

Ranch Updates

- **Equine Assisted Services – Programs being April 5**
 - **Description of Programs Offered: Horsemanship, Learning, Therapy**
- **Property update – Fans, Lighting and Community Room**
- **Program Horses – March Conditioning (Volunteer opportunity)**
- **Horse Stories and Sponsor a Horse Opportunity**
- **Thank you to Donors and Volunteers** (*New volunteers are always welcome – contact us at wcrvolunteercoordinator@mail.com*)

Equine Assisted Services--Therapy-Learning-Horsemanship

We are excited to announce that our WCR 2021 season will begin Monday, April 5, for the Horsemanship and Learning programs! If you are interested in more information about registering for lessons, please contact us at wcrvolunteercoordinator@mail.com or (262) 806-4080.

Horsemanship:

Participants will learn horseback riding skills that may include more than just riding. Learning about horses and their care is also a part of horsemanship. As appropriate for a participant, they may also learn about grooming/tools, horse behavior, tacking (“dressing” the horse for riding), or leading a horse. This is in addition to learning to ride, stop & start, turn, balance – all while strengthening body muscles, gaining self-confidence and having fun.

Learning:

This program is ground based, no riding. A participant interacts with the horse to develop confidence, stretch and strengthen muscles (grooming), learn horse behavior and safety, become self aware and learn how demeanor can affect the horse (and other people). For school-aged participants, this program can be a part of their Individual Education Plan (IEP) to strengthen and reinforce learning objectives.

Participants (not just for people with “special needs”) are those who may need a quiet, calm place to unwind or learn coping skills. WCR provides a nature-based experience to support learning, emotional and spiritual growth. This program is for individuals or groups/retreats.

Therapy:

This is a more in-depth program for participants who may suffer with issues such as trauma, depression, substance abuse or relationship problems. The participant works with a mental health professional, an equine specialist, and a horse or horses to discover healing opportunities.

Community Room updates – Property Lighting

A big thank you to **Mark K., Brian M. and Jim C.** for installing the arena Big Ass Fans – purchased with generous donations from Willow Creek Ranch supporters.

Thank you to **Brian M.** for installing a solar light for the parking area. More lights will be installed once the snow/ice is gone. (Let’s hope that is soon!)

The Community Room continues to be our building focus. Kitchen cabinets are being built with beautiful workmanship and reasonable cost by an Iowa Amish carpenter. Funding for the cabinets came from a generous donation from **Anne and Fritz Rouse**. Countertops have been ordered. And a special countertop for the kitchen island is being created with cherry wood from WCR property. Building and installation is expected to be completed by the end of March – in time to show off at the beginning of our 2021 season!

Program Horses, March Conditioning

After a 3-month rest, the WCR horses have begun working with volunteers (☺) to prepare for a season of providing equine services. Thank you to volunteers who are coming to provide the horses with grooming, exercise, reorientation, and desensitizing: **Brian M., Pam L., Joy P., Elizabeth P., Melissa J., Sue B., Marty H., Laurie B.** and new volunteer **Sue K.** Volunteers are still welcome to help (and learn more about the horses). March conditioning is scheduled for Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 5:00pm to 7:00pm and Saturdays from 2:00pm to 4:00pm. Please send an email to wcrvolunteercoordinator@mail.com if you would like to help or have questions.

Sponsor a Horse Opportunity

Thank you to our 2021 sponsors who are caring for Oliver (Vic H.), Grace (Anonymous), Mickey (Marie M.) and Luka (Lisa F.)!

We are happy to now have a sponsor for one of our adorable mini donkeys. **Bruce and Cheryl Pritzlaff** are sponsoring our mini donkey **Hank**. Hank's half brother Patrick feels left out – for only \$800 you can provide healthcare, food and other needs for this little guy – and make him smile that he is important too. This can be an individual donation or a family/friends group donation. And we have a sponsor for one of our program horses. **Marty Hren** is sponsoring **Calibur** in honor of his long-time service.

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. If you can help us now, you will be “making a difference” for the horses and programs of Willow Creek Ranch. All gifts, great and small, are appreciated. Horses needing a sponsor for 2021: Slapshot, Gator, Pixie, Toby, George, Rusty, Tucker, and Patrick (our mini donkey).

Here are a few WCR horses that need sponsors:



GEORGE is a big guy! But he has a gentle way and shows participants that big isn't scary. He was a former trail horse and went on hunting trips out west. He has been part of the riding program since 2018. He calmly provides assurance to inexperienced participants, giving them the confidence to excel. Born April 2000, Tennessee Walking Horse.

TOBY joined WCR in October 2017 and was a former driving and riding pony. He also has experience in equine assisted psychotherapy and learning environments. Toby has proven to be a Rock Star in his patience and calmness with some of our more challenging participants. He seems to understand what he needs to do to make it a positive experience for those needing more help – but he also can challenge independent participants who need a riding challenge! He is adorable and sweet and loves to give lots of nibbles and wet kisses. Born April 2004, Halflinger.



TUCKER was our first Paint horse – recognizable by splashes of white on his stomach, hips and up his legs. Stare at his markings long enough and you can find animals, maps, and lots of other interesting things! Tucker was a trail horse for 10 years and was part of a 4H project in pleasure showing and speed games. Since he began at WCR in early 2020, he has fit in very well with the other horses and brings calmness to our participants. Born in 2002, Paint, American Quarter Horse.

Thank you to our supporters.

We continue to be so thankful and amazed at the generous hearts of our donors and volunteers.

With COVID affecting so many people and businesses, we have been blessed to be able to continue providing services to the community-- It is only because of the thoughtfulness and commitment of our donors and volunteers and participants and their families. Please know how sincere and grateful we are for you all – THANK YOU.

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.