

**Affinity Ranch Newsletter** Newsletter@affinityranch.org via... Sep 10, 2024, 10:03 AM (1 day ago)



to me

# Affinity Ranch

September 2024



"Unbridled Possibilities"  
Pictured: Dusty and Sugar  
The Ranch Under a Rainbow

## Message from the Executive Director



Dear Friends of Affinity Ranch,

I can't believe it is September already, I am already mourning summer a little bit but there is something about back to school routines that I love as well. I am always more productive when I have a routine in place.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported our Jeans and Jewels Gala. We had a great time and enjoyed meeting new faces, solving a murder mystery and raising money for our favorite place. If you were unable to attend please take a moment to watch this [video](#) that

recaps our incredible programs. If you wanted to donate but have not done so yet it is never too late! Donate [here](#), every dollar counts as we work to create “*Unbridled Possibilities*” for our clients everyday.

I would like to share with you a little bit of what I shared at the Gala and express my thanks to the many hands that work so diligently to make our mission possible. It is truly a privilege to lead such an extraordinary team dedicated to our mission: TO ENRICH OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CONNECTION AND INCLUSION.

For those new to Affinity Ranch, welcome! I hope you find a place here with us. We truly are a ranch family and the addition of more supporters only makes us stronger. Managing a 37-acre property with 21 horses, 3 goats, 3 bunnies, 5 cats, and several chickens, alongside our transformative programs, is no small feat. The costs are significant, but our mission to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities, including mental health challenges, drives us forward.

Amy and Donna, featured in the video, are part of our Adaptive Horsemanship program, which we heavily subsidize thanks to the generosity of donors like you. Keeping our programs affordable is crucial for families facing numerous expenses. Our partnership with Developmental Pathways helps further reduce and even eliminate costs for those who need it, we are immensely grateful for this support. Your contributions ensure that clients like Donna and Amy can continue to benefit from this life-changing program. It's this very program that brought me to the ranch nine years ago, seeking services for my own children. I've seen firsthand the transformation in my daughter's life, her newfound confidence, her increased social skills, and her deep connection with her current horse, Sugar.

Noah, whom you heard from in the video, is a shining example of our Supported Employment program, which is incredibly close to my heart. Our Supported Employees, who work alongside job coaches, bring a light to our ranch with their enthusiasm and dedication. Their perspective on work is truly inspiring, reminding us all to find joy in our careers.

Our Equine Assisted Therapy Program utilizes the movement of horses to achieve therapeutic goals, while our Psychotherapy services offer clients the chance to regulate their emotions through the sensitive connection with horses, who can hear your heartbeat from up to four feet away.

Additionally, our recreational workshops foster social interaction, skill development, and enjoyment among friends—both human and animal.

Today, we come together to raise awareness and vital funds to support our current programs and expand our reach. With waitlists stretching for all our programs, your donations are crucial. If I could meet our financial obligations with love as currency we would never run out of resources. The unfortunate truth is that love doesn't pay the bills. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps bring more clients off the waitlist, providing them with access to our life-changing programs. More clients equals more horses and more employees which equals more expenses.

Every gift makes a difference no matter the size. Our mounted programs have waitlists exceeding 200 individuals, growing daily. Parents and caregivers call daily to inquire about programming and they are so excited about the opportunities available for their loved ones, only to learn they have to wait. Your support can help us make a meaningful impact on more lives.

Please consider sharing this video and message within your network. Engaging individuals from diverse backgrounds is crucial to bolstering our efforts and addressing both our increasing financial and volunteer needs.

Please mark your calendars for our upcoming Haunted Horses Event on October 20th, from 11 to 3. This event will serve as an excellent opportunity for the community to experience what Affinity Ranch has to offer. Attendees can look forward to horses in costume, concession sales, crafts, games, and, of course, trick-or-treating. We encourage you to invite your friends and join us for a memorable and enjoyable experience.

Shannon Forslund  
Affinity Ranch  
Executive Director  
[Shannon@AffinityRanch.org](mailto:Shannon@AffinityRanch.org)

## Upcoming Events

- **September 29**  
Adams Camp - Celebration at the Ranch
- **October 20**  
Haunted Horses
- **October 26 - 27**  
Fall Mane Event Horse Show  
(For client families and friends)
- **December 14**  
Come see us at the Parker Holiday Parade
- **Upcoming Closures:**
  - October 12 - 18
  - October 26 (horse show)
  - November 25 - 30
  - December 21 - January 4

## Changes at The Ranch

**Facilities Manager** - Rebecca Guess has been appointed to the Ranch Facility Manager Position. If you have any suggestions or issues about the property, please let her know at [Rebecca@AffinityRanch.org](mailto:Rebecca@AffinityRanch.org)

**New Program** - We have now started Equine Assisted Therapy with our new Physical Therapist Sarah Puckett. The program is just getting started, but we are excited to bring this new program to the ranch.

**Social Media and Grant Writer** - Genevieve Hawksley has taken over as our new Social Media and Grant Writer. Two very important jobs to keep the ranch running!

**Two new trial horses** have joined us to see if they will fit in - Oakley, and Shadow.

## August Volunteer Hours

**We love our volunteers!** In August 119 people volunteered 1054 hours broken out as follows:

- Barn Help: 125
- Board Members: 4
- General Help: 118
- Horse Handler: 751
- Horse Partner: 2
- Instructor Trainee: 20
- Office Work: 21
- Orientation: 13

## Volunteer Groups

We just want to call out our Volunteer Groups in August. These folks came out with a specific task to do, and they rocked it! Thank you so much for your help around the Ranch:

- Rotary Club of Parker

We are always looking for new volunteers to work with clients, help out around the barn, or work in the office or on a committee (like fundraising). The Ranch has a lot of maintenance that always needs done, so if you have a special skill (plumbing, electrical, fencing, etc.) we can always use the help. You can volunteer [online](#) or if you have a question, contact our Volunteer Coordinator at [Volunteer@AffinityRanch.org](mailto:Volunteer@AffinityRanch.org).

## Volunteer Spotlight



**Judy Snoich** is one of our regular side walkers and horse leaders - pictured with Gingerbread.

[READ MORE ABOUT JUDY HERE](#)

## Animal Spotlight



Most days **Bailey** is among the first few faces you meet when you enter our ranch. She is the perfect welcoming committee to all that walk through our doors.

[READ MORE ABOUT BAILEY HERE](#)

## Sensory Tip

Restless night? Try an extra comforter or other blankets to give some extra weight on your body. If it's your legs, fold the blanket to lay just over your legs. The extra weight can create a soothing "hug" and help you relax.

## Employee Spotlight



Meet our new Facilities Manager - **Rebecca Guess**. Although Rebecca has been our Barn Manager for years, she has recently been promoted to Facilities Manager.

[READ MORE ABOUT REBECCA HERE](#)

## Ways to Donate



Do you shop at King Soopers? Did you know you can sign up for Community Rewards and a portion of your purchase will be donated to Affinity Ranch with no cost to you?

Just login to the King Soopers website and scroll to the bottom of the page and click King Soopers Community Rewards. In section 2, Click "Link your Card" to an Organization and then click Search and enter Affinity Ranch. Then click Enroll.

## Wish Lists

We have the following Wish Lists online if you would rather pick how your money is spent:

[Amazon](#)

[Chewy](#)



## Did You Know? Manis & Pedis at the Ranch



Did you know all of our equine partners require consistent manis & pedis?!? What a life, right? I wish I could tell my significant other that I simply must get my nails done every 6 to 8 weeks, or else I will end up with some very serious, long lasting and even life threatening issues. But when it comes to our equine partners this is an absolute must!

We currently own 13 out of the 21 equine partners that live on our beautiful property.

Eight of our equine partners require "trims". This means that our farrier while using special nippers, rasps, and hoof knives, removes the overgrown parts of the hoof and works very hard to maintain the functional anatomy of the horses hoof. Our trims must be done every 8 weeks and cost \$65 per horse.

One of our equine partners require a "half set" of shoes, meaning she wears shoes on her front two feet because she gets very tender and uncomfortable walking on hard or rocky surfaces, which in Colorado is pretty much anywhere you go. A half set of shoes, and a trim on her hind feet both have to be done every 6 weeks and cost us \$140 each time.

Then we have one equine partner requiring a "half set" of shoes with "pads and packing". What is that you ask? Think of this as your specialty orthopedic insoles. Yes, even horses sometimes need very specific "insoles" in their horseshoes. This can be due to many different

factors such as poor conformation which can cause lameness, the need to create artificial sole depth, to prevent cracking or bruising, or to relieve pain in the navicular region of the foot, and many more. He needs to see the farrier every 6 weeks and each time it costs \$215.

And last but not least, three of our equine partners require a “full set” of shoes with “pads and packing”, meaning shoes and special insoles on all 4 feet. This has to be done every 6 weeks and costs \$250 per horse.

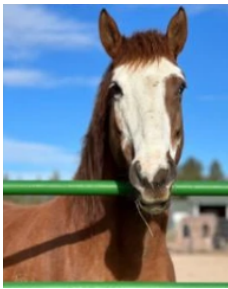
Currently, we spend \$520 every 8 weeks and \$1,105 every 6 weeks just on mani&pedis for our wonderful equine partners so that they are able to participate in all the programs and activities offered at Affinity Ranch.

And if you are wondering, what about the other 8 equine partners? They are privately owned by absolutely wonderful owners which allow us to work with their lovely horses in exchange for our outstanding care and training. However these owners are responsible for the basic needs of their horses such as the farrier, and veterinary care. We take care of everything else such as feeding, mucking, scheduling veterinary appointments, daily care, administration of medications, grooming, exercising and training, their tack, and anything else you could possibly think of. We are tremendously grateful to all of these amazing individuals for entrusting us with their equine best friends!

Please if you are in a position to help consider sponsoring one of our equine partners, or donating to our farrier fund to help us keep our equine friends feeling their best so that together we can help as many clients as possible. And if you are not in a position to donate or sponsor one of our equine partners, please consider sharing our mission and the wonderful work we do here at Affinity Ranch with your friends and family. Because together we can accomplish so much more!

### Meet some of our family!

**In Loving Memory Rainy**



**In Loving Memory Arwen**



**In Loving Memory Dalai Lamba**





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