



Feed Shift Handbook

WELCOME to the FHHR family of volunteers!

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue Volunteers should:

- Read and follow the policies of the organization regarding Feed Shift Volunteers
- Contact Feed Shift Leader or Barn Manager with any questions or concerns
- Follow posted Feed Shift Routine and check regularly for changes
- Read the "Alert" board and sign-in book upon arrival for any important notes, and sign in and out legibly.
- Notify the Horse Care Committee Lead or Barn Manager of important information such as injuries to horses or volunteers, abnormal horse behavior, unexpected visitors that stopped by or any questions or concerns regarding your feed shift. Make note in log book.
- Notify the Farm Operations Manager of anything that is broken or not working properly and write on whiteboard under Maintenance.
- Notify your Feed Shift Leader if you are unable to attend your scheduled feed shift or if you are going to arrive early or late to your shift. **Communication is key to a successful team relationship.**
- Notify Amy or Rich Lawson with any concerns regarding their animals or homeowner's property.

Apparel

You will want to dress comfortably for the weather, and wear plenty of layers in the colder weather. Always wear closed toed shoes while working around the horses.

Barn Cats

Please make sure cats have food and water at your shift (in tack room).

Blanketing

Some horses will need a sheet or a blanket during the Cold Weather Routine. Horses that are thin, older, and those that do not grow a good winter coat typically need to be blanketed especially when there is inclement weather (rain, snow, sleet, freezing rain) or strong wind (15+ MPH). Sheets help block the horse's body from inclement weather and wind. Blankets provide warmth for the horses when their own natural coat and body weight are not sufficient.

Each horses' specific blanketing needs will be written on their stall cards and the white board. Some horses only need a sheet/blanket if there is inclement weather or strong wind dependent on the temperature & do not need a sheet or blanket when stalled. Other horses need a sheet/blanket according to the temperature whether they are stalled or turned out. It is important that these horses have on a sheet when there is inclement weather during

the day so that they will be dry to be blanketed if the night temperature is going to be at their blanketing temperature needs. Blanketing needs may change throughout the Cold Weather Routine, so it is important to pay close attention to possible changes posted on board.

AM Shift:

Take off all sheets and blankets unless there is inclement weather, strong winds, or the temperature is below 30 degrees (sheets) or under 20 degrees (blankets) for the day. This allows the horses to regulate their winter coat better so that we do not hinder their natural winter coat growth.

If horses are turned out in inclement weather, please ensure that the horses have a blanket or sheet according to the real feel temperature until the PM shift. (ie: If there is precipitation and it will be a high of 40 degrees for the day but the night temp is going to be under 30 degrees, horses need to have on a sheet to keep them dry)

PM Shift:

Put sheets or blankets on horses that get one as specified.

If horses were turned out at arrival in inclement weather, please remove sheets and put on blankets if the temperature will be at the horse's blanketing needs. Horses that only get blanketed in inclement weather or windy conditions may need to be blanketed even when stalled if temperature goes <10. You will be notified as what to do in special circumstances such as these.

IMPORTANT:

- Do not put a wet blanket/sheet on a horse.
- Do not put a blanket/sheet on a wet horse.
- Do not put blankets/sheets on any horse unless you have been trained to do so.
- Ensure that all fasteners/clasps are secured and not hanging loosely around legs or stomach.
- Neatly fold up blankets/sheets if they are dry; PLEASE spread out and hang to dry if they are wet. If temperatures are below freezing, hand in heated tack room.
- If a blanket/sheet is ripped or broken, notify the Barn Manager.
- Give the horse a quick brushing prior to putting on a sheet or blanket. Use the dryer sheets - rub on your hands, the blanket/sheet and on the horse to reduce static electricity if present.
- If you are unsure, contact someone from the Horse Care Team or Barn Manager.

Care Kit

There is a Care Kit that is stocked with the following items for you to use as needed while grooming horses are if items are needed:

- Flyspray- use especially on the face and legs where the flies normally are bothersome and horses have difficulty removing flies with tail and shaking muscles.
- Detangler- use in the mane and tail to make brushing them out more easily without pulling out hair.

- Antibiotic ointment & Swat- to be applied to wounds. Use Swat during fly season to keep flies away from cuts.
- Desitin- use on horses with chronic diarrhea to prevent sores on rump/legs
- Sunblock- apply to white parts of horses that are prone to sunburn
- Hoof dressing- apply to the outside of hoof to give moisture to the hoof when dry and brittle. Do not get on horse's fur.
- Thrush remedies- apply to the crevices around frog to prevent/cure thrush
- Banixx- apply to hoof for various hoof ailments
- Vetericyn- apply to wounds or itchy areas like tail hair loss

Fans

- Plug stall and run-in fans in when the temperature is going to be above 80 degrees
- Unplug stall and run-in fans when the temperature is going to below 80 degrees

Feed

Each horse gets a specific amount of grain to maintain a proper body condition. Some horses require very little to no grain whereas others need much more. It is important that each horse gets the proper amount rationed to them at each feeding, and never eat another horse's feed.

When preparing the horses feed and feeding the horses, volunteers should:

- Prepare feed (grain and forage) and medications and/or supplements according to the white board in the feed room for each horse.
- Prepared feed should be placed into the buckets that are labeled with the name of each horse.
- Check the whiteboard each time you feed as there can be changes to a horse's diet regularly.
- 1 scoop (sc) or 1 cup of grain is a full heaping scoop/cup. Scoop or cup is located in the appropriate feed can.
- Make sure all feed bins, medications, and supplements are closed tight after use.
- All of the feed bins (trash cans) are labeled with the type of grain it contains. When a bin is empty, please add more grain. Do not place new grain into the bin on top of the grain that is in there. Old grain must go on the top.
- Notify the Barn Supplies/Inventory Manager and write on whiteboard under SUPPLIES if we are low on grain or there is no more grain
- If you open a bag of grain and it smells musty or moldy, please set aside and inform Barn Manager. DO NOT FEED TO HORSES.
- Most of our horses require their grain to be wet down. Please use warm water from the sink to wet down the grain (amount of water listed on white board for each horse) in the feed buckets, mix well. Please rinse out and dry all feed buckets.
- Horses need to wait at least 20 minutes to eat if they have exercised or are too hot.
- Feed Shift Leaders or Co-Leaders should be the only volunteers preparing the feed.
- Minors under the age of 16 are not permitted to prepare the horses' feed unless being directly supervised by a FSL or CoLeader.
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Grooming

The horses need to be groomed at each shift. Each shift will be assigned particular horses to groom. You may only groom the horses in which you are skilled enough to do so as some horses can be more difficult than others.

There may be times when you are short on time and need to only do a quick groom which includes picking hooves and quickly knocking the dirt off of the body, where at other times you can do a more thorough grooming using all of the tools provided in the grooming tote.

While grooming, you should also do your Health Check on the horses.

Please make sure to:

- Use each horse's own grooming tote & tools (labeled with the horse's name) only on that horse. Please do not share grooming tools among horses.
- It is best to start at the neck and work your way back to the rump.
- Grooming can be done in stalls or while horse is tied to tie post in barn. Tying horses up in stalls or fences is not permitted.
- Use the supplies provided in the Care Kit located on shelf in feed room as needed and return to Care Kit. *(If applying any topical medication to a horse, please notify someone from the Horse Care Team prior to applying. This ensures the team is on top of all health care issues and to make sure the proper care is given)*
- Some horses are best to groom while eating, and other horses are best to groom at a tie post. You will be notified as to the best practice for each horse.
- Do not attempt to pick a horse's hooves until you have been trained to do so.
- If you are having trouble with a particular horse, please notify the Feed Shift Leader or the Horse Care Team Lead or Barn Manager as there could be some underlying problems.

Grooming Tools

There is a specific use for each of the grooming tools that are provided to you to use while grooming. The following is a guideline for each tool:

- Curry comb: Use in a circular motion on the neck, body and rump. Do not use on the legs, face, or other bony areas.
- Winter curry comb: Use the same way as the regular curry comb, but in the winter when horses have thick winter coats.
- Soft curry comb: Use in a circular motion on the face, legs and other bony parts.
- Hard brush: Use in the direction that the hair is growing on the neck, body, and rump. Do not use on the face, legs or other bony parts.
- Soft brush: Use in the direction that the hair is growing on the entire body, especially on the legs, in between front legs, and stomach.
- Face brush: Use in the direction the hair is growing all over the face.
- Mane & tail brush: Use on the mane and tail. Start at the bottom and work your way up to the top as you brush the tangles out. Use detangler when necessary.
- Hoof pick: Use the pick to scrape mud off of the front of the hooves and to pick the dirt out from the bottom of the hooves. Be careful not to pick the frog and to get the dirt from the crevices around the frog. Use the brush on the hoof pick to brush off

the frog, bottom of hoof, and top of hoof. Please do not lift leg too high or drop hoof when finished - lay hoof down gently.

- Shedding blade: Use to scrape off mud or when horse is shedding winter coat in the direction that the hair is growing. Use on neck, body, and rump. Do not use on the face, legs or bony parts.

There are extra grooming supplies in the FHHR locker in the feed room.

Grooming Totes

Each horse has its own grooming tote with the following grooming tools in them: curry comb, winter curry comb, soft curry comb, hard brush, soft brush, face brush, mane & tail brush, hoof pick and shedding blade.

Please:

- Put the grooming tools back in the grooming tote and place grooming tote back where it belongs after use.
- Keep all grooming tools with the specific grooming tote so that each tote has all supplies needed. No sharing of tools is permitted.
- If any grooming tools become unusable, please notify the Horse Care Committee Lead.
- Remove hair from brush and combs after using.

Hay

Each horse gets a specific amount of hay to maintain a proper body condition. It is important that each horse gets the proper amount rationed to them at each feeding. Horses will get hay when they are in stalls or paddocks to supplement grass turnout on the pastures. Hay and grass are the primary source of a horse's diet.

Volunteers please:

- Do not go by the way the bales are cut when rationing out flakes of hay. You must go by weight. (1 flake of hay= 4lbs) If in doubt, it is always better to give more than less when it comes to hay unless it is being wasted.
- We have hay nets, hay huts, and slow feeders to place hay in. Please follow the posted protocol for each for the safety of the horses and to ensure all horses have access to enough hay.
- For Paddocks: Adjust hay as necessary if horses are leaving a lot of uneaten hay so that it is not being wasted. Amounts are written on the whiteboard under Hay. Clean out old hay at the bottom of hay nets or hay huts and replace with new hay.
- Only open a bale of hay at the barn never in the Paddock. When you open up a bale of hay, pull out and discard the baling twine immediately so it is not accidentally given to the horses or left out in the paddock. It is a choking hazard.
- If you notice a musty smell, mold, thorns, bugs, thick stalks, weeds on/in hay, place it to the side and inform the Horse Care Team Lead or Barn Manager. DO NOT FEED TO HORSES.

Hay Nets

The hay nets are used in stalls and paddocks to help eliminate waste and to mimic natural grazing since they are slow feeder hay nets. Volunteers please follow below regarding the hay nets:

- Fill hay nets completely full of hay but do not pack tightly
- Hang hay nets towards the front of the stall and on the opposite side of the water buckets to prevent hay getting in water on the posts and hooks if provided.
- Make sure to pull the net all the way to the top of the stall or post/hook before securing with double clips for the horses safety.

Health Check

Each shift should perform a health check on every horse to ensure the health and well being of each horse. Notify Horse Care Team Lead if any issues are noted. Specifically pay attention to the following:

- Attitude: Is horse alert? Is horse behaving in a normal state?
- Hooves: Pick out all 4 hooves and take note of cracks, smell or other problems
- Trauma Check: Look for wounds, cuts, scrapes, bumps or bites on entire body of horse and take note of anything noticed that should be addressed
- Stance/Movement: Is horse putting weight on all four feet evenly? Is horse moving normally for that horse?
- Gum Color: The gums should be pink and moist. Press gums with a finger and remove. Count the number of seconds for the gum color to return (2 seconds is normal).
- Eyes: Are eyes clear and bright? Make a note of cloudy eyes or discharge.
- Discharge: Check the eyes, nose, mouth, rectum, vulva or sheath for signs of discharge. Make a note of colored discharge (clear is ok).
- Gut Sounds: Use your ear or stethoscope to listen to gut sounds. You should hear gastrointestinal noises.
- Appetite: Is horse interested in food and water?
- Pests: Spray for flies if needed

Normal Vital Signs: Temperature 99 - 101
 Pulse 12-36 per minute
 Respiration 12-24 per minute

Manure Pile

- Place manure in the allotted area only and nowhere else.
- Keep manure as close to the back wall of the manure pile as you can
- Do not dump separate piles in random places in the allotted area. This makes removal much more difficult, and makes it harder for others to get to the back of the pile.
- Dump waste from wheelbarrow or wagons from the top down into the pile, or from the bottom going back as far as possible
- As the manure pile fills up, keep the top of the pile flat so that you can push your wheelbarrow or wagon on top of the pile to continue dumping until the pile is

removed. Please do not dump manure on top of the railroad ties-the tractor cannot get to it and it has to be manually shoveled into the pit.

Mucking

- Please clean your assigned stalls and areas at every shift.
- For Paddocks:
 - Pick up all the manure in those areas and place in the manure pile.
 - Pick up all manure in the run in shelters
 - Clean up any old, wet, or wasted hay that the horses are not eating.
- For Stalls:
 - Pick up all manure and urine/wet spots, dirty bedding and dirty hay (waste).
 - Sift through the stall bedding to take out all waste material.
 - Spread out shavings evenly throughout stall.
 - Add more stall bedding when it is needed. Stall bedding should be at least 2 inches thick.
 - Sweep clear the bedding from the front area of the stall under the water or feed buckets so that the stall mats (rubber mats) are free of debris.
 - Place waste in the manure pile

Natural Horsemanship

At FHHR, we practice Natural Horsemanship philosophy and techniques when working with our horses both on the ground and under saddle as we believe that this is the best way to establish a trusting relationship with our horses and communicate with them in a way in which they understand.

Natural Horsemanship is based on the way horses communicate in their natural world. The principles and techniques used with Natural Horsemanship are based on respect for and love of horses – and understanding horse nature and psychology. This type of horsemanship avoids using force, fear, harsh bits or mechanical training aids in favor of love, language and leadership. We have developed our own methods by combining what we have learned from several natural horsemanship practitioners and do not follow the methods of any one individual, but combine several methods that we have learned to be more effective and the way in which we feel most comfortable with the horses that come to the rescue.

- The Basic Principles of Natural Horsemanship:
 - What we do is more human training because it's the human in the human- horse relationship that needs to learn how to relate naturally to the horse. Natural Horsemanship teaches you how to work with your horse in the most loving, effective and efficient way possible for lasting results and success.

Four Keys: The basic principles of Natural Horsemanship can be summed up in four words: Relationship, Understanding, Communication, and Trust.

1. Relationship:

- the relationship between you and your horse is the foundation

2. Understanding:

- Understanding that horses are prey animals and that pretty much everything they do or don't do is based on their survival instincts.
- Learning to see the world from the horse's point of view – this includes figuring out “what's in it for them” when asking something of your horse.
- Understanding your horse's basic personality type so that you can work with him in the most effective way possible. Understand how to “read” the horses and incorporate the best strategies for managing behaviors and achieving success. “Making the right thing easy and the wrong thing hard”

3. Communication:

- Relationships are based on understanding and communication. To have a good relationship with your horse, you need to understand him and be able to communicate with him. Through natural horsemanship, you will learn to communicate with horses the way they communicate with each other using horses' own natural communication methods.

4. Trust:

- Horses are herd animals and are therefore instinctively comfortable following a leader. Natural Horsemanship philosophy, principles and techniques help you become your horse's trusted leader so that the horse feels safe with you and will willingly do what you ask. Trust is established in a number of ways including:
 - Putting the relationship first
 - Learning to communicate in the horse's own language
 - Keeping the horse safe and calm in the face of what he finds fearful
 - Establishing a good relationship on the ground before you attempt to get on his back

Horses do not learn from pressure but they learn from the release of that pressure. It is imperative that you perfect your timing so that you are rewarding the horse for desired behavior and not undesirable behavior.

You can learn more about Natural Horsemanship from practitioners such as: Crandell's Horse Works (Joe, Donna, and Jason Crandell), Pat and Linda Parelli www.parellinaturalhorsetraining.com, Monty Roberts, Buck Brannaman www.brannaman.com, Clinton Anderson www.downunderhorsemanship.com and others.

Search the web for videos on how you can learn to become an individual that follows the principles and techniques of Natural Horsemanship and truly understands how to communicate with horses in a more natural way. There are also many videos, magazines and books available for you to sign out, located in the FHHR library in the tack room. Please return when you are finished viewing.

We also offer weekly Horsemanship Clinics during the warmer weather months to teach volunteers about Natural Horsemanship and give opportunities for hands on learning and growth as well as monthly volunteer training clinics which will be posted on the volunteer

Facebook page and the corkboard located outside the tack room and also in the Whinny newsletter.

Parking - Please only park in designated parking areas. Do not block the entrance gates.

Quarantine Protocol

New Equine Arrivals will be placed under quarantine for a period between 2 weeks. During this time, volunteers must adhere to strict quarantine measures in order to keep the horse community safe.

Every volunteer who encounters one of the horses that are in quarantine must not come in contact with any other horse until you do the following:

- Change your clothes
- Disinfect your shoes
- Wash any part of your body that came in contact with the horse(s). Best practice is to take a shower.

All equipment used at the Quarantine Barn or for New Equine Arrivals may not be brought to any other barn for any reason without being properly disinfected.

Shavings

- There is a shavings bin for bulk stall bedding in the back of the barn. There are shovels in the bin to fill wheelbarrows or wagons. Please ensure that the bulk bedding is covered with the tarp and doors closed and secured after use.
- Bagged bedding is used for some horses with respiratory issues, or when bulk delivery is unavailable or when snow covers sawdust bin access. Please do not overuse bagged bedding as it is 3x more expensive than our bulk bedding.

Sidework

Each feed shift is assigned to a weekly side work task. Please ensure that you are performing your side work each week. The side work tasks help us to keep the barn looking neat, orderly, and clean, ensure that our horses continue to live in sanitary conditions, and help us continue to have good standing license through the Maryland Horse Industry Board.

Water

The horses must have access to fresh, clean water at all times. If you notice that a trough or stall water bucket is dirty, please dump and scrub before placing fresh water inside.

During the WARM WEATHER routine:

- Ensure that the water troughs have water. Because troughs need to get dumped more frequently, large troughs only need to be HALF full; smaller troughs can be completely filled.
- If water is lukewarm or there is algae present, volunteers must dump, scrub and refill water.
- There will be two water buckets in each stall. When horses are being stalled, please fill both water buckets completely full. When horses are being turned out, please make sure only one water bucket is HALF full.

During the COLD WEATHER routine:

- Ensure that the water troughs have water. Troughs should be HALF filled as the bottom heat element can only heat so much water.
- Water troughs have a heating element inside them to prevent the troughs from freezing. Please plug in troughs when it is below 32 degrees and unplug troughs when above 32 degrees.
- Stall water buckets are heated and must be plugged in when horses are in stalls and the temperature is 32 degrees or below. If temperature is above 32 degrees, buckets must be unplugged.
- If horses are out for the day and it is below 32 degrees, dump all stall water buckets and keep unplugged to save on electricity. They must be dumped or they will freeze.

Water Hoses

During the WARM WEATHER routine:

- Hoses will be attached to the water spigots for use.
- Keep hoses tidy and rolled up nicely in big loops to prevent kinks

During the COLD WEATHER routine:

- Unhook and drain hoses after use
- Keep hoses in the tack room when below 32 degrees to prevent from freezing
- Keep hoses tidy and rolled up nicely in big loops to prevent kinks
- If outside hoses freeze, use the retractable hoses located in buckets in tack room to hook up to pumps to fill water troughs. Unhook, let hose retract and return to tack room

Water Hydrants

Make sure the hydrants are not leaking after use. If hydrants are not working properly, please inform the FARM OPERATIONS MANAGER.

During the COLD WEATHER routine:

- When there is a severe drop in temperature, you may need to pump the handle of the hydrant a few times to get the water to flow through the pipe.
- There is heat tape on the pumps and an insulated box surrounding the pumps by the troughs. There is also a light bulb inside the insulated boxes which should stay plugged in to prevent freezing.

Weekly Newsletter

"The Whinny" is a weekly publication that is sent out every Wednesday via email to volunteers. This is an important publication for you to read so that you can stay up to date as to what is happening at FHHR. It also provides various volunteer opportunities, feed shift fill in needed, event and program calendar and educational material for you to grow in your knowledge and horsemanship as well.

Volunteer Facebook Page

If you have a Facebook account, we ask that you "Like" our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FreeToLiveAgain and request to join our Volunteer Only Facebook group page www.facebook.com/groups/FHHRVolunteers where we share important information and connect with one another through social media. If you do not have a Facebook account, we encourage you to create one so that you can stay involved with the FHHR community and join our group.