

RIDING PROGRAM HONORED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PHOTOS BY FRED NEUROHR

Veterans visit Lonesome Dove to take part in Clint Arrington's therapeutic riding program. There, said Arrington, they begin to realize "they can do anything."

Two years later, program for veterans still going strong

By Roslyn Ryan

Editor

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Powhatan resident Clint Arrington likes to build things—and he's good at it.

A mason by trade, he's built elaborate outdoor pavilions and patios aplenty. But his most ambitious project, which he began a little over two years ago, has required much more than muscle and mortar.

From his home on Route 13, Arrington runs one of Virginia's only therapeutic riding programs for veterans. There on his property, surrounded by trees and rolling fields, veterans from WWII to the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan come to find solace and strength on the backs of Arrington's horses.

Therapeutic riding has been widely used for decades to help people dealing with various disabilities, from

autism to physical and emotional trauma.

For Arrington, the work he and the volunteers do at Lonesome Dove is about helping those who have given so much transition back into the lives they left behind.

"This gives [veterans] the courage to move forward," said Arrington last month, as he readied the riding area for a lesson. "It allows them to know that if they can ride a horse they can do anything."



One on one interaction with horses is just one way the program helps veterans heal.

For all the work Arrington and the volunteers at Lonesome Dove have done for others, they still have plenty of needs themselves. As of mid-January they were still looking for a grant writer, and they always need volunteers. They have also been collecting donations to put toward a lift system, which would help in getting veterans on and off the horses.

While they often go about

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Pastor: Why he likes it here

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move out here, rather than just spending the weekend being weekend warrior rural farmers [on the] weekend that they can plug into a church somewhere, to rekindle the spiritual desires and interests that can come from slowing down. We want to be a beacon of light that is a safe place where people can bring their families and can hear God's Word. There can be some fellowship and connections, relationships, but mostly rekindling of a spiritual desire to know who God is. I think that is happening.

It's the people [that make Powhatan special]. On Tuesdays I go up to the county seat and I enjoy talking to this person and that person. People are friendly. They say, "How's it going?" They make jokes about what's on the sign here [at the church] sometimes. [They'll say,] "Hey, preacher!" and they'll have a question about God that nobody has an answer for. I enjoy the people. I grew up in a small, rural town where I knew a huge percentage of the people and a huge percentage of the people knew me. I am enjoying getting that

Wednesday, March

► **Family story** hours are Monday, Wednesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. Library hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Tuesday 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Gaming Days on the 3rd Fridays of each month 3-6 p.m. The Library is closed on Sundays and county holidays. If you have any question call 598-5670.

► The **Powhatan County Library** is participating in **Snuggle Up with Peter**, a winter reading program sponsored by the Library of Congress. The program is designed to foster a love of reading in young children by having a parent or other adult read to the child. The program includes reading logs, and activities free to anyone who wants to participate. Snuggle Up will also take place during regularly scheduled story events (Monday, Wednesday, at 10:30 am). "The use of Potter's beloved *Peter Rabbit* as this winter's theme encourages parents and children to engage both parents and children in reading," said Treadway, Librarian of

► **Reformers Unanimous Addiction Program** meets EVERY WEDNESDAY from 8:15 p.m. at Mt. Moriah Church. For information call 598-5328.

► **Free tax returns** will be e-filed by AARP in the Powhatan Library.

Schools: One

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was sent by a member but I found out that it was created by teachers as part of a grassroots