

Happy Trails Riding Academy

A publication of Happy Trails Riding Academy, a nonprofit organization of therapeutic horsemanship for people who have cognitive, physical or emotional disabilities.

Spring 2019

Lisa Cotta-Meek *Celebrating 25 years*

Roundup

Where do you start when you try and describe the grace, patience and determination of a woman who has done so much for Happy Trails? Lisa Cotta-Meek is one of the greatest treasures that we have known and when she retires May 31 she will leave a legacy that will be hard to replicate in the years to come.

Born and raised in Tulare County, Lisa has had the heart for equines from a very young age. She started riding horses when she was nine years old which led to many years of competing on the Quarter Horse circuit. Lisa began raising

and training her own Quarter Horses, which propelled her down the path of becoming a Licensed Veterinary Technician and also an aide for Special Education classes in Adaptive Physical Education. As fate would have it, Lisa stumbled upon an article in the local newspaper talking about Happy Trails – she soon became a volunteer.

Fast forward two decades, and you will find a woman who is tenured, driven and maintains the same amount of love for horses and individuals with disabilities as she did on day one. When asked to reflect on her time with Happy Trails, there were quite a few fond memories that surfaced. Lisa was proud when Happy Trails acquired their own property. With ownership, Lisa was able to make programs more creative and tailored to the specific needs of many of her riders. Watching her students grow every day into confident riders and overcoming odds that often seemed impossible, has been one of her greatest accomplishments.

As with any wonderful journey, the sun does set and a new day will come. As Lisa teaches her last class or feeds Abigail for the final time, a new adventure awaits her and husband Randy. Just around the turn and over a hill, a wonderful new story is waiting to be written - we know they will continue to do great things. From all of us at Happy Trails, our hats off to you Lisa on a job well done. Your new adventure awaits you - we wish you nothing but continued happiness.



Lisa Cotta-Meek with Emma

24th Annual Spring Event- "Night at the Races"

Friday, May 31, 2019 at 6 p.m.

To Reserve Your Tickets or Table Please Call (559) 688-8685

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Annual Report 2018



WHO WE SERVE

1,994 Total number of therapeutic rides offered

141	14	84%	39%	61%
TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS	CENTRAL VALLEY COMMUNITIES SERVED	RIDERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD	RIDERS ARE MALE	RIDERS ARE FEMALE

OUR SERVICES OFFERED

Therapeutic Riding
Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy/Learning
Equine Activities & Therapy with an Occupational Therapist
Interactive Vaulting
Equine Services for Heroes

OUR VOLUNTEERS & STAFF

10,935 Total number of volunteer hours

2,935	90	15	3	5
TOTAL CLASS HOURS	AVERAGE NUMBER OF WEEKLY VOLUNTEER POSITIONS	LOCAL SERVICE CLUBS VOLUNTEERED ON FACILITY PROJECTS	FULL TIME STAFF MEMBERS	PART TIME STAFF MEMBERS

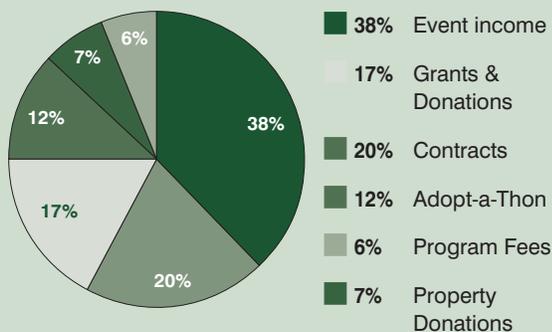
OUR HORSES

17 Animals served our riders

16	1
HORSES	MINIATURE DONKEY

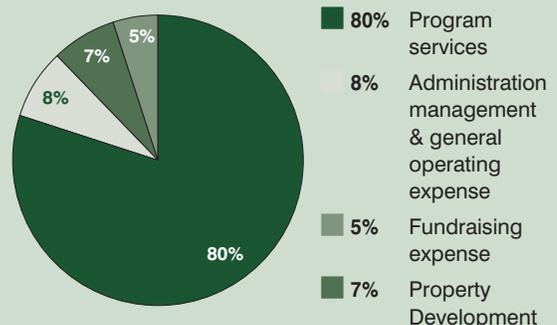
WHERE DOES OUR REVENUE COME FROM?

\$499,632 was generated in 2018 to meet our budget



HOW DO WE USE OUR DOLLARS?

Happy Trails Riding Academy's annual budget is approved by the board of directors and is reviewed on a regular basis. In addition, the board approves all capital improvement plans, budgets and expenditures.



Sneak Peek of Night at the Races

We are excited about Happy Trails' upcoming Night at the Races event, on Friday May 31, 2019, 6:00pm at the Visalia Convention Center. It is a fun night, filled with good food, good company, and exciting horse racing, all while benefiting Happy Trails. The evening will start with socializing and enjoying Kentucky Lemonades, then transition into dinner catered by Sue Sa. We will then begin the horse races; the first race is a practice for everyone to test their luck, followed by 6 more races. Exciting prize packages are planned for each race. Ways to get involved this year:

1. **Be a Sponsor** – sponsorship levels start at \$250, and all sponsors get to name a race horse
2. **Ladies wear your best derby hat** – there will be a Derby Hat Contest with a prize for the winner
3. **Bring your wagers** – always great prizes, returning this year are second and third prizes for each race

We can't wait to see you at Night at the Races!



Laura Morrelli & Kendra Fowler



Volunteers are the Backbone of our Program



Volunteer, as defined in Dictionary.com, is a person who performs a service willingly and without pay. Happy Trails could not be the success it is without this commitment to selfless service exhibited by the many volunteers we see throughout the year. In 2018 alone, Happy Trails benefited from an average of 90 weekly volunteers accounting

for 2,935 class hours and 15 facility projects completed by local service clubs and school groups for a total of 10,935 volunteer hours.

National Volunteer Week, April 7-13, provided the opportunity to recognize the many volunteers who help in class, on the property, assist with fundraising, and

numerous other activities at Happy Trails. This year, our volunteers were greeted by a number of fun signs and banner when they arrived for their class. They were also met with coffee, a sweet treat and a Maverick's gift card to thank them for their service.

Happy Trails Volunteers are the Best!



Thursday Volunteer Crew - Cathy Lambert, Vicki Conklin, Denise Simmons & Sarina Bergman

Central Valley Christian High School Day of Service

Leadership Visalia

We are proud to announce Nicole's upcoming graduation from the 2018-2019 Leadership Visalia class! Leadership Visalia is a nine-month program offered through the Visalia Chamber of Commerce with the intention of enhancing leadership in participants' workplaces and involvement in the community. The class gathers multiple times a month to learn about leadership strategy, hear from experts on various community issues, and collaborate on a project to positively affect the community. About her experience, Nicole said "I have built

many strong relationships with my classmates, and have a new wealth of knowledge about myself and the wonderful place I live. I so appreciate the support of both Happy Trails and the Board for affording me this opportunity, and look forward to how the experiences in the class will benefit our great organization."



Nicole Payne



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Thank you for your Service.....

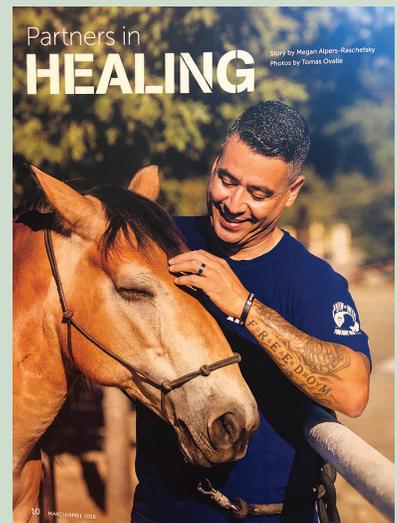


Joe

Therapy Horse, Joe, was donated by Carlee Williams in 2008. What struck us most about Joe was his calm, quiet, thoughtful demeanor. He is the kind of horse you can count on when the going gets tough. This year he has earned his retirement back to Carlee in the beautiful hills of Springville. Joe, aka Joseph, we thank you for your years of dedicated service and we are going to miss your handsome heart.



Clifford Evans with Joe



Norbie Lara and Ridge

The April issue of California Bountiful Magazine featured the Happy Trails Equine Services for Heroes program.

Check it out at
www.californiabountiful.com