



# CHEFF CENTER VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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June 2022 Issue 21

## JUNE VOLUNTEER PROFILE: LINDA & MIKE MOORE



Mike, Garth and Linda

Linda and Mike began volunteering at the Cheff Center in 1984. With a nearly 40-year connection to Cheff, they are among our longest serving volunteers and have made innumerable contributions.

They first learned of Cheff through their involvement at the Battle Creek Hunt Club next door. The Hunt Club is also where they got started with horses.

A life-long horse lover, Linda first visited the Hunt Club years ago with a neighbor whose daughter was taking riding lessons there. By

the time she left that day, Linda was signed up for lessons herself. She got her first horse from Mike as an anniversary gift when they were in their 20s. Through Linda's experience, Mike started thinking that riding looked interesting, so soon they had two horses. They moved from Parchment to a home not far from Cheff, where they had room for the horses rather than boarding them.

As volunteers in the 1980s, they had the opportunity to know Ted Cheff, founder of the Cheff Center, as well as Lida McCowan, the first executive director, and her daughter Bliss Brown, who was a lead instructor and later succeeded her mother as executive director.

While Linda and Mike did not grow up with horses, their children, Scott and Lisa, did. They had two ponies, one of whom was adopted from Cheff. As Hunt Club members, the whole family rode in hunts. Both kids volunteered at Cheff through their school's community service program. For Scott, this involved some heavy lifting to keep the barn stocked with hay. He liked the volunteering and the bonus benefit of getting in shape for the upcoming football and wrestling seasons.

One of their family adventures was riding the Shore-to-Shore, a trail ride organized by the Michigan Trail Riders Association. The 235-mile trip goes from Oscoda on Lake Huron to Empire on Lake Michigan. It's a two-week outing, mostly on trails, with a little on-road travel, including the one thing you can't avoid when traversing the state horizontally: crossing I-75. The foursome rode down the middle of an overpass, not too close to either side, with highway traffic whizzing below.

Mike is retired from a career as an electrician. Linda is also retired after working in administration at the school of the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home. They currently have four horses: two draft crosses who are 11 and 15 years old, plus an Appaloosa and an Arabian who are older.

In addition to volunteering at Cheff, Linda and Mike are pretty busy with a number of interests, both horse-related and otherwise. They have a close-knit family, with son Scott in Martin, and three young granddaughters.

They remain Hunt Club members; Linda especially is a regular rider in the club's twice-weekly events. The pair have traveled to Ireland to ride a few times. On one trip they connected with the Galway Blazers Hunt Club. Other times they did trail riding, or "trekking", as the Irish call it.

Linda is a fan of horse camping. She and a group of long-time friends make a few trips a year with their horses to equestrian campgrounds in Michigan and beyond. In case you're not familiar with this special kind of camping, it involves horse trailers that have built-in living quarters. They are

essentially self-contained units with battery power, water, and storage for hay.

Linda loves gardening and, over time, has surrounded their house with flower beds. She considers them friendship gardens, as many of her plants come from exchanges with family and friends. Linda teaches a weekly water aerobics class at the Sherman Lake YMCA, where she and Mike both swim.

You may have seen Mike overhead and not realized it was him. He's a hot air balloonist and Linda is crew chief. With their balloon "Shenanigans," they are regular participants in the annual Battle Creek Field of Flight Air Show and Balloon Festival and the Kalamazoo Balloon Fest, which are both coming up this summer. Mike got started in the sport through a fellow Cheff volunteer.

Mike is a member of the Kalamazoo County Sheriff Department's Mounted Division. The unit includes 16 volunteer officers, who provide their own horses. Mike's partner is his 15-year-old draft cross named Chief. They work all kinds of events, from WMU football games to presidential visits, and ride in the Kalamazoo Memorial Day Parade, too. Mike was inspired to join the unit as a tribute to daughter Lisa, who was a Kalamazoo Public Safety sergeant and canine handler. Lisa had been interested in being part of the mounted unit. She passed away from cancer in 2015. The mounted unit stood honor guard at her visitation and memorial service.

Lisa was a regular blood donor. After her death, the American Red Cross dedicated their annual holiday blood drive in her honor. The drive takes place at the Radisson

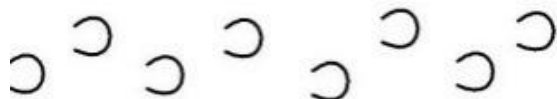
in downtown Kalamazoo a day or two before Christmas. It's a wonderful event to take part in if you're a donor or thinking about becoming one.

What stands out to Linda and Mike from their long experience as Cheff volunteers? Linda summed up their impressions: "We just love the program. It's so worthwhile."

They love seeing the improvements clients can make over time. They also noted how special it is to witness the pure enjoyment and social connection that Cheff gives clients and their families and caregivers. Mike said they have learned a lot as volunteers over the years, including becoming comfortable working with people with disabilities. A favorite experience is working with a client over time, so you get to know each other and you learn what reinforcement to give and not give.

Linda and Mike have helped with many different Cheff classes and special events. A highlight for Mike has been working with veterans. Linda has helped organize fundraiser events over the years. They have participated in Ride-a-Thon and often attend the annual Shindig event. Like many volunteers who are also horse owners, they are continually impressed by how patient the Cheff horses are.

Linda and Mike, we can't thank you enough for your invaluable service and dedication to the Cheff Center. You've made a difference to so many people and horses and are a great resource for fellow volunteers. We look forward to working with you for many years to come!



## **READ AND RIDE IS COMING BACK TO CHEFF!**

**We are happy to report that the Read and Ride program will be returning to Cheff the week of June 20-24 as a summer camp!**

**For those of you unfamiliar with Read and Ride, this is a program for elementary school students from Gull Lake Community Schools who are falling behind in their reading skills. There are six students per class who will participate in a three-hour session rotating between reading to a dog, classroom time, and playing reading games on horseback. They are given tests before the program and then again after to measure the progress they have made as a result of the camp. The kids absolutely love it! They fall in love with their horses and leave the classes just beaming and incredibly happy.**

**Because it is an entirely different type of class than our regular Therapeutic Riding classes, it's a nice break for the horses and our volunteers—something completely different and new! If you love our regular classes, you will absolutely love Read and Ride! It used to be a very popular class with our volunteers (before Covid!) and hopefully soon will be again!**

**The classes will run from 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm. We need 12 volunteers per class with six leaders and six side-walkers. If you are interested or have any questions, please contact Sara Putney-Smith. There are still quite a few slots open that we need to fill. You won't regret it!**



# HORSE BREED OF THE MONTH: HAFLINGER



Although small and compact, the Haflinger is a hardy, strong and multi-talented horse, suitable for both children and adults. They may be shorter than other riding breeds, standing approximately 13.2 to 15 hands (4' 6" to 5') and weighing from 800 to 1300 pounds, but they are mighty, with a short, stocky build with strong hooves and legs, capable of easily carrying full-sized adults. Their life expectancy is 25 to 30 years and they have relatively few health issues.

The Haflinger originated in the Tyrolean Mountains, which run between Italy and what is now Austria. In medieval times, horses carrying riders and packs navigated narrow trails to access these mountains. This was a challenging task that demanded mountain horses that were agile, surefooted, and strong.

In 1874, a colt named Folie was born of a half-Arabian stallion and out of one of these mountain mares; all Haflingers can trace their lineage back to Folie through one of seven bloodlines. The breed was named after a village called Hafling, which was an Austrian territory at the time.

During World War II, the Haflinger was bred to be short and stocky for use as pack horses for the military. In the postwar era, the Haflinger was indiscriminately crossed with other breeds and some observers feared the breed was in renewed danger of extinction. However, starting in 1946, breeders focused on producing purebred Haflingers and a closed stud book was created. Since then, the breeding focus shifted to developing versatile horses that can be both ridden and driven, reflecting the modern breed traits common today.

Interest in the breed increased in other countries, and between 1950 and 1974, the population grew, even while the overall European horse population decreased; in 1958, Haflingers were imported to America, where the breed quickly became popular among both riders and drivers. Population numbers continued to increase steadily, and as of 2005, almost 250,000 Haflingers existed worldwide.

Thanks to its versatility, the Haflinger excels in many different activities. It's a popular dressage, jumping, and Western show horse, sturdy enough to serve as a vaulting or packing mount, and excels in pleasure driving, endurance riding, and trail riding. Its gentle temperament and people-loving personality make it ideal for therapeutic riding programs too.

This breed is known for its golden chestnut coat and cream- or white-colored mane and tail. The Haflinger coat can range from a light gold to a darker chestnut or liver chestnut. Many Haflingers also have white points on their lower legs and faces. The golden chestnut color is not considered a Palomino.

Most Haflingers are easy keepers, so the key to keeping them healthy is in a carefully selected and controlled diet. Most of these horses need little or no grain, but if a Haflinger's workload requires it to have grain, it's important to choose a low-sugar and low-starch option. Haflingers also require little hay, so feeding hay in a slow feeder can help the portions to last longer.

While Haflingers love grass, many of them shouldn't be allowed to indulge in its rich sugars. Many Haflingers need to wear a grazing muzzle if they're out on pasture, and this is particularly important if the horse has metabolic issues or a history of founder.

While Haflingers are often friendly toward people and have a relatively laid-back temperament, some are known for testing their riders and developing a bit of a hard-headed attitude; this can sometimes overwhelm beginner riders; professional training and consistent handling can help with this.

Haflingers tend to be healthy, but the breed is prone to some potential health issues:

- Laminitis: This painful hoof condition can result in coffin bone rotation and sinking, separating from the hoof wall. It's often caused by horses eating too much grass or too much rich grain.
- Equine Metabolic Syndrome: This condition can result in a horse being obese, developing a resistance to insulin, and being at a higher risk of laminitis. Horses with EMS need careful maintenance to keep them healthy.

In Cheff's herd, there are horses that are pure Haflinger (Emma) or part Haflinger (Gunny).



Emma

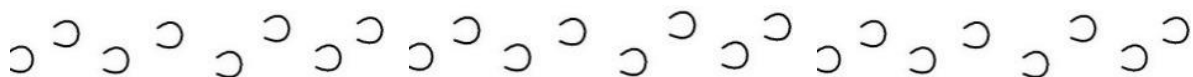


Gunny

More information on this wonderful breed can be found here:

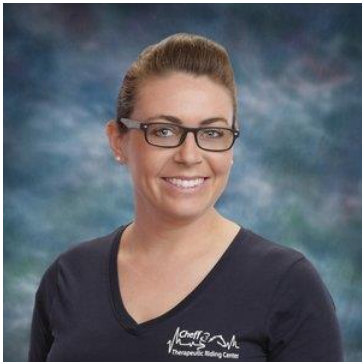
[Breed Info | American Haflinger Registry \(haflingerhorse.com\)](https://www.haflingerhorse.com)

[A Guide to the Haflinger Horse Breed with 6 Fun Facts \(horseyhoooves.com\)](https://www.horseyhoooves.com)



# FAREWELL TO SARAH PIZZIE & FIRST ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BBQ

## JOIN US JUNE 4<sup>TH</sup>!



Let's give **Sarah Pizzie** a celebratory send off as she heads back to school, at the **first Volunteer Appreciation Potluck**, to be held Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> from 12-3PM, rain or shine!

**DUE TO COVID, THIS WILL BE RESCHEDULED AT A LATER DATE**

To RSVP, please contact **Christy Smith**. We are asking attendees bring a dish to pass - preferably not sweets as we have plenty! Cheff will provide the meat(s), buns, and drinks.

It is also **Harvey's 30<sup>th</sup> birthday** this month so he will be making an appearance.



# HAPPY SUMMER!!!



# CHEFF UPDATES



We would like to introduce our new Property Manager/Maintenance person, Randy Rice! Randy started several months ago, and you have probably seen him in the barn or out and about in the building or the yard(s).

Randy grew up in Galesburg on the family farm, which he took over when he turned 18. He farms 350 acres in which he grows corn, soybeans, wheat, grass, and several different types of hay. His family had draft horses as he grew up, and at this time he has two horses—a Paint and a Quarter Horse.

Being a paid, “on-call” member of the Galesburg-Charleston fire department, Randy works with them on emergency calls when needed, but he also spends about 10 hours a week training and polishing his skills for fire and rescue. He also helps to teach the

Fire Academy students. If you ever see Randy drop what he’s doing and leave in a rush, you can bet there is an emergency somewhere in which he will be assisting.

Randy loves all animals and has an adorable Blue Heeler puppy named Tana. You might see her riding in the Gator with him occasionally. He has rescued and raised skunks (yes, skunks!), racoons, squirrels, and other non-domesticated animals.

What brought Randy to Cheff? Well, he lives next door to our Executive Director, and she talked him into coming to work for us. He is an incredibly hard worker who loves people and getting things done. He knew what our mission at Cheff is, and he felt like it would be a great place to be. One of his greatest joys is seeing people smile, and he loves seeing the clients come in excited to ride, and their smiles afterward. He enjoys seeing the classes in full swing and finds his work here very rewarding. Randy is happy to help in any way that he can, and he makes an excellent member of the Cheff “Team”.

So how does Randy find the time to work full-time at Cheff, firefight, train, and farm every week? “I don’t get a lot of sleep!”

In his “spare” time Randy likes to fish, garden, run, and just spend time outdoors.

So, next time you see Randy wandering around the barn or grounds, feel free to introduce yourself and welcome him—he’s a great guy and we are glad that he is with us!

## FLOWER GARDEN CLEANUP

The irises are blooming in the Cheff Center flower gardens! The garden areas between the office/arena building and the barn got a spring cleaning and spruce up in late May. A group of volunteers and staff members, led by volunteers Barb and Dave, pulled weeds, removed a ton of baby maple trees, and transplanted flowers that had popped up in odd places.

New items were planted, including a butterfly bush and miniature lilac, followed by a good covering of mulch. New edging blocks were added along the walkway. Milk weed plants are coming up, so we're hoping they and some of the other blooms will bring butterflies.



If you have a few extra minutes when you're at Cheff and feel like pulling a weed or two, we welcome the assistance anytime! And if you'd like to be involved in helping to maintain and plan the gardens, please contact

Volunteer Administrator Sara Putney-Smith.

Thank you to volunteers Barb, Dave, Sam, and Ann, along with Sara, Sarah, and Randy from the staff, for your help in May. Special thanks to Barb and Dave, who have done so much for the gardens over many years.

**WE ARE FULL OF GRATITUDE** to the **BATTLE CREEK MISFIT'S CAR CLUB** for their Cheff fundraiser they're holding July 9<sup>th</sup> at Legion Post 257...**THANK YOU!**

**SHINDIG IS AUGUST 26<sup>th</sup>!** This event is responsible for a large portion of our operating budget and, in turn, makes programs for those with special needs in our community possible. Volunteer help with preparation and during the actual event is needed to make it successful.

If you can help by donating any items or services such as gift certificates to restaurants, activities, etc., we can put them together in themed gift baskets with a value between \$150-\$200. Contact [Sara Putney-Smith](#) for any questions.

**VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION REMINDER:** The next orientation is scheduled for June 25th from 10am-1pm.



## June Fun Fact

Ever wonder why you see some horses out in the field wear grazing muzzles?

Grazing is natural for equids, but it isn't without risk. For some horses that are easy keepers, they can easily become overweight. But for some others that are insulin resistant, have Cushing's, etc., over-ingesting certain grasses can lead to laminitis, where the laminae (tissues within the hoof capsule) become damaged and inflamed.

So, what is it about grass that can create such an issue for these animals? It comes down to the density of sugars (glucose, fructose, sucrose, etc.) created during photosynthesis; this can result in an increase in blood glucose concentration that can trigger an insulin surge.

Grass sugar content fluctuates with the time of day, season, and weather. Grasses in the Spring are especially high in sugar due to the longer days (more sun = more photosynthesis = more sugar). Summer grass is safer, but when Fall temperatures get down below 40 degrees for most of the night, the amount of carbohydrates once again increases since the plants' growth rate slows and stored sugars aren't used up.

Another important consideration is that most of the sugar in grasses tends to be in the bottom three to four inches of the plants. And short, overgrazed pastures can be very high in sugar.

Here are some of the ways to mitigate risks for vulnerable horses:

- Slow introduction to green pasture with regular health checks.
- Grazing Muzzles – studies show intake decreases by 50%, lowering the intake of carbohydrates.
- Feed hay prior to turnout, which helps lower insulin.
- Daily exercise not only lowers insulin levels but also increases circulation.
- Turn horses out at night which allows more time in the pasture when there are lower sugars than in the afternoon.
- Always provide fresh water to help move food through the gut quicker.

For more information:

<https://thehorse.com/199039/dont-gamble-with-green-grass/Horse-Pastures-Sugar-Levels-In-Spring-and-Fall-Grasses>  
[Pasture Grass Sugar Levels: When Are They Lowest? – The Horse](#)



# JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Gretchen A  
Megan C  
Eloise R

Cindy B  
Olivia H  
Marianne S

Stacy B  
Molly I  
Sandy U

...and HARVEY, who turns 30 years old!



Happy  
Father's  
Day



## **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!

## **Amazon Smile**

Anytime you order online from **Amazon.com**, the Cheff Center can receive benefits. Support us each time you shop at \*no\* extra cost through Amazon. To find out more, visit:

<https://smile.amazon.com/gp/chpf/about>

## **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/>

## **Rite Aid**

Rite Aid has become one of Cheff partners and extended their shopper rewards program to us.

Please consider signing up as a Cheff Supporter, it's just one quick form: [Rxfundraising.com](http://Rxfundraising.com) - [Support Your Cause!](#)

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

If so, you can contact Sara Putney-Smith, Volunteer Administrator, at [sara@cheffcenter.org](mailto:sara@cheffcenter.org)

Contributions by: Emily Kalin, Ann Lindsay, Ashton Maguire, Morgan Meulman, Sara Putney-Smith, Marianne Stier

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