



HALLECK CREEK HEADLINES

WINTER NEWSLETTER 2006/07

"Our mission is not to dry the children's tears, it is to preserve their laughter." -Herbert Hoover

A New Look For Our "Old" Program

For nearly 30 years, Halleck Creek riders and volunteers have enjoyed a day of riding and friendship each and every Saturday. While six days a week the ranch lay quiet and peaceful, every Saturday it roared to life with the joyful energy of dozens of riders and volunteers working together during the weekly riding sessions.

But as the program grew, it became harder and harder to find regular riding slots for everyone that was already enrolled in the program, and impossible to continue to enroll new students. In addition, there were some riders who struggled with the length and distractions of the larger group sessions.

With the help of our summer intern and friend, Avery Brown, we broke the Saturday mold and created a brand new style of program: individualized riding sessions. These sessions are shorter, but more intensive than the Saturday group sessions. Working with a Halleck Creek staff member, weekday riders are guided through stretches and exercises appropriate to their level and need. Staff can be much more flexible in each lesson due to the small number of horses in the arena during an individualized session.

For some riders, the quiet and solitude of the individualized sessions allows them to bypass the barriers of their disability and progress at a more rapid pace. One young rider with autism found the Saturday sessions too stimulating. He showed his protest by screaming, pulling off his helmet, and trying to get off of his horse. But when he attended his first weekday session, with only two people and one horse to focus on, he was able to respond to his instructor, and actually began to turn the horse by himself. Another rider was able to finally try to ride by himself off of the lead line. "He just had the ride of his life!" gushed his proud mother.

Currently there are 18 new riders attending the Monday and Wednesday sessions, representing a 50% increase in the number of riders we serve each week. Some of these riders will eventually move to the Saturday group sessions, but other riders are very excited about the new format and the different opportunities it brings. From the successful seeds of the Saturday program, a vibrant community and program continue to grow.

Because "Many hands make light work", we appreciate all of our hard working volunteers. But we have a special thank you to the following people for going above and beyond the call of duty:

♥ To **Dennis Hansen** for managing the new floor and painting of the Ranch Manager's House.

♥ To **David Lee** for a new office door lock, and new saddle racks in the tack room.

♥ To **Nancy Brookshire** and her friend **Geraldine Ganun-Owens** for the beautiful new Halleck Creek calendar! Make sure you get a copy.

♥ To **Jane McKechnie** for her weekly phone calls to round up Saturday volunteers.

♥ To **Rhonda Lenore, Tricia O'Neill, and Marty McCowan**, our weekday volunteers.

♥ To **Dorito Marringa** for the beautiful flower cards we are selling to benefit the program.

♥ To **Oona Zeigler** for the new brochure she designed herself to help promote our organization.

Calendar Of Activities

Some of these dates have come and gone, but wanted to let you know what we have been up to . . .

December 9th—New Volunteer/Rider Orientation, 1:00PM

December 16th—Holiday Party—Potluck, bring a favorite dish or treat to share. We will have hot cider, and a visit from Santa who is bearing stockings stuffed with goodies! Cross your fingers that no storms come our way on this day.

December 20th-January 2nd—No Ranch Riding, Happy Holidays!

January 13th—New Volunteer Orientation 8:30am

January 27th—New Rider Orientation 1:00 pm

February 10th—New Volunteer Orientation 1:00pm

February 24th—New Rider Orientation 8:30am

March 10th –New Volunteer Orientation 8:30am

March 17th - Leprechaun "Hunt"

March 24th—New Rider Orientation 1:00pm

April 14th-New Volunteer Orientation 1:00pm

April 7th—Easter Egg Hunt On Horseback

April 28th—New Rider Orientation 8:30am

May 12th—Human Race Walkathon-No Ranch Riding- come walk or roll with us at this very important "fun"draiser! Get a free t-shirt, lunch, and other give aways too! Get your friends and neighbors involved, start early, and help us raise money for our ranch and programs. Look for more information coming in January 2007. Let's make this year the best, and most successful race ever!

July 12th—30th Anniversary Birthday Party
Join us for cake and music to celebrate 30 years of riding and fun at Halleck Creek. Its potluck, so bring a salad or dish to share.

August 3rd-6th—Rogue River Rafting Trip

Join the Halleck Creek Rogue River Rats on the adventure of a lifetime. Camp along a scenic area of the river, and enjoy two days of floating and rafting on a guided tour of the Rogue. Don't miss this trip, it is one of the most fun weekends you will every have.

As always during the winter and spring months, the weather can be very unpredictable. If the weather turns wet, call the ranch phone , 415-662-2488, anytime after 7 am the day of an activity, and there will be a message indicating any cancelled activities that day.

NOTE: We begin sign ups for riding sessions on the 23rd of each month for the following month. Please call 415-662-2488 and speak to Julie, or email Julie at:

jcassel@halleckcreekranch.org

to schedule rides each month. Please remember to notify Julie of any scheduled sessions you cannot attend to free that space for someone on the waiting list.

New Horses Come To The Ranch

You may have noticed a few new horses in the pastures around the ranch. There is a new pony named simply "Tony", and a horse with appaloosa markings and a distinctively small tail named "Tailor Made" or Taylor for short. Their generous owners donated them to Halleck Creek because they appreciated the quality of our facility and the importance of our mission.

Each horse that we accept for donation has a unique personality and life story. Because of the differences, the length and type of training they go through before beginning as a therapy horse varies greatly. Some horses need more time to find their place in the herd. Some horses need extra time to get used to the unique sights, sounds, and activities of the program. Then there are some horses who take it all in stride, assimilating into the herd and program as if they had been here their entire lives.

Tony is a small, energetic pony who needs to watch his weight and needs regular hoof trims to keep his feet healthy. We keep him in a smaller pasture so that we can monitor his diet more closely than the other horses. He is still getting comfortable in his new surroundings, and

volunteers have begun working with him to get him ready to work in the program. He will eventually replace some of our older, shorter horses when they retire.

Taylor is already working in the program taking riders. He is an old lesson horse from Miwok Stables in Mill Valley. Because of his previous life as a lesson horse, he is very comfortable working with many different people and other horses. He settled in very quickly, and was working in the program after only a few training sessions.

Taylor showed his true value one day at the water trough. The volunteer leading him did not notice that his bridle had caught on the automatic watering device which fills the trough. When Taylor raised his head, the device came with him, hanging off of his bridle and spraying water everywhere. While many horses would have gone berserk, Taylor calmly waited for it to fall off, then resumed drinking.

**Become a
Halleck Creek
Horse
Sponsor!**

While Taylor and Tony look and act very differently, they are both going to be ideal additions to our program.

Halleck Creek Loses Foundation Funding

By now you have received our annual appeal letter asking for your financial support for the ranch and programs. For those of you who have sent back your donations, THANK YOU! Your support has enabled us to expand our services with a new program reaching 50% more riders than last year, opened our ranch to operate four days a week, and has helped us to create a safe and beautiful facility for our riders and horses.

If you have not sent your annual support yet, I ask once more that you do. While the Marin Community Foundation has dominated local headlines, it is not the only source of foundation grants that is refocusing their support dollars. Two foundations that have regularly supported Halleck Creek for years have either pulled all funding for our programs, or have se-

verely lowered the amount of financial support they are giving. Your donations will be crucial to keep our organization strong and thriving in these changing economic times.

"We have heard such wonderful things about your program. Our family is happy to send this donation to support your work."

-Anonymous donor

There are many ways to support Halleck Creek financially, and all of them come with substantial tax benefits. You can give a gift of appreciated stock to our endowment fund, or set up your estate to include Halleck Creek as a beneficiary of an annuity. Call Julie at 415-662-2488, or speak to your tax and/or financial advisor for more information.

Halleck Creek Institute partners with Marin County 4H to provide this program. Halleck Creek Institute and the University of California, in accordance with applicable Federal and State law and University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or status as a Vietnam-era veteran or special disabled veteran. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. Inquiries regarding the policy may be addressed to the Affirmative Action Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin Street, 6th Floor, Oakland, CA 94607-52—(510)987-0096

Return Service Requested



PO Box 159 < New Address!!
Nicasio CA 94946
415-662-2488
jcasel@halleckcreekranch.org
www.halleckcreekranch.org

HALLECK CREEK INSTITUTE

Non Profit
Bulk rate
US Postage Paid
Point Reyes Station CA
Permit #5

Happy Holidays! See you at the ranch in 2007!

Volunteer Trainers Get The Job Done

You may have noticed a few volunteers wearing lime green shirts on a Saturday. If you looked closely, you would see the words "Volunteer Trainer" on the back of the shirt. While all of our volunteers comprise the heart and soul of the program, these special volunteers have taken on the extra work and responsibility of assisting with training the newer volunteers. Through their time and efforts, new volunteers are shown "The Halleck Creek Way" of doing everything from grooming and tacking up horses, to relating to a rider they do not know. Thank you to Nancy Brookshire, Colleen Goodin, Madison Lloyd, Jane McKechnie, Ron Nekula, Diane Smith, and Oona Ziegler for their extraordinary efforts. You are making the experience of volunteering at Halleck Creek so much better!

**SPEED
LIMIT**

10 MPH

**ON OLD
RANCHERIA
ROAD**

***Please be courteous to our
neighbors and drive safely
and slowly!***