

**in this issue >>>**

- Pumpkin Patch 2023*
- Volunteer of The Month*
- Upcoming Events*
- Volunteer Needs*
- CAESA**

October  
2023



## Grand Valley Equine Assisted Learning Center

**“There’s more to life than just horses...  
There’s ponies too.”**



**Upcoming Events >>>**

**Pumpkin Patch**  
September 23-October 31  
open daily 10am-7pm  
**Trick-or-Treat Street**  
October 28  
11am-7pm  
*Included in general admission*



## CAESA

*Our homeschool enrichment program was featured in Fruita Tickles and Bits - written by Vera Mulder*

October marks the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Moon Farm Pumpkin Patch opening. The public can participate in the traditional haunted maze, petting zoo, hayride, haunted houses and finding their own pumpkin. This historic farm is now home to the Grand Valley Equine Assisted Learning Center (GVEALC).

I remember my own children, some 40 years ago, enjoying trips to that special place. The farm has evolved from 3 buildings and one horse to now many small buildings, settler’s hut, tree house, an old general store and even a full-sized Viking ship and more.

Schools took field trips there, arts and crafts flourished. After David Moon’s

mother, Ella passed, David sold the site to a nonprofit to continue the legacy. In 2021 Grand Valley Equine Assisted Learning Center purchased the facility

*“While this may be the first program of its kind on the Western Slope it is sure to not be the last.”*

I took a trip out to the farm and there I met Michelle Eccles, Ellie Fagan, and Jordan Hamm.

Michelle currently works for GVEALC as a LPC helping to service mental health

clients. She was contacted by Eric Dinell and Mark Carlson with Colorado Agribusiness and Equine Science Association (CAESA) regarding a homeschool enrichment program. They were looking to bring a state funded enrichment program to the farm where homeschool kids could come learn all

**Continued on page 2**

*Continued from page 1 >>>*

about horses and what it takes to own a horse of their own. When they contacted her, she jumped at the job. Her main roll with the program is head instructor, and the behavior lead.

Ellie has a background in FFA, 4-H and growing up on a ranch. Ellie has shown Dressage horses all her life alongside her mom. She was brought into the program to be a bridge between the two organizations, GVEALC and CAESA. Ellie also works closely with the families to provide all communication, student pictures, and funny quotes the kids say throughout the day. Ellie also works with the students as a co-teacher.

Jordan works at the farm as an Equine/ Farm Manager and Volunteer Coordinator when not being a co-teacher for the homeschool program. She has a background in 4-H, FFA and showing horses in western disciplines and rodeo. Aside from working closely with the therapist during sessions she also helps maintain the property and playhouses.

Jay D Muller and Suzanne Muller are the new owners of Moon Farm and the founders of GVEALC. Since the purchase of the farm in 2021 they have been working to merge the two businesses together. They are currently in the process of adding an indoor arena to the property where they will be able to service clients year-round. The addition of CAESA has brought a new dynamic to the facility and opened several doors for GVEALC. CAESA provides industry-based experiential learning opportunities for K-12 students in animal and plant sciences, agriculture, food, horticulture, entrepreneurship and natural resource management. While this may be the first program of its kind on the Western Slope it is sure to not be the last.



**COLORADO AGRIBUSINESS & EQUINE SCIENCES ACADEMY**



*Volunteer of The Month >>>*

## *Avis Loshbaugh*

Avis has been a volunteer with us for 4 years. She has helped us with pen cleaning, pumpkin patch, general farm work and cleans the onsite VRBOs. Avis always comes to the farm ready to work no matter what the job may be.

When Avis is not helping at the farm she enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband.

She is a board member for Grand River Humaine Society where she fosters dogs and kittens. Avis can often be found at their Saturday adoption events helping pets find new homes.

We appreciate all you do for us and are so thankful for all the time you put into our organization. Thank you!

*Horse of The Month >>>*

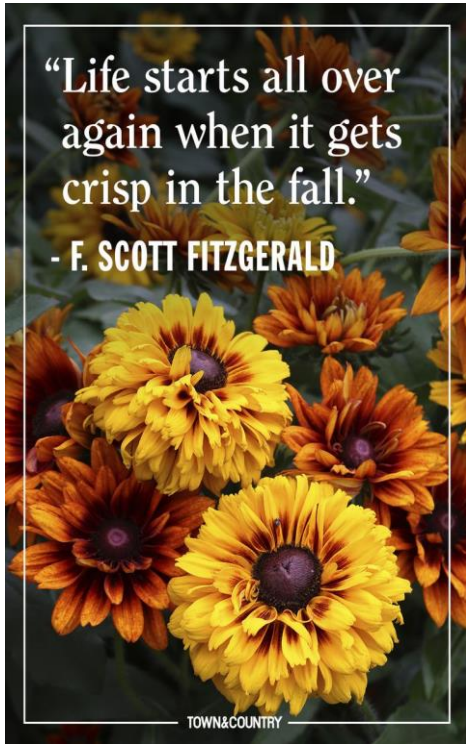
## *Q-tip*

Q-tip began his career with us in 2015 then donated to us from Reimer's Rainbow Ranch in 2020. Q-tip has become one of the favorites at the farm. His kind disposition and soft eye will melt the heart of anyone who comes to know him. He may not be first to the treats or loves but he makes sure to get his share.

We love you Q



# Pumpkin Patch >>>



Pumpkin Patch 2023 is currently in full swing. Our opening day, September 23<sup>rd</sup> was a big success. We had quite a few people come out after enjoying Fruita Fall Fest, many eager to take home pumpkins and many just ready to enjoy the fall weather.

We were able to bring some new elements to the haunted maze this year and have a scavenger hunt for the kids. The Moon Farm Express Train has been fixed so we are able to run the train on the weekends alongside the hay ride. The pumpkin patch is filled with pumpkins of all sizes ready to be picked.

We will be hosting a Trick-or-Treat Street October 28<sup>th</sup> from 11am-7pm. Kids will be able to dress up and walk through all the playhouses to receive candy. 2022 was our first year doing this event and it was a major hit. We had more kids come through the farm than we ever expected to have. We decided this year to extend the timeframe to be able to service more families and help with crowd control. The Trick-or-Treat Street is included in the regular \$7 general admission for ages 4 and up.

Be sure to come out and see us to grab your pumpkins!



## More Information>>>

*To keep up to date on events and training opportunities please keep an eye on our website*

*[gvequineassistedlearningcenter.org](http://gvequineassistedlearningcenter.org) or our facebook page.*

## Volunteer Opportunities>>>

We have several volunteer opportunities available with Pumpkin Patch. These positions are 4 1/2 hour shifts throughout the day during business hours. We have positions open for cashier, pumpkin sales, barnyard supervisor, and farm floater. As we start having school groups come out to the farm we will need all the help we can get. Extra eyes and ears are great with all the kids.

Aside from the Pumpkin Patch we do have several days without a horse pen cleaner. This is a job that can be done as your schedule allows. Many of our volunteers who signed up for this job like to come out early morning before the heat sets in. If this is something you would like to help with please email [jhamm@gvealc.com](mailto:jhamm@gvealc.com) with your information.

