



The Saddle Light Center for Therapeutic Horsemanship

March 2021

Official Newsletter for Saddle Light Riders, Volunteers & Supporters

The Saddle Light Center for Therapeutic Horsemanship

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The Saddle Light Center is a non-profit corporation created in 1991 to help disabled people reach their full potential.

Our mission is to provide equestrian therapy for children, teenagers and adults with neurological, orthopedic, learning, emotional or other disabilities.

Our goal is to inspire our riders to accomplishments previously considered beyond their capabilities.

Dear friends and supporters,

To say we have faced challenges over the past year is an understatement! At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, we, like so many other organizations, had no idea what to expect or how it would affect our riders' ability to come or the number of volunteers we would have. As an organization that provides a social service, we were never forced to close although at one point we had less than half of our usual riders and were struggling to get enough volunteers to accommodate them. Luckily, we were able to cut expenses without sacrificing the care of our horses, and find new opportunities to fund raise that helped us remain stable. We can't express our gratitude toward the individuals and organizations that offered us much needed support this year! We are financially stable and are back up to 80% of our rider capacity and have been recruiting additional volunteers (although we need more before we can schedule more riders!). We hope to see more of you at the barn and at our regular events as we are able to put them back on the calendar in the near future!



Winter Storm Uri hits SLC! Along with all of our neighbors at Retama, we faced harrowing road conditions and a lack of power and water for 5 days! With the help of friends, a few volunteers that were able to get here, and the Selma Fire Department, we made it through and all 13 horses were safe and healthy. They were just happy to get out of their stalls at last! (Max gave himself a much needed mud and snow roll).

What's going on around the barn?



We are pleased to announce that the Saddle Light Center has again received the 2021 **Platinum Seal of Transparency from the Guide Star** Organization! To see what achieving this status means about our transparency, ethics, and strategy you can visit our profile at [SADDLE LIGHT CENTER INC - GuideStar Profile](#)

Welcome to our new board secretary **Vicki Howard**! Vicki joined the board in January of 2021. Vicki has a BA in English from the University of El Paso. She has been a volunteer with SLC for over a year and is also a part of the fundraising committee, which was responsible for our first ever online auction this year! Vicki retired from her job as Director at Integrated Screening Partners in 2019, and since then has enjoyed traveling with her husband, an SWA pilot. She enjoys spending time with her kids and grandkids, running, and volunteering with SLC as well as Habitat for Humanity. Welcome Vicki and thanks for all you do!

Thanks to volunteer **Kevin Hasselhort** who has been helping us install a new phone and internet system! This new system that connects via wifi will help SLC save a good amount of money—and one thing this year has really driven home is that every dollar counts! Thanks Kevin for all the time spent on this!



In September we welcomed a new barn manager, **Kailey Slagle**! Initially interested in volunteering, Kailey had horse experience that made her a good candidate for the job. Originally from Arizona, Kailey has experience leading a mule team and grew up around horses. She is also working toward her horse management certificate online. She learned about the barn and horses very quickly and we are glad to have her on board!

Many thanks again to **Alterman Electric**—Alterman has long been a friend to SLC and helped us with several projects related to our lights which we very much need during the fall and winter months. In August, they installed a new spotlight off the arena and they also cleaned and improved all the fixtures inside the barn, which made them safer in addition to nicer to look at. We appreciate all they do for us!



We have openings on the weekends for group services projects—weekend groups help us with special projects like painting the arena or repairing the mounting ramp, or regular deep leaning chores we don't have time to accomplish during the week. In addition to doing all activities outside, we do ask individuals wear masks and maintain social distancing during service projects.



Mark your calendars for **EquestFest 2021!** We are hopeful that by October we will be able to have a safe and fun EquestFest for everyone, and to make up for all the fun we missed last year we want this to be the best and biggest year over. We are also pleased to announce a new location for EquestFest, the **Helotes Festival Fair Grounds!** We will have the usual activities, music and auction and we are very excited about this new venue! If you or your company or organization is interested in corporate sponsorship please contact Fundraising Chair Alison Gragg at 210-273-7497.

Does your company have a community service or matching program? You may not be aware, but many companies have programs that reward employees for their service time, or will even match donations employees make as an individual or a group to a non-profit organization. If your company provides an opportunity like this, we can help you with any necessary paperwork.



Thank you to the following organizations for your generous support this year—we could not have made it through without you: **H.E. Stumberg, Sr. Trust, CJDA Foundation, Gordon Hartman Family Foundation, the AQHA, the San Antonio Area Foundation, the Greehey Family Foundation, the Alamo Kiwanis Club, Amy Shelton McNutt Charitable Trust, Dr. Robert Ball of Bracken Equine Clinic, and the Retama Equine Hospital.**

Most of us are relying heavily on delivery orders right now, and you can help support the Saddle Light Center by shopping with **Amazon Smile!** Just go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and select Saddle Light Center Inc.

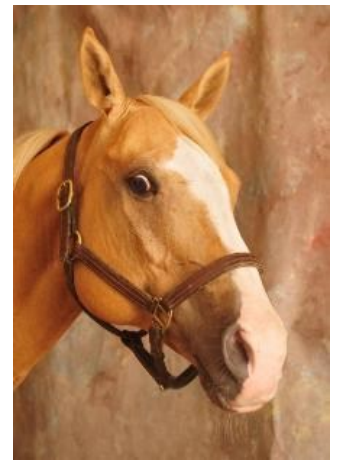
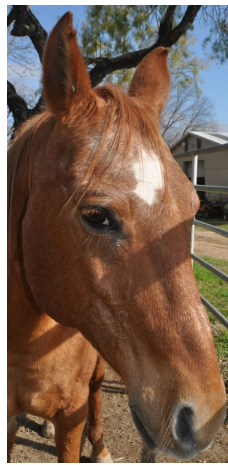


Next Volunteer Training: Saturday March 20th, 10am to 1pm



For the safety of our riders and their families, our volunteers, and our employees, the Saddle Light Center will continue to require masks and gloves to be worn when working with clients, as well as mask wearing and maintaining social distancing as much as possible when in the barn.

Thank you for helping us keep everyone involved with SLC stay safe and healthy!



We're looking for dedicated and committed volunteers for a not so ordinary volunteer opportunity!

...working with the Saddle Light horses and the children who benefit from equestrian therapy!

We need over 120 volunteers each week to provide their time & energy with rider assistance by spotting, sidewalking, or horse leading, as well as horse care and barn chores. We also have opportunities for groups that want to fulfill a specific service project (great for church groups, college clubs, work teams and more).

Volunteer hours are from 3 pm to 9 pm Monday through Friday. Most volunteers sign up for either a 3:00 to 6:00 shift or 6:00 to 9:00. We also need volunteers to assist with barn chores on Saturday and Sunday mornings and afternoons. Contact us for more info—(210) 651-9574 or volcoor@sbcglobal.net.

No experience necessary! We will teach you what you need to know.



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**Free Matter
for the Blind
&
Disabled**