

Share the love...

...Give hope.

The Barn for Equine Learning is a nonprofit organization that offers equine assisted growth and learning opportunities to youth and adults. We care about meeting the needs of the people who enter our barn and the horses that make it all possible. Your donation will go to meeting the daily needs of our horses and to opening our barn doors to more people in need in our community.



Every dollar counts:

No donation is too small, and every dollar will go to meeting the needs of the people we serve and the horses we care for.

You can also give towards specific needs in the following ways:

- \$8 Two bales of hay
- \$50 Sponsor a participant in EAL or EAP
- \$215 Sponsor a horse for a month
- \$2,500 Sponsor a horse for a year

To donate:

Make checks payable to: **The Barn for EL**

Send to:

The Barn for Equine Learning
3203 Timpson Ave. SE
Lowell, MI 49331

You can also make a safe and secure electronic donation on our website's "Donate" page at www.thebarnforequinelearning.com

All Donation are tax-exempt. Thank You!

thebarnforel@gmail.com ❖ www.thebarnforequinelearning.com ❖ 616.690.0646

The Barn for Equine Learning
3203 Timpson Ave SE
Lowell, MI 49331



Giving youth and adults the opportunity to discover new experiences, challenge themselves, and grow through the healing power of the horse in the therapeutic setting.



2016



Experience. Challenge. Grow.

An Amazing Season

What an amazing season we have had here at The Barn. We have accomplished so much in our first official non-profit year! There are moments that are truly awe inspiring, thinking about all the people The Barn has served, along with the people who have come along side and supported The Barn. It has been wonderful to have experienced working with the people that visit The Barn and the charity of people through their gifts of time, talent, and finances.

Every morning when we begin chores and drop grain for 13 very eager horses, we are reminded about the steady progress that has transpired. Walking by Oliver's stall, our newest addition to The Barn herd, I am flooded with heartfelt emotions and warmth toward the people who have helped make this possible. This progress has improved life at The Barn! We have been able to create enough pasture in close proximity to The Barn for all the horses. This makes it much safer in the winter when the paths can get very icy. Also, the utility room is well underway and we hope this coming summer to add a bathroom, along with cabinets to create storage space.

These meaningful projects have improved the day-to-day functioning at The Barn and allowed us to do more, opening The Barn to connect with more people. Many people who come to The Barn are experiencing pain, hurt, and loss in one form or another. When they come to The Barn it is through the horses that they have an opportunity to interact with these warm, responsive, gentle giants in a unique environment that allows for growth and healing. This builds an amazing haven, a therapeutic platform, from which to address a wide range of issues in a creative and caring format. The work that is being done is powerful and we are able to see, first hand, the changes in people. The work we do at The Barn is not easily labeled. Some people call it hope, and at times it is hope that we instill, but the experience may be as different and as varied as the individuals we see.

It's that kid that sits in the arena on the mounting block with his ear-buds plugged in and with every movement telling staff, students, everything in the larger radius around him, "leave me alone!". However, when that one horse comes over and sniffs his shoes and the boy's hand reaches out to touch the warm four-legged soul, engagement has occurred. That just might be a moment, a much-needed moment for a struggling soul, and is not for us to label, but to recognize and encourage. The Barn has the privilege of sharing these unique moments. However, it is only possible as a result of the people who have shared their gifts with us.

The Barn held its first fundraiser in the spring of 2015. There were many people that helped give The Barn a leg up! Toward the end of the fundraiser a donation came in that allowed us to exceed our goal. The spring fundraiser allowed The Barn to gain traction and reach out to more people, all while creating additional programming, adding to the herd, and continuing with Barn improvements. Not only was the fundraiser a major success, we are so grateful to the numbers of people who have come forward giving of their time and talent. The people who have joined up with The Barn have made a profound impact! From cutting down trees, late night fence building, day-to-day care of the barn and the horses, your support does not go unnoticed! The Barn expresses our sincerest thank you to all The Barn supporters! Thank you for giving us this opportunity to reach out and impact people in a positive and powerful way!



"There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man."
-Winston Churchill

Horse Spotlight ~ Monty's Story

EAGALA comes to The Barn!

The Barn is proud to announce that Kat Welton and Shana McGovern have become EAGALA certified! EAGALA-Equine Association Growth and Learning Association is an amazing addition to The Barn! With this certification The Barn will be able to offer a therapeutic approach to working with people and horses. The EAGALA certification will act as a compass to help guide The Barn facilitators in challenging situations when working with individuals and groups during therapy.

After two trips to Traverse City, MI for the very long three-day class sessions, along with developing a portfolio, and a strict regiment of continued education credits, we sure have learned a lot! This certification has brought us confidence and a researched based therapy model that brings professionalism and credibility to what we do at The Barn. We have also networked with some amazing people who are using this approach and are having unbelievable success! We are thrilled to have reached out and tapped into the EAGALA community, which has generated an awesome support system! We are continuing with our training in EAGALA and working toward an advanced certification!

I remember the day when Bart, my mother's partner, told me about an older, big horse, that he knew of. He had been taking care of horse's farrier needs for many years. The horse was in need of a new home. His barn was closing. His owner was very fond of him, but riding was not going to be part of her life moving on. So this very large gentle giant patiently waited, in a lovely barn with good care, but with no one-person to devote the many hours brushing, riding, or just taking him for long walks around the pasture. I remember saying, "Thanks, Bart, but I really can't have an extra mouth right now, especially headed into winter, and besides our barn isn't even finished. I'll find something in the Spring". On top of that, it sounded like he came with a price tag, and that made it out of the question. That was that. Later on, the owner of the closing barn reached out to The Barn explaining that she had some things to donate. She asked if we could come and sort through, but to bring a truck and trailer because she had some stall doors that she didn't need. The Barn, at that time, was desperately in need of stall doors! So I orchestrated a crew and one weekend day we went to the closing barn to retrieve the goods. I was so excited for the stall doors and the material goods that were coming our way, but never once thinking about the gentle giant munching his time away, just waiting for the right person to come along.

This gentle giant's coat is so dark that, if the lighting is low in the barn, you can barely see him in the stall. If walking quickly by his spot, one might not even be aware of his giant presence. The owner of the barn pointed him out and introduced him, "Monty". I asked to go into his stall for a look. I opened his door and the giant barely acknowledged my presence and continued to munch his hay. The stall was dark and it smelled of fresh shavings and good hay. I reached out to touch his massive shoulder and felt his soft coat. Monty

stopped eating, lifted his giant head and swung it to me, and with those big, soft, brown, eyes said, "Hi, I am what you need, I am good boy, I like people, and what do you have in your pocket for me?" My husband and his brother joined the welcoming, and in low manly voices I heard them both say, "I like him".

Hook, line, and sinker. Monty had a person. In fact, he was to have a whole slew of them. He might not have known what he was getting into as he loaded into my trailer on that cold November day. He was indeed leaving his barn of many years, maybe the only one he had ever known, and his buddies, four-legged and two-legged, all behind, but, oh, the buddies that were to come!



The lesson kids at The Barn found humor in that Monty, with the beautiful dark, almost black coat, was brought to The Barn on Black Friday. On his first day at The Barn, I introduced him to his new stall and took him for a walk around the arena and the pastures. On our walk he picked up a pine tree branch and carried it in his mouth for some time. I realized on this stroll (which is, by the way, Monty's favorite gait and pace), with pine branch and all, we had a wonderful horse, we were going to be just fine, and it was going to be a very good fit, Monty's forever barn.

Monty has proven to be a favorite with all that visit The Barn. His size is impressive and his personality is definitely larger than life. His broad shoulders have helped build the lesson program at The Barn and he carries the biggest weight of the lessons taught, generating much-needed funds for The Barn. However, most importantly, he has the ability to shoulder the burdens that so many of our at-risk, troubled, abused and neglected kids bring to The Barn. He does this with grace and humor and never balks at this important job. Whether it is a quiet brush in his stall with a kid who needs confidence, trotting around the arena building a feeling of competence, or one of his most favorites, trailing the trail ride, he is a warm soul, with soft big knowing eyes, and a curious roman nose that loves the attention at his forever Barn.

Program Highlights

The Barn offers a variety of programs. Much of our 2015 season was working with at-risk youth placed in residential or foster care. The Barn typically ran programs everyday with individuals and groups, with kids ranging in age from 6 to 18 years old.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL)

EAL utilizes an experiential approach, which allows youth to work on personal and group goals while learning valuable and essential life skills through their interaction with people and horses. EAL projects included working with the horses, barn chores, barn maintenance, and riding.



Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP)

The Barn offers EAP through the EAGALA model primarily to youth in residential treatment. The approach utilizes horses to bring about emotional and personal growth and learning. These sessions are typically an hour and can address a wide range of issues and challenges the participants are facing.

Other services The Barn offers include:

Barn Time

Barn Time is open to the community and is an opportunity for people to come out to The Barn and interact with the horses. Whether you want to groom a horse, hug a horse, give a horse a bath, or just spend time with a horse, we would love to have you out here. Please refer to our website for time and dates.

Volunteer Program

The Barn is always looking for volunteers! Volunteers are the backbone of The Barn. If you would like to offer your time and talent, we would love to find a way for you to share them.

Horsemanship Coaching

The Barn Riding Program teaches riding skills and horsemanship to kids of all ages as well as adults.

For more information please visit www.thebarnforequinelearning.com

Make sure you stay connected with us on Facebook!

Kids Connect

A student shares their Barn story...

The Barn is a good place to relax for someone who likes the woods and animals. The Barn has a lot of animals; horses, goats, chickens, dogs, and a rabbit. It is a wonderful place to have fun and relax around animals. For the past few weeks I have been working with a horse named Simon... Simon [can be a] nervous horse, but I have been riding Simon for the past few weeks and he has not gotten nervous when I ride him. I learned a lot at The Barn about how to ride a horse and how horses act. I also learned how to put on a saddle. When I ride Simon I feel relaxed and Simon is relaxed too. [We also] went trail blazing and I had so much fun! My favorite day at The Barn was when Simon was trotting. That day was so much fun!

-Barn student, 2015



Simon

A Special Thank You to some of our Barn Volunteers

The Barn is able to make an impact on our community due largely to the dedication of our volunteers.

Volunteer Shout Outs!

Kelly Nickel – Kelly has been a reliable and hardworking member of The Barn team from the beginning. Kelly came out most week day mornings to help with chores. Thank you Kelly!
Missie McGovern – Missie is a professional photographer who came out to The Barn and took many wonderful pictures of our horses and facility so that we could share these images with others.

Harris Creek Livestock – Thank you to the Bowman family for donating the poles to help make our newest pasture a reality. The Barn also appreciates the use of farm equipment.

Wilb Welton – Thank you Wilb for all your hard work at The Barn and always being a phone call away! You truly have made a huge impact!

The Girls! - Thank you Jillie, Annaka, La, Michaela, Catlin, Ariel, and Taylor for all your hard work and dedication to The Barn! Your time you have put in with chores and helping with groups is greatly appreciated!
Eric Davidson – Thank you! You truly made the lower horse pasture possible!

Thank you to our Barn Partners!

Your support of The Barn is greatly appreciated!

- ❖ The Davidson Family
- ❖ Sue Bazan
- ❖ Susan Rumford
- ❖ The Stegeman Family
- ❖ Fred & Peyton Mellema



The Global Standard for Equine Assisted Psychotherapy & Personal Development

To learn more about the EAGALA approach please visit www.eagala.org

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