

# Spotlight

NEWS FROM  
FREEDOM  
HILL HORSE  
RESCUE

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue



*Free to Live Again!*



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## Tiki's Astounding Transformation

Many of you know our big boy, Mickey Blue. We've told his story many times, but where are the horses that came in with him five years ago? In this issue, we will feature one of his pasture mates, Tiki, one of five horses that were found malnourished and emaciated before Freedom Hill Horse Rescue stepped in.

Tiki was only about 800 pounds with marks and scars all over his body. His eyes looked tired, almost showing defeat. His body score was barely a 2 on the Henneke Body Condition Scale.

Tiki had started regaining his weight when he was adopted by Lisa in 2011, but he had a long road ahead of him.

*Tiki in January 2011 (left) and December 2014. Photos courtesy of Lisa Wagner.*



# Summer 2015

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Luckily, Lisa was experienced with rehabilitating horses. She knew the time it would take and committed to helping him get well. It has been a slow and continuous transformation, physically and emotionally; a transformation that Lisa calls “astounding.”

About six months after adopting Tiki, Lisa started with private training sessions, then in 2012 took him to a gaited clinic hosted by *Freedom to Gait* author, Anita Howe. Lisa shares, “she told me he needed a lot of work and good luck with him. She wasn't kidding and he is progressing well, or maybe I should say he and I are progressing well.” It really does take two to build a relationship into a partnership.



In 2013, Lisa had the opportunity to take Tiki to a 4-day clinic with Buck Brannaman. “This clinic was the most life altering education for both Tiki and me,” she told us. “He was so fidgety and would not stand still on the first day of the clinic. This is his normal pattern; as soon as you mount he is ready to go and go and go.” Lisa continued, “he had no ability to stand and just look around, he has always been all go.” By the last day, however, other clinic attendees were complementing Lisa on how well Tiki was doing. “He would stand quietly behind me on the ground and would actually stand while mounted for short periods of time,” Lisa said with pride.

Tiki and his stable mate, Libby, are in for a significant life change. Lisa’s job transferred her from Berlin, MD to Gainesville, Georgia in early May. Since then, she’s purchased property and is busy putting up fencing and a barn structure while her husband, Mark, remains in Maryland to care for the horses.

*From Top: Tiki with Anita Howe, author of Freedom to Gait, in 2012 and Buck Brannaman in 2013. Photos courtesy of Lisa Wagner.*

Owners often decide to sell their horses rather than go through the process of moving them. We want to thank Lisa for sticking by her decision to give Tiki a loving, forever home. It heartened us to hear that she is anxious to have Tiki and Libby in her back yard again. Thanks for offering Tiki an amazing second chance.

## Farewell Sweet Thunder

On June 11, we said a bittersweet farewell to Thunder. He had not been with us long, just 6 months. The vet said that his weight and coat looked better than she had seen in years, thanks to our care, but despite daily medication, his previous pelvic injury was still causing him severe pain.

One of the most difficult aspects of running a rescue or sanctuary is when it comes time to discuss quality of life issues for a specific horse. We know in our hearts that it was time to ease his suffering.

Thank you to our volunteers for taking such great care of this sweet soul while he was with us, especially in his last days. He has peacefully crossed the rainbow bridge. Gallop on, Thunder!

*Photo by Kristina Truluck*





## Volunteer Spotlight: The Reid Family

Hello! We're the Reid family – Ben, Renee, Ella, and Elise – and we've been asked to share a little about ourselves and our experiences with FHHR for this month's newsletter. Ben is active duty Air Force and I'm a stay at home mom finishing up my teaching degree while wrangling our extremely precocious girls. We first became involved with FHHR through a friend of ours whom you probably know, Tina Woodbury. We were new to the area and happened to meet her at a get together. It was destiny! We were looking for a way to get additional exposure to horses for our older daughter, Ella, who is a horse lover through and through (I have to admit she takes after her mom!), and Tina knew just the place! Our experience with FHHR has turned out to be so much more than 'exposure' though! Not only do we have as much time with the horses as we could want, but we've met an amazing group of volunteers who are truly dedicated to their mission and have been welcomed into a community that we feel truly blessed to be a part of.

We are now approaching our one year mark with the rescue and have learned so much in that time. Before starting we had limited experience with horses and even less with the day to day work required to care for them. Now we're confident grooming and handling the horses (though Elise mostly likes to handle the duck) and have learned everything from proper hoof care to basic first aid, and dietary requirements to driving the tractor. The best part, though, is that while we were doing all of this working and learning we also did a lot of falling in love with the horses of FHHR. It is a heartwarming and humbling experience to love them, and rewarding beyond anything we'd ever expected. I'll admit, the work can be hard and dirty, sometimes downright disgusting (sheath cleaning, anyone?), but honestly, I feel as if we gain far more than we could ever give.

**A Note from FHHR:** *Words can't express how grateful we are for the many hours that Ben, Renee, Ella and Elise have spent making the rescue a better place for the horses, other animals (saving the baby barn swallows) and everyone who works here. You are truly amazing people. Thank you!*



Photos by Jennifer Purcell



Photo by Kristina Truluck

*From Top: The family poses for a photo with Willie and the duck, Renee works with Mickey at a clinic with Sarah Drew, Ben and Chris Anderson moving stall mats during spring cleaning at Hampton.*

**New this Summer!**

**Horsemanship & Life Skills Summer Program**



**See page 8 for details**  
Photos by Jennifer Purcell



## Spotlight on Tucker and Moonshadow

Tucker has been at the rescue for five years. Although we love him dearly and he is a volunteer favorite, he deserves to find his forever person, someone who will work with him consistently to build the trusting relationship that he needs and that we know he can have.

A rescue from Camelot auction, Tucker had whip marks on his hind end and several marks from a harness. Without official background information, we can only surmise that he was used to drive a cart or buggy with limited success. When it didn't work out, he ended up at auction.

A 15.2 hand chestnut gelding, 13 years old with a kind eye, a curious mind, and big heart, Tucker will stand for hours to be groomed. Heidi May says Tucker is her favorite horse to groom. "He LOVES, LOVES it so much," Heidi says. "I sing to him and he falls asleep. His head starts hanging and his bottom lip hangs, his eyes start closing, and if I stop his head will perk up, and he'll turn to look at me as if to say, 'why are you stopping?' When I start to sing again, he starts to fall back to sleep."

*Continued on page 6...*

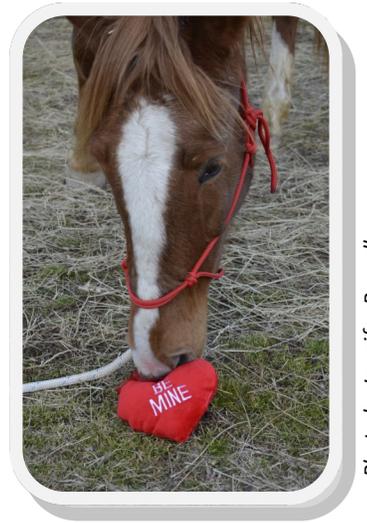


Photo by Jennifer Purcell

*Every day begins with  
the most beautiful  
"Dawn".*

*– The Rudzis' Family*

*Maybe she's Barn with it;  
Maybe it's Neighbelline.*

*– Jaden & Taz Greenley*

*"We've got you covered"*

*Love, Aaron, Mary &  
Caleb Douglass*

*Photo by Kristina Truluck*

## Freedom Hill Horse Rescue's **People Steeplechase & Ponypalooza**

In April, Freedom Hill Horse Rescue (FHHR) celebrated the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) national Help A Horse Day with a month-long effort to spread the word about at-risk horses and raise funds to help neglected, abused, and unwanted horses be Free to Live Again.

We asked supporters to "Get on Board.... Literally," by purchasing and inscribing a board at one of four support levels (board, beam, roof, or foundation) to help acquire a run-in shed. After selling 115 boards, we were able to purchase an amazing 12x16 used run-in with storage room. Local Boy Scouts volunteered to help us do minor repairs, stain the shed, clean out the storage space, install shelves, and remove the floor to prepare it for the horses. Meanwhile, we began to inscribe a long list of inscriptions. Some of our favorites are included in the box.



## GIFTS OF TIME

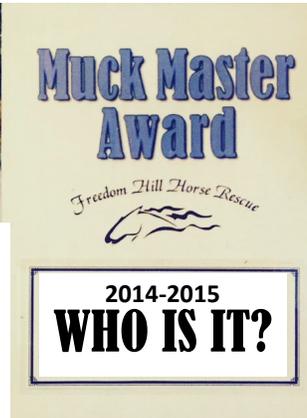
Adapted from a poem by Susan Greig

*Both night and day  
you've given of your time  
To make the rescue a better place  
Every horse here has benefited  
And your efforts can never be erased  
We send this note to tell you  
That we are aware and all agree  
Your gifts of time — large or small  
Are special ones indeed!*

## Celebrating Volunteers

We celebrate horses all year long. Next month, it's time to celebrate our volunteers. Whether you started just two weeks ago or have been with us for many years, we can't thank you enough for your service and compassion for our horses.

Like last year, we will induct members into our 100 Muck Club, which includes volunteers who have completed at least 100 feed shifts in a 12-month period. We'll also present the Muck Master Award to the volunteer or family that completed the most feed shifts. Last year, it was mother/daughter team, Beth and Summer. This year's Muck Master will be announced at the Volunteer Appreciation Party on July 25<sup>th</sup>.



# FHHR Volunteer Appreciation Party

## SAVE the DATE

Saturday, July 25, 2015 @ 3pm

Hang out with fellow FHHR Volunteers. Bring your family. Eat, drink, and be merry. Swim, sing, do the limbo, play horseshoes, and maybe zip line. Stay late for a bonfire. Just have fun as we thank you for your dedication to the horses at Freedom Hill Horse Rescue!

Details to Follow



## People Steeplechase *Continued from page 4*

That same day, volunteers recruited by our very own Ben Reid helped to erect the remaining perimeter fence. That was April 26<sup>th</sup>, the day after our first annual *People Steeplechase and Ponypalooza*, a family event with face painting, games, food, equine demonstrations, a 3K obstacle fun run, and photos with a unicorn. A handful of very dedicated volunteers were there both days; a true labor of love. Despite multiple events happening around the county, Ponypalooza was a big hit.

Participants in the People Steeplechase included 12 runners from The Cove/DFZ Youth Wellness Community Center, a free program for at-risk youth, and Noah Wood, a local runner raising awareness about Lyme Disease. His wife is coping with this devastating disease, one that inflicts pain for human and horse, much like FHHR's rescue horse Mickey Blue. Noah took 1st place overall.



Photos by Charity Higgs (top) and John J. Young



Photo by Jennifer Purcell

## GRANTS UPDATE:

### No More Hay Waste

Thanks to a recent grant from *The Snyder Foundation for Animals*, FHHR can finally purchase round bale feeders. Using feeders is important because they have been scientifically shown to minimize the waste that often occurs when using round bales. It is the best way for the rescue to save much needed resources. The Snyder Foundation grant will have a significant long-term impact on our work at the rescue. Thank you.

## Tucker and Moonshadow *Continued from page 4*

Did you know that Tucker has a favorite song? According to Heidi, he prefers *Moonshadow* by Cat Stevens. Beth Printz has witnessed this too! Beth says when she and her then 8-year-old daughter started volunteering at FHHR, Tucker was one of the first horses they worked with and that he treated her daughter differently, like he knew she was just a little kid.

Tucker is also a curious fellow who likes to get into things. Lori Harrington shared a story about how he grabbed Christmas garland one day while she was decorating and ran out to pasture with it. He has grabbed trash bags from the tack room to do the same thing. One morning, he grabbed a volunteer's 20-ounce cup of coffee while she was grooming him. She got within an inch of taking it from his mouth when he sent it flying across the stall. Luckily it was no longer hot, and his resulting Flehmen response made it look like he was laughing at her!

Even though trash bags, pool noodles and tarps don't scare him, any fast movements or items that resemble a stick or whip can send him into flight mode. His reactions are sporadic and often unpredictable, which means he will need an experienced horseperson with a calm demeanor if he is to become a riding horse. Otherwise, he would be happy to share a field and eat all day if he's adopted as a companion, and will be protective of his herd mates. Hannah Bohn told us that while she was treating a wound on Ellie, Tucker stared at her with a look of "don't you dare hurt my girl," and he stayed like that the entire time. He's loyal, that's for sure.

Because of a generous grant by the Tony Stewart Foundation, Tucker is working with licensed Parelli Professional, Sarah Drew. He is learning to trust and be calm while in the round pen with waving sticks and whips and unpredictable movements. We are looking for a special someone to take Tucker to the next level or simply love him from the ground.

Knowing Tucker epitomizes the message behind Moonshadow. Be present and be joyful. Don't get wrapped up in what has been, but live for now, because every moment in life, and every horse, is rich and unique.



Photos by John J. Young (left) and Kristina Truluck

## People Steeplechase

*Continued from page 5*

FHHR thanks the ASPCA for supporting equine rescues and encouraging all-volunteer organizations to reach higher and do more! The rescue also wants to thank its village of supporters, including volunteers, vendors, donors, and participants, many from the local Southern Maryland community, for believing in horses. All of our sponsors, vendors, and volunteers are listed online at [freedomhillevents.weebly.com](http://freedomhillevents.weebly.com). Click on the "Teamwork" tab.



**Like us on Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/FreeToLiveAgain](http://www.facebook.com/FreeToLiveAgain)

# Mark Your Calendars for Upcoming Events!

## Events:

Volunteer Appreciation Party 7/25  
 Equine Connections  
 7/11, 8/1, 9/5, 10/3 @ 2 pm  
 Horsemanship & Life Skills  
 Summer Program  
 7/27—7/31  
 Contact Kristy for more information  
 240.320.7715

## Volunteer Training Sessions:

New Volunteer Orientation  
 7/11, 8/1, 9/5, and 10/3 @ 4 pm  
*All volunteers are encouraged to attend these monthly sessions featuring different equine topics.*  
 Contact Jennifer for more information  
 347.595.9100

## Horsemanship Team Sessions:

For Level 3 Approved Members  
 (all volunteers welcome to observe)  
 Mondays at 6:30pm @ Hampton  
 Horsemanship Team evaluations are scheduled by appointment.  
 Contact Terry for more information  
 240.535.4009

## Local Restaurants Support FHHR

Join us for good eats and good times while raising money for the rescue. All restaurants will donate a portion of proceeds to their horses.

Restaurant	City	Date	Info
Rita's	Dunkirk	July 7	6pm-9pm
Ruby Tuesdays	Prince Frederick	Every Tuesday in July	Bring a flyer*
FRESH Frozen Yogurt	Dunkirk	Every Friday in August	<p><b>Visit our website or FB page to download the flyers.</b></p>
Chesapeake Grille	Dunkirk	August 8-15	
Applebees	Prince	Sept 10	Bring a flyer*

Thank you to the Killarney House in Davidsonville for hosting FHHR during the Triple Crown races. The event generated \$450 for the rescue.

## Get on Board!

Now you can Get on Board all year long. Just visit our website to donate via PayPal or send us a check. Be sure to let us know what you'd like inscribed on your board. Funds will be used for future building and facilities projects.



## Horsemanship & Life Skills Program

**JULY 27—JULY 31, 9am—3pm** Campers will learn the basics of horseback riding and natural horsemanship, plus goal setting, communication, leadership skills, teamwork, and bully prevention. Grades 5-8; \$200 per person; limit 10 participants (subject to change). Contact Kristy at 240-320-7715 to register.

[www.freedomhillhorsesrescue.com](http://www.freedomhillhorsesrescue.com)



Photo by Jennifer Purcell

## How You Can Help!

### Join the Horse Angel Network!

You can support FHHR by joining the Horse Angel Network! We are seeking individuals that are willing to become a monthly sponsor for one of our horses while they are with us. We have several levels of sponsorship available from \$25 per month to \$200 per month. Contact Kristy today if you would like to become one of our horses' angel.

### Super Senior Sponsorship

For \$20/month, sponsor one bag of grain to help keep our seniors healthy and happy.

### Purchase Wish List Items

For the months of June through September, wish list items include:

- ◆ 4x6 rubber stall mats
- ◆ Wood for fencing
- ◆ Fly Spray, MTG, Banixx, SWAT, Kopertox, and Keratex

*Cash donations are always appreciated and can be mailed to:*

*FHHR, P.O. Box 606, Dunkirk, MD 20754*