



# HoofBeat

January 2018



## A Note from Susie...



Nora and Susie

I love how Nora takes my hand and pulls me up the ramp as we wait for her horse 'Sara'. She is so full of excitement, her whole body is electric and everyone in the arena is filled with joy! Once on her horse, Nora looks at me, touches my face and smiles so big, her way of thanking me. Her love of horses renews my passion for what Freedom Farm is able to accomplish.

We continue to say 'yes' to those seeking our services and our programs are growing. The newest is the accredited charter high school, **Freedom Academy**. Opening the doors to a high school was a big accomplishment! The unique and peaceful setting of our Schoolhouse allows us to passionately support and encourage each student on an individual basis. One of their classes, Succeed With Horses, has the students in the barn with me everyday ~ Yippee! Our beautiful horses reach the students working through anxiety, depression, anger and self control in the most real and life changing ways.

I am excited for the new addition that will be completed this year! The vision of how we will better serve our participants and build relationships is so beautiful.

The new addition will provide:

- Freedom Academy classroom
- Veteran Coffee Time area
- Climate control tack room
- Volunteer check in area
- 4 horse stalls



'Healing with Horses' Veterans



I look forward to walking this journey with you in our 18th year.

Much love and blessings,  
Susie Bjorklund

**Freedom Farm** enriches lives by partnering with the unique attributes of the horse to improve mobility, build confidence and encourage personal growth in children and adults with physical, mental and emotional challenges.



**The 2017 Donor List** will be sent by email, is available on the website and posted on the wall in the arena at Freedom Farm.

# FREEDOM FARM RIDER NORA

By Nora's Mom, Melissa

If a picture is worth a thousand words, this one is worth even more to our family. Everything Nora (and our family) feels about Freedom Farm is summed up in this photo. Freedom Farm is truly an amazing, life-changing place. Above all of that though, Freedom Farm is Nora's happy place! She is nothing but smiles and giggles when she is with Susie and riding her horse.



Another natural benefit is how the horse promotes communication, and with Nora we are looking for ways to make learning to talk fun. Nora communicates mostly by signing and as Susie puts it "her extremely gifted facial expressions are very clear!" but when on her horse, especially when riding outside, she is very verbal. This is so important for her as she works on forming words.



Nora using her signs to let us know she is ready to ride!

Until February of 2017, Nora used a walker to help her walk and riding at Freedom Farm has helped strengthen her core and legs, which has improved her balance and confidence with walking. Now, she practically runs towards the barn when it's time to ride!

Every staff member and volunteer at Freedom Farm treats the riders with such respect and love and the resulting smiles are worth more than could ever be said. Our family is beyond thankful for the amazing program at Freedom Farm and we can't wait to have our Nora continue her riding journey with them!



## HORSES CHANGE LIVES 2018



Josh proudly shows his coins for 'Candy'.

The Horses Change Lives (HCL) campaign is one way to help us reach our goal of \$48,000 for the year. The cost for each horse is \$4,000.00 per year.

You can help by setting an HCL jar at work, school or in your car, encouraging others to donate their spare change.



Nora fills 'Sara's' coin container.

To date we have received \$740.35.

*Every penny counts!*

You can support our horses by going to our website and click the 'Donate Now' button, add the horse's name you are supporting in the memo section.

\$48,000.00

\$27,203.35



## MINNESOTA HORSE COUNCIL GRANT



A huge **THANK YOU** to the Minnesota Horse Council for generously awarding Freedom Farm a grant in the amount of \$3,450 for a portable horse shelter.



# FREEDOM ACADEMY

OPENED SEPTEMBER 2017

Freedom Academy is an alternative learning program for at-risk high school students, grades 9th-12th. Students learn through a hands-on, project-based approach that seeks to bring real world problem solving into the classroom. Each learning experience incorporates many different content areas, and offers the flexibility to personalize the learning for each student.



A Thanksgiving meal, prepared and served to our Veterans group.



Students went to the Minnesota Zoo to learn how to care for geckos and now have one of their own. Meet 'Ricky'!



The 'Spirit of Minnesota' event was held at the Schoolhouse, highlighting historical facts and urban legends in Minnesota.

In addition to supporting the students academically, Freedom Academy seeks to support each student's emotional, mental, and physical health. In partnership with Freedom Farm, students are able to learn skills to help them thrive, not just survive, with things such as anxiety and depression. Therapy services are also offered on site as well.

At Freedom Academy, we believe that each student is beautifully and wonderfully made, and we are inspired by all that the students can accomplish; mind, body, and spirit.



A busy day of collaboration at Freedom Academy.

## POLO EVENT - SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2018

The **11th Annual Freedom Farm Polo Event Fundraiser** is a fun filled day at the picturesque Blackberg Ranch with more than 2,000 guests attending. We are excited to have the Horses & Horsepower Car Show return this year!

*Just before the match, along with Freedom Farm Riders, you can meet and take selfies with the professional polo players.*

### Traditional Polo Event Activities:

Raffle · Half-Time Live Auction · Divot Stomp · Hat Contest · Awards Ceremony

### Family Friendly Fun:

Pony Rides · Face Painting · Kids Craft Tent · Photo Booth · Carriage Rides



**Contact us today to become an event sponsor or reserve your VIP Tent!**

**Call: 952.955.2505 ~ Email: polo@freedomfarmMN.org**



11500 Ferman Ave SW  
Waverly, MN 55390

[www.freedomfarmMN.org](http://www.freedomfarmMN.org)

## Save The Dates:



Reserve **YOUR VIP Tent**  
or Sponsorship **NOW**  
**952.955.2505**

[info@freedomfarmMN.org](mailto:info@freedomfarmMN.org)

**September 8, 2018**

**11th Annual Polo Event Fundraiser**

**16th Annual Riding Celebration October 13, 2018**

A special day recognizing our Riders and Horses



Rider Jackson showcasing his riding skills for the crowd

### YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Do something meaningful and fun this year.

Volunteer at Freedom Farm and work with AMAZING Riders and Horses!

#### 2018 Volunteer Training Dates:

- Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> ~ 4-6 pm
- Thursday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> ~ 5-7 pm
- Monday, March 26<sup>th</sup> ~ 5-7 pm
- Tuesday, March 27<sup>th</sup> ~ 4-6 pm
- Monday, April 2 ~ 5-7 pm



2017 Volunteer of the Year:  
**Jim Jacobson**



2017 Horse Handler of the Year:  
**Kerry Barnauskas**

Contact us today to sign up for Volunteer Training. Call 952.955.2505 or email: [info@freedomfarmMN.org](mailto:info@freedomfarmMN.org)