



July 2021 Issue 11

# CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE: CARRIE KIRKPATRICK



Willy and Carrie

Carrie (pronounced CAH-ree) became a Cheff Center volunteer about three years ago, when she moved back to Michigan after many years in the western US. She had volunteered at another therapeutic riding center in the past, so was happy to find out that Cheff was nearby her new home here in Michigan. She is a retired nurse and a lifelong horse person.

As a kid, Carrie lived in Centerville and Bronson. She began riding at age three and has been involved with horses ever since. In Bronson, her family's next-door neighbor

raised ponies, so Carrie had a ready herd to hang out with. She got her start as a pony trainer while still in elementary school with the new foals arriving at her neighbor's place each year. Her childhood horse was a pony named Trigger.

Carrie went on to get a bachelor's degree in nursing and specialized as a surgical nurse. It was while working at a hospital in LaGrange, IN, about 20 years ago, that she first learned about therapeutic riding from some of her colleagues. It sounded interesting, so she located an area center, LoveWay Therapeutic Equestrian Services near Elkhart, volunteered there and found she loved it.

Later in her career, Carrie moved west for many years, to Arizona and Colorado, and transitioned to working as a traveling nurse, where you go on temporary assignments to places needing nurses. In between nursing jobs, she spent time working on ranches.

She did a whole range of ranch activities, including training young horses, working with older ones on settling and refresher schooling, teaching riding lessons, and leading trail rides in the mountains, sometimes with her son helping out. These were quite large ranches with 40, 50, and

even 100 horses. Carrie noted that when you're regularly getting 20 horses ready for a trail ride, you become quite efficient at grooming and tacking!

Back in Michigan, Carrie lives on a 48-acre farm where she has a large garden and she and her husband grow corn and soybeans. She has dogs, cats, chickens and a collection of tractors. No horses right now, but she rides with friends and hasn't ruled out getting another horse in the future. In the winter, when there are fewer farm activities, Carrie has time for some art projects – painting and sculpture. She also travels out west regularly, where her son and daughter live.

Carrie is typically at Cheff a couple days a week. You can find her working in the barn – getting tack set and horses ready, helping with any special needs of the horses, and other barn jobs. She also works with classes in the arena whenever needed. And she's on the horse-care team – a group of volunteers that do some extra work with the horses outside of classes. The team was just getting started when Covid-19 arrived and has been on hold during the pandemic.

What does she like best about volunteering at Cheff? She loves all of the work itself and the exercise that comes with it. "It's a great way to keep me out of trouble!" she said.

She really enjoys the clients and getting to talk with and know them. Carrie said she also appreciates seeing the positive impact that riding has on clients, and how special it is that once you're on horseback, many difficulties fall into the background.

Favorite horses? Carrie has a special bond with the two Clydesdales, Tess and Willy. She has been able to spend some extra time and TLC on the pair, which they appreciate, given their outsized surface areas and adorable feathery legs (almost as adorable when trimmed!).

Carrie said she is grateful to everyone at Cheff for the opportunity to be a part of the operation. Thank you, Carrie, for joining us Cheff volunteers and bringing your years of experience helping and working with people and equines. We're glad you're here!

## HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY!



# HORSE OF THE MONTH: TINA



Beautiful Tina

Beautiful Tina arrived at Cheff in May 2016. She came from a local barn – the same barn that Monte came from -- where she was a dressage horse. She's 18 years old, 15.2 hands and about 1100 lbs. Her registered name is "Temperence".

Tina is quite unique in the Cheff herd. As an Arabian/Trakehner mix, she's the only Cheff horse from either of those breeds. She is also our only grey horse at the moment. To be specific, her color is known as "flea-bitten grey".

And, as you may have noticed, the feature she's especially known for is her delightful tongue.

Tina almost always has her tongue out unless she has a bit in her mouth and we don't know why! She has done this her whole life. It has endeared her to many a

client and is especially fascinating to some of our younger riders.



Tina and her famous tongue

Tina is quite a versatile worker. She is in many therapeutic riding classes, and she also does hippotherapy, which is her favorite. This is where she works as part of Cheff's Physical Therapy Team, led by physical therapist Char Swain.

If you've led her in class, you know that Tina likes to go fast. You can get in some extra steps if you're on her team. She makes an enthusiastic transition from walk to trot – sometimes before her rider even finishes saying the word "trot"! She also loves to go on trail rides and to jump.

Tina is great buddies with Harvey. You may see them hanging out when they are in the pasture together.

Favorite treats? Any and all – granola bar, apple, carrot, or horse treat. Tina's not

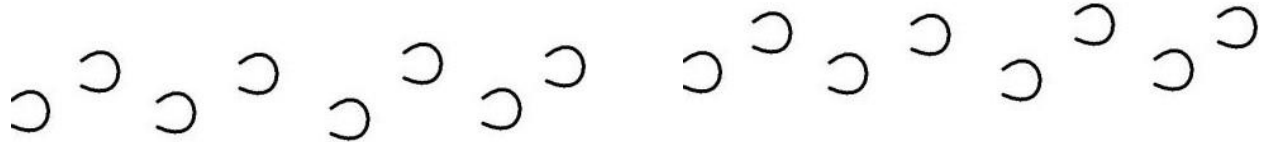
picky and is happy with whatever goodies turn up to chomp on after class!

As she approaches 20, Tina could use a pair of Back on Track Hock Wraps (size L) to stay comfortable.

Please stop by and see our elegant Tina next time you're in the barn!



Tina and her best friend, Harvey

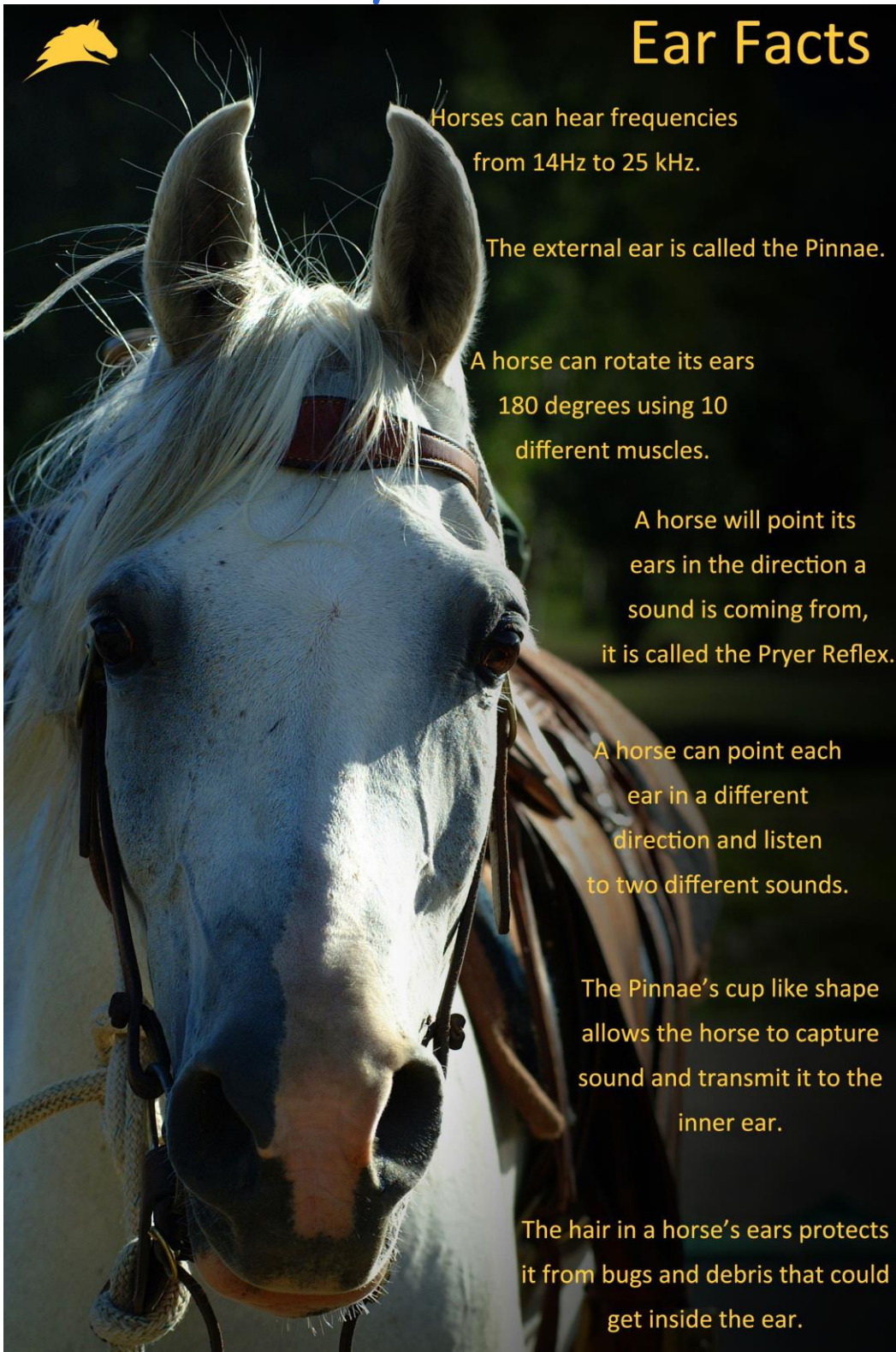


Horses teach people about life, about themselves, and sometimes, only the smallest lessons are actually about horses.

~ unknown



## July Fun Fact



### Ear Facts

Horses can hear frequencies from 14Hz to 25 kHz.

The external ear is called the Pinnae.

A horse can rotate its ears 180 degrees using 10 different muscles.

A horse will point its ears in the direction a sound is coming from, it is called the Pryer Reflex.

A horse can point each ear in a different direction and listen to two different sounds.

The Pinnae's cup like shape allows the horse to capture sound and transmit it to the inner ear.

The hair in a horse's ears protects it from bugs and debris that could get inside the ear.

# EDUCATION CORNER: SUMMER HEAT ISSUES

After a long, cold winter and an often wet and rainy spring, many of us look forward to summer. The sunshine, warmer temperatures, green grass, sandy beaches, refreshing lakes, and fresh air are all something we look forward to.

It can also be a difficult and dangerous time when high temperatures and humidity are involved. Just as people can get heat stroke, horses are also at risk during these hot and humid days. Some of you know that we had to cancel classes recently (one day) for this very reason.

Horses, like people, cool themselves by sweating. When the sweat evaporates from the skin it has a cooling effect. When it is humid, less sweat evaporates making it more difficult for the body to cool itself. Generally, horses drink between 6 to 10 gallons of water a day. During extreme humidity, a horse working hard can lose 2-4 gallons of sweat and may become dehydrated if water is not available and given regularly.

There are several ways that horses can be affected by extreme heat: heat stress and heatstroke, “tying up” (painful muscle spasms in the muscles that run over the back and hind quarters), dehydration, and colic.

## **Equine heat stress**

Heat stress occurs when the horse has had a prolonged exposure to high temperatures and is beginning to become “stressed”. Symptoms of heat stress include:

- Increased heart rate
- Increased breathing rate
- Rectal temperature over 103
- Profuse sweating
- Droopy ears
- Lethargy
- Dehydration
- Skin tent lasting several seconds (when you “pinch” and pull the skin out on the neck and it doesn’t bounce right back)

Some horses are more at risk than others when it comes to heat stress. Horses that are overweight or advanced in age, are in direct sunlight when it is over 100 degrees outside, those not consuming enough freshwater and not getting enough salt and minerals, and those in hot, poorly ventilated stalls or trailers are all at high risk for being affected by the heat.

## **Equine Heat Stroke**

This is a much more serious condition than heat stress. Horses experiencing heat stroke may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Rectal temperature above 106
- Rapid heart and breath rates that don’t go down after 20 minutes of stopping exercise

- Whinnying and distress
- Dehydration with dry mucous membranes and skin tents that last 4-10 seconds
- Muscle weakness
- Incoordination
- Collapse

Heat stroke requires IMMEDIATE attention from a veterinarian, and immediate action must be taken to cool the horse.

If a horse is exhibiting signs of heat stress, immediate action should be taken:

- Stop riding and find shade if possible. Take off tack if applicable. Call a veterinarian as the situation can turn into an emergency quite quickly.
- If there is no breeze, provide air movement with a fan if possible. Lead the horse around slowly as this can help the sweat evaporate and cool the skin.
- Gradually wet the horse's entire body with cool water starting with the head and neck and moving down the back and rump, repeating until the horse is cool.
- Give the horse small amounts of water every 15 minutes until the veterinarian arrives.

#### **What can we do to help avoid heat stress in horses?**

- **Be aware of feeding and exercise schedules.** Horses produce a large amount of body heat when eating and digesting their food. Therefore, it is important to avoid riding them in hot weather too close to feed time.
- **Try to adjust your exercising schedule to early morning or late at night when it is cooler.** Keep the workload light and take frequent breaks to allow the horse to cool down and to resume breathing normally.
- **Provide plenty of clean, fresh water and trace-mineralized salt.** Horses may drink up to twice as much water during the hot weather than they normally would, so having extra water supplied constantly is especially important! Along with the water is a need for the trace-mineralized salt (and perhaps) electrolyte supplements. Horses' sweat generally contains a large amount of sodium and potassium, and when they are exercised in hot and humid conditions, they may not be able to replenish these electrolytes with only the salt. A good electrolyte supplement may be necessary for those working hard in hot weather.
- **Make sure there is adequate airflow and circulation in the barn/stalls.** Fans, good ventilation, and misters (if available) will help prevent overheating and help to keep the horses comfortable.
- **Help the horse to cool down after exercise.** It is important after exercise that the horse have access to plenty of water. If the horse is sweaty, combing or brushing the hair against the grain will help them dissipate the sweat more quickly. If the horse is extremely sweaty, rinsing them off and getting the excess water off afterward will get the dirt and sweat off, and if placed in a well-ventilated stall will help them cool down more quickly.

- **Watch for signs of sunburn.** This occurs most often in white or light-colored horses. Using sunscreen or masks may help to avoid sunburn.

### **How do you know when it is too hot to ride or exercise a horse?**

Calculating the heat index is an easy and effective way to know if it may be too hot to ride/exercise a horse. To do this, you simply take the outside temperature in Fahrenheit and add the percentage of relative humidity.

- If the sum is **below 120** there should be no problem.
- If the sum is **between 130 and 150**, the horse may sweat but should not have problems if given plenty of water and help cooling down.
- If the sum is **over 180**, do not ride or exercise the horse as their inner cooling system will not be adequate to prevent heat stroke/exhaustion.

For more information on heat stress visit:

[Caring for horses during hot weather](#)

[AQHA Heat Stress in Horses](#)







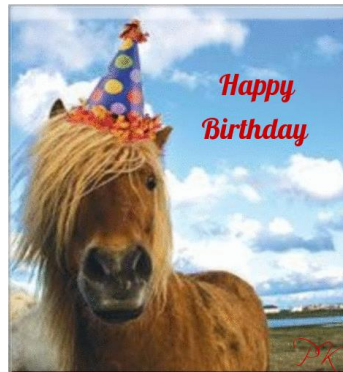
## JULY BIRTHDAYS



Megan C  
Addyson G  
Sarah H  
Jordan MG  
Madison T  
Sue W

Miranda E  
Theresa G  
Jen I  
Dia PB  
Lacey VC  
Willhemina W

Lori F  
Ruth H  
Lauren J  
Launa R  
Eden V



## 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](https://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.

## 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!

## 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. For more information, click on the link below.

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

Again, we thank you in advance, and please let your friends and family know—every little bit helps!!!

## Do you have any Questions/Comments/Suggestions?

Or, if you would like to write an article, please contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator, at [sara@cheffcenter.org](mailto:sara@cheffcenter.org)

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