



HARMONY FARMS, INC.

Equine Assisted Therapy & Activities

www.harmonyfarmsinc.com



Our Mission Statement

Harmony Farms, Inc. is a volunteer based, 501(c) (3) charity, providing equine assisted therapy and activities to disabled individuals of all ages, to enhance the quality of life for all.

The program was founded in 1992 to address the need in the local community for alternative programs for the disabled. We handle physical, mental and emotional disabilities. We are a member center of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), which serves as a regulatory and advisory agency for all the member centers. Conferences are held yearly as well as educational workshops.

Our students range in age from 4 – 84 years. Our riders are referred to us by their physicians, and therapists. The horse is used as a motivator to improve movement & muscle tone, increase language skills, improve ability to follow instructions, increase attention span, and other similar goals. These new skills and attitudes are carried over into the school, home and the workplace.

Riders experience certain physiological effects. Since horseback riding is exciting, adrenaline flows & endorphins are produced in the body which causes the riders to experience feelings of well-being which may last for days. This effect can be said to enhance the quality of life for the rider. These benefits are available to even the most severely disabled person.

Horseback riding gives freedom from crutches and wheelchairs, and provides a sense of independence. Just sitting on such a large, fuzzy animal builds confidence and self-esteem, while mastery of skills is a reward in itself. For all, the sight, smell, and feel of a horse is an exhilarating experience which can create a joy of living not otherwise attainable.

CURRENT OPERATION:

- **Barn & land** - 12 stall barn, with feed & tack room & office on 9 acres of land
- **Horses** - 12 horses, seven in the riding program, one on limited duty, and three retired. We have seven horses over the age of 27. All horses are donated to the program.
- **Roster - Disabled Students (weekly)** - 60 **Waiting list of students** – 20
- **Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructors** – 6 **In Training** – 1
- **Volunteers** – 40 plus
- **Program Director** – 1 **Volunteer Coordinator** - 1
- **Executive Director** – Pam Rogan is the Founder and Executive Director. She is the Florida State Representative for the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA), currently sits on the Advisory Board of Wickham Park, and is a Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor.
- **Board of Directors** governs the operation

In addition to the therapeutic riding program, we offer several outreach programs in the community and several programs which generate money to fund the operation.

CURRENT OUTREACH PROGRAMS:

1) **Black Stallion Literacy Project** – Coordinated by Arabian Nights in Kissimmee, FL, this program is based on the early books by Walter Farley. We encourage children to read, using horses. In 2010, we hosted 5 elementary schools at the barn and 500 students. A familiar comment by the teachers is that a student who refuses to read aloud in the classroom, does not hesitate to step up to a horse to read his book aloud. The program is very successful.

2) **Field Trips:** - Area schools, home school groups, Moms & Toddlers come to the barn to “Meet, Greet & Feed a Treat”. Patrick Air Force Base Youth Program brings children out every summer to work at the barn and then to raise money for the horses through fundraising events. We provide handouts to the children and give them a short lesson about horses and what they do at Harmony Farms.

3) **Off Campus Training Facility** - We provide training for new students and interns from area colleges and universities.

- Brevard Community College – First term Nursing students and Vet Tech students
- University Central Florida – First term Nursing students
- Kaiser College – Occupational Therapy students

The students spend a minimum of one week working in the therapeutic riding sessions, observing students and horses and preparing reports regarding their experience. The consensus from all is that they are exposed to more disabilities in one week at Harmony Farms, than any other venue they attend. Vet Tech students get to work on older horses and gain experience working with arthritis, dental issues and all the issues associated with aging horses.

4) **Volunteerism** – Orientations for new volunteers are held monthly. Training is provided in all aspects of horse handling, stable work and assisting with the disabled riders. Volunteer hours at Harmony Farms are accepted credit for Bright Futures Scholarships and all other High School Community Service requirements.

- Brevard County Juvenile Justice Dept. has selected harmony Farms as one of its agencies which provide volunteer opportunities for Court Ordered Community Service.

We feel it is essential in the development of our youth to teach them to help, work and interact with people with disabilities. Many teen volunteers form a friendship with the riders and request to work with those riders because they feel they are making a difference in their lives. We are preparing the adults of tomorrow!

5) **Scouting** – We provide training for Boy and Girl Scout Badges and Belt Loops. Many Eagle Scout projects have been completed at our facility and more are scheduled in the future.

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Harmony Farms, Inc.

- 6) **Basic Riding Lessons** – We are currently offering non-handicapped riding lessons only to our volunteers at a reduced fee.
- 7) **Summer Camp** – We offer 2 weeks of camp every summer. Cost is \$250 per week for five half days of riding and activities. We average 12 – 14 campers. This number is dictated by the number of horses available. On the last day of camp, we have a Horse Show and a barbecue for the campers and their families.
- 8) **Fertilizer Distributor** – SuntreeViera has some of the richest gardens in the county due to the Harmony Farms manure we give out to local gardeners!

FUNDRAISING EVENTS: *Signature Events*

Buckaroo Ball – (held in June) This event is a dinner, dance, with silent auction and a definite theme each year. Previous events have featured a Boot Scootin' Fashion Show with area dignitaries, a Buckaroo Derby with real jockeys, a Casino Night in a western saloon, and in 2011 we go Polynesian with a South Seas Revue held at the Brevard Zoo!

Ryan Moore Memorial Golf Tournament – (held in October) This event was coordinated by the parents of a former 5 year old rider with Autism, who drown in 2009. The family lives across from the barn, in Sonoma, in Viera. We held the first tournament in 2010 and it was extremely successful. Community involvement and help from Viera East Golf Club added to that success.

Blizzard at the Barn – (held in December) This event is a holiday open house with vendors, farm animals, photos with horses, treat feeding to horses, pony rides (*very popular*) and **SNOWFLAKES IN THE BARN!** Snowflake sales and sponsorships add to the event.

Open Fun Horse Shows – We do 3 shows per year which are for *all riders*. We combine equitation, pleasure, horsemanship, showmanship, jumping, games, costume, tot lead line and more in all shows. This year, 2011, marks our 17th year of providing a fun venue in Brevard County, for schooling, showing and just enjoying your horse.

Other Events – Harmony Farms formed the first Equestrian Team from Brevard County to participate in the Florida Special Olympics. Our riders have brought home lots of gold over the years.

We also participate in area Challenge Shows for our riders with special needs. This show, put on by several Florida "Therapy programs, is more relaxed than Special Olympics and gives our riders a chance to "Strut their Stuff".

THE FUTURE

THE MALCOLM LAVENDER EQUESTRIAN CENTER

Our goal, and dream, is to build a facility that will enable us to expand our current program, increase our fundraising efforts and provide a safer facility for our students, volunteers and horses. Malcolm Lavender, of A. Duda & Sons, Inc., was a huge part of making this dream, a reality. It is our honor to name this facility in his memory.

We are currently leasing 110 acres of land from Brevard County. Access to the land is via Powerline Road, in Viera. We currently have a lease with A. Duda & Sons, for the use of the road, which provides access to the property. That lease also requires that they maintain the road.

Our plan is to build a 20 stall barn, with separate modular building for an office, meeting room and classrooms, a covered arena and an open arena. This facility will greatly improve our current program, increase our capacity for riders and enable us to retire older horses to pasture and obtain younger, suitable mounts for our program. A breakdown of those improvements follows:

Planned enhancements to our Current Program: A larger facility will enable us to:

- Increase the number of horses; retire our older horses
- Increase the rider roster for the therapeutic riding program
 - Add another day of lessons & add more hours to existing days
 - Offer Private Lessons
 - Offer Specialized Lessons – example: stroke victims, senior riders, etc.
- Offer non-handicapped Riding Lessons *to the Public* (now restricted to volunteers only)
- Add another week to summer camp and add a Spring Break camp
- Add employees – increased programs will generate revenue and necessitate the need for more employees
- Hold our Horse Shows at our own facility – eliminate the fee paid to the county to use Wickham Park, increase the number & types of shows, with no competition for dates.
- Offer clinics, workshops and demonstrations *at our own facility*
- Compost Manure to sell

These enhancements will increase our revenue and enable us to create more jobs at the center and within the community.

Additional Programs to add to the Current Program: A larger facility will enable us to:

- Start a Hippotherapy program – This program requires a licensed therapist working with the rider and horse. It is a specialized arm of therapeutic riding.
- Start a Cart Driving Program – We already have a wheelchair accessible horse cart and will need a Certified Driving Instructor to start the program. This will enable riders who can no longer ride astride to continue to enjoy their interaction with horses.
- Start a Horses and Heroes Program – This program was developed through our national organization to work with Wounded Warriors to help veterans regain their independence using horses. A licensed psychologist or psychiatrist is required in this program.

FUNDING:

Our fundraising efforts have been greatly impacted by the current state of the economy. Donations of funds, materials and labor are scarce. Many businesses & Individuals who previously committed to doing jobs for free, now must charge for the work. This has greatly impacted our ability to raise necessary funds or to get donated materials and services.

We have been fortunate to have some of the preliminary work donated,

- Site Plan engineering – Donated by Hassan Kamal of BSE Engineering.
- Wells & pumps – donated by Morgan Plumbing
- Discounted site prep – offered by Randy Wadsworth

An estimate of the entire project which includes the site work, the covered arena, and the 20 stall barn, including plumbing & electric is shown below. The entire project will be done in phases. The first phase will be the site work and barn.

The site work estimate includes several items that we still hope to get donated which will greatly reduce the cost; (example: fill, concrete work land clearing, digging the pond).

Project cost :

Site work - \$185,000

Barn (Woody's Barns – St. Cloud) - \$145,000 (20 stalls, tack & feed room, utility room, including plumbing and electric.

Covered Arena - \$135,000

Total project cost for above: \$465,000 (without donated services)

The modular administration building will be purchased from Williams Scottsman's, in Orlando with a charitable discount applied. Approximate cost of this building is less than \$10,000.

HELP NEEDED:

We have been actively seeking Grants and donations toward this project. We continue to work on collaboration with area contractors and service providers to further reduce the cost with donated service and materials.

Our Dream:

Imaginea place where disabled individuals can have a variety of horse-related activities in a quiet, lush setting, with real trail rides in the woods. A place where they can ride a horse, or drive a horse drawn cart over 100 acres. A place for the public to enjoy horse shows, clinics, seminars, summer camps, barbecues, barn dances and much more.

With your help, Harmony Farms can be that place!

♥ *Together we can do great things!* ♥

Prepared by Pamela Rogan, Executive Director
January 2011