

# THE LITTLE CREEK TIMES

JUNE 2023

Official publication of the [Little Creek Farm Conservancy](http://www.littlecreekfarmconservancy.org) & DeKalb County's Little Creek Horse Farm and Park

**Little Creek's Spring Pony Ride on Sunday, April 16, was a barrel race of fun (minus the barrels)! Ponies and bunnies and chickens --not to mention an adorable mini donkey -- oh my! If you missed this fun-filled day--or if you were there and want to pony up again--make your reservation for **Sunday, June 11** at [www.littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](http://www.littlecreekfarmconservancy.org).**



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*Humans grazing in the grass at the Heidi Potter Clinic.*

## Behind the Barn...

Contributor: **Rene Iverson**

**Happy Summer!** So much to report-- we'll canter right in!



**Big A\*\* Fans!** Public/private partnership is what we're all about at the Conservancy, and as proof.... Two fans now hang in the indoor arena for the comfort of animals and humans who work and play in the barn. Thank you to all who donated time and money toward the effort, and to Dekalb County Parks for their support in all ways - including the purchase of one of the fans. Definitely a win/win leading up to what promises to be a doozy of a summer! *Thanks to [TBC Supply](#) (supplier of Big A\*\* Fans) and [Sunbelt Rentals](#) (the scissor lift) for being so easy to work with, and for the non profit discounts provided. Thank you LC Community, for your gracious tolerance of electrical work and install days that shut down the indoor arena. Special thanks to Jamie Hodges, board member and volunteer, for spearheading fundraising!*

**Next Pony Rides & Petting Zoo:** April pony rides was amazing - & **JUNE 11th** is our very next one - tickets on sale now on our website.

Pre-purchasing [HERE](#) saves you time on arrival AND helps us plan for a successful event.

- We'll have plenty of cold water on hand to cool everyone down, and the event will once again be RAIN or SHINE. See you there!
- Want to **volunteer** June 11? Sign up [HERE](#)



And...say hello to your **new Board for 2023!** LCFC's annual election was held May 6th. These folks work HARD for this Park, as do all of LCFC's amazing volunteers. But here's who and how to reach YOUR Board:

President: Nick Thompson, [president@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:president@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

Treasurer: Peggy Berg, [treasurer@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:treasurer@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

Outreach: Bobbi Woolwine, [outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

Secretary: Jamie Hodges, [secretary@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:secretary@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

Advisory: Rene Iverson, [vicepresident@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:vicepresident@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

*We are seeking someone to step into the **Vice President role!** Please reach out if interested. This 2-year term is intended to move to President as the next step. A very satisfying way to give back in a public service role...any of us are happy to chat with you about the possibilities.*

**The 2021 Community Building Grant is completed:** Thanks to [Park Pride](#)'s wonderful matching grant program & team, and the [The Home Depot Foundation](#) and unwavering support from [DeKalb County Parks](#) (including [Wood Engineering](#)), LC's security gate, new signage and Visitor Center/Community Room are complete. Hope you have had a chance to check it all out! Visually, the Park is more welcoming than ever. A ribbon cutting was held May 23rd, and folks enjoyed a hearty Chipotle lunch.



**L to R:** Believe, Peggy Berg (Treasurer), Kayla Altland (Park Pride), Tamara Dillard (DC Barn Supervisor), James Baugh (DC Ops Staff), Jeffrey Love (DC Ops Staff), Valerie Morvan (Volunteer), Frances Bullard (DC Barn Asst Supervisor), Sprinkles (LC Ambassador #1), Leslie Hunter (Volunteer), Rene Iverson (Volunteer), Habeeb Alghizzi (DC Ops Staff), Sabrina Coker (DC Ops Staff), Robin Hitchcock (Volunteer), Nancy Cornish (Volunteer), Jack Tansill (DC Ops Staff), David Flaherty (DC Parks Regional Manager), Boone (LC Ambassador #2), Brad Williams (Instructor with Mark's Riding School).

## ***FEATURED EQUESTRIAN PROGRAM: STRIDE AHEAD***

**Introducing Teddy: Welcome to the Stride Ahead Equine Therapy Team!**

**Contributor: Leslie Hunter**

The Stride Ahead equine therapy team is thrilled to introduce you to Teddy, its newest member! This utterly adorable gelding arrived at LC as an early Valentine in February and was greeted with great excitement! Stride leadership had been looking to bolster the team of mature mounts for well over a year, and the magic finally happened as this charismatic young fellow was found in the horse capital of the country: Kentucky.



**Above, Allison Funderburk and mane man, Teddy**

When Stride founder Anne Preston met Teddy, "it was love at first sight." This quarter horse/draft cross with a sunlit flaxen mane--the envy of any woman who pays her hairdresser to "naturally" achieve--is a former ranch horse. 14 hands of huggable cuteness – sort of like the classic Teddy bear his Stride fans believe he was named for. As Teddy acclimates to LC, he is being given all of the love he can handle. During his first week at the barn, he was the lucky recipient of a bodywork session with Nancy Scott, Stride's bookkeeper and a certified

Equine Specialist in the Masterson Method: an energy-based technique used to relax horses. Working with Teddy, unaltered in the grass arena, not only did he exhibit physical evidence of relaxation, he did something very special that only Nancy's words can do justice to:



*“At the end of the session I walked about 30 feet away from him. He slowly walked towards me and positioned himself next to me with his shoulder aligned with the side of my body, known as the Buddy Up position. And, he yawned four times. Thanks to Horse Speak, I know the meaningfulness of his behavior --- how well we had communicated and connected and how safe he felt with me. It brought tears to my eyes.”*

Teddy has been receiving training under the guidance of Stride instructors Pam Smith and Abbey Luke. He has also been carrying riders who, in turn, are learning to have patience as he learns how the English style of riding differs from the Western style he was used to. He is also learning that therapy work has special benefits that he was not accustomed to at his ranch home. The first time Teddy was offered a frisbee full of carrots and apples as a treat following a lesson, he quizzically looked at Pam as if to say, “what the heck is this?” Several months later, he has figured out how yummy these goodies are and licks the frisbee clean!

The Conservancy & the Park would like to acknowledge the entire team of Stride equine therapy professionals for their hard work and dedication all year round. You can find a full bio on each of these beautiful creatures at their website, [www.strideahead.org](http://www.strideahead.org). *Stride Ahead is an independent program operating at Little Creek Horse Farm & Park, a Dekalb County Park.*

## **FROM THE MOUTH OF ERIN: Looking through the Eye of Love**

**Contributor: Leslie Hunter**



Greetings to the LC community! My name is Erin, and it's my turn to tell you my story. I'm not sure why I was selected for this honor – but it may be because I'm *viewed* as special. You see, I have only one eye, and yet I can still jump! But I'm getting ahead of myself – which is not unusual for me since rider Hallie Crawford says I like to go fast!

I'm what's called a flea-bitten gray, which means I have a white coat decorated with pigmented speckles. I was born in 2005 and moved to Tamplin Farm in Madison, GA, when I was 4. Although I have never raced, I am a thoroughbred, which means like TBs all over the world, I celebrate my birthday on January 1.

*(Right: Hallie and Erin)*



Dana McDaniel, of [Atlanta Riding Academy](#), brought me to LC in 2014 to become a schooling horse. Her friend, Sadie Tamplin, had asked her to find a buyer for me, but once we got to know each other, Dana decided to take me off the market and home with her. It's been wonderful getting to know the students. I'm so happy that they love riding all 16 hands of me! When they think I'm not listening, I've heard them describe me as sensitive, sweet, steady, intuitive and unflappable. And most importantly, I don't spook. All those nice words could give a mare a big head, but it just makes me happy because I really love to please my students. They do admit that I get excited when I'm jumping and can be hard to slow down. But I think that's because I'm just grateful I *can* jump. Which brings me to my left eye...

In January, 2020 I cut the cornea of my eye and it became infected. The UGA Veterinary Teaching Hospital considered a corneal transplant, but unfortunately there was too much damage. Total eye removal--enucleation I think it's called--was the only option. I was heavily medicated for several days and didn't feel much like eating. If you know anything about horse health, you know eating regularly is critical. By the time they removed my eye, I'd been off my feed for too long. You guessed it: I coliced.

The UGA staff worked with me for 4 very long days. Turns out I had something called Left Dorsal Displacement involving my spleen. Dana stayed with me every night because I had to be on round-the-clock IV fluids. If that wasn't enough stress for all of us, in between fluids I had to jog up and down hills, and Dana had to lunge me at the trot. Not exactly what anyone wants to be doing after major surgery! But guess what? I lunged great—especially given the fact that I was totally inexperienced at being on a lead rope without vision on one side! Please don't let my sweet and gentle demeanor fool you. My heart is big, and I don't give up. I hope I share that with my students.



How can I still jump with just one eye? As I understand it, a horse has a visual range of 215° per eye. This, along with the placement of our eyes on the sides of our heads, means that I can have up to



a 350° range of vision. Of course, it still takes work and patient riders who understand that my depth perception isn't what it once was. But I love to run and jump, and I'm so thrilled that I can still do it! In fact, Hallie says she used to be able to catch me in the pasture for her ride, but she can't do it anymore. You see, I love being with my mare buddies Panda and especially Rhapsody, who by the way is also living a very fulfilled life with only her right eye. She is a therapy horse with Stride Ahead and her riders love her! As do I – most days anyway. In fact, I can hear my one-eyed paint pal whinnying for me right now!

## ***PINT SIZED PHOTO OPS***

Starting this issue, we'll feature fun photos of our two Program Ambassadors, the irrepressible Sprinkles & Boone. If you've had the opportunity to capture this tiny twosome in the act of being their adorable selves, please send your creations to: [leslieruthhunter@gmail.com](mailto:leslieruthhunter@gmail.com).



*A busy mare needs her beauty rest.*



*Boone pretends to listen to mom, Lizzie.*



These two happily attend [Hands on Horses](#) sessions, [birthday parties](#), and meet & greet our many volunteers to thank them for their work. They are both also learning to “drive”....no, not convertibles. They have to keep practicing for a bit, but the Conservancy hopes to soon add Cart Driving demos to the list of cool things folks in Metro Atlanta and Dekalb County can experience here at the Park!

## ***BOOK STALL***

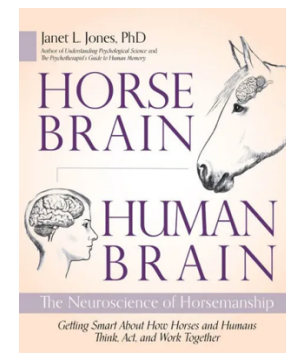
### ***Horse Brain/Human Brain: Making the Connection***

**Contributor: Leslie Hunter**

Have you ever wondered what a horse is thinking when you ask them to do something? And why they may decide to refuse. Or why their brain is so much smaller than yours when they are so much larger? And do their five senses work like ours? Then you've come to the right place!

Many books have been written about horse behavior and how to work with these magical and often mysterious creatures. But I've found that while the authors take great pains to provide detailed directions on *what* we humans need to do, there is little about *why* their instructions work– or don't. The missing piece of the puzzle is the brain – the organ without which nothing else would happen. In fact, there are actually two pieces of this puzzle – the horse brain AND the human brain.

Sounds like a great title for a book. And it is. ***Horse Brain, Human Brain*** is a fascinating book that solves many, if not all, of the questions about how our equine companions operate in the world we share with them. And because we are their partners, we also learn about how our brains work best in sync.



Author Janet L. Jones is uniquely qualified to address these questions and more. She has been around horses her entire life, both personally and professionally. She has ridden in multiple disciplines and currently trains horses and riders. She also has a PhD in cognitive science and taught at the college level. Her observations about the connections between the human and horse brains are based on a blend of scientific research and lived experience. She walks the walk, posts the trot.

If you think a book based on hard science sounds about as dry as a Mustang's journey through the Mojave Desert, think again. Dr. Jones has a wicked sense of humor and uses it in just the right places to get her points across, without losing those of us for whom science is a horse's open umbrella. Referring to herself as a "horse nerd," she wants what's best for them—and us. In noting that "Any animal trainer will tell you that the hardest part of the job is training the human," her goal is to enlighten us so that we understand our horses better, which will in turn improve both our lives.

Now you may balk at yet another horse book to add to the pile you've begun and never finished. No problem! Over the next several issues, *The Little Creek Times* will be running a series of articles exploring *Horse Brain, Human Brain*, including such topics as how horses learn, how their senses work, and understanding their emotions. But most crucial of all, we'll learn how connecting the different abilities of our individual brains will enhance our relationship to its fullest potential!

## HANDS ON HORSES

### Contributor: Christy Rosenblatt

Hello! I'm the Conservancy's coordinator for **Hands on Horses**, an important and long-running outreach program where volunteers introduce community members to the Park and some of its four-legged residents. I've already had the pleasure of hosting a variety of groups, and they are always so appreciative and so in awe of our equine friends! I am looking for volunteers (both with and without horses) to assist me with the program. The time commitment is about an hour (or less) each time, and you can sign up for times when you are available.



Please email me ([christyrosenblatt@gmail.com](mailto:christyrosenblatt@gmail.com)) if you are able to help as a volunteer and/or as a demo rider of your horse on the flat (For some of our sessions the group watches a rider tack up and ride). Also, if you know of a group that might like to visit, please direct them to our [website](#) for information. We are open to hosting groups of all types. In the past, we have hosted everything from a kindergarten class to residents of a retirement community. **Thanks for your interest!**

**Horses featured: Believe, Al, Sprinkles and Boone**



# AUDUBON Area proposed concept via Park Pride's Visioning Process Contributed by: Bobbi Woolwine

Further refinement and vetting of ideas, funding sources and necessary permits notwithstanding - look at this great concept! Feedback to: [outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org), please!



Little Creek Horse Farm Meadow



Audubon Sanctuary Plan view with annotations, as well as a page of reference photos, materials, and rough details. Materials and fine-tuned details will be up to the budget and the Parks Department. You will probably need a variance for any kind of construction (the gathering space) in the 75' stream buffer zone of the creek (see the yellow line on the plan view). The plan includes:

**Entrance:**  
Recommend consideration of a chicane or changed "kissing gate," the serpentine entrance is often seen in the UK and Europe. The detail shown is modified from the U.S. Forest Service. Designs can be modified for wheelchair access and will need a longer run than shown to achieve a ramped descent to the lower level of the slope. Recommend paving a pad around the hose bib to prevent erosion, it should be designed to the depth of the bottom of the slope, so that won't be undermined.

**Seating:**

1. On the gathering space, recommend brightly-colored chairs made of recycled plastic, able to be rearranged within the space.
2. Stationary benches, standard park recommendation (Victor Stanley)
3. Swing bench, various options (see the image from Little Nancy Creek Park, Atlanta)

**Signage:**

1. At the entrance, educational signage can be placed (either mounted on a fence or freestanding) overlooking the entire meadow
2. Educational signage can be placed overlooking the stream
3. Signage could include QR codes linking to more in-depth information

**Trail and points for views:** (either mown or lined with a trail-mix type gravel or chipped slate)  
The trail connects the entrance to the meadow and the gathering space.

1. Views enjoyed from the trail or from benches placed between the trail and the fencerow
2. Views enjoyed from a swing bench overlooking the stream
3. Views enjoyed from the gathering space under the large oak, either paved with flagstones or continuing the trail-mix/chipped slate of the trail. If not paved, some sort of edging such as a boulder set wall should be placed around the space.

Project contact: Little Creek Farm Conservancy; Bobbi Woolwine [outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:outreach@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org)

## Little Creek Horse Farm Meadow, Details (Sheet 2 of 2)

Conceptual plan prepared by Park Pride, 10/31/22 Page 2 of 2

	Gathering Spot Paving: Option 1: <b>Flagstone</b> Ellipse with edge banding		Gathering Spot Paving: Option 2: <b>Trail-mix</b> or <b>slate chips</b> with boulders as edge + additional seating
	Signage Opt 1: <b>Fence-mounted</b> interpretive signage		Signage Opt 2: <b>Freestanding</b> interpretive signage
	Pathway Opt 1: <b>Mown pathway</b> no surface material		Pathway Opt 2: <b>Trail mix</b> crushed stone and silt to create trail bed
	Creek overlook seating: <b>Swing Benches</b> One or more benches at picturesque viewpoints (see at Little Nancy Creek Park, Atlanta)		Gathering Spot Seating: <b>Movable Chairs</b> made from recycled plastic material
	Gatherer: <b>Modified Chicane Gate</b> with paved ramp surface if desired (dimensions would increase to accommodate)		Fence: Fencerow

Note: Details contingent upon approval by DeKalb County Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Affairs and flood plain best practices

## WORDS AND WHINNIES.....Chasing Chi Contributor: Claire Rauschenberg

As author Dr. Allan J. Hamilton of *Zen Mind Zen Horse* reminds us, the Chinese word, Chi, refers to the “all encompassing, universal life force.” When I contacted Little Creek Farm Conservancy for the first time a few months ago, I wasn’t sure what I was looking to achieve. Each time I drove past the farm on my grueling commute, I eyed the horses in the pasture with longing. I have very little experience with horses, but I have always been dazzled by them, their strength, stature, and grace. I knew I wanted to learn more about the Park and the horses, but I hadn’t figured out why it felt so important.



I'm in my third month of volunteering with Stride Ahead, and I have cherished every moment spent with each horse and child, both with their own unique personalities and behaviors. The procedure of it all is crucial for the success of everyone involved. It's a lot to remember, and I often admonish myself for forgetting a step. I'm not yet a horse person, but I want to be. I look forward to each session, devouring each bit of knowledge I glean from the students, instructors, and other volunteers. I am so thankful that everyone at Stride Ahead has given me the opportunity to pursue this passion. Despite my lack of knowledge, they have made me feel welcome and included.

*(Left to right: Judy, Sarah and Claire)*

I am beginning to understand what lured me to the horses and the farm. It's that "all encompassing, universal life force," or Chi, that Hamilton explains in his theory of horsemanship and that horses have instinctively mastered. By being present and grounded in Chi, we can better understand the horse, ourselves, each other, and ultimately, the world around us. Life is not easy, and moments of happiness and fulfillment are scarce. I believe we can find them if we slow down, take a deep breath, and connect with a horse.



*If you'd like to contribute an essay to **Words and Whinnies**, please contact [leslieruthhunter@gmail.com](mailto:leslieruthhunter@gmail.com). Even Boone has something to say!*

## **Heidi Potter 2023 Recap**

**Contributors: Nancy Scott and Bobbi Woolwine**

Little Creek Farm Conservancy deeply appreciates the LC community and Dekalb Parks' support of the 2nd Annual Heidi Potter Clinic held at the end of March. Fun times were had by all, and it was very informative! 34 individual registrants attended as auditors and/or participants, one to four days each, and the maximum daily participant quota was met.



*Gentleman Al shows off his Horspeak.*

Horse Speak sessions were a great opportunity to learn the language that horses use with each other so that we can join in their conversation. Centered Riding sessions offered tools to help with balanced riding so that both the horse and rider are comfortable. The foundation of both Horse Speak and Centered Riding is safety, with a big dollop of fun on top! And speaking of fun, the agility games were a blast!

Heidi is impressed with the spirit of our barn community and is eager to share more of her Holistic Horsemanship, “It is our responsibility to support their well-being in all ways, for only then can we create more safe and enjoyable interactions for both the horse and the human. My responsibility and



*Gracie prepares for a centered rider*

commitment is to meet them where they are, in that moment, and offer them compassion and understanding so that trust can grow.” For more information, her website is [www.heidipotter.com](http://www.heidipotter.com)



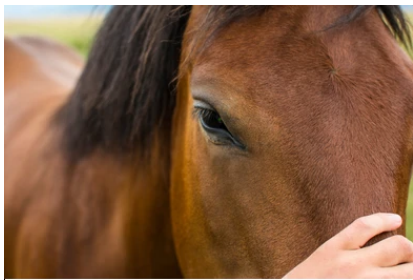
Stay tuned for information about the 2024 Heidi Potter Clinic event. LCFC is mindful of the impact of non-participants on arena use during inclement weather. We plan to share the arena next year for most of the clinic days.



*Boone having a ball during agility games.*

**Pony Rides! June 11th, 11-1**

**Tickets [HERE](#), or [VOLUNTEER!](#)**



## *The Fine Print*

Little Creek Farm Conservancy is a non-profit, 100% volunteer-run organization which supports the Park with programming to bring the public in safely, and fundraising for special projects.

Please visit our website:

[www.littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](http://www.littlecreekfarmconservancy.org) for complete information. We have special ways to visit and volunteer

opportunities available, as well as memberships that support our mission to be stewards of this special place.

*The Little Creek Times is a publication of Little Creek Farm Conservancy*

*Please send submissions, corrections and questions to:*

[leslieruthhunter@gmail.com](mailto:leslieruthhunter@gmail.com) or [vicepresident@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org](mailto:vicepresident@littlecreekfarmconservancy.org).



*Cupid couldn't decide if this colorful cone was a toy or a very strange carrot! Whichever, this happy girl knows how to have a good time at Little Creek!*

[Plan your](#)

[Party at the Park!](#)



**Last Words:** “Horses are only afraid of two things: 1. Things that move. 2. Things that don't move.” *horseyhoooves.com*