



Dear Family & Friends,

Summer is off to a stormy start, literally, but we hope that you're looking forward to joining us for our 8th Annual Hayburner Fundraiser & Silent Auction, on Saturday, September 14, 2024 from 1-4 pm! Rain or shine, we hope to see your smile back at Heaven's Gait Ranch! As a working mother of two now, I appreciate your continued interest and investment in HGR's future, as the trajectory of our mission rests more and more in your loving hands.



Herd Update:

Since our last update, we sadly said goodbye to the matriarch of our herd, Ellie. At 28 years old, Ellie had a spectacular life, and everyone at HGR was blessed to be part of it. To say that we'll miss her is an understatement, knowing the incredible impact she had on so many. Generously donated in 2017 by Cheri & Gene Eberhardy, Ellie was one of the "originals" who paved the way for our therapeutic riding program. During her time at HGR, she provided a remarkable 1,180 lessons to individuals with special needs and veterans with disabilities.

After losing two mares within six months, we've had some big shoes to fill before scheduling our busiest seasons of the year. If you've ever lost a beloved pet, you know how difficult it is to say goodbye, and if you've ever lost a reliable co-worker or employee, you also know how hard it is to recruit and retain top talent. Ellie was all of that and more.



That's why we were so relieved when our "Prince" arrived this spring! Your generosity in the first quarter, along with proceeds from our March Meat Raffle, allowed HGR to purchase Prince, an eight year old leopard Appaloosa gelding from a family in the Oostburg area.

At his previous home, Prince was trained in western pleasure and was also used for children's lessons. His steadiness under saddle makes him an excellent choice for participants who are learning to ride off-lead as well as those learning to trot and canter. His ability to neck rein also provides options for riders with limb differences to be able to steer their horse independently. Prince passed his trial period in April, and we are grateful that volunteer Celeste Pauli & her husband Matt have generously sponsored Prince's annual care. We are hopeful for many years with Prince and are excited to watch him grow while he learns the ropes of equine-assisted services!

Although we are still searching for free lease options to add to our herd, we received a generous pledge to help support the purchase price of our next program horse when we find the right fit long term.



Nevertheless, we've learned that short term lease agreements can still make a positive impact at HGR. At age 23, Bossie, who arrived last fall on a free lease, returned home to her family this summer where she will comfortably resume retirement. In just three seasons, Bossie provided over 150 therapeutic riding lessons, serving a very meaningful purpose and creating memories for a lifetime. We thank her family for kindly sharing their beloved mare with us last year, and we thank Lisa A. H. Cudahy for generously sponsoring her care!

Program Update:

Despite a higher-than-average number of tornadoes wreaking havoc across the state, HGR is still on track to provide another 1,000 lessons to our community this year. With your steady support, veterans continue to take priority over other inquiries, so when a spot opens, they have the opportunity to come first at no cost. Referrals for counseling and therapeutic services continue to come from Ozaukee and Sheboygan counties, primarily through the Children's Long Term Support Waiver. However, as expected, we have a waitlist again through fall for therapeutic riding. Monitoring equine welfare with mounted workloads, HGR will expand ground programming this fall to include equine facilitated learning that targets empowerment and self-determination. HGR's staff is in the early stages of curriculum development, but we have received positive feedback thus far from county case managers and service facilitators.

HGR's contract with Kim Berggren, PATH Intl. Advanced Instructor & Mentor, will conclude at the end of this year, so we are maximizing her time and talents on site over the next six months. Program Assistant Anika Gooding has started the credentialing process of becoming a PATH Intl. Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor, and she has begun her instructional hours under the supervision of our seasoned, certified staff.

As Interim Director of Operations, Kim has also strengthened our partnerships with surrounding high schools in Sheboygan County, deepening a pipeline of applicants searching for youth apprenticeship opportunities. With pre-approved work-releases from school, juniors and seniors can come to HGR to earn credit and compensation for courses in animal sciences.



Volunteers

While we are still struggling to find weekly lesson volunteers – thus justifying the need for more paid staff – HGR has cast a wider net to offer opportunities fulfilling one-time service projects, when youth have reliable transportation to help in the middle of the day. This summer, at the request of some of our participants, HGR made the short list of approved host sites for local mission trips organized by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Inspired by the life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the "Love Begins Here" initiative helps middle and high school teens deepen their faith by serving those in need within their own communities.

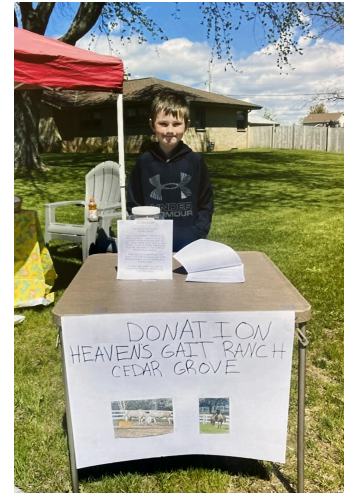


Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc.

Summer 2024

Teens came to HGR in June from different parishes within the Archdiocese, clearing the gardens along HGR's driveway and creating a welcoming environment for all to enter. By cleaning the clutter and working alongside HGR volunteers Sharon Sandona and Sherri Sandona Kamenski, these missionaries illuminated the beauty, wonder, and awe of our surrounding blessings on Main Street.

I learned to love your neighbors and help them because even the small things done with great love make a big difference in someone's life.
– Emily, Volunteer



Events



Not only is HGR seeing more interest in one-time service projects, but HGR is also gaining more traction and financial support from youth in our local community. Students at Cedar Grove-Belgium Elementary School rallied in May to raise funds for Prince's hoofcare and shoes, while one of HGR's homeschooled participants also joined the movement. Mason sold cookies and lemonade during our community rummage sale, which was held the same week that the elementary school spearheaded their fundraising initiative. Together, they raised \$1,461.36!

Photo Credit (left): Ozaukee Press; Mason (pictured above); Schaefer Sprung & 2 Nigh's (below)

While the kids in our community are noticing wonderful ways to make a difference, HGR's staff and volunteers are also getting creative with engagement and support from their families and friends.

Rounds for the Ranch was an absolute blast as teams participated in our first annual charity clay sporting trap shooting event. Co-hosted by SoLu Winery and The Highlands Sportsmen's Club of Cascade, WI, the first Saturday in June was a beautiful day to gather for some fun in the sun with food, drinks, music, raffle prizes, and retrievers. Maggie Robertson took the lead on pioneering the event with vendors and sponsors, while Monica Schaefer and Anika Gooding staffed the event stations with HGR volunteers.



Teams competed for best individual score, best team score, and best flurry score. Winners included Dan Schaefer, Schaefer Sprung & 2 Nigh's, and Team Schecher respectively. Dan scored an impressive 47/50, and all were eager to come back again next year. Many thanks to Maggie, Monica, and Anika for taking point on this event, to H.Knox Development for sponsoring the "flurry station," and all the volunteers and teams who raised \$1,684.30 for our mission. Your generosity ensures the most vulnerable among us get the essential services they need!

Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc.
Therapeutic Riding Center

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Cedar Grove, WI 53013

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How You Can Help

Please keep Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc. in your prayers and know that your support directly impacts the quality and quantity of the equine assisted services we provide.

You're Invited to the 8th Annual Hayburner Fundraiser & Silent Auction!

Join us for live music, heavy hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction, and raffles, with proceeds benefiting our equine assisted programs for individuals with special needs and veterans with disabilities. Adult tickets are \$50 each; Children 12 & Under: \$20. With much to celebrate in year eight – and more to plan before year ten – we hope to see you in September! Please RSVP to 920-400-0628 to help us prepare for food & drinks.

Can't make our fundraisers but still want to support?

1. Text-to-Give: 920-315-7551 keyword: horses
2. Invite a friend & spread the word about our mission to co-workers, employers, or neighbors.
3. Donate a Silent Auction Item.
4. Donate directly to Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc., and we will allocate funds to where it's needed most.
5. Remember Heaven's Gait Ranch, Inc. in your will or trust.
EIN: 81-1274623. As a small nonprofit, we will remember you!

Thank you again for all you do, and we hope to see you in September!

Sincerely,

Margaret Mary McClaren

Margaret Mary McClaren
Executive Director

