



July 2023 Issue 32

CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE: BECKY AND CARRIE KING



Carrie and Becky

At Cheff we are fortunate to have several familial “teams” of volunteers—husband and wife, grandmother and granddaughter, sisters, and mother and daughter, even a family of four! One of our “teams” is Becky and Carrie King, who are our Volunteer(s) of the Month this month.

Becky grew up in Portage. She rode horses from the ages of 8-18 at Burlwood Stables in Kalamazoo, with trainer Margaret Spencer,

focusing on English riding and jumping. After graduation from Portage Central, she went to Western Michigan University where she earned her degree in occupational therapy. During her years at WMU, she completed 40 service hours volunteering at the Cheff Center! She currently works at Evergreen Senior Care and Rehab in Battle Creek, as the Therapy Program manager, with her clientele mainly being geriatric orthopedic and neurologic.

Becky and her husband, Michael, a firefighter at the Ross Augusta Fire Department, have three children: a son, Jonathan, 21, who just became a firefighter at RAFD with his father, a daughter, Laura, 19, who is a dental assistant and studying to become a dental hygienist, and Carrie, 15, who attends Gull Lake High School.

Becky likes to play board games with her family during her “spare” time and enjoys cardio-drumming in Battle Creek. She also really enjoys her time in the barn with Carrie here at Cheff or sometimes at Pine Meadow Farm where Carrie rides and works. She took riding lessons with Carrie at Pine Meadow for a few years, and still occasionally rides.

What does Becky like about volunteering at Cheff? She loves listening to the clients and getting to know them, seeing how they improve and how riding affects them, as well as being with the horses. She recently volunteered at the Read and Ride Summer Camp and really enjoyed leading Emma and working with the

same three students all week. She saw the children really respond and get excited about reading throughout the week and was so glad that she was a part of it!

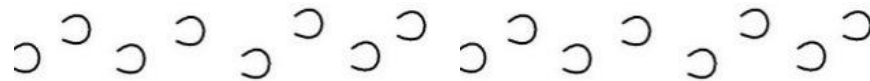
Carrie currently attends Gull Lake High School and will be a sophomore this school year. She plays trumpet in the marching band, and especially enjoys going to competitions during the football season. She also loves to play the piano and has been taking lessons for five years. After high school, Carrie would like to go to college. She has not decided what she would like to do but is thinking about something in the medical field—ultrasound technician, OBGYN, midwife, or possibly focus on becoming a social worker. Thankfully she has a couple more years to figure out what she wants to do!

Carrie has been riding at Pine Meadow since she was 10, where she currently works part time, cleaning stalls, helping with turnout,

feeding, and sweeping. She continues to take weekly riding lessons; she rides English and jumps and plans to continue riding for the foreseeable future.

In her spare time, Carrie is an avid reader—Barnes & Noble is one of her favorite places to be. She also enjoys spending time with her mom when they volunteer at Cheff together. She loves working with the clients and seeing the joy on their faces when they come to ride, but also likes to see the improvements that they make. She said that one thing she has learned while being here is to be patient, and being exposed to different disabilities has made her aware of so many things our clients and their families face and deal with on a daily basis, and it has been very good for her personally.

We want to thank Becky and Carrie for spending their time together with us, and we hope that they will be with us for many years to come!



volunteers plant seeds of love
that help countless hearts
to grow...



What is a Breed?

This month, we're taking a step back from featuring a member of the herd or a specific breed to look at the concept of "breed" itself, including how breeds are formed and managed, and their role in biodiversity. By the way, 11 equine breeds are currently represented in the Cheff Center herd.

Here are some basics about breeds:

- **Breeds are subgroups of a *particular species*.** For example, horse breeds, such as Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred and Paint, are all subgroups of a single species: the domesticated horse. Or consider dogs: from Great Dane to Chihuahua, all dog breeds are subgroups of the domesticated dog species.
- **The term breed is used with *domesticated animals*,** but typically not used with wild animals. Wild species can have subgroups somewhat similar to breeds; however, for wildlife, the subgroups are called **subspecies**. For example, the Plains Zebra species has several subspecies, including Chapman's Zebra and Burchell's Zebra.
- **Most domesticated species have *many breeds*.** They can number in the hundreds or even thousands for a given species, if you count breeds found around the world. This goes for horses, donkeys, dogs, cats, chickens, cows, pigs, sheep, goats, and others.



Some livestock breeds: Cotswold sheep, Guernsey cows, Rhode Island White hen.

Definitions. Many sources point out that "breed" is tricky to define. That's primarily because there are both natural (i.e., biological/environmental/genetic) factors and human factors involved in developing and perpetuating a breed.

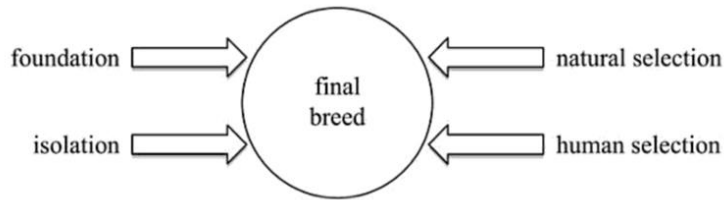
From the **natural and biological side**, breed can be defined as: a group of animals, within a species, that is consistent enough in type to be readily recognized and logically grouped together, and that when mated within the group, reproduces the same type.

This definition gets at two important points: 1) each breed has certain unique genetic packages that make it distinguishable from other breeds, and 2) the distinguishing characteristics are reliably reproduced in offspring.

From the **human and cultural side**, a breed can be defined as: a group of animals that is recognized by an appropriate authority and given official status.

This definition reflects the fact that breeds today are often highly managed by humans. Through selective breeding, breeds can be modified, improved, or even newly created to match human-defined goals. In other words, human influence can determine what makes a particular breed a breed.

How do breeds come into existence? The book “Managing Breeds for a Secure Future” identifies four main influences that come together to form a breed:



- **Foundation** refers to the specific set of animals that start a breed’s population. The foundation of most older, local breeds was almost always unplanned, occurring where local animals happened to be raised in relative isolation and, over time, developed enough common genetics to form a recognizable breed.

For newer, deliberately formed breeds, foundation animals are specifically chosen with the new breed’s goals in mind.

Breed names often reflect the foundation’s location, especially for older breeds. For example: Clydesdale, Trakehner, Percheron and Haflinger all refer to areas in Europe.

- **Isolation** from unrelated animals, over time, allows the formation of a repeatable genetic package that distinguishes the breed.
- **Natural selection** occurs because some genetic combinations thrive and reproduce readily in particular environments, while others don’t. The harsher or more extreme the environment, the more natural selection is involved.
- **Human selection** has played an increasing role in breed development through history, as humans discovered more about animal management and breeding and, more recently, as genomes are mapped, making specific selection decisions possible.

Working breeds. For working animals like horses and dogs, breeds have been modified and enhanced to match particular jobs. Human selection guided the development of larger horses for agriculture and hauling, fast horses for racing, and agile horses with “cow-sense” for ranch work. In the dog world, breeds developed for tracking, hunting, herding, and guarding, etc.



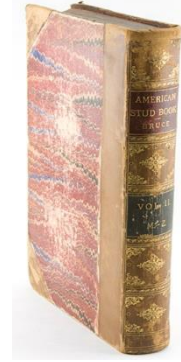
Breed talent at work: driving cattle, herding sheep, plowing a field.

Standardizing equine breeds. For 250 years, in various parts of the world, humans have established equine breed societies and associations. Before this, many breeders kept records, but the associations provided a new level of centralization and standardization of breeds. According to “Mason’s World Encyclopedia of Livestock Breeds and Breeding,” the purpose of these associations is to 1) preserve the purity of the breed, and 2) promote the value of the breed.

One of the earliest was The Jockey Club, founded in 1750 in London around both the Thoroughbred breed and the horse racing industry. In 1791, volume one of the “General Stud Book of England” was published. It is considered the first modern-style breed registry, listing Thoroughbred foals and their parents (sire and dam).

The General Stud Book and its equivalent for Thoroughbreds in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico, the “American Stud Book,” are **closed stud books**, meaning both parents must be in the registry for a foal to be registered. These books essentially record each horse’s **pedigree**, i.e., its ancestry over generations.

Some breeds have **open** or **semi-open stud books**. The Appaloosa Horse Club, for example, registers foals where both parents are in the club’s registry, or where one parent is and the other is a registered Quarter Horse, Thoroughbred or Arabian.



American Stud Book, Vol 2, 1873.

Breed associations establish **breed standards**, which define the ideal conformation, colors, patterns, and other traits of the breed. In addition to parentage, or in the absence of proven parentage, the standard may be used to determine a horse’s eligibility to be registered. Many breed associations provide other functions, too, like approved breeding programs, competition events and owner education.

Preserving rare breeds. A variety of domestic animal breeds are currently at risk of extinction. The reasons vary, depending on the species.

For animals raised for food (meat, milk, eggs), the tremendous increase in large-scale, industrialized agriculture in the last few decades has favored certain breeds, which dominate the market, making it hard for other breeds to compete. There is growing interest in heritage breeds and small-scale production, but it is still difficult to maintain viable populations of many non-mass market breeds.

For equines, a big factor in the decline of some breeds is the dramatic decrease in demand for their work over the course of the 1900s, as mechanization replaced horsepower in agriculture, the military, industry, and transportation.

The Livestock Conservancy, and similar organizations, track breed populations and promote preservation. Their mission is to preserve the unique genetics of each breed and maintain the overall biodiversity of the planet. Individual breeds can have valuable adaptations for disease resistance and for thriving in climate extremes, scarce forage conditions, etc. Preserving this genetic diversity is considered a safeguard for world food security and for species preservation in the long term. Preserving the cultural heritage of rare breeds is also a major goal.



[Newfoundland Pony](#), endangered, but numbers have stabilized around 600.

The conservancy’s [2022 equine priority list](#) includes over 30 horse and donkey breeds that are classified as critical or threatened, based on population and annual registration counts. The Clydesdale is listed as threatened, meaning there are fewer than 5,000 worldwide. The UK’s Rare Breeds Survival Trust is another group working to keep equines like our Tess, and all at-risk breeds, around for a long time.

| Sources and More Info | |
|--|---|
| <p>Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Breeds for a Secure Future, 2017. • A Natural History of Domesticated Mammals, 1987. • Mason's World Encyclopedia of Livestock Breeds and Breeding, 2016. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Livestock Conservancy U.S. rare breed organization • Rare Breeds Survival Trust U.K. rare breed organization • Breeds of Livestock OK State Univ • List of Horse Breed Associations Horse Illustrated • Photos from Wikimedia Commons |

We often write about some of the challenges and conditions that Cheff Center clients deal with. In this issue of the newsletter, we'll take a look at depression.



Depression is a mood disorder that impacts a person's day-to-day life and ability to maintain normal activities of daily living. It can be described as a feeling of persistent sadness or loss and leads to disinterest in activities or events that once provided joy. This can lead to a change in a person's normal activities and eventually impact the physical and mental health of the individual. These symptoms often occur during periods of increased stress, grief, loss, or trauma.

Recent statistics from the CDC indicate an increase in feelings of depression following the COVID-19 pandemic. This has led to an increased need for mental health services and treatment.

Symptoms. Symptoms of depression may include the following:

- Feeling sad, tearful, empty, hopeless
- Angry outbursts, irritability, frustration, anxiety, restlessness
- Loss of interest in activities or hobbies that previously provided joy
- Sleep disturbances ranging from inability to sleep to oversleeping
- Lack of energy, persistent feeling of tiredness
- Dietary changes ranging from reduced intake of food with possible weight loss to an increase in food intake with a weight gain
- Difficulty in thinking or processing with potential to impact speech, movement, concentration, problem solving, decision making
- Unexplained physical ailments including headaches, body aches, digestive disturbances
- Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness ranging from feelings of guilt to self-harm, suicide, or recurrent thoughts of death/ fear of dying

Symptoms are often present daily or nearly daily and lead to a change or disruption in a person's day-to-day activities, work, school, and relationships. They are individual to each person and manifest in a unique manner. An individual's response to these symptoms may lead to isolation from family and friends, as well as an increased intake of alcohol and drugs, often as a way of self-medicating.

Diagnosis. Diagnosis is based on a person reporting the above feelings daily or almost daily, interfering with daily activities and lasting for two weeks or more. Depression can impact persons of all ages, races, and ethnicities. Women are more often diagnosed than men. This may be because men are less likely to report symptoms, which places them at greater risk of misdiagnosed or undertreated depression. There is also a slight variation in symptoms noted within age populations; careful assessment should be done to prevent misdiagnosis or undertreatment of children and the elderly as their symptoms may be mistaken for another issue or overlooked entirely.

Depression can be classified by cause and severity. Each classification requires a depressed mood or loss of pleasure in one's life. These symptoms must cause significant distress or impairment but remain without manic or hypomanic behaviors.

Depression classifications include:

- Mild, moderate, or major (clinical) depression -- Major depressive classification requires five or more symptoms from the list above lasting for more than two weeks.
- High-functioning depression -- Symptoms are as noted in major depression but are less severe and remain persistent for two years or more.

- Atypical depression – Mood is temporarily boosted in response to positive events, which differs from typical depression, where depressed mood is usually constant.
- Treatment-resistant depression -- Standard medication treatment provides little to no relief of symptoms.

Treatment. Treatment is focused on the severity of the person’s symptoms and cause of the depressive event. Medication treatment with antidepressants may be utilized alone or in conjunction with therapeutic intervention. The extent of the therapeutic intervention can vary from identifying and eliminating the root cause of the event, finding ways to boost the person’s mood, receiving care from a licensed therapist, or alternative therapeutic interventions. Treatment is not a one-size-fits-all approach; it must be tailored to each individual. Some alternative therapeutic interventions include mindfulness, psychotherapy incorporating horses, and group therapy sessions.

There are several ways to get help with depression. Seek medical attention from a medical provider or therapist if you are feeling depressed. Additional support may be provided by religious leaders, family, friends, or a trusted contact.

If you are feeling suicidal or believe you may harm yourself, you should contact 911 or go to a local emergency room.

Support is also available 24/7:

- Call 988 for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline
- Call 211 for information about community resources

If you believe someone is in danger of harming themselves or attempting suicide, you should ensure the person is not left alone and contact 911 or take them to a local emergency room.

Long term self-care. Remember that maintaining a healthy lifestyle including physical activity, proper nutrition, adequate sleep, and self-care will help during periods of stress and trauma.

In response to the increased prevalence of mental health issues, the Cheff Center offers several mental health opportunities throughout the year. We offer women’s Self-Care groups, and the Girlz in the Barn program for teens and tweens who experience anxiety and depression. We also work with Skywood Recovery Center, which is a local residential addiction recovery facility, on a weekly basis. During Mental Health Week in June, Cheff offered three workshops covering topics of self-care (for our volunteers only), a youth anxiety program, and a grief program. The next session of Girlz in the Barn begins July 24th.

To find out more about these programs, please visit the Mental Health Services section of our website at <https://www.cheffcenter.org/mental-health>.

Sources and More Info.

<http://cdc.gov>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books>

<https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases>

<http://nimh.nih.gov>

<http://mayoclinic.org>

<https://www.bridgestorecovery.com>

Welcome to a new contributor to the newsletter: J. Zeigler RN!

THE ARC OF CALHOUN COUNTY

Some of you may or may not be familiar with another non-profit organization that serves similar clientele as the Cheff Center—The Arc of Calhoun County. We are proud to say that we partner with The Arc and their clients in their Volunteer Program. The Volunteer Program provides adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) with the opportunity to develop, enhance, and exhibit adaptive skills in a community setting. The opportunities for skill development can include socialization, adaptability, self-discipline, independence, self-confidence, sense of belonging, self-advocacy, personal safety, resource allocation, time-management, professionalism, problem solving, leadership, and conflict-management.

Established in 1954, The Arc “provides supportive programming to adults with disabilities, advocacy for special education from birth to 26 years old, and further support to the community as it relates to its citizens with disabilities.” The staff at The Arc work with not only the client, but their family or support people, teachers, caseworkers, etc. to enhance the experience for the client.

People who use the services at The Arc have choices of programming such as work skills, education assistance, supported employment, and volunteering, to name a few. Once they receive services, they stay in the programs as long as they wish and may change programs at any time depending on what they would like to learn and do. The level of support they receive is unlimited and is determined by the needs and wants of the specific person.

We work with The Arc on Tuesday mornings from 10AM-12PM while we are in session. The clients who choose to come to the Cheff Center really enjoy being here and are a pleasure to work with. If you would like to work with The Arc while they are here, please let [Sara](#) know!

You can find out more about The Arc of Calhoun County and their services by going to their website www.thearcclalhoun.org.



SHINDIG UPDATE



Now that summer camp is done, we will start turning our attention (in a BIG way) to Shindig.

As most of you know, Shindig is our biggest and most important fundraiser of each year—it brings in up to one-third of our annual operating costs in one evening of FUN! Attendees buy tickets to the event, which entitles them to a nice dinner, open-bar, silent and live auctions, and a live band for dancing the night away. There are games in the arena, trips all over the world to purchase, photo booths, etc. It's a great event to attend, and a lot of fun to work and be a part of!

We will be asking for help for the week leading up to Shindig (Aug. 21-25) and then for the event on the 25th. We will be power washing the barn and arena, cleaning the building inside and out, painting (if needed) the fences, and on Thursday and Friday will be working on setting up for the event. Those who work during the week will get lunch before/after their shift, and those working on Shindig night will have dinner provided.

Another way you could help is by donating items for gift baskets that will be auctioned off —anything you think might be a nice item to go into a themed basket, or you could make your own themed baskets! We do ask that baskets have a value of over \$150, and items be new if possible. Or you can ask businesses for “in-kind” donations of gift certificates, classes, services, etc. Anything that we can use to raise money is appreciated! [Shindig Item Donation Form](#)

Sara will be sending out the sign-up sheets for different days/times in the next couple of weeks.

Please keep in mind that people do not have to be current volunteers to help with Shindig—you can recruit family members, friends, co-workers, or anyone else you would like to! We need a lot of help, and the more, the merrier! (Hours worked during this week do count toward service hours!).

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact [Sara](#) Putney-Smith. 😊

CHEFF UPDATES

HERD UPDATES



IT IS WITH HEAVY HEARTS that we announce that our miniature horse, **Star**, has crossed the rainbow bridge. At the ripe age of 29, she lived a fabulous life full of love, adoration, and her trademark feistiness.



Star was the best ambassador – traveling everywhere from baseball games, hockey games, nursing homes, to carnivals. She was an adorable introduction to the world of horses for countless individuals and the cornerstone of our ground program. She will be greatly missed! ❤️💔

CHEFF WILL SOON BE WELCOMING RYAN, a beautiful draft cross that looks a LOT like Garth, and he's sweet. He is owned by an 80+ year old man who only rides occasionally, and so we have a year lease on him. We will feature Ryan in the August newsletter where you (and we) will learn all about him!

SCOOBY, a paint with a great personality, will be temporarily on loan from Kassidy (Tara's stepdaughter).

PHILLIP, our newly purchased horse, should arrive soon from California; he is briefly being boarded in Kentucky until our air quality is better. We are hoping to see him later this month. Phillip will be featured in a future newsletter.

THE NEED FOR MORE EQUINES remains urgent. If you or someone you know has a SANE, SOUND, and SAFE horse who's looking for a new career, please give us a call at 269-731-4471.

GIRLZ IN THE BARN program will run Mondays 7/24, 7/31, 8/7 and 8/14 from 9:30AM-12:30PM. We need four to six FEMALE volunteers who want to work with tween and teen girls on improving communication, regulating emotions, and enhancing their problem-solving skills. If you would like to help, please contact [Sara Putney-Smith](#)

THE NEXT VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION IS JULY 8, 2023, FROM 10:00AM-1:00PM. We always need volunteers, so invite your friends, family, and co-workers to attend!

JULY FUN FACT

The first official Paralympic Games, held in Rome in 1960, were initially open only to athletes in wheelchairs. At the 1976 Summer Games, athletes with different disabilities were included for the first time; competitors with cerebral palsy classifications were allowed to compete for the first time at the 1984 Summer Paralympics. At the 1992 Summer Paralympics, all disability types were eligible to participate, with classification being run through the International Paralympic Committee; classification was based on functional disability type.

Para-equestrian dressage was added to the Paralympic Games program at the 1996 Summer Paralympics, where riders with physical disabilities compete on the same team as people with vision impairment. Men and women compete against each other equally within their specific grades, with riders competing on their own horses. They are divided into five classes depending upon the nature and extent of their impairment. The level of difficulty of the dressage test they perform is relative to their allocated grade.

This sport has one of the highest rates of injury and illness among all Paralympic sports; for this reason, much of the equipment for the sport is developed with safety in mind; Velcro and rubber bands are used so that things can easily break away and protect the rider during a fall.

There is also a constant balance in developing equipment for para-equestrian to assure that the rider remains in control, and that they are not dragged along by the horse. Competitors must wear the appropriate equipment as stipulated in the Para Dressage Rules and are only permitted the use of special equipment called compensating aids when this has been formally documented and approved.

The 2024 Paris Paralympic Games will be held from Tuesday, September 3 to Saturday, September 7 at the grounds of the historic Château de Versailles on the Etoile Royal esplanade in the center of the Palace's gardens. Of the three equestrian disciplines held at the Olympic Games, only dressage is contested at the Paralympics.



For more information:

[Para-equestrian
2024 Paris Paralympic Games](#)

[Paralympic Games | NBC Olympics
Stinna Kaastrup's incredible story](#)

JULY BIRTHDAYS

Brett A

Candice B

Lila C

Jane K

Jordan MG

Ava R

Dave S

Baylee A

Aubri B

Sarah C

Abigail K

Jake OB

Launa R

Nia W

Danielle B

Melissa C

Lauren J

Sam M

Dia P-B

Moriah S



Check out last month's birthday buddies, Ashton and Harvey...they both celebrated their June 6th birthdays together!

Cheff gets a large discount on horse-related products!

If you would like to get more bang for your buck, you could make a [DONATION](#) to Cheff and we will gratefully use it where most needed!

Harding's

Harding's customers - if you join their Community Rewards program and select the Cheff Center as your organization of choice, we receive a rebate based on your purchase amounts.

Please let your friends and family know—every penny helps! For more information, click on the link: <https://www.hardings.com/savings-and-rewards/community-rewards/>

Rite Aid

Rite Aid is one of Cheff's partners and extended their shopper rewards program to us. Please consider signing up as a Cheff Supporter. Simply register at: support.rxfundraising.com/CheffCenter

Any Questions/Comments/Suggestions?

If so, you can contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator, at sara@cheffcenter.org

Newsletter Contributions by: Emily Fields, Ann Lindsay, Ashton Maguire, Morgan Meulman, Sara Putney-Smith, Marianne Stier, Jennifer Zeigler

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