



EQUINE-
ASSISTED THERAPY



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JULY 2026 ISSUE



EQUINE-
ASSISTED THERAPY

Letter From Lulu

Executive Director

Dear EAT Friends and Family,

Summer is upon us, and there is so much happening at the barn! As a reminder, if you will be away on vacation, please provide us with ample notice by text or email at info@eatherapy.org.

May marked an exciting milestone for Equine-Assisted Therapy as we launched our very first Capital Campaign. The Mane Event, held at a private residence on May 30, was a wonderful success, and we are incredibly grateful to everyone who attended and supported this special evening.

This is an ambitious campaign and an exciting opportunity for the future of EAT. If you know of a business, foundation, or individual who may be interested in supporting this effort, including naming opportunities, please contact Lulu.

Looking ahead, October will bring our annual Hoedown for Hope, taking place on Saturday, October 10, from 5:00–9:00 p.m. at the Wildwood barn. This family-friendly fundraiser helps sustain our programs, provide scholarships, and ensure exceptional care for our horses throughout the year.

We are currently seeking sponsors and auction donations for this event. The Giving Tree is now up in the lobby, and we are actively collecting donations. If you have any questions, please let us know! This event sells out every year, so be sure to purchase your tickets when they go on sale in August!

Please also remember to update your volunteer and participant applications if you have not already done so. The June–December 2026 applications are due.

Thank you for all you do for Equine-Assisted Therapy. We truly are a family, and the life-changing work that happens here would not be possible without each and every one of you.

Wishing you a safe, happy, and blessed summer.

Walk On
- Lulu Bogolin

EATherapy's First Capital Campaign

The Mane Event

In June of 2025, EAT's Board of Directors started meeting about our strategic plan, with a goal of lowering our current waiting list of riders. There have consistently been over 100 on this list for the last couple of years. It was concluded that a new and separate campaign should take place, becoming our first Capital Campaign.

Our vision became organized into two interconnected phases to execute this strategy. The first phase focuses on expanding our capacity to serve more clients with the addition of new structures, positioning us to increase our services over the next three years. The second will build on that momentum by expanding our herd, staff, and certified instructors along with training. Together, these efforts will allow us to further increase our impact while building long term sustainability. During this time, we will prioritize keeping our culture that we are proud to have today and to continue to serve our current riders that experience the services provided by our staff, volunteers, and the herd.

Phase 1 will invest in essential facilities and site improvements all while we continue the exceptional care for our horses and our clients in a safe and therapeutic environment. We plan to build a new office space, where the glass house currently sits, for counseling services and team members as well as a structure to cover the outdoor arena. This phase will permit us to expand programs. As well, we hope to convert some areas of our maintenance building to include a couple of indoor stalls and a dedicated tack and grooming area. This will create more working space in the current indoor arena and improve efficiency of daily operations while maximizing the use of that building.

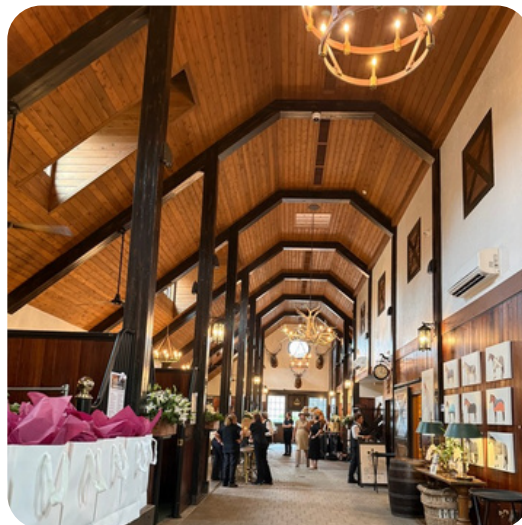
Phase 2 will invest in team and herd members. Certifying more instructors and adding more horsepower to our already amazing herd of horses, along with the training and care needed, ensuring they can continue their special work.

The total Capital Campaign Goal over 3 years is \$3,000,000.

Below are a few photos from The Mane Event, held on May 30 at the beautiful home of Mary and Joe Stieven. Their incredible generosity, along with the vision and dedication of committee members Becky Hadfield and Greer Gufler, created an unforgettable evening.

The event introduced many new families, friends, and businesses, outside of our existing community, to the life-changing work that takes place at Equine-Assisted Therapy each week. We are deeply grateful to everyone who attended and for the support and trust they have placed in our mission and our future.

The challenge for us is to focus on 2 priorities at once. As we execute this capital campaign, we also continue to raise funds to support our daily operations through donations and strong attendance to our annual Hoedown for Hope. Because of everyone's commitments, we are one step closer to expanding our programs, serving more individuals, and ensuring that the healing power of horses continues to "change lives one hoof-print at a time." Thank you for believing in our vision to support and grow our EAT family.



Our Story Continues

HOEDOWN FOR HOPE

Save the Date: Our Story Continues

For the last 22 years, EAT has been changing lives through the healing power of horses - and thanks to supporters like you, our story continues.

We invite you to join us for an unforgettable evening at our annual Hoedown for Hope, our largest fundraiser of the year. Together, we'll celebrate the impact we've made, the lives we've touched, and the chapters still to come.

Saturday, October 10, 2026

5:00–9:00 PM

EAT Wildwood Facility

Tickets go on sale in August, but be sure to mark your calendar now. The Hoedown has sold out for the past three years, and we expect another full house this year!

The Evening Includes:

🎵 Live Music by The Wildhorse Creek Band

🍴 Catered Dinner by Candicci's

🐾 Kid-Friendly Activities in the Barn

💃 Dancing & Drinks

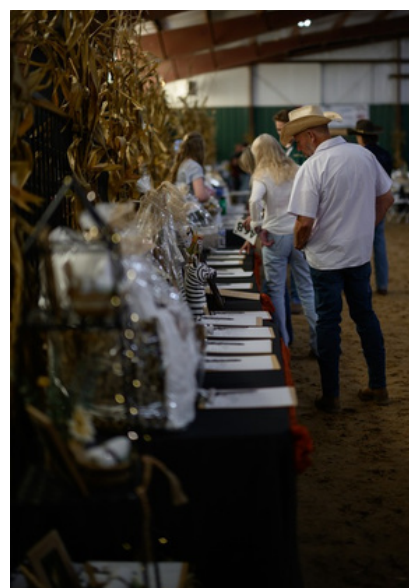
🎁 Live & Silent Auctions

🎟 Raffles and More

Most importantly, every dollar raised helps support our scholarship fund, provides care for our incredible therapy horses, and ensures that EAT's programs remain accessible to those who need them most. We can't wait to celebrate the next chapter of EAT's story with you. Watch for ticket information coming in August!

Hoedown for Hope

Help us Write the Next Chapter!



The success of our Hoedown for Hope depends on the generosity of our amazing community. As we prepare for this year's event, we're seeking donations and sponsors to help make the evening a success.

Ways You Can Help



Auction Items & Experiences

Gift baskets, tickets, unique experiences, services, vacation stays, and other special items for our silent and live auctions.

Gift Cards

Any amount is appreciated for our popular Mystery Boxes. Grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants, coffee shops, spas, local businesses, and retail stores are always favorites.

Beverages

Wine, beer, soda, and bottled water for the event.



Event Sponsors

Businesses, families, and individuals are all welcome to become sponsors and help further EAT's mission. **We are still looking for our Title Sponsor!**

Donations may be dropped off at our Wildwood office during regular business hours or shipped directly to us.

Every donated item, sponsorship, and contribution helps ensure that our story continues—providing life-changing equine-assisted services for children and adults throughout our community.

Interested in donating, sponsoring, or getting involved? We'd love to hear from you!
 Together, our story continues—one hoofprint at a time.

Rider Spotlight

Lily Rogers

Hope and Acceptance for 22 Years

Our daughter, Lily, began participating with Equine-Assisted Therapy in 2004, when she was just four years old. Lily was probably in the initial classes offered by EAT. As parents, we were a little nervous about having such a small girl riding on such large animals. But it was quickly obvious what great care the staff and volunteers take with all the participants. And it was apparent right away how open Lily was to being around the horses!

Lily was born in 2000. She was a colicky baby and had low muscle tone. Initially, her pediatrician reassured us these traits were nothing to worry about. As the months passed by, our concerns grew as Lily didn't meet any developmental milestones on time. Eventually, she was diagnosed with autism, intellectual disability, verbal apraxia, ADHD, and other sensory and behavioral challenges. She had started speech, OT, and PT before her first birthday—a very busy girl with a full schedule.

When Lily was very young, riding the horses at EAT seemed to build her core strength, improve her focus, and build her communication skills bit by bit—in ways that traditional therapies sometimes could not. The connection she formed with the horses created both motivation and joy, making her sessions seem very special.

Now, at age 26, Lily still has some behavioral challenges, meltdowns, and difficulty with transitions—even with preferred activities like therapeutic horsemanship. The staff have always been incredibly patient and understanding in meeting her where she is. They guide Lily to work through her issues by offering choices yet keeping reasonable expectations of her.





Rider Spotlight cont'd

About a year ago, Lily moved into her own Individual Supported Living home. This has brought about more growth and more challenges for all of us. She now has staff who take her to weekly scheduled sessions. That was another tough transition for several months. But EAT staff and volunteers have helped all of us successfully work through these new hurdles, as well.

Lily continues to benefit from her Saturday sessions which provide her with exercise, movement, following directions, and the personal interaction that riding offers. But beyond the physical and developmental gains, horseback riding has become something Lily loves that continues to build her confidence. Seeing her smile and enjoy herself as a young adult is incredibly meaningful.

As her parents, one of the greatest gifts has been watching Lily participate in an activity that brings her happiness. Over the years, she's worked through many therapies (speech, OT, PT, and ABA therapy) that were necessary, but not always enjoyable. Equine-Assisted Therapy has been different—it's combined growth, confidence, and joy in a way that has enriched Lily's life for more than two decades.

Equine-Assisted Therapy is a real community. It has been this way for us from day one through Lily's 22nd year with the program. Everyone is welcomed and accepted. And everyone is acknowledged, honored, and nurtured to thrive in new ways. Programs like EAT make a lasting difference not only for individuals like Lily, but for their families as well. We are incredibly grateful for the staff, volunteers, and, of course, the horses at Equine-Assisted Therapy. All of them have added much to the richness of Lily's life.

~ Jan and Buck Rogers, Lily's parents



Volunteer Spotlight

Anna Ballance

My name is Anna Ballance. I was born in St. Louis and spent most of my life living in Pacific in the home that my dad skillfully designed and built. While I no longer live in Pacific, I have never moved far! My husband, Stephen, I, and our 4 fur-children (cats Penny, Kitty, and Ruff and dog Archie) currently reside in Valley Park. In my time outside of work and EAT, I spend my time attending church and growing in my faith, laughing and exploring with my husband, partaking in all things Harry Potter, exploring new hobbies like watercolor and puzzles, playing with my fur-babies, and relaxing at home.

I am the girl who never outgrew her love of "ponies". From the first time I was placed on the back of a neighbor's horse when I was 3 years old, they had me... hook, line, and sinker. As I got older, I began taking horseback riding lessons at various barns, ultimately falling in love with English riding and jumping! My first job was as a working student at the barn I rode at so I could work to earn my lessons and so that I could spend as much time as possible with horses. When I was about 13, my mom showed me a newspaper article that she found about a new organization called Equine Assisted Therapy. In the following months, my mom and I got into contact with Ginni Hartke, one of the founders of EAT, and discussed how we could get involved. At that time, EAT was located at Crescent Farms. My mom and I began sidewalking and helping anywhere we could. As the years went on and EAT grew and finally found it's home in Wildwood, I have always done my best to incorporate volunteering into my schedule. During my time at EAT I have been a sidewalker and leader, and one day soon I hope to become a certified instructor to begin teaching classes as well!

When I started volunteering with EAT it was because of my love for horses; however, I ended up falling in love working with the participants as well. The more time that I spent working with them, the more I felt a connection to working with individuals, particularly children, with disabilities, supporting them, assisting them, and watching them grow. It was this connection found at EAT that caused me to feel called to find a profession where I could play a more full-time role in facilitating independence and success of individuals with disabilities.

This led me to occupational therapy. In 2015 I graduated from Saint Louis University with my Master's Degree in Occupational Therapy. Since then, I have worked at a primarily pediatric outpatient clinic, schools, and adult home health. Out of these, though, my greatest love has been working in schools. In 2018, I started Compassion Therapeutics, LLC, which has allowed me to independently contract with schools in New Haven, Spring Bluff, St. James, Rolla, and Cuba, MO. In 2020 I was introduced to a very special school called Promise Christian Academy, a Christian school specifically for students with disabilities, that was seeking an occupational therapist. I was lucky enough to acquire my dream job that allows me to express my Christian faith everyday while working with children and young adults with disabilities, helping them to grow in independence and skill and succeed in their goals. I am blessed enough to experience daily reminders that we are all beautifully and wonderfully made and made for a purpose.



Volunteer Spotlight cont'd

As of 2026, I have been volunteering with EAT for a total of 20 years. For 20 years, EAT has been a constant in my life... something that has fed into me the same, if not more, than I have fed into it. In moments in my life where I was feeling fear or heartbreak, anger or sadness, stress or unsuredness, I could always count on the horses and participants to keep me grounded. I truly enjoy telling everyone that I meet of my involvement with this wonderful program and encourage each of them to seek volunteering opportunities so that they experience their cup being filled the way that mine has.

For those who are new volunteers or are on the fence, I have to say... be prepared to make connections, both expected and unexpected. You will fall in love with the horses, whether you have a history with horses or not. They will feel what you feel, both joy and pain, and join you in that space with a peaceful quiet that only horses can. You may be faced with mourning your favorite horses who have fulfilled their purpose here on earth (RIP Dewey), but rest assured that another will soon nuzzle their way into your heart to cushion your grief (love you, Hero). The participants that you work with will help you grow as much as, if not more, than you help them. They will bring you joy unimagined, and you will build bonds for life. I have been with the same rider for 10 years now, and it has been the biggest blessing to be able to watch him grow into the amazing, skilled, and joyful young man that he is today.

Thank you, EAT, for being such an important part of my life for the past 20 years (and many years to come). Thank you for helping me grow into who I am today, for guiding me to a profession that brings me such immense joy and sense of purpose each and every day, a profession that now allows me to feed back even more into the program that helped build me.



Welcome to the Herd!



Big Red

Big Red is a 17-year-old Quarter Horse with a striking sorrel coat, standing an impressive 16 hands tall. He came to EAT from the family of a former participant, who knew he would be the perfect therapy horse and enjoy a well-deserved pampered life with us. While he's one of our many handsome "brown horses," Big Red is easy to recognize thanks to the unique wooden spoon-shaped marking on his forehead. His kind personality and steady presence are already winning hearts, and you'll be seeing him in classes very soon!

Trivia Night Was a Winning Success!

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Trivia Night! It was an evening full of friendly competition, laughter, and incredible community support. A special thank you to our generous sponsors—Golden Horseshoe Equestrian, JS Direct Marketing, and MERS-Large Animal Rescue—and to our wonderful host, Dr. Shannon Baker, DVM, for helping make the evening such a success. Thanks to our amazing attendees, sponsors, donors, and volunteers, the event raised critical funds to help us continue providing life-changing equine-assisted services. We can't wait to see everyone again next year!



Horse Show

Our annual Horse Show on May 17th was a wonderful celebration of our riders' hard work, determination, and accomplishments throughout the year. Every participant entered the arena a winner, demonstrating courage, perseverance, and the incredible partnerships they've built with their therapy horses.

This special day would not have been possible without the dedication of our amazing volunteers and instructors. From preparing horses and assisting riders to keeping the day running smoothly behind the scenes, your time, energy, and enthusiasm helped make the event a memorable experience for everyone involved. Thank you for making our riders feel supported and celebrated every step of the way.

We'd also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Purple Heart Veteran Jack Williams for proudly carrying our nation's flag during the opening ceremony, and Linds for her beautiful performance of the National Anthem.

Congratulations to all of our riders—we are so proud of each and every one of you! Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Horse Show such a tremendous success.



Summer Weather Policy

We know how much our riders look forward to class, and we understand that changes in routine can be difficult. Canceling classes is never an easy decision, but the health and safety of our riders, volunteers, instructors, and horses always comes first.

For evening classes, weather decisions will be made by 2:00 p.m. For daytime classes, we'll notify families as early as possible.

During the summer, classes will be canceled if:

- A Heat Advisory is in effect.
- The feels-like temperature is 95°F or higher.
- The temperature plus the humidity percentage equals 150 or greater when the temperature is above 80°F.

If classes are canceled, you will receive a text message or email notification. We always ask that you respond to the message so we know you have received the cancellation and can ensure everyone has been notified.



FUN FACT

Horses generate a tremendous amount of body heat while exercising. On hot, humid days, they have a harder time cooling themselves because sweat doesn't evaporate as easily.

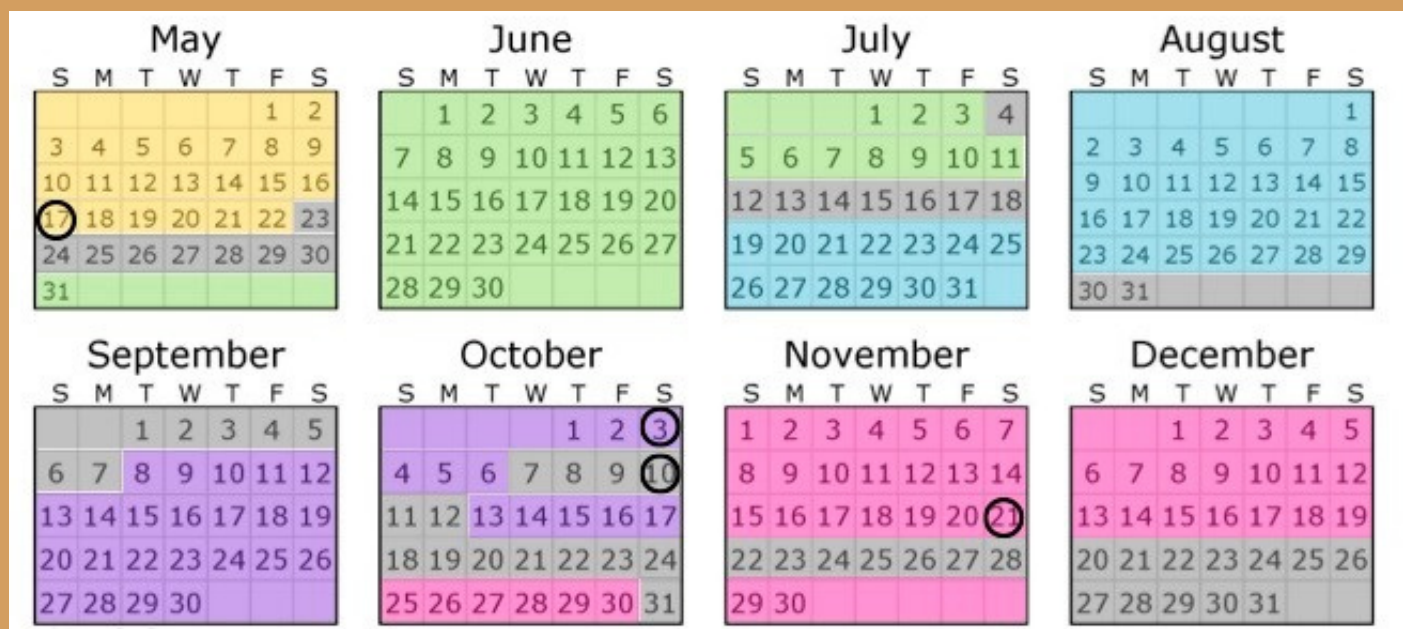
2026 Calendar



Event Day



No Classes



July 4: No Class

July 12-18: Off Week

Aug 30-Sept 7: Off Week

October 3: Fall Festival at Longview Farm Park

October 7-12: No Class

October 10: Hoedown for Hope

October 18-24: Off Week

October 31: No Class

November 21: Volunteer Thanksgiving Dinner

November 22-28: Off Week

With Gratitude

Thank you to everyone who helps make EAT's mission possible!

Agape Construction
 Alan Stevenson
 Anna Sutkowski
 Anne Ducey Charitable Trust-St Louis Community Foundation
 Becky Hadfield
 Beverly and Michael Buccheit
 Bob and Liz Baisch
 Cara Sullivan
 Claire Williamson
 Concord Village Lions Community Service Foundation
 David Politte
 Dawn Hoover DVM
 Dennis and Sandy Layton
 Drew Klein
 E Walter Hausstette Charitable Foundation
 Ellen Donovan
 Golden Horseshoe Equestrian Tack Shop
 Jack and Pat Williams
 JMS Foundation
 Jody and Tony Delf
 Joyce Jackson
 Julie Jacob and Family
 Karen Masterson
 Kathryn and Lee Cox
 Kathy Yamaguchi
 Kelley and Mike Nieman
 Kelly Buerke
 Kelly Knighter

Knights of Columbus St Clement of Rome Council 13604
 Kris Meserole and Family
 Kristi Mikes
 Leo Bierling
 Lindsay Moody
 Lola Belle Underwood
 Maggie Munaco and Family
 Marcy Byrne
 Marie Mitchell
 Mary Stieven
 Michelle Bunch
 Montgomery Bank
 Patricia Foster
 Paul Crowe
 PNB Bank
 Richard Salmon
 Robyn Mikes
 Ryan Hoehne
 Sarah Kozak
 Schmidt Family Fund-Community Foundation Land of Lincoln
 Sejla and Arya Fingers
 Shawn Bauer
 Steve and Joy White/JS Direct Marketing
 Steven Timm and Family
 The Khanna Family
 William S Kallaos Family Foundation
 Woods Basement Systems

Thank You, Julie!

A huge thank you to Julie Jacob for creating the adorable fairy garden beside our outdoor arena! We know our participants will love discovering and playing with the tiny figurines. Please help us keep the magic alive by enjoying them during your visit and leaving them for everyone else to enjoy, too.



Thank You, Jack!

Thank you to Eagle Scout Jack Wardenburg for designing and building our beautiful new benches at Town and Country. Your hard work and dedication have given our riders, families, volunteers, and visitors a wonderful place to rest and enjoy the park.



With Gratitude

Thank you to everyone who has donated towards our First Capital Campaign!

Amanda Perkins
Andrew Dickinson
Anita and John O'Connell
Becky and Mark Hadfield
Bob and Bev Menendez
Bob Corbett
Brian and Kristen Hogan Charitable Fund
Bud King-King Family Charitable Foundation
Cathy Shaw Connely
Chandra and Tom Niemann
Charles Smith
Connie Burkhardt
Cottrell Fox
Deborah and William Kuempel
Don and Cathy Sanders-Nightline Express
Don and Nancy Ross-Ross Family Foundation
Dot and Larry LeGrand
Dustin English
ELCO Chevrolet-Cadillac
Elizabeth Glazer Designs
Greg and Christine Eilerman Charitable Fund
Helen Buhr
James G and Kathryn Sansone
James M and Eleni Zemlyak Foundation
Jamie Rivers
Jane and Thom Sehnert
Jennifer Hadfield
Joanna and Chris Pelligreen
Jody and Tony Delf
Joe and Mary Stieven
Joe Glynias
Joe Jedlicka
John and Ann Mohart
John and Renee Berra

John Rodis
Karen and James Shaughnessy
Kathy Yamaguchi
Kim and Brad Seabaugh-the Seabaugh Family Charitable Fund
Laren and Justin Musgrove
Lauren Hadfield
Laurie and John Laughlin
Lisa and Bob Auffenberg
Lisa Proctor
Lucinda and Fred Moore
Margie and Charlie Medelberg
Mark and Julie Jacob
Mark Travis and Greer Gufler
Mary and Mike Piccirilli
Molly and John Ortwerth
NRRM LLC
PJ and Jackie Martin
Richard and Nancy Arnoldy
Richard Salmon
Robert Hosenfelt
Robert Maddock
Sara Sindelar
Scott and Barbara Smith
Scott and Julie Engelbrecht
Shaughnessy Family
Stifel Charitable Ronald J and Michael Kruszewski
Susan and Gene McNary
Susan and Steve Cox
Suzanne Sartori
The LeGrands
The Wagner Charitable Fund
Tim and Margaret Barrett
Virginia Orthwein



thank you