

Grace Lake Ministries

Quarterly Newsletter 2023

Issue 2

www.gracelakeministries.org

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who came out to support the riders for our 2023 Horse Show! We would like to extend a special thank you to all of our volunteers who made this show possible. Also, Leta Parker who was the announcer at the show, Wayne Miller from King's Trail Cowboy Church who provided the audio, and Ren from RLD Photography TX, LLC for taking beautiful pictures.

Thank you to all the sponsors for this year's show. We are grateful for your support!

Gold Sponsors~Cutting Edge Pediatric Therapy & King's Trail Cowboy Church

Silver Sponsors~CapTex Bank, Grayson Collin Electric Cooperative, Paradise Dental, RBFCU

Bronze Sponsors~903 Broadband, Bear Creek County Store, Branscome Grocery, First United, Kristine Edens Realty, Tami Burndt Realty, Tractor Supply

Inkind Donations~Jeremiah's Ice, RLD Photography TX, LLC, Platinum Performance, SmartPak



Important Dates

6/3-Summer Semester Begins

8/1-Last day for riders to sign up for Fall semester

8/19-Training for new Volunteers

9/5-Fall Semester Begins

[Online Calendar Link](#)



Amazon is no longer providing their AmazonSmile program where a portion of your purchase goes to a nonprofit of your choice. But, Kroger continues to be a wonderful partner. If you are a Kroger shopper, please sign up for Grace Lake to get a percentage of your purchase as a donation! Our NPO number is SD296

[Kroger Community Rewards - Kroger](#)



Volunteer Spotlight



Welcome new Board member, Nicole Chilson!

Nicole Chilson has joined our Board of Directors as Treasurer.

Nicole is a devoted wife, mother, daughter, business owner, and a farmer. After 30 years of experience in accounting, she decided to start her own bookkeeping firm in 2014. Although she services many different fields of business, she finds the most joy in being able to fill her need to help people and animals, by focusing on non-profit organizations and agriculture-based business.



Meet Julie Zeller. Julie relocated to Texas from California about 2 years ago. Her son and his family – three beautiful grandchildren – live in Melissa. Her daughter, Katie is a Veterinary Technician/veterinary surgical nurse in California. She is extremely jealous that Julie gets to spend a day each week on the ranch around horses!

Julie has been volunteering at Grace Lake Ministries for the past two years. She found Grace Lake through Volunteer Match. And it was a perfect match because she had spent her career in education, 20 years as a high school biology and chemistry teacher and 17 years as an administrator. She also served many students with special needs during the course of her years in education.

Now that she is retired, Julie is still keeping very busy. Grace Lake was her first volunteer ministry after arriving in Texas but she also volunteers at her church as the VBS director and with a couple of organizations that support foster youth and youth that have been transitioning out of the foster system. Clearly, Julie has a real heart for young people!

Grace Lake is so happy to have her serving as a sidewalker on Wednesday's with Rowdy. She loves Rowdy's infectious laughter. She says that his smile will break your heart and she is always amazed at his sense of humor in one so young!
Julie



Welcome new herd member, Wildfire! He is owned by our Instructor, Nikki diVittorio. Thank you, Nikki, for sharing your sweet boy! Wildfire has already had few classes this session and will do more as he continues to learn about his new job here at Grace Lake.

puts her all into volunteering and in return, she enjoys serving God by serving one of His children and being a part of a team that is dedicated to giving a child every opportunity to thrive and succeed. Grace Lake, Rowdy and Julie make a great team!

*Author – Horse Leader Volunteer Susan Withrow

A Lesson In Compassion



By partnering with institutions and volunteers that inspire hope, Grace Lake Ministries helps people overcome challenges that most think hopeless. One of the biggest sources of this inspiration is Collin College and their “Service Learning Program” which consistently provides the help of compassionate students that work tirelessly to change the lives of our riders.

The Service Learning Program provides students opportunities to gain hands-on experience working with their communities in fields that interest them. While these students solidify the concepts they learn in class and gain skills they have previously only studied, they become heroes in the eyes of our riders. By leading lessons that improve



Follow us on Facebook to see pictures of classes and other happenings around the barn.

[Link](#)

Ephesians 6:18 ~ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for the Lord's people.

motor control and simply offering support, the students at Collin College make immeasurable impacts on the process of healing and improvement.

Though these volunteers are only required to work a minimum of 14 hours of community service, many find inspiration in their philanthropy and continue to log over 100 hours each semester. In fact, in a recent semester the students in the program have been recognized for a combined 5,081 hours of hard work toward improving lives.

Professor Jeni Long (DNP, RN, CNE) is a Professor of Nursing at Collin College and the founder of the Service Learning Program. With a PhD in Nursing and a BA in Nursing Education, Professor Long has dedicated her life to improving the health and ability of those around her. Four years ago, Professor Long brought the program to Grace Lake, looking for enriching opportunities for her nursing students to gain real-world experience with people facing challenges many cannot relate to. Since then, she's seen students grow, experiencing new perspectives and developing a new-found confidence once immersed in a group of dedicated volunteers.

Like most people, many students start off feeling uncomfortable working with people with disabilities, they hesitate to get involved and misinterpret the struggles they see as insurmountable obstacles. The students expect to see people with limitations to what they can do and just want to offer help or kindness. But as they watch riders grow, getting stronger and more capable each day, students quickly realize that our riders have no limits, just challenges they are determined to overcome.

All of us at Grace Lake Ministries would like to offer tremendous thanks to Professor Jeni Long and all of the staff and students at Collin College. You make an incredible difference to our entire community and an indescribable impact on the lives of our riders. Through hard work and compassion, you've helped Grace Lake spread hope and healing throughout our entire program. Thank you, Collin College!

*Article written by Grace Lake volunteer, Jack Long.

Grace Lake's mission is to partner with horses to develop life skills and God centered wholeness for those with diverse physical, developmental, and emotional needs.