, he may have been a 4H project and trail horse. He ended up at an auction and was not sold. He was put in a holding pen when a man approached the fence and Rusty came to greet him. Luckily it was that "rescue" that led him to WCR rather than an unhappy end. Months of special care and feeding to make him healthy created an exceptional horse that has brought a lot of joy and fun to WCR (and some funny stories-like walking into the Community Room to look out the window!). He has been working in the riding lesson and mental health programs and has become a favorite friend to many of our volunteers and riders. Birth date unknown, estimated 20 years old, American Quarter Horse.



Available for Sponsorship (\$800 each) Half brothers **HANK** and **PATRICK** joined WCR in 2016. They have worked primarily in the mental health program, showing sibling rivalry at times, rambunctiousness, curiosity and overall cuteness. They also have introduced new participants to our equine learning programs as their miniature donkey size is less intimidating to some. They love ear rubs. Born in 2012; donkeys can live to be almost 45 years old!



Your gifts are appreciated. There are still opportunities for you to make a gift to WCR in support of our horse care or greatest needs. Gifts are accepted by check (the old-fashioned way!) OR through Facebook or through PayPal on our website, www.willowcreekranch.org.

Willow Creek Ranch - Where Life Reins...Miracles Happen

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Willow Creek Ranch, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and a member of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International and of the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.