



CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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February 2022 Issue 17

FEBRUARY VOLUNTEER PROFILE: VICKIE KING



Art & Vickie

Vickie King, our February Volunteer, first experienced Cheff about 6 years ago when she participated in a work-sponsored United Way clean up, and with a donation to a rider in the annual Ride-a-Thon. Later, Vickie's daughter volunteered in a 4H club community project at Cheff; Vickie and her daughter participated in one session by cleaning tack and making decorations, and then attended an orientation session to learn more about volunteering. Vickie has continued volunteering since then!

Vickie originally hails from southern Wisconsin, where she used to spend time on her uncle and aunt's horse farm during the summers. This is where she got her first horse, a breeding stock paint horse that she trained herself when the horse was old enough. Vickie's family moved to the country when she started high school. She kept her two horses and sheep on their hobby farm. Vickie currently owns two off-the-track thoroughbreds which she retrained with the help of her riding instructor.

Vickie acquired her undergraduate degree in Animal Science at UW-RF, then went to Arizona and Nebraska for her graduate degrees. Vickie worked on the faculty at the University of Minnesota, College of Veterinary Medicine, and then for Pfizer Animal Health/Zoetis as a statistician; she has been working in this area for 18 years.

Although Vickie had no previous experience working with people with disabilities, her husband has a nephew who is severely disabled, and another nephew's son is autistic.

One of Vickie's favorite things is working with the horses and seeing the clients enjoy their time with the horses. She loves to see those who are able to advance to unclipping and riding independently. She also loves to see each client's enjoyment of the

movement of the horse and their time spent with the horses.

Vickie has learned the skills to work with Cheff clients and enjoys meeting the other volunteers that work at the Cheff center. "We are all united by the horses and clients no matter what we do in the other parts of our life."

Vickie doesn't have a favorite horse at Cheff, she feels they are all special in their own ways. We would agree. 😊

Thanks so much, Vickie, for your time and commitment to Cheff, it is greatly appreciated!



"At the end of the day it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished... it's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back."

- Denzel Washington



HORSE OF THE MONTH: EMMA



Emma the Gorgeous

Who is that gorgeous blonde standing out in the pasture? Why it must be Emma, an enchanting 19-year-old Haflinger mare so very generously donated, along with Gunny, in May of 2015.

Like most Haflingers, Emma is a bit shorter than the average horse and sturdy, coming in at 14.3 hands high and around 1000 pounds – but like humans, this can vary slightly by season. 😊

Prior to coming to Cheff, Emma had done some local shows and trail riding. Emma loves trail rides and speed events! And the word in the barn is that Emma is actually one of the faster horses that we currently have, although she sometimes tries to keep that a secret.

Some of the volunteers know that Emma is a bit of a quirky lady! She does NOT like side walkers during the therapeutic riding classes but doesn't mind them in hippotherapy! Seems like Emma prefers to be ground driven vs. being led in classes.

In the summer, Emma loves to be scratched on her belly and has been known to softly nicker during the process! Emma is registered with the Haflinger association, and her registered name is

Melodramatic!

Emma could use joint care supplements due to her age, and with summer coming (sometime in the future) she would love to have some sunscreen and fly spray to help keep her comfortable.

When you're in the barn next, make sure to stop in and see Emma, and maybe bring her favorite treats - wild berry gummies!



Emma and sunset



Emma at work

Click this link to see Emma at work!

<https://fb.watch/aE8DadJcvO/>



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AT: [Volunteer Newsletters](#)**

How Horses Sleep

The importance of sleep for good health in humans is well known. It supports the immune system, cognition, memory, tissue repair and other functions.

Sleep is equally important for horses and other equines. There are many factors that can help (or hinder) a horse's ability to get enough zzz's, just as there are good (and bad) practices for best human sleep.



Horses in Spain's Basque region showing the three ways to snooze.

In this article, we'll look at the basics of sleep in horses and how it compares with human sleep patterns.

Sleep Stages

Sleep in horses, as in humans, consists of various stages: a **deep restful state, slow-wave sleep (SWS)** and **rapid eye movement sleep (REM)**. As a horse moves through these stages from lighter to deeper sleep, its muscles become more relaxed and its awareness of the surrounding environment decreases.

To some extent, the sleep stages can be observed. But to comprehensively study sleep function in people and in animals, scientists use tools such as electroencephalography (EEG) to record electrical activity in the brain (i.e., brain waves) and electrooculography (EOG) to measure eye movement.

The Stay Apparatus

A famous difference in the way horses sleep compared to humans is that horses can doze while standing up. Sleeping on their feet is possible thanks to a mechanism called the **stay apparatus**, which is a complex system of muscles, ligaments and tendons that allows a horse to lock major joints (see [diagram](#)).

The stay apparatus is also used to rest muscles even when the horse is not drowsy. The locked joints stabilize the horse and free up muscles from working as hard as they normally would while standing.

Sleeping upright typically involves the deep restful sleep stage – a drowsy state where the horse is easily roused and is still quite conscious of the surrounding environment. The horse may also enter the SWS stage, a somewhat deeper sleep, while standing.



An Ardennes horse dozing while standing. Note the resting left hind leg.

When a horse sleeps with the stay apparatus engaged, its posture will be similar to the photo above. Head is slightly down (sometimes even lower than shown) and the horse's eyes may be partially closed. Weight is often balanced on three legs, with one hind leg bent and able to fully rest. The horse will periodically shift position to let the other hind leg rest.

Why Do Horses Sleep on Their Feet?

It is thought that horses evolved to get the bulk of their rest while standing because, as a prey animal,

lying down is risky. A few other large animals are also able to doze while standing – e.g., zebras, giraffes, and elephants.

REM Sleep

There comes a time, usually daily, when horses have to lie down to get some REM sleep. In this deeper sleep stage, there is a loss of reflexes and muscle tone, so the horse is unable to remain standing. As the name suggests, a characteristic of REM sleep is rapid eye movement (under closed eyes). Horses also may twitch and paddle their legs as if trotting in this sleep stage.

Horses can lie down in two positions. In the photo at right, Art is demonstrating the **lateral recumbent** position (lying on his side). The rest of the group are all in **sternal recumbency** (lying on their sternums).



Cheff horses on a sleep break.

REM sleep typically takes place while a horse is laterally recumbent.



Feral horses – Pryor Mountain Wild Horse Range, Montana. Some of the herd sleeps while the rest remain standing and may be acting as lookouts.

With wild horses, it is common for part of the herd to lie down while others stand and act as sentinels, watching for danger.

Sometimes you can see this protective behavior in domestic herds as well.

How Much Sleep and When?

Here's another area where horse sleep differs from human sleep. Ideally, adult humans get seven to eight hours of sleep in a single session at night, plus maybe a brief afternoon nap. Around 20-25% of this sleep will be in the REM stage, meaning about 90-120 minutes of REM sleep every 24 hours is good.

Horses spend significantly less time sleeping than people do. This may be another prey animal adaptation since any time spent in slumber, whether while standing or lying down, is a vulnerability.

A horse's total sleep time is typically three to five hours per day, with 30 minutes of that, plus or minus, spent lying down in REM sleep. The overall total is accomplished



Sternal recumbent Monte. Is he just waking up or about to drift off?

through multiple short sleep sessions rather than one long session, mostly at night, but sometimes during the day as well. Additional time spent resting while standing is common.

Sleep Issues

Horses, like people, can become sleep deprived, especially if they do not get enough REM stage sleep.

Stumbling or collapsing unexpectedly may be a sign that a horse has a sleep deficit. This can happen if the horse is so tired that it dozes off while standing and goes right into REM sleep. Muscles are not active during the REM stage, so the horse can't prevent its legs from buckling. The horse may, or may not, awaken quickly and catch itself before it goes all the way down to the ground.

What causes a horse to be sleep deprived? Here are a few common sleep disrupters:

- Feeling it is not safe to lie down and sleep. This could be due to things like a change in the herd or being in an unfamiliar environment for a few nights, such as at a horse show.
- Pain or lack of mobility. If it hurts or is difficult to lie down, a horse may avoid it. A veterinarian can help here.
- Ground and floor conditions. Horses appreciate bedding in a stall and firm, dry ground outside for lying down. They may avoid reclining if their only option is muddy or mushy ground. This is perhaps a self-preservation trait reflecting the fact that it is tricky to get up quickly and flee if you don't have good footing.

People and horses can get by with insufficient sleep for a while, but it is not recommended! Creating a good sleep environment and anticipating changes that may disrupt sleep are keys to good short- and long-term health for horses (and also for people).

At Cheff, keep an eye out for some of the herd resting and sleeping, inside or out in the pasture. Sky and Star are good candidates to observe sleeping in the barn. Sky is one to frequently be lying down in his stall making sleeping noises! Star is known to go to the back of her stall and take a snooze.

The barn lights are usually kept off during the day to encourage everyone to rest before classes begin. So, right before the first afternoon class of the day is a potential time to catch some sleepers. You also may notice a horse dozing briefly on their feet in their stall at any time and maybe even while tacked up and waiting in line to get to the mounting area.

Sources / More Info

Sleep:

- [How Much Sleep Does Your Horse Need?](#) (Horse Journals Canada, Sep 2021)
- [Is Your Horse Sleep Deprived?](#) (Equus Magazine, Sep 2008)
- [Sleep and Sleep Disorders in Horses](#) (American Assn of Equine Practitioners Proceedings, 2008)
- [What is REM Sleep?](#) (Current Biology 30(1) Jan 6, 2020)

Stay Apparatus:

- [Diagram with explanation – hind leg](#) (Atlanta Equine Clinic)
- [Diagram – front and hind legs](#) (WikiVet)
- [Detailed explanation](#) (Wikipedia)
- [Dozing horse – fun video of stay apparatus in use](#) (2 min.)

Photo Sources – Cheff photos except: [Horses in Spain](#), [Ardennes horse](#), [Feral horses](#) (all Wikimedia)

CHEFF UPDATES



ART has finished his treatment after being diagnosed with Equine Protozoal Myeloencephalitis (EPM), a neurological disease that attacks the central system. He has been tested and all is well!

TINA was also diagnosed with a mild case (EPM isn't transmitted horse-to-horse, it is the result of ingesting a protozoal parasite in hay or water that has been contaminated by an infected opossum's feces.) **The good news is that Tina was treated successfully and is now back to good health!**



Star now requires hay pellets rather than regular hay, which can be pricey. Star would be most appreciative for any donation of pellets, or if you could find it in your heart to donate toward their cost at: [Donate to Cheff](#).

CLASS UPDATES – We are happy to report that all the new educational classes for volunteers have been full, and the feedback has been very positive! We plan to continue classes throughout the year, and even have waiting lists for some of the classes that will be repeated. If you have any topic suggestions for future classes, please submit them to Sara Putney-Smith.

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION REMINDER: The next orientation is February 5, from 10AM – 1 PM. **If you know anyone that would be a great volunteer, please encourage them to fill out the [VOLUNTEER APPLICATION](#) on our website and come to the orientation!!**

CONGRATULATIONS to our very own **Emily Kalin** and her fiancé **Chris**, married on January 28th! Best wishes for a long and blissful life together!!



DID YOU KNOW? Cheff is always looking for great horses to add to our herd. Because of their important role, we are very selective in determining which horses are accepted. If you know of any possible candidates with the qualities listed on our website: [WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN A HORSE](#), please contact Emily at: Emily@cheffcenter.org

February Fun Fact

In several urban areas of the country, equestrian culture exists where you might least expect it.

In honor of Black History Month, we focus on two groups with similar missions - to provide positive alternative paths to urban youth by engaging them in equestrian sports while teaching life skills, instilling discipline, and promoting academic excellence.

The **Fletcher Street Riding Club** is a non-profit organization devoted to inner-city horsemanship in north Philadelphia. Experienced local horsemen maintain and care for horses while teaching neighborhood youth how to do so and encourage good grades and positive ways to spend their leisure time outdoors.

The horses used in the program were initially purchased at a livestock auction, giving a second chance to animals that would likely otherwise have been killed. The horses are ridden throughout the city's streets and parks, and regular races are held on an open strip of Fairmount Park called the Speedway.

G. Neri's 2011 young adult novel **Ghetto Cowboy** is based on Fletcher Street and urban horsemanship culture, and was adapted into a Netflix film called [Concrete Cowboy](#) starring Idris Elba that debuted on April 2, 2021. The song "[Feel the Love](#)" by Rudimental features the Fletcher Street horses, men, and youth in its music video, viewed more than 72 million times.

The **Compton Cowboys** are a group of childhood friends who first met in the late 1990s through the Compton Jr. Posse, a non-profit organization in Richland Farms. The Los Angeles-area city of Compton was a rough neighborhood, and they found horse riding to be a positive alternative to gang violence and drugs.

The Compton Cowboys provide a collective effort to maintain and take care of the horses, compete in different types of events such as bull riding and English Hunter-Jumper, and have been invited to perform in parades in the LA area.

The Compton Cowboys' motto is "Streets raised us. Horses saved us."

For more information on both groups:

[Rudimental - Feel the Love](#)

[FSURC](#)

[Streets Raised Us. Horses Saved Us. \(comptoncowboys.com\)](#)

[Storycorps - Bringing hope and a love of horses to LA streets](#)

[Fletcher Street Urban Riding Club - Wikipedia](#)

[Compton Cowboys - Wikipedia](#)





FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS


Carla C
Michael M

Paul E
Aaliya M
Holden R

Steven J
Linnea O



Did you know that Cheff gets a large discount on horse-related products?

If you want to  your dollar, please make a [DONATION](#) and we can use it where most needed!

Amazon Smile

Please remember that when you order online from **Amazon.com**, the Cheff Center can receive benefits when you do. Go to smile.amazon.com and register—we are one of the 1000s of charities that you can choose from, and we will get 0.5% of your qualified purchases! To find out more, visit: <https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about>

And if you really want to help, ask your friends and family to do the same. We thank you in advance, as every penny counts for us, especially at this time.

Harding's

For those of you who shop at Harding's, if you join their Community Rewards program and select the Cheff Center as your organization of choice, we will receive a rebate based on your purchase amounts. Please let your friends and family know—every little bit helps!!!

For more information, click on the link below.

<https://www.hardings.com/savings-and-rewards/community-rewards/>

Have any horse-related equipment hanging around?

Cheff relies HEAVILY on donations - if you have any gently used horse equipment- saddles, pads, blankets, sheets, (even half bottles of fly spray), we'd love to take them off your hands!

Do you have any Questions/Comments/Suggestions?

If so, you can contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator, at sara@cheffcenter.org
Contributions by: Emily Kalin, Ann Lindsay, Ashton Maguire, Morgan Meulman, Sara Putney-Smith, Marianne Stier

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