

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your friends at HorseFriends!

2020 has been an AMAZING year for HorseFriends!! Now, you might ask, why would we say that 2020 has been amazing when so many terrible, uncomfortable, sad, and maddening things have happened during this year?

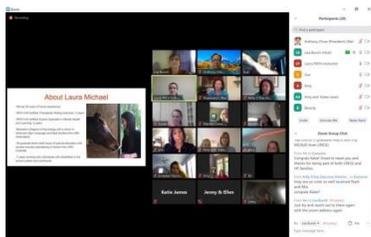
Well, follow along, enjoy the photos, and count the many ways that God has blessed our little non-profit organization during the year. And find out how you can help us continue our mission of sharing the blessings of Christ with our community by providing equine programs that develop confidence, as well as physical, and emotional strength for our participants and volunteers.

We moved, again! On February 1, we moved to Still Water Farm in Summerfield, NC. Due to some unforeseen circumstances, it was the right move for us and turned out to be a blessing in disguise. This gorgeous property has turned into collaboration between HorseFriends and Still Water Farm by providing not only our free therapeutic riding classes, but also individual and group riding lessons for beginners of any age, birthday parties, family gatherings, daycamps for elementary students, photo shoots, and more. Contact our Operations Director, Mandy Crews, if you are interested in any of these services.



MandyCrews@HorseFriendsNC.org or 336-420-4588.

March brought the pandemic and a shutdown of just about everything. While we thought we were ready for classes to begin at Still Water Farm in March, we realize now just how much more needed to be done and the shutdown helped buy us some time. God's timing is perfect!



The world learned to Zoom and we did too! We introduced our new PATH Certified Instructor and Program Director, Laura Michael, during an online volunteer training. If you have questions about our therapeutic riding program, Laura can be reached at LauraMichael@HorseFriendsNC.org



Training for our horses and minis never stopped. Fantastic volunteers, like Board Member Kim Adams, helped keep them in shape and ready to work. Here she is with the lovely mini Mia.



We missed our therapeutic riding participants and we knew by May that everyone could use something to smile about, and an excuse to get out of the house, so we organized our Drive-Thru & Say Hey Pony Parade for our participant families and the community. We also collected much needed food for the Northwest Guilford Area Backpack Ministry. Vera Crews' pony, Bandit, joined in the fun that day!

By July, restrictions had eased a bit, but therapeutic horseback riding can mean hands on contact between sidewalking volunteers and participants, so we started back slowly by introducing our participants to our horses and to the other farm animals at Still Water. We then moved on to some ground work with horses and participants, and they learned to groom and tack the horses.



What would summer be without our Summer Riding Camp? No fun at all! It was a challenge that we accepted and we dove right in to how we could safely provide a fun outdoor experience for able bodied and neuro-typical children, while raising a few much needed dollars for HorseFriends.

In August, we hosted the UNCG Provost and some of his colleagues for a meeting. Some attended in person, while others joined by Zoom. During their lunch break, a few of the attendees learned more about HorseFriends by participating in a demonstration of a therapeutic riding lesson.

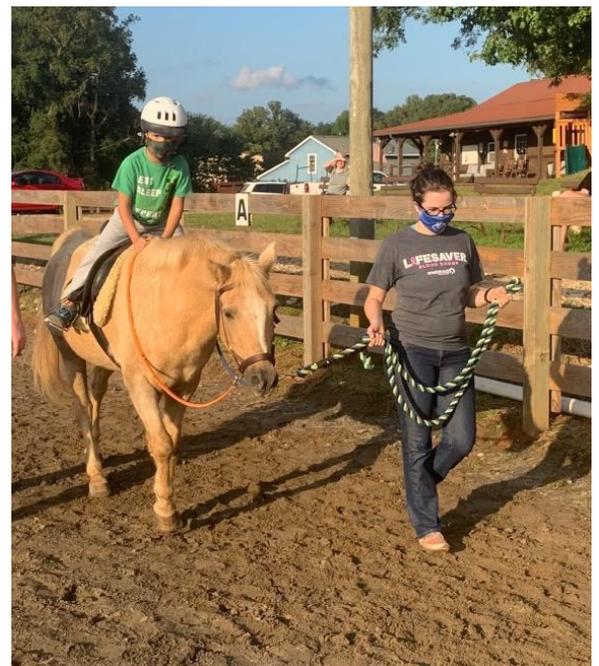


In anticipation of having riders back in the saddle by September, HorseFriends held a socially distanced volunteer training in the arena. We couldn't run our program without these amazing individuals who give of their time! Sue Parker is our Volunteer Director and if you are interested in volunteering with the therapeutic riding program, fundraising, events, or another

capacity, drop Sue an email at SueParker@HorseFriendsNC.org

It was FINALLY time to get our participants back on a horse! This young participant looks like he's practicing his two point stance. Great job! Our pony, Tucker, enjoys working as a therapeutic riding pony. If you don't know Tucker's story, read about it on our website HorseFriendsNC.org.

Matthew Allen joined the HorseFriends team as an Army intern for the fall. Matthew fell in love with our horses and working the farm. His time with us just recently wrapped up and we will miss him and his hard work.



In September, we spent a lovely evening thanking our volunteers with a family cookout, hayrides, and a mule and rider demonstration from former volunteer and now horse & mule trainer, Noelle Salmon.



In mid-October we hosted a small horse show for our therapeutic riding participants and riders who are taking lessons. It even included Queenie dressing up as a unicorn! She's beautiful with a butterfly rider.

2020 is HorseFriends 15th Anniversary year and we were disappointed that so many activities had to be canceled, including our large Horse Show and the spring Boots & Buckles Benefit. BUT, in October we were able to hold a scaled down version of the 2nd

Annual Boots & Buckles Benefit at Summerfield Farms. It was a lovely evening with music, live & silent auctions, and a delicious dinner. We appreciate all of you who were able to attend, bought dinner to-go, and/or participated in our first online silent auction. A big thank you to our terrific individual and corporate sponsors, and our fundraising team volunteers who helped make the evening a success! If you are interested in being a corporate or individual sponsor of a HorseFriends event in 2021 or have questions about how to make a contribution, contact Lisa Bunch, Fundraising Director at Lisa@HorseFriendsNC.org



Halloween on the Farm was well attended with lots of fun, games, and candy for families.

On a blustery November day, we hosted Leadership Greensboro at Still Water Farm and introduced them to the benefits of therapeutic horseback riding.



Finally, it was time to celebrate Christmas, and the farm is the perfect place for families to come and experience the joy of the season. We had to make some last minute changes to our plans, but the drive-thru event was enjoyed safely by all and they received a "rain check" for hayrides and a bonfire for a date to be determined.

We couldn't have done all that we accomplished in 2020 without the financial support and prayers of so many of you. Please help us continue to keep our amazing therapeutic riding program free for individuals with special needs. Consider a monetary donation to our non-profit organization through our website HorseFriendsNC.org (click on the support button) or by mailing a check to HorseFriends, P.O. Box 10211, Greensboro, NC 27404.

From all of us at HorseFriends, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy, *and healthy*, New Year!