

November 20, 2022



STIRRUP COURAGE

Equestrian Learning Center

www.stirrupcourage.org

SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED between July and this fall, I just can't keep up with sitting down to write a newsletter with everything that keeps moving forward from week to week! I'll try not to miss any of the exciting news we need to cover from the end of summer till now!



THE DAY WE'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR: MOVE-IN DAY!



After a full year of anticipation, from the start of the first foundation work on our barn and indoor riding facility, pushing through classes in our pasture without shade through the heat and humidity of July and August, and the unpredictability of weather going into September...Construction work on our stalls and arena were finally completed to the point that we could move our horses into the new barn and start running classes indoors on October 1st! The move came JUST IN TIME for the

weather to really start changing and sunset times to start coming earlier, which would have made it impossible for us to continue holding classes outdoors in the evenings. Now that we have the indoor arena, our weekly classes have continued and will run into December before we take a winter break through January. We are thankful as always to Dallas and Rhoda Steiner and family for their support in putting this building up on their land, and to all of our business sponsors and individuals who have donated to our Capital Campaign and participated in our fundraisers, for helping us get this far! I marvel each time I walk down the barn aisle that I get to share this beautiful facility with the kids I teach!

From the end of Summer sessions outside...



...to the beginning of Fall sessions inside!



New Referrals, New Smiling Faces

One of my main goals for this year has been to continue making new connections with other social services and mental health providers in the area so that we can keep getting new referrals and grow our reach to children most in need of a positive experience with our horses. We have seen those connections being made and new children coming through referrals by Dalton Local schools counselors, the Village Network, Anazao Community Partners, connections I've made through community events and churches where I've shared, and from our families sharing about their experience on Social Media! Through these new referrals we were able to hold another new Horse Care Intro class in October with 4 new children, and just began a teenage Horse Care class in November with 3 new youth!



The Growing Horse Team!

Another goal with completing the barn was that the new stalls would allow us to add to our team of horses so that we would have the capacity to serve more children. As word spread about what we were doing and our stalls neared completion, the offers of donation horses to round out our program came quickly, and it didn't take long to have most of our stalls filled! Introducing our first 3 donated equine partners:

Belle was our first new donation. Donated by Emma Wirtz and her mom Demi, Belle was Emma's first horse who she used to show in 4-H and other competitions. Now that Belle is older and Emma is about to head to college this winter, they decided that Stirrup Courage sounded like just the right fit for Belle's next life stage. This dainty gaited mare is the perfect in-between size to use with our littlest beginner riders and more independent elementary riders, and always stands perfectly still for grooming, so she quickly became a regular for all levels of classes! We enjoyed having Emma return in October to volunteer with a class and assist with rider Jasmine on Belle!



Tess is a large draft cross mare with a history of abuse and neglect before being pulled from an auction by a rescue. She is donated to us by Elizabeth Allman, who was finding that Tess wasn't suited to the career of jumping events she had hoped for, and would be better off in our program being pampered and loved on by kids. Tess struggles with anxiety and trust from her past treatment before being sold at auction, and from the old scars she carries from the whip we can understand why! But when we started to

ease Tess into classes with some of our more calm and confident riders in the past couple weeks, we could see the horse she can be as she settles into her new role. Quote from a parent this week after teen rider Aubrie started working with Tess: *"She absolutely loves Tess! Makes her so happy when she gets to be with her. Thank you again. I see a side of my girl that I don't get to see often and I want to keep seeing that side of her. Tess is a great fit for her."*



Gambler Jones was a trail riding partner for donor Cheryl Jones for 16 years, exploring hundreds of miles of trails in the Cleveland Metroparks and multiple states over years! But at 21 years old, the long miles were getting to be too much for this handsome buckskin Quarter Horse, and Cheryl was needing to think about a younger trail partner. When a friend told her about Stirrup Courage, she wrote an email to inquire about donating Gambler to our program, and with a teary goodbye in October she blessed her old partner to start his new job teaching our children.





Hard Goodbyes

On the night of October 19th, I was alerted that something was wrong when Ginger did not come running up from the pasture as usual when I went out to feed for the evening. I began to walk the entire fence line, concerned she may have gotten out somehow. When I found her still form lying on her side, it was the last thing I expected. Though she still had labored breathing and a heartbeat, after waiting an hour in the dark and cold for the emergency vet to arrive, he confirmed that



she appeared to have had a sudden stroke. While her basic body functions were struggling on, there was no conscious brain activity, and there was nothing to do but help her body find its final rest. While we were fully expecting to have Ginger in our program for many more years, we are grateful for what she added to our program and the many children's



lives she was a part of during our first two years when she has been essential to helping us get Stirrup Courage started! We had the chance to lead her up to the new barn for one Saturday of lessons with little ones in our new Horse Care group before she died, and she was just as calm and dependable as always even in the brand new environment. Our little Ginger pony will not be forgotten! ❤️



#Walk2EndAlz

The morning of October 15th was the coldest we had felt so far this fall, with frigid wind to match. Yet this crew still showed up for our Walk Team to support the cause of the Walk to End Alzheimer's in Wooster! Thanks to all the sponsors who donated to help our team raise enough money

to earn our own team banner to carry on the walk, proudly carried by youth walkers Collins, Thea, and Payshence. We were proud to support our team leader Cathy as she walked in memory of her father, and our other family participants who walked in memory of parents and grandparents who were lost due to this disease.



Balloon-Popping FUNds

Our all-day balloon runners would probably tell you it is a lot more WORK than just fun, but hopefully all our volunteers also had a little fun together raising money by working at the Northern Ohio Outlaws Cowboy Mounted Shooting event at the fairgrounds. This time we did a full day

event in October, and by sticking it out through the running, the noise, the dust (and the wind that kept blowing our balloons away and popping them before we got to use them...), our volunteer crew helped to earn \$637! Thanks especially to Jon and Laura Hofstetter for supplying our workers with pizza for lunch to keep everyone going!





SPIRIT WEAR SALE!

We are currently taking orders for a variety of Stirrup Courage logo clothing items, including youth sweatpants, youth and adult t-shirts, long-sleeve T's, and zip-up hoodie sweatshirts! You can find a post about style and color options and prices on our Facebook page, or email Tara directly to place an order by November 30th so we can place the order in time for Christmas gifts!



Come Tour the New Facility at our CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE!

Stirrup Courage Equestrian Learning Center would like to invite our supporters and the community to come see what we have built so far and visualize the dreams we have for finishing out the rest of the building!

**Stop in on Sunday, December 18th,
Between 1:00-4:00pm**

Tour the facility, meet our horses, enjoy refreshments and maybe win a prize as we celebrate everything that has been accomplished in the past two years since Stirrup Courage was founded!

If you'd like to bring a "barn-warming" gift, we will be adding to a wishlist of needed items at myregistry.com.

Just look up Stirrup Courage in the registry search bar to view our list!



As you do your Christmas shopping, don't forget that an easy way to send support our way (with money you were already spending on gifts) is to go to [Smile.Amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) before you place any order through Amazon, and designate Stirrup Courage as your preferred charity! We were sent a check for \$32 from the last payout period from current supporters using Smile! As long as you always go through Amazon Smile when you make any purchase, a percentage of what you spend is donated back to us!

**Remember us on
#GIVINGTUESDAY next week,
and as you think about end-of-
year gifting to nonprofits that
are important to you!**

You can find ways to donate online through the donation page on our website, through fundraising posts on our Facebook page, by mailing a check, or emailing Tara if you'd like to stop by to drop off a donation in person! Your gifts will help sustain our program through the winter months, and fund remaining construction on our heated viewing room for families!

We are so THANKFUL for all your amazing continued support!

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