

June

STEP

2023

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



STEP has had three big events in May and June. In May we gathered at the farm to celebrate the people and horses who are no longer with us during our Lights of Love Ceremony. We had a good turnout and Gem Stone provided a lovely musical arrangement. Over \$8,000.00 was donated to the program in memory of those who have passed which goes toward the care of our horses and the 2023 lesson program.

In June we hosted a volunteer open house at the farm. This included tours of the facility, demonstrations of mock lessons, and horse poop bingo! We had a great turnout and will be offering trainings for new volunteers joining our STEP family. We hope to see new faces around the barn in the upcoming weeks!

In June STEP also hosted the To Life! group. This non-profit organization, who supports those dealing with a breast cancer diagnosis in treatment and survivorship, joined STEP and Kay for a day of horses and healing.



2023 Lesson Season

The 2023 lesson season is in full swing! We currently have 45 participants active in our program and 10 participants on our waitlist. While Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays remain our busiest lesson days, we are scheduling some lessons on Wednesday's and Friday's to accommodate as many of our participants as possible. We are offering unmounted lessons, hippotherapy, and therapeutic riding sessions. In addition to lessons, STEP has been hosting the

Broadalbin Perth school group since April. Our last group for the spring session came in June but with summer school starting a new group of students will be joining us for the summer session. The students work on a number of mounted and unmounted skills such as grooming, leading, and horse care during their time at STEP. Broadalbin Perth is not the only group joining us this summer. We are also hosting the Burnt Hills Special Education Group, grades 7 - 12, and the Sunnyview Recreational Therapy Department, who is hosting equine experiences at STEP for individuals with disabilities. Participants pet, groom, and interact with our 1,000 lb. therapists.



New Faces

Many of you may already know Cody. He is the newest member of our 4-footed STEP family. He was kindly donated by Sarah Lindsey Deforest. Cody was ready to retire from his job as a lesson pony & pet but don't let that fool you because he still has a lot of pep in his step. You can often see Cody (right side of picture) turned out with his friend Cami (left side of picture). We are thrilled to have him as a part of our program and are very thankful to his donors.



CONGRATULATIONS!

STEP would like to recognize Jennifer DiCerbo and Erica Stockman on their outstanding achievements! Jennifer is one of our therapeutic riding instructors who teaches on Tuesdays and has completed her specialty education course through PATH for Equine Services for Heroes. This course gives instructors the tools to help lead and guide military veterans through equine assisted activities. STEP will be offering a VA aftercare group called Hooves on the Ground.



Erica, who is the STEP barn manager and assists in lessons, completed her course as an Equine Specialist in Mental Health & Learning (ESML) through PATH. As an ESML, Erica ensures the safety and well-being of the equine participating in mental health or equine-assisted learning sessions and serves as the equine expert during equine-human interactions. We are so proud of our instructors and are excited for the new skills and new knowledge they will bring to our program!



We would also like to congratulate three of our volunteers who have recently graduated high school!

Kate Licata is one of our main horse handlers, lesson leaders, and barn chore volunteers on Saturdays.

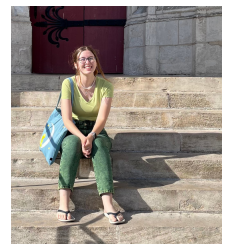
Ashley O'Hara is one of our weekend staff members/volunteers who leads in lessons, cares for our horses on second shift, and takes care of barn chores. Ana Zepf is one of our third shift volunteers who takes care of our horses with her mom on Tuesday nights.

We are appreciative of all their hard work and commitment to our program. We will miss them but wish our STEP family the best as they head off to college and accomplish great things!

Fun Fact: The Mass Effect

Recent studies conducted by the Institute of HeartMath provide a clue to explain the bidirectional "healing" that happens when we are near horses. According to researchers, the heart has a larger electromagnetic field and higher level of intelligence than the brain...While this is certainly significant it is perhaps more impressive that the electromagnetic field projected by the horse's heart is five times larger than the human one (imagine a sphere-shaped field that completely surrounds you). The horse's electromagnetic field is also stronger than ours and can actually directly influence our own heart rhythm! Research shows that people experience many physiological benefits while interacting with horses, including lowered blood pressure and heart rate, increased levels of beta-endorphins (neurotransmitters that serve as pain suppressors), decreased stress levels, reduced feelings of anger, hostility, tension and anxiety, improved social functioning, and increased feelings of empowerment, trust, patience and self-efficacy."

Source: Northwood Farms Facebook



Salute to Service

We would like to recognize our staff and volunteers who make STEP possible. Without them, we would be unable to care for the horses, provide services to our participants, or carry out the administrative duties that keeps the program funded and running. The commitment shown by ALL of our volunteers does not go unnoticed and is appreciated beyond words. Some have been part of STEP for a few months while others have been a part of STEP for 30 years. Please know that each and everyone of you are treasured and an important part of our STEP family. In particular we would like to recognize a few people who help carry out the day to day functions of our program...

Our barn staff: Erica Stockman, Francesca Butler, and Liz Roz,

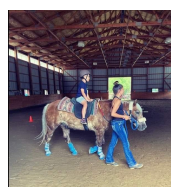
Their team of assistants: Kate Licata and Ashley O'Hara,

Our volunteer coordinators: Pat Wright and Janet Garry

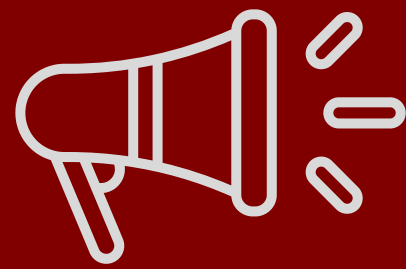
Our lesson instructors: Jennifer DiCerbo, Physical Therapist Janis Lumley, and Physical Therapist Hildy Reich

Treasurer: Barbara Murray

Our Executive Director & Physical Therapist: Kay Stanley-White.



Upcoming Events



STEP out to Wolf Hollow Brewing Company

Join STEP on Sunday August 6th from 12pm - 6pm at Wolf's Hollow Brewing Company in Glenville. The event will include food options from Burger 21, music by Gem Stone, fresh quality beer from Wolf's Hollow Brewing, and our mini ambassadors. Tickets can be purchased prior to and at the event at \$50 for adults and \$25 for children. Tickets are free for kids 2 years old and under.

Kay's Kamp for Kids

Kay will be running summer camp at STEP for kids ages 7 - 13 from August 7th - 11th. Camp will run from 9am to 2pm. Campers will learn about horse and barn care, practice their riding skills and play games on horseback, and have fun doing arts and crafts. If you are interested in an application, please contact Kay at stepatnfec@yahoo.com or call 518-374-5116. Spots are limited so if you are interested do not delay in signing up!

Putt 4 the Ponies

Save the date! STEP will be holding a golf outing at Eagle Crest golf course in Clifton Park on Tuesday September 12th. There will be a raffle with a chance to win tickets to a NY Giants football game against the Philadelphia Eagles. We are currently looking for sponsors for the event and we also need a minimum of 50 golfers in order to reserve the course for our private event. Please spread the word to local businesses, family and friends. If you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor or participate as a golfer please contact Kay at stepatnfec@yahoo.com.

