



Gully's
Learning Ranch

DECEMBER 2024



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



November By Margaret Morgan

Now it is November,
Trees are nearly bare;
Red and gold and brown leaves
Scatter everywhere.

Dark now are the mornings
Cold and frosty too;
Damp and misty evenings
Chill us through and through.

Busy are all creatures,
Winter food to hide;
Nests to make all cozy
Warm and safe inside.

Welcome!

Welcome to our monthly newsletter e-mail chain!

Each month, your e-newsletter is delivered right to your inbox – delivering important information regarding upcoming events and programs, interesting information from the world of equine assisted learning and experiential learning, and all things Gully's Learning Ranch – plus a monthly coupon!

We look forward to bringing you all the latest news from around our ranch – please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions for future installments.

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How Horses Heal – Mind, Body, & Soul

Mind, body, & soul – the essentials of life. Finding the balance between all three can be difficult. When these are imbalanced, we can often feel lost, unsure of our next steps, and struggling with who we are and our authentic self. We must find balance between the three in order to create overall wellness for ourselves. Horses are natural teachers, therapists, and Reiki masters. They intuitively know and understand what others need to let go of in order to move forward in life and find positive change. They help us physically, mentally, and energetically. With a similar emotional language to our own, horses can sense and understand our moods, feelings, and emotions. They have an ability to reach out empathetically, feel what another being is struggling with, and help us release and ground energy that is no longer serving us or our purpose. They ultimately help us to look into ourselves and self-reflect on what they are trying to point out to us. In order to have good health and overall wellness, we must have our mind (mental health), body (physical health), and soul (energy systems) balanced, which is something we can only do for ourselves. However, horses can help to encourage us to find the answers to our questions in life. They help us to let go, move on, and focus on the here and now.

The mind, or mental health, is important to our overall wellness. Our minds are powerful. Our moods, feelings, and emotions can be strong and, sometimes, hard to control. Developing emotional regulation, as well as positive behavioural modification, helps for us to gain strategies to help us when times are difficult and when we feel we have lost our path. Horses react to the environment around them and can sense when we are struggling emotionally. When they react to us, we can self-reflect on what we have brought to their environment – mentally or emotionally. They are incredibly sensitive to emotional vibrations and can share in your emotional journey. Horses can guide us to the answers to those questions that we may have about life and being authentic.

The body, or physical health, is a very important aspect to overall wellness. Our bodies are what grounds our energy and connects us to Mother Earth. We must ensure that we keep our bodies fit and strong. Horses help us with our physical health in many ways. Did you know that working with a horse is a physical activity, even without riding? Grooming our horse allows for stretching and muscle strengthening. We need core strength to lead our horse effectively. Leading a horse helps to stabilize our core muscles and increase our physical balance. Horses also encourage the development of respecting boundaries and personal space and an understanding of what safe or healthy touch is (especially while grooming and petting their horse). Horses clearly demonstrate when their boundaries have been pushed and their reaction is authentic. Horse communicate through body language and through appropriate assertiveness (known as Pressure & Release when working with a horse).

The soul, or our energetic system, our route of conscience, morals, and ethics, is an essential aspect in overall wellness. We must keep our energy grounded and balanced, or we become at dis-ease. When our energy system (we are all energy beings) is unbalanced, we begin to have dis-ease in our mental state and disease in our physical body. In order to stay balanced, we must be rooted in our present. We are grounded in our energy and allow for ourselves to be authentic, both inside and outside. Horses are incredibly grounded animals, and in turn, help to release, balance, and ground those around them. Nature has given them a natural understanding of the energy system and can positively encourage the release of unnecessary energy from others. This is a highly adapted survival mechanism in order to sense danger or other emotional responses around them.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

**November 2024 Events:****6-Week Youth Curriculum Program****Sunday, November 3rd – Sunday, December 8th (11am-12:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher. Skills include creative problem solving, effective communication, appropriate assertiveness, fair negotiation, teamwork, leadership, and more – all while having fun!

6-Week Youth Curriculum Program – LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE**Monday, November 4th – Monday, December 9th (1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

All-Ages Horse Meet & Greet**Saturday, November 16th (1pm-1:45pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

December 2024 Events:

No publicly scheduled events or programs will begin in December. Only private programs available until 2025.

PRIVATE PROGRAMS: Private Programs can be booked for participants who are looking for specific programs, wanting a certain date and/or time, or wanting a more personal and/or customized experience with our horse teachers. Private Programs are ideal for those who are looking for a unique, personal experience for family, friends, co-workers, teammates, students, employees, and more! Private Programs are run for just you and the participants you bring along with you.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMS: Although we love to see our participants working in teams, our program is easily adaptable to a single participant and can be customized to meet your goals, your family's goals, or a client's goals. With huge success, we have developed a single participant program that still includes tons of life and social skills development, while also allowing for one-on-one time with our horse teachers! Although participants do not have another human team member, their horse team member is just as important and interactive team member. A horse has a similar emotional language as humans and is a powerful parallel to building a friendship with another human being.

January 2025 Events:**6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Programs****Saturday, January 11th – Saturday, February 15th (11am-12:15pm & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Programs**Friday, January 17th – Friday, February 21st (11am-12:15pm & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

All-Ages Meet & Greet**Sunday, January 19th (1pm-1:45pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

**** Please note that dates and times are subject to change ****

Please keep in mind, extreme cold and stormy weather conditions cause us cancellations, reschedules, and delays of events and programs during the winter.

Private Programs are available.

February 2025 Events:**All-Ages Meet & Greet****Sunday, February 9th (1pm-1:45pm)**

Come and groom, lead, pet, and be around horses. Registration Required.

6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Programs**Sunday, February 23rd – Sunday, March 30th (11am-12:15pm & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Programs**Monday, February 24th – Monday, March 31st (11am-12:15pm & 1pm-2:15pm)****March 2025 Events:****6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Programs****Saturday, March 8th – Saturday, April 12th (11am-12:15pm & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

All-Ages Meet & Greet**Friday, March 14th (1pm-1:45pm)**

Registration Required.

Horse Teacher Breed Profile Series: Dreamer

Did you know that each horse teacher at Gully's Learning Ranch is a different breed? This means we have 5 different breeds of horse (and 1 breed of donkey)! As with any domesticated animals, each breed has been created for a role or job within human society. Some horses have been bred to be large and some are small, but all breeds have a purpose. Over the next few months, we will be diving into the world of horse breeds, by examining the breeds in our herd, and finding out more of their origins and their ancestral past. This month, we will be focusing on our horse teacher Dreamer's breed, the American Paint Horse.

When we think of an American Paint Horse, we think of Westerns, cowboys, and rodeos – this is because they are living legends of the Wild West! Paints are exactly what their name implies. They are flashy, with spots of two colours on their coat, making it look like they have been painted with a paint brush! As a breed, Paints can be traced back to two-toned horses that were brought over to North America with the Spanish explorers. These Spanish horses were decedents of North Africa and Asia Minor horse breeds. Wild herds were created when horses would escape their Spanish handlers, and they would roam on the Great Plains for the first time since the equine ancestors were hunted to elimination in pre-historic times. Over many generations of living in wild herds, these horses were no longer domesticated – many will know these as wild Mustangs. These horses were captured, gentled, and given a job, typically ranching with cattle drives and herding buffalo. Esteemed among Native Americans and Western frontier cowboys, Paints have a good temperament and give a splash of colour. Native Americans have a particularly special bond with American Paint Horses. They believed that Paints had magical properties and would protect them in battle. Today, Paints are still known for their bold coat patterns, kind and gentle disposition, and natural intelligence. Although classified as a “stock-type” breed (a horse who works with livestock), they have been bred with more sport-horse breeds, such as the Thoroughbred. Still popular in rodeo and ranching, you will also see American Paint Horses in many disciplines, including show jumping, racing, and as gentle teacher and friend.

Of course, the characteristic that makes the American Paint Horse so sought after, is their incredible colours. Paints have light and dark patterning but may be confused with a “Pinto”. A Pinto has the same colour patterns as a Paint, but a Pinto can be any breed. The American Paint Horse is an official breed in itself, with bred-specific registration standards, including meeting a minimum colour requirement. All Paints are white and any other dark equine colour (i.e. black, bay, chestnut, etc.), and they have three distinct patterns: the tobiano pattern, the overo pattern, and the tovero pattern. The tobiano pattern is characterized by the shape of their spots (regular and oval or round, extending down the neck and chest, resembling a shield), their solid-coloured head (with typical face markings of black, strip, star, or snip), their white legs (at least the lower legs), and their two-coloured tail. Some tobianos are almost solid in colour. The overo pattern is characterized by their irregular and scattered markings (they may be almost solidly dark or white, white markings do not cross the back), their bold white head markings (even a “bald face”), their dark legs (one or all four will be dark), and their solid-coloured tail. Registration was expanded to include the tovero pattern, which is characterized by having traits of both the tobiano pattern and overo pattern.

Our horse teacher, Dreamer, is a 14-year-old, tobiano patterned, bay and white, American Paint Horse mare, with a small star and snip face markings. She has a sweet, gentle temperament and loves teaching! Dreamer has a healed broken leg from before she joined our herd. She teaches her students bravery, strength, and the importance of perseverance. Dreamer does not let the past hold her back and she is constantly moving forward in life.



Reference:

<https://breeds.okstate.edu/horses/paint-horses.html>

News 'Round The Ranch

Sidney Starts Snuggling!

Some of our long-term participants have started to casually hang-out with our new girl, Sidney. Sidney is beginning to understand what her job will be, and the more we get to know her, the more we know she will be an incredible horse teacher. She is such a gentle giant. You may even see her with birds on her back – she lets them ride around on her!

Back To The Paddock!

Although not the horses' favourite time of year, it is time for us to shut the large grass pasture off for the season. We will need to let it rest over the winter and have a chance to grow some in the spring before we let the horses back out. For the winter, the horses will eat our beautiful hay we harvested this year instead of grass.

Our Municipality's Health, Safety, & Wellness Fair

In October, we were proud to be a part of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's Healthy, Safety, and Wellness Fair! Michelle, our Certified Equine Facilitator, made a presentation on horses and how they help us achieve overall wellness and better health. We also had a prize on the raffle table. Thank you for inviting us to join!

Community Living Chatham-Kent Calendar Sponsor!

We are proud to once again be a sponsor for Community Living Chatham-Kent's 2025 Lottery Calendar. They will be celebrating the wonderful volunteers in "Shining Stars Of Service"! We have sponsored the month of June 2025, as well as donating a Family Program to the weekly prices. Purchase yours today at 650 Riverview Drive, Chatham!



2025 Lottery Calendar



COUPON

Special Newsletter Coupon – Each month, there will be a coupon at the end of the newsletter. To redeem the coupon, mention the code below when booking your next program!

This month, our coupon is for a 6-Week Private Curriculum Program at the price of a Group Curriculum Program (\$60 OFF).

CODE: GROUPDISCOUNT2025

* Valid for any programs booked in November 2024 for a start date in 2025.



NOVEMBER 2024 NEWSLETTER

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NOVEMBER'S FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Nothing
builds
self-esteem
and
self-confidence
like
accomplishment.”

- Thomas Carlyle



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