



# UNTAMED SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

August 2015 Edition

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## SMALL ANIMAL INTEGRATION CENTER

Thanks to a \$1,500 grant from the LEEPS Foundation, a \$500 donation from the students at Old Donation Center and a \$1,000 donation from the AvalonBay group, the Small Animal Integration Center is nearing completion. Volunteers from AvalonBay assisted Butch Snow (our fearless barn worker and dad to Buxton) in laying the foundation of this small barn that will house our goats and pigs. It also has a small stall, so that our miniature horse, Image, can find shade during the day.

Many, many hours have been dedicated by Butch and Shaun Gayhart finishing off the barn, to ensure the small animals are safe during the heat of summer and cold of winter.



## 2nd Annual Integrative Wellness Expo

September 12, 2015  
10:00 am-3:00pm

Forward Motion Farm - In the heart of Pungo  
**FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!**

Join us for an educational, family fun-filled day on the farm! By looking at the whole person, we are better able to reduce stress, incorporate healthy living styles and become proactive in personal treatment protocols. In addition to clinical treatment programs, integrative wellness also includes exercise, diet, self-care (yoga, massage therapy, essential oils), outdoor activities such as horseback riding and gardening, art and music therapies and behavioral health care.

Integrative thinking about healthcare is on the upswing world-wide and Untamed Spirit a natural farm setting in rural Virginia Beach.

**Sponsorships and Vendor Spots  
Still Available!**

Contact Barb@untamedspirit.org  
757.288.5999



- Therapeutic Riding Demo
- Agility Dog Demo
- Harpist
- Wellness vendors
- Music and Art Therapists
- All in one location



3943 Dawley Road • Virginia Beach • www.untamedspirit.org



Board of Directors: Chris Ryan, Barbara Fernandez, Verna Rosenblum and Elizabeth Gilmore

This note was written to our Executive Director by JoEllen's husband.



“This marks two months of therapy for JoEllen and it's been more help than I could have imagined. As you know, she has a condition called *Primary Progressive Aphasia – dementia*. The equine therapy has made such a positive impact on her attention span and demeanor since she started lessons. We are also very fortunate to have Long Term Care Insurance which covers the cost of this therapy. However, your attention to Jo Ellen along with help from the other folks at the farm, is the highlight of our week. It gives her a remembered touchstone to focus on each as the days passed. We just had a recent routine visit to her primary care doctor and he was justifiably impressed with the fact that she was participating and seemed buoyed by having her les-

sons at the farm. It shows that we can still enjoy the horses even in our later years. Kindest regards, *Christopher Watson*”



### First Colonial Inn

Senior Living Community residents came to visit the farm this winter. They were able to pet the horses and watch a therapeutic riding lesson.



The excited giggles and laughter warmed our hearts as we watched the two generations interact. What a great way for our valued Seniors, living in Assisted Care Facilities, to be involved in our program.

## Surgery for Nightwatch

“Officer” Nightwatch, as one of our young students now refers to him by, is our 19 year old Thoroughbred therapy horse (and former Mounted Patrol Horse) who is in desperate need of surgery. Nightwatch suffers from a partially paralyzed larynx and requires surgery to help him breathe.

On July 18th, Ashley Gayhart held a HUGE Tack Sale to benefit Nightwatch and to date; over \$2,400 has been raised towards the \$3,500 goal. Thanks to EVERYONE who assisted Ashley in getting ready for the sale, but in particular, Margaret Graf, Carly Vasta and Aubrey Taylor who spent many long hours in the barn with Ashley cleaning and organizing tack and all the donated items for the sale. Thank you to everyone who came out to the sale and purchased items to help us meet our goal!



We would particularly like to thank the following donors for their additional financial support toward Nightwatch's surgery: Anonymous; Jan Dool; Melissa Baxter; Dr. John Sangenario; Aubrey Taylor Family; Margaret Graf; Debbie Dear Keim; Verna Rosenblum; Brandon & Hannah Carey; Hannah Yasemsky; Chris and JoEllen Watson; Catherine Johnson; Partners Tack Shop and Elaine Rector (former owner).

Won't you help us raise the remainder of funds needed to have this surgery done soon? Checks can be made payable to Untamed Spirit with “Nightwatch” in the note section.

# UNTAMED SPIRIT 2015 SUMMER CAMP!!

Eight Enthusiastic youngsters had a great time learning about prehistoric horses and dinosaurs during Untamed Spirit 2015 Summer Camp. Daily activities included horseback riding, arts and crafts and even a visit from the Equine Dental Team! The weather was fabulous and wonderful volunteers made this camp a great success!!



## RIDER SPOTLIGHT

### Melissa Baxter

By Brian Baxter and Verna Rosenblum

Disabilities have not stopped our daughter in surpassing goals set. Melissa has always wanted to fit in, to be that normal person like everyone else. Since Melissa entered the public elementary school program she had problems keeping up with the normal curriculum and making friends. "Mom or Dad" why are kids making fun of me, was often asked? Through these hardships Melissa has excelled in learning even though it might take hours longer than normal persons, she succeeded in earning an Associate's Degree with Tidewater Community College.

Melissa has always had an affinity for animals, especially horses. Since she began therapeutic riding lessons, at the age of 13 with Barbara S. Ford and her assistant instructors, Melissa has gained the independence and friends that she constantly strives to meet.

Though many of these friends have four legs and a tail, they provide her the time to care, talk, and ride, all important in growing the independence Melissa wanted in a "NORMAL" life. Therapeutic riding isn't just about climbing on a horse for an hour then leaving. It provides the disabled person a means of finding true strength in themselves, a non-judgmental environment to expand their wings without criticism and the feeling of being "normal" in as much as their disability will allow.

Melissa, still has challenges, but is now able to volunteer at Forward Motion Farm and Untamed Spirit with the care and feeding of the horses and the other animals. She also volunteers with Untamed Spirit as a side walker or leader to other riders and wants to become a therapeutic riding instructor one day. Through all the ups and downs in Melissa's life, she has always found strength and caring in Barb and her daughter, Ashley Gayhart (her instructor) and their staff. Untamed Spirit has become a very important "peace" in Melissa's ever changing life. Melissa has been great fun for my daughter, Suzanne and I, states friend Verna Rosenblum.

Melissa attended the first ASL (American Sign Language) group class we held at the farm and since Melissa had previous sign instruction, she whizzed through the lessons. We meet regularly with Melissa to continue practicing sign and to talk about horses and riding.



As both a student and volunteer at Forward Motion Farm and Untamed Spirit, Melissa is quite a role model for our younger riders. She has a tremendous work ethic, as well as a genuine regard for the horses. She is a talented horsewoman who demands much of herself and knows how to work with her mount to achieve these goals.

Meeting Melissa and becoming friends with her and her parents, Bernice and Brian, has been something that Suzanne, Artie and I count as one of the many good things that Untamed Spirit has brought into our lives.

**DID YOU KNOW** that it costs an average of **\$350 per month** to take care of our treasured therapy animals?

Untamed Spirit now has a herd of eleven drafts, horses, ponies and mini (*along with goats, cats and pigs!*) that provide daily interactions and riding opportunities to special needs and challenged children and adults.

We are in desperate need of **monthly sponsors** who can help to defray their upkeep throughout the year. Won't you **consider sponsoring** these therapy animals so the joys of farm life and love can continue all year long for our clients?

Contact Executive Director, Barb Ford for more information (757) 288-5999 or [barb@untamedspirit.org](mailto:barb@untamedspirit.org).

Your donation, AT ANY LEVEL, will ensure a long life for our therapy animals.



**Thank you** just does not seem to be enough, but without these wonder vendors and practitioners, Untamed Spirit would not thrive!

Sterling Meadows Farm, Green Ridge Farm, Dominion Equine Clinic, Technomedia, Jones Printing, Window World, Perfection Auto, Equine Dental Care of Virginia, Posie Magurn, Leslie Savvas, Scott Cottrell, Lorrinda Springston and Judi Fisher.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, our staff, riders and families, thank you to *ALL the financial donors* who support our organization throughout the year. Thank you especially for the monthly donors and for those who have supported Untamed Spirit since its inception in 2010! Look for our expanded Business and Individual Donor recognition in our Fall Newsletter.



After three long years, Barb graduated last August with a Master's of Counseling degree from Regent University, passed her National Certified Counselor Exam (NCC), and just this past month received word that she is now in her Resident in Counseling phase.

Another exciting milestone was achieved as Forward Motion Farm and Untamed Spirit were also designated as counseling sites!

Untamed Spirit has been partnering with Meichell Worthing, LPC, NCC and Lighthouse Counseling this year to offer mental health

counseling to interested parties; and, we look forward to expanding our services in the near future.

For more information contact:  
Barb at: (757) 288-5999 or Meichell at (757) 324-5421

Mark your Calendars for our upcoming 4th Annual Virginia Beach Runway 5K that is set for November 14, 2015 at the Military Aviation Museum in Pungo...



**Untamed Spirit Summer Camp 2015 Riders and Volunteers  
(and of course, Image)**



**UNTAMED SPIRIT**  
**Therapeutic & Educational Program**  
**Non-profit Organization**  
**3943 Dawley Road**  
**Virginia Beach, VA 23456**

Untamed Spirit is a PATH, International and TRAV Member Center and is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization.