



June 2023 Issue 31

CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LAYNE ENDRES



Layne and Archie

Layne has been with Cheff for almost three years; she said she had several reasons for wanting to join Cheff. Originally, Layne wanted to learn how to ride, however she had never been around horses! Her thought was to volunteer to see if she even liked horses (which she found she does!)

Layne had heard of Cheff through her years working as an RN at Bronson and thought it would be a great place to volunteer. She said that it has definitely been a learning experience. She had no idea that each horse would be an

“individual” with such distinct personalities, likes and dislikes. So, the idea of riding lessons went out the window and she stuck with Cheff.

Layne really loves working in the barn, making sure the horses have enough water and that their stalls are clean and tidy. She also helped with Read and Ride, which she said was a great experience – especially watching the children grow in confidence, not only with reading, but in their relationship with their horse. During the winter she enjoyed learning more about horse behaviors, tacking, leading, and mounting through classes offered at Cheff.

Layne says she really doesn’t have a favorite horse, because “They are all fabulous!” However, she absolutely adores Archie, “He’s so sweet and humble and just a gentle old soul.” Layne is very happy that he has such a life of leisure at Cheff.

On a personal note, Layne is married to Jack, and has two amazing young adult children, Drew and Bryn, and a lab named Mollie. In 2019, she retired from Bronson after 25 years of working as an RN. Layne enjoys traveling, reading, and their cottage life during the summer.

Thanks for being here, Layne, we appreciate everything you do for Cheff!



HORSE BREED OF THE MONTH: DONKEY

In previous newsletters, we've written about the various horse breeds found in the Cheff Center herd. This time our subject is donkeys, represented by the one and only Archie.

Archie

You may have seen on Cheff's [Our Horses](#) list that Archie is a *Standard Donkey Jack*. This means he is a male donkey (a *jack*), whose height, measured at the withers, is over 36 inches, but not more than 48 inches (the *standard donkey* category). At 12 hands high (48 inches), Archie is at the tall end of the standard range. (For more Archie info, see his profile in the [April 2021 newsletter](#), p. 3.)



Archie

Donkey Types and Breeds

In North America, donkeys are classified by size:

- Miniature – 36 inches and under
- Standard – over 36 inches to 48 inches (this is the most common type of donkey)
- Large Standard – over 48 inches to 54 inches for jennets (females); over 48 inches to 56 inches for jacks (males)
- Mammoth – over 54 inches for jennets; over 56 inches for jacks

In addition to the size classifications, various donkey breeds and registries have been established around the world. In the US, some prominent breeds are:

- Miniature Mediterranean Donkey – these smallest donkeys come from the Italian islands of Sardinia and Sicily; they were first imported into the US in the 1920s.
- American Mammoth Jackstock – starting before the American Revolution, large donkeys were imported from Europe, especially Spain, for the purpose of breeding large mules; the Mammoth Jackstock breed was established, with registry created in 1888.
- Spotted Ass – registry created in 1967 for spotted donkeys, mules, and hinnies of all sizes.
- Baudet de Poitou – a large, shaggy French breed, considered endangered, with a small but visible population in the US.



From left: Miniature; Spotted; Poitou

Terminology

- Jenny or Jennet – a female donkey; Jack – a male donkey.
- Gelding – a castrated male donkey.
- Foal – a baby donkey.
- Burro -- Spanish word for donkey. In the US, it's often used for donkeys in the western part of the country, including feral herds.
- Donkey vs. Ass – Donkey tends to be used for the domesticated animal; Ass is used for the wild species found in Africa and Asia, and sometimes for the domesticated species, too.

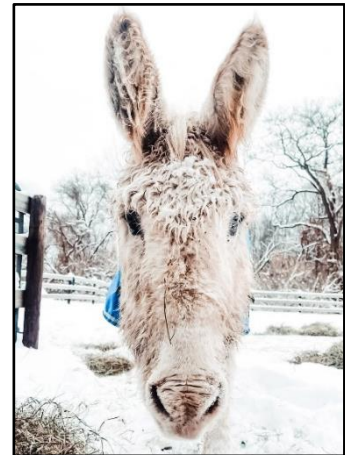
- Mule – an equine hybrid, the offspring of a male donkey and a female horse; Hinny is the offspring of a male horse and a female donkey.

Characteristics

Equine experts emphasize that donkeys are not long-eared horses! They are, of course, both members of the scientific family Equidae and genus *Equus*, but they are different species, with thousands of years of distinct history.

Here’s a look at selected donkey physical characteristics and how they compare to horses:

- Head -- Donkeys typically have a deeper jaw and broader forehead.
- Withers – Donkey withers are less prominent, giving their back a straighter appearance compared to a horse’s back.
- Eyes – Donkey eyes are larger and less round than horse eyes; they are sometimes described as D-shaped. Donkeys have a more prominent brow ridge.
- Tail – Donkey tails are considered cow-like, with shorter hair at the top and a swish of longer hair on the lower portion.
- Hooves – Donkey hooves are smaller in proportion to their body size, are more upright, and are tougher than a horse’s.
- Ears (last but not least) – Donkey ears are longer in proportion to their head and are thicker than a horse’s ears. Some sources speculate that the longer ears, with blood vessels near the surface, give donkeys enhanced cooling ability in hot weather.



Archie

Then there’s the donkey’s bray. This hee-haw is unique among equines and varies between individual donkeys. Sound is made during both inhale (the hee) and exhale (the haw). Jacks tend to be more vocal than jennies.

Regarding behavior and personality, both donkeys and horses are herd animals and do best with at least one equine buddy, if not more. A significant and observable difference, though, is how they handle stressful or potentially threatening situations. In cases of fight or flight, horses are flight animals. Donkeys, on the other hand, are calmer and tend to stop in place to figure things out rather than run.

Donkeys are said to have a keen sense of self preservation, meaning they may hesitate when confronted with someone or something new, needing time, and perhaps the help of a trusted human, to learn and adjust before moving on. Their tendency to stop and assess can be misunderstood as stubbornness.

Food

Domesticated donkeys are descendants of the African wild ass. As such, they evolved for a desert environment without lush pastures. Their digestive system is very efficient at extracting nutrients from sub-par vegetation.

Therefore, they need a diet with more fiber and less energy than horses do. With an overly rich diet, donkeys easily become overweight and may develop permanent fat deposits on their neck and elsewhere. They also become at risk for laminitis and other serious health conditions. You may have noticed that our own Archie has treat restrictions.



Grazing donkey

Donkey Contributions to the World

Since donkeys were first domesticated about 7,000 years ago in East Africa, they have made huge contributions to civilization. Donkeys, as well as horses and mules (and other animals like camels and elephants), have worked for and with humans in countless ways. They have been used for milk and meat, and still are in some places.

Just a sampling of the donkey's service includes:

- Expanding trade by hauling goods and carrying packs.
- Transporting humans as riders and in wagons.
- Powering machinery for purposes like grinding grain and pumping water.
- Working in mines, both underground and above.
- Pulling plows and other farm implements.
- Supporting the military behind the scenes and in battle.



Hauling water in Kenya

Today, in many developing countries, working donkeys continue to be critical to the economy and to individual family income. Their importance is reflected in donkey population counts gathered by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. As of 2018, the organization estimates a worldwide donkey population of some 50 million, with more donkeys living in poorer countries than elsewhere. For example, Sudan and Ethiopia each have over 7 million donkeys, according to the 2018 survey.

In industrialized countries like the US, large-scale equine work in agriculture and industry ended by the mid-1900s, as mechanization took over. Here, donkeys are often companions, as well as riding and show animals. There is still important work for donkeys to do, however. For example:

- Donkeys serve as livestock guardians, protecting against predators like coyotes. Standard and larger donkeys are best for this job.
- Donkeys of all sizes are great fits for equine-assisted services organizations like Cheff.

That's a very quick look at the wide world of donkeys. As you can see, individually and as a species, these special equines are amazing!

Sources and More Info

- [Donkeys](#) – International Museum of the Horse.
- [All About Donkeys](#) – The Donkey Sanctuary, an international organization based in England.
- [Livestock Conservancy](#) – The Conservancy's [Equine Breeds of Concern](#) includes three donkey breeds in the US: Miniature, Mammoth Jackstock, Poitou.
- Breed Associations -- [American Donkey and Mule Society](#) / [American Mammoth Jackstock Registry](#) / [National Miniature Donkey Association](#) / [American Council of Spotted Asses](#)
- [At Long Last, a Donkey Family Tree](#) – New York Times, 3/14/2023; New genetic study on origins of donkey domestication.
- Books – Available for loan through MeL (Michigan eLibrary):
 - [“The Book of Donkeys”](#) / Donna Campbell Smith, 2016.
 - [“The Donkey Companion”](#) / Sue Weaver, 2008.
 - [“Livestock Guardians”](#) / Janet Vorwald Dohner, 2007.

Photos: [Mini](#) / [Spotted](#) / [Poitou](#) / [grazing](#) / [working](#)

EDUCATION CORNER: BIPOLAR DISORDER

We are occasionally writing about some of the challenges and conditions that Cheff Center clients deal with. In this issue of the newsletter, we'll look at bipolar disorder.



Bipolar disorder is a mental illness that can be chronic (persistent or constantly reoccurring) or episodic (occurring occasionally and at irregular intervals). People sometimes refer to bipolar disorder with the older terms “manic-depressive disorder” or “manic depression.”

Everyone experiences normal ups and downs, but with bipolar disorder, the range of mood changes can be extreme. People with the disorder have manic episodes, or unusually elevated moods in which the individual might feel very happy, irritable, or “up,” with a marked increase in activity level. They might also have depressive episodes, in which they feel sad, indifferent, or hopeless, combined with a very low activity level. Some people have hypomanic episodes, which are like manic episodes, but not severe enough to cause marked impairment in social or occupational functioning or require hospitalization.

Most of the time, bipolar disorder symptoms start during late adolescence or early adulthood. Occasionally, children may experience bipolar disorder symptoms. Although symptoms may come and go, bipolar disorder usually requires lifelong treatment and does not go away on its own. Bipolar disorder can be an important factor in suicide, job loss, ability to function, and family discord. However, proper treatment can lead to better functioning and improved quality of life.

Symptoms of bipolar disorder can vary. An individual with the disorder may have manic episodes, depressive episodes, or “mixed” episodes. A mixed episode has both manic and depressive symptoms. These mood episodes cause symptoms that last a week or two, or sometimes longer. During an episode, the symptoms last every day for most of the day. Feelings are intense and happen with changes in behavior, energy levels, or activity levels that are noticeable to others. In between episodes, mood usually returns to a healthy baseline. But in many cases, without adequate treatment, episodes occur more frequently as time goes on.

Symptoms of a Manic Episode	Symptoms of a Depressive Episode
Feeling very up, high, elated, or extremely irritable or touchy	Feeling very down or sad, or anxious
Feeling jumpy or wired, more active than usual	Feeling slowed down or restless
Racing thoughts	Trouble concentrating or making decisions
Decreased need for sleep	Trouble falling asleep, waking up too early, or sleeping too much
Talking fast about a lot of different things (“flight of ideas”)	Talking very slowly, feeling unable to find anything to say, or forgetting a lot
Excessive appetite for food, drinking, sex, or other pleasurable activities	Lack of interest in almost all activities
Feeling able to do many things at once without getting tired	Unable to do even simple things
Feeling unusually important, talented, or powerful	Feeling hopeless or worthless, or thinking about death or suicide

People are diagnosed with three basic types of bipolar disorder that involve clear changes in mood, energy, and activity levels. These moods range from manic episodes to depressive episodes.

- **Bipolar I disorder** is defined by manic episodes that last at least 7 days (most of the day, nearly every day) or when manic symptoms are so severe that hospital care is needed. Usually, separate depressive episodes occur as well, typically lasting at least 2 weeks. Episodes of mood disturbance with mixed features are also possible. The experience of four or more episodes of mania or depression within a year is termed “rapid cycling.”
- **Bipolar II disorder** is defined by a pattern of depressive and hypomanic episodes, but the episodes are less severe than the manic episodes in bipolar I disorder.
- **Cyclothymic disorder** (also called cyclothymia) is defined by recurrent hypomanic and depressive symptoms that are not intense enough or do not last long enough to qualify as hypomanic or depressive episodes.

“Other specified and unspecified bipolar and related disorders” is a diagnosis that refers to bipolar disorder symptoms that do not match the three major types of bipolar disorder outlined above.

The exact cause of bipolar disorder is unknown. However, research suggests that a combination of factors may contribute to the illness.

Bipolar disorder often runs in families, and research suggests this is mostly explained by heredity—people with certain genes are more likely to develop bipolar disorder than others. Many genes are involved, and no one gene can cause the disorder.

But genes are not the only factor. Studies of identical twins have shown that one twin can develop bipolar disorder while the other does not. Though people with a parent or sibling with bipolar disorder are more likely to develop it, most people with a family history of bipolar disorder will not develop it.

Research shows that the brain structure and function of people with bipolar disorder may differ from those of people who do not have bipolar disorder or other mental disorders. Learning about the nature of these brain changes helps researchers better understand bipolar disorder and, in the future, may help predict which types of treatment will work best for a person with bipolar disorder.

Many people with bipolar disorder also have other mental disorders or conditions such as anxiety disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), misuse of drugs or alcohol, or eating disorders. Sometimes people who have severe manic or depressive episodes also have symptoms of psychosis, such as hallucinations or delusions. The psychotic symptoms tend to match the person’s extreme mood. For example, someone having psychotic symptoms during a depressive episode may falsely believe they are financially ruined, while someone having psychotic symptoms during a manic episode may falsely believe they are famous or have special powers.

Looking at symptoms over the course of the illness and the person’s family history can help determine whether a person has bipolar disorder along with another disorder.

Treatment helps many people, even those with the most severe forms of bipolar disorder. Mental health professionals treat bipolar disorder with medications, psychotherapy, or a combination of treatments.

Certain medications can help control the symptoms of bipolar disorder. Some people may need to try several different medications before finding the ones that work best. The most common types of medications that doctors prescribe include mood stabilizers and atypical antipsychotics. Mood stabilizers such as lithium or valproate can help prevent mood episodes or reduce their severity. Lithium also can decrease the risk of suicide. While bipolar depression is often treated with antidepressant medication, a mood stabilizer must be taken as well, as an antidepressant alone can trigger a manic episode or rapid cycling in a person with bipolar disorder. Medications that target sleep or anxiety are sometimes added to mood stabilizers as part of a treatment plan.

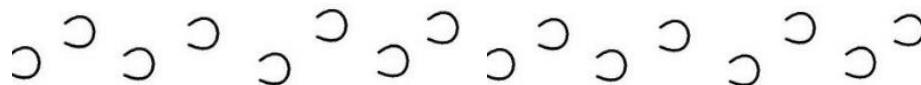
Psychotherapy (sometimes called “talk therapy”) is a term for various treatment techniques that aim to help a person identify and change troubling emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. Psychotherapy can offer support, education, skills, and strategies to people with bipolar disorder and their families.

Some types of psychotherapy can be effective treatments for bipolar disorder when used with medications, including interpersonal and social rhythm therapy, which aims to understand and work with an individual’s biological and social rhythms. Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is an important treatment for depression, and CBT adapted for the treatment of insomnia can be especially helpful as a component of the treatment of bipolar depression. Learn more on [NIMH’s psychotherapies webpage](#).

Some people may find other treatments helpful in managing their bipolar disorder symptoms.

- **Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)** is a brain stimulation procedure that can help relieve severe symptoms of bipolar disorder. ECT is usually only considered if an individual’s illness has not improved after other treatments such as medication or psychotherapy, or in cases that require rapid response, such as with suicide risk or catatonia (a state of unresponsiveness).
- **Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS)** is a type of brain stimulation that uses magnetic waves, rather than the electrical stimulus of ECT, to relieve depression over a series of treatment sessions. Although not as powerful as ECT, TMS does not require general anesthesia and presents little risk of memory or adverse cognitive effects.
- **Light Therapy** is the best evidence-based treatment for seasonal affective disorder (SAD), and many people with bipolar disorder experience seasonal worsening of depression in the winter, in some cases to the point of SAD. Light therapy could also be considered for lesser forms of seasonal worsening of bipolar depression.

This article is an excerpt, reprinted with permission from the [National Institute of Mental Health](#). You can read the article, in its entirety, at [Download PDF](#).



CHEFF UPDATES

HERD UPDATES – Sadly, Josey has returned to her previous owner as of May 25. You may have noticed that she loved being loved but was not so fond of being in class.

The rest of the herd is doing well, but there is still a great need for more equines! 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.

SUMMER CAMP READ & RIDE IS JUNE 19-23! This is the reading camp where Gull Lake first graders play reading games while riding in the arena. Camp sessions run every day with two shifts—from 9AM-12PM, and 1-4PM. Volunteers are still needed, so if you would like to help, please contact [Sara Putney-Smith](#).

GIRLZ IN THE BARN program will run Mondays 7/24, 7/31, 8/7 and 8/14 from 9:30AM-12:30PM. We need 4-6 FEMALE volunteers who want to work with tween and teen girls on improving communication, regulating emotions, and enhancing their problem-solving skills.

THERE IS NO JUNE VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION - OUR NEXT SESSION IS JULY 8, 2023, FROM 10:00AM-1:00PM. Invite your friends, family, and co-workers to attend!

SHINDIG IS COMING FAST! If you would like to contribute to this very cool and very important fundraiser, here are several ways to do so.

We need lots of volunteers during the week up to Shindig to get the entire facility Shindig-ready (it requires a lot of cleaning, some painting, power-washing, etc.), and on the evening of Shindig for the event itself. Lunches are provided during that week, and dinner is provided on Shindig night. Shindig is an event that's not to be missed!

Donations of all types are accepted (i.e., goods and services to auction off, monetary donations, etc.) If you know someone with a restaurant or store that would like to help Cheff out, ask them for a tax-deductible donation!

We use donated items to make themed gift baskets for our silent auction, and we get very creative putting all sorts of interesting items together. If you would like to create and donate a gift basket, we would greatly appreciate it: [Shindig Item Donation Form](#). Donated items just need to be a minimum of \$150 value.



JUNE FUN FACT

Thousands of sport horses travel all over the world every year to get to destination competitions. How do they get there? They fly, of course!

The journey starts with the equines loaded onto trailers, traveling from farms to one of the major airports with specialized facilities for livestock transportation. One of the most travelled routes is between Amsterdam in The Netherlands and Miami, Florida. The goal is to have the horses travel as smoothly as possible so that once they are off the plane, they can perform at their full potential at the destination.

Upon arrival to the airport, the horses are loaded into specialized containers for the flight; owners can opt for coach, business or first class. Once the horses are secure in the containers, the boxes are lifted into the cargo bay of the airplane.

Just like a precious package, the horses have quite a bit of padding, with leg wraps to offer compression and protection, and halters lined with fluffy wool. Upon arrival - in Miami, for example - the animals are transported to USDA quarantine where they are required to stay for 48 hours. Once released, the horses will be shipped in a trailer to their destination barns, and so begins the next round of competition and training.

It takes an incredible amount of planning and teamwork to ensure these athletes arrive safely and in top form. The logistics for a horse's travel is certainly a bit more complicated than a human's, given the size of the passenger (a sport horse weighs 1,100 pounds on average), and also due to the quarantine regulations.



For more information:

[When Horses Fly: The Business of Equine Air Travel](#)

[Air Horse One: The wonderful world of equine air travel](#)

[Horse Loading onto Airplane](#)

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Gretchen A

Cindy B

Emily C

Karen C

Catherine D

Sam G

Molly I

Gregory N

Angie R

Marianne S

Sandy U



...and 31-year-old Harvey!



*Without volunteers, we'd be a
nation without a soul.*

~ Rosalynn Carter

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK

We are happy to report that we now have our class/workshop lineup for Mental Health Week, June 26-29, 2023!

Tuesday, June 27

5:00pm-8:00pm (check in 4:45)

Self-Care with Horses (for our volunteers only)

This class, especially designed for our volunteers, focuses not only on the regular women's self-care programs (mindfulness, art, journaling, exploration of leadership/motivation/assertiveness) but goes a bit deeper. Attendees will explore Trauma Informed work as participants, not only as volunteers, and get a chance to front load on self-care and personal exploration where we are the focus of the evening. Attendees do not need to have a mental health diagnosis. Hours have been extended to provide more hands-on time. No riding experience necessary—this is strictly a ground-programming course.

Cost: \$50/person as a thank you to our volunteers!!

Wednesday, June 28

5:00pm-7:30pm

"I'm so, so anxious sometimes, can my horse help?" Youth program.

An introductory psychoeducational group that will explore how we can use time with horses to develop some mindfulness skills and coping mechanisms to help with everyday anxiety.

We will practice emotional regulation skills and mindfulness activities. Most of the time will be in the barn working with the horses, though there will be a riding portion.

Ages: pre-teen through 18 years old with staff approval.

Cost: \$100/person

Thursday, June 29

5:00pm-7:30pm

Grief Matters: An Introduction to Grief 101 - Partnering with Horses on Our Journey

Everyone experiences grief in their lifetime—death of a loved one, losing a job, moving, divorce, disability, etc. This psychoeducational group is for anyone who has experienced any sort of grief. We will talk about signs and signals of grief, self-care, and process our feelings while working with the horses. This workshop is facilitated by a Grief/Trauma Certified Mental Health Professional, our wonderful PATH certified instructors, and Equine Specialists.

Cost: \$100/person

Pre-registration is required for all classes as space is limited. Register on our website at

www.cheffcenter.org.



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

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