



Volunteer Training Booklet

WELCOME ABOARD

“Where Horses are Living Mirrors, Empowering Positive Change”



Welcome to the Stable Wranglers!

Thank you for joining us here at Stable-Spirit and helping us fulfill our mission. We cannot do it without you.

Orientation/ Tour For all Volunteers

- **Tour of the facility:** After which you should know the location of each of the following: the 3 different herds, horse care stall, volunteer stall, waiting room, feed and tack rooms, office, and restroom.
- **Review general safety requirements such as:** always close gates/doors that you open, always pay attention, always put items back in the proper place.
- **Review what to do in case of an emergency.** Be able to call 911 and give specific direction to the stable. A stable phone is not available, but most staff will have a cell phone and nearly all the volunteers have a cell phone as well.
- **You are not required to perform any function that you are not comfortable doing or that you have not been trained to do.**

Volunteer Space

(We are still a work in progress.) We have a Volunteer Stall with cabinets and a refrigerator. The Waiting Room is a nice place to sit and cool off and drink coffee. The Smoking area is anywhere on the outside of the fence.

Restrooms

The restroom is located to the right of the office at the front of the building.

Rain or Shine

Our horses are the true miracle workers here and need care every single day, regardless of the weather. We are open to volunteers every single day, except Sunday (once you have been trained).

Find us on Social Media

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/stable.spirit.nonprofit>

Instagram

<https://instagram.com/stable.spirit>

Volunteer Etiquette

Stable-Spirit is a working facility and while you are here you will likely see sessions going on. It is very important you do not interrupt these sessions. Please do not be in the area the sessions are going on. If you are grooming, try to have your horse farther in the breezeway or in the dirt areas to ensure you are not taking up the session spaces. On especially busy days you may need to tie your horse to the ties behind the Director's home and tote tools over. If you have a question, find a Staff member not in a session, a more experienced Volunteer, an Office Person, or the Volunteer Coordinator. Pictures of clients are not allowed. Please be respectful of other volunteers in your photos and do not post to social media without permission.

Tips & Expectations with the Schedule

- Hours of operation 8:30 am – 5:30 pm Monday - Saturday
- Once you have been trained you may volunteer at any time during the hours of operation. Please call/text Katie Durio @ 409-365-5277 before coming to ensure there is a Staff member

or Upper-Level Volunteer on property (once you've been established for a while no need to text ahead – except Saturday – always call/text ahead.)

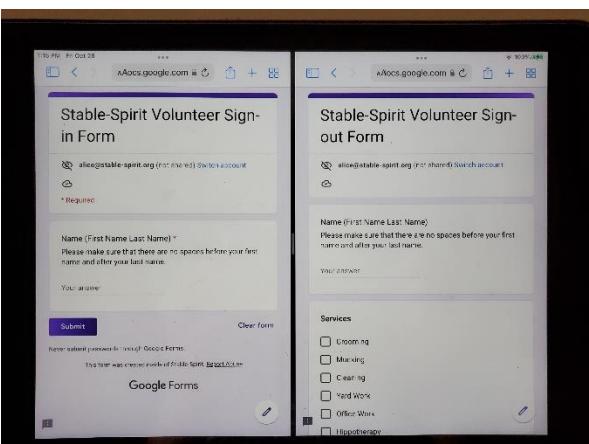
- While there are no minimum time requirements to volunteer – it is extremely important you are reliable if you commit to a certain schedule/ task.
- Don't forget to sign-in and sign-out.
- Please wear your nametag while here at Stable-Spirit and leave it in the bin before leaving.

LOGGING YOUR TIME

It is very important you log your volunteer time for Stable-Spirit. Here are a few reasons.

- Safety – in case of an emergency we need to know who is at the facility at all times.
- Grants – we are a non-profit and depend on a lot of grants to continue our work. Grants always want to know how many volunteers and how many hours volunteers worked.
- Recognition – we like to see how many hours our volunteers work and periodically recognize this great deed.

Your first step when arriving to Stable-Spirit to volunteer is to sign-in using the Volunteer Tablet. Enter your name and hit submit. When signing out enter name, mark the services you perform and hit submit. (Please do NOT click on the Blue Letters that say Switch Account...that logs the entire system off and no one can use it)



MUCKING PASTURES

Horse Experience Level: Beginning/Intermediate

Why we muck our horses' pastures: If the pastures are kept clean, it helps keep the horses from getting bacteria and parasites that can harm them. The pastures are our horses' homes. They cannot clean up after themselves, so we need to help them. (Remember, horses like to roll in the dirt/sand to scratch their itches.)

Mucking is the most important job a volunteer can do, even though it is the most thankless. If every volunteer could take one wheelbarrow full out every day the benefits would be enormous in helping with the health and wellbeing of our horses.

***** IMPORTANT: Any gate that you open, whether horses are in the pasture or not, be sure to lock it behind you.**

- 1. Wheelbarrow:** Choose a wheelbarrow that fits your ability to push and dump.
- 2. Muck Rake:** Choose a muck rake off the wall by the wheelbarrows. Place it in your wheelbarrow as you go to the pasture you are working in today.
- 3. Muck and Dump:** Walk pasture picking up piles that you see and putting them in the wheelbarrow until you have a load that is manageable for you to push and dump. Bring wheelbarrow load to the Manure Dump pile in the corner of the pasture and dump the load as far back in the pile as possible. Please include cleaning up the wet hay around the hay rings.
- 4. Return Tools:** Return wheelbarrow and rake to their parking places. Please be sure the wheelbarrow is completely empty, and the rake is free of poop.



HALTERING, LEADING & TYING A HORSE

Horse Experience Level: Beginning/Intermediate

1. Locate the individual horse's halter from rack. (They are hung by their noseband and should have their lead rope attached.)

2. Go to appropriate pasture and locate the horse you are looking to halter and lead.
3. Approach the horse slowly with the halter ready to place on head.
4. Place your hand on the horse's body. If horse is facing you, place your hand on its neck to let him/her know you are to be trusted. If horse is turned away from you, approach at an angle towards the shoulder.
5. Place the rope so that it hangs around the neck. This is just to let the horse know you are there to halter it.
6. From the left side of the horse, put the horse's nose through the nose band and bring the long strap around behind his ears and put it through the loop. Cinch it up and tie a knot to where the noseband is 1-2 fingers below the horse's cheekbone.
7. Fold lead rope in figure eight loops so that you have about 6 inches between the halter and your hand on rope. The extra rope should be held in the opposite hand. **DO NOT WRAP THE ROPE AROUND YOUR HAND(S) AT ANY TIME!!**
8. Stand next to the side of the head a little ahead of the shoulder at the throatlatch. Look straight ahead at where you are going- and begin to walk. The horse will follow you at the speed you choose. If the horse begins to walk



too fast, simply pull on the rope at the halter until pace desired is reached.

9. When tying the horse, have about 24" of slack in the rope. Put a loop in the rope and insert it straight into the safety tie and put the prong up through the loop from behind. Pull down on the rope to ensure it is tied securely.

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER:

1. Close all gates behind you entering and leaving the pastures.
2. YOU control the horses not the other way around. Be comfortable being assertive when necessary. They will still love you.
3. Horses in different herds DO NOT MIX. When walking your horse to grooming area, be aware of other horses in the breezeway that may belong to another herd. Do not pass in front of or behind a horse with your horse in proximity.
4. Remove halters and ropes when you bring them back to the pasture and replace the ropes and halters to their proper place.

GROOMING HORSES

Horse Experience Level: Beginning/Intermediate

Why we groom our horses: Grooming increases blood flow to the skin's surface, massages large muscle groups, and builds a bond between groomer and horse. Our horses deserve a spa day as often as they can get.

***** To prevent skin issues between the horses, please sanitize each tool as you finish with it and place it in the “used” basket.**

1. **Rubber Curry:** Rub your horse with the rubber curry in a circular movement moving counterclockwise.



2. Body Brush: Brush off the dirt and hair that was loosened by the rubber curry. Start at the neck and work over entire body, brushing in long strokes with the direction of the hair. (Don't forget the legs and tummy.)



3. Hairbrush: Brush the tangles out of their mane and tails. Detangler is in the grooming stall if needed. **Never stand directly behind a horse to brush his tail.**



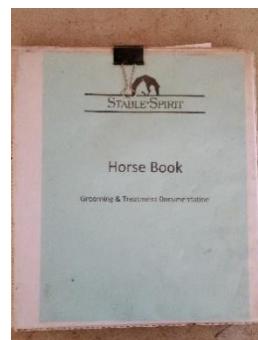
4. Fly Spray: On days the bugs are bad spray the horse down with fly spray. Do not spray their face. Always have them untied and held in your hands and start from legs up. ***Please note – only Purple and above Volunteers may use the Fly Spray or have assistance from Staff.**



5. Clean Up: Sweep up dirt and hair from the floor and dump it in the trash can by the bench in the breezeway.

6. Sanitize: Don't forget to sanitize the brushes after each use.

7. Document: Notate which horse(s) you groomed in the Horse Grooming Logbook along with any notes.



SPECIAL EVENTS

Remember to keep an eye on the Volunteer Hub at timecounts.org/stable-spirit for upcoming events and opportunities to volunteer. Sign-up on the Hub for any events you are interested in.

SKILL BASED VOLUNTEERING

If you see a need and can fill that need, let's talk. There are so many examples of skills you may be able to offer - photography, graphic design, clerical, sewing, carpentry, plumbing, electrical – just to name a few.



HOOF CARE

*Horse Experience Level: **Experienced (Additional Training Required)***

Why we pick our horses' hooves: Horse's hooves are prone to picking up bits of gravel, dirt, and debris on a regular basis, especially if they are out in a paddock, or pasture. If the hooves are not picked, these pieces of gravel or debris can lead to discomfort, infection, and lameness.

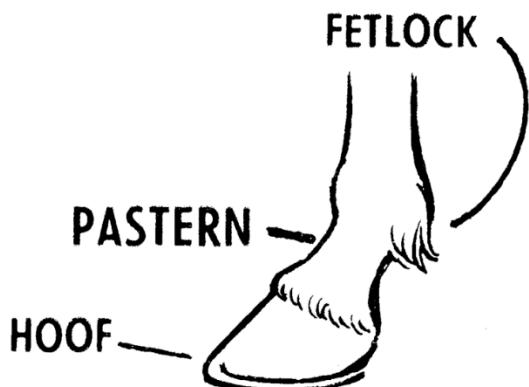
Order of lifting and picking hooves: **Right Front- Right Rear- Left Rear- Left Front.**

IMPORTANT: In some cases, the horse may be reluctant to cooperate and won't lift its feet. The horse should be examined to make sure it is healthy and not experiencing pain in one or more legs.

DO NOT FORCE THE HORSE TO LIFT ITS LEG. If this occurs, please make note of it in the grooming logbook in the comment section and if there is a Staff member near, let them know of your concern (make sure said Staff member is not in a Session).

- 1. Hoof pick:** Have hoof pick in far hand when ready to lift horse's foot.
- 2. Pick up the horse's foot:** Stand near the horse's leg, facing its rear, and run your near hand down the horse's leg, toward the pastern. (Some horses will pick up the foot automatically, but others need a little more physical involvement – a small pinch.) Cradle the foot in your hand. Keep the angle of the leg natural and don't bend it off to the side.
- 3. Clean out the inside of the hoof:** Take the pick in your hand and, pointing the pick away from you, scrape out any dirt or manure with the tip of the pick, paying special attention to the sole, bars and frog. Clean the areas around the frog, **but don't dig into the frog.**
- 4. Spray:** Use Tea Tree solution under and around each hoof as you complete the picking.
- 5. Clean up:** Sweep up all dirt/debris from picking hooves and place it in wheelbarrow on side of barn. Do not put in trash can.

**** You do not want the horses to walk in each other's hoof debris.**



HIPPOTHERAPY TRAINING

Additional Training Required & a Scheduled Commitment is Preferable

SIDE WALKER TRAINING

Note: Must be sixteen (16) years of age or older unless prior approval has been given by Executive Director. ***Experienced riders and current or previous horse owners will be given priority*** on a case-by-case basis.

- 1. Various Holds, depending on client's needs:**
 - a. Hand holding front of saddle with forearm across leg (just below the knee)
 - b. Hand on leg
 - c. Hand on ankle
 - d. Hold back curve of saddle, just behind client's leg to always remain in proper position.
- 2. Listen for directions from the Therapist as to when they need your assistance. Otherwise, do not engage verbally with the client unless asked to do so.**
- 3. Throughout the session, the main task of the Side Walker is to be sure the client is safely in the saddle and to assist the Therapist when asked.**
- 4. Give instructions as to what to do if client needs to be taken off the horse suddenly due to horse or client behavior. Therapist will usually be the one to take the client off on their side of the horse.**
- 5. Be aware that therapists may modify your holds as required for their clients.**
- 6. Practice grooming a horse and assist in preparing them for a session.**
- 7. Practice putting on the proper tack for the session (with the aid of a Therapist, Horse Handler, or Staff).**
- 8. Review how to assist a participant to put on a helmet properly prior to the ride.**

HORSE HANDLER TRAINING

Note: Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older unless prior approval has been given by Executive Director. ***Experienced riders and current or previous horse owners will be given priority*** on a case-by-case basis.

1. All elements of side walker training above must be completed.
2. Demonstrate how to lead the horse at the walk and trot.
3. Know the limits of correction that can be used for a horse when a child is on its back.
4. Be thoroughly familiar with the characteristics unique to each horse you lead.
5. Demonstrate how to tack up horses using all the various types of equipment available.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of what tack to use for each horse/client by knowing where the information is located.
7. Demonstrate how to lead a horse into a mounting ramp, lead the horse, and unload at the ramp.
 - a. **LOADING STATION:** Be on the right side of the horse, enter from back of mounting station, horses head towards left mounting area so horse is close to mounting station, stop horse at set point. Hold horse still while client mounts. Keep horse close to ramp so Therapist doesn't have to jump off.
 - b. **ENTERING ARENAS:** Big "U-Turn" towards gate. Be sure horse is walking down the middle of the gate so as not to 'scrape off' Therapist or Side Walkers by being too close to one side.
 - c. **DURING SESSION:** Listen for directions from the Therapist as to where to walk, when to stop, etc.
 - d. **RETURNING TO RAMP AFTER SESSION:** Be on the left side of the horse. Big "U-Turn" once through gate. Go in forward, close to ramp for Therapist to walk up ramp to flat mounting surface.

Throughout the session, the main task of the Horse Handler is to control the horse and be focused mainly on the horse.

Below is a list of volunteer opportunities while at the Stable. Again, you are never required to perform a task you do not wish to perform.

Maintenance

- Mucking (pastures, paddocks, arenas)
- Sweeping (tack rooms, feed room, breezeways)
- Rugs in Breezeway (shake out dirt)
- Dusting (tables, shelves, cobwebs)
- Janitorial (clean restrooms, take out trash)
- Restock bottled water
- Clean and fill dog/cat water bowl
- Laundry (horse blankets, towels, rags etc.)
- Distribute Sanitized Grooming Tools (after drying)
- Sprinkle ant poison on ant beds
- Rake (sweetgum balls, old hay around hay rings - dump on burn pile)
- Grounds Clean-up (pick up down branches - dump on burn pile)
- Trim low hanging branches (dump on burn pile) **
- Mow grass (including along street coming in) **
- Weed eat along fence lines **

**** Speak with Katie D (Director) for equipment use approval**

Groom Horses

- Brush horses
- Pick hooves **
- Spray with Mosquito/fly Spray **

**** Must be a Purple Volunteer or have assistance from Staff**

Office

- Shredding
- Photography ** **Speak with Volunteer Coordinator about Stable-Spirit Needs**

Special Events **

- We always need volunteers to help on Farrier Day, Events, Fundraisers etc.

Hippotherapy **

- We always need volunteers to help on Hippotherapy Day

**** To view and sign-up for Events and Hippotherapy don't forget to go to:**

timecounts.org/stable-spirit

NOTES