

**2017–2018**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018



Virginia  
Horse Center  
Foundation<sup>TM</sup>

# The Virginia Horse Center Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

With the support of the Foundation, the Virginia Horse Center serves as an economic and cultural asset for the benefit of the Rockbridge County community and the Commonwealth of Virginia. An important resource to the East-Atlantic equine competition circuit, the Virginia Horse Center hosts all disciplines of equestrian sport, standing at the forefront of Virginia's \$1.2 billion equine community.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## OUR MISSION

The Virginia Horse Center Foundation provides a world class facility hosting regional, national, and international equestrian events.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Virginia Horse Center Foundation envisions a unique, bucolic landmark to honor and celebrate the timeless, special bond between mankind and the horse through safe, fair, and spirited equestrian competition.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Gardy Bloemers

## Dear friends of the VHC,

It has been one year now since I've had the privilege to serve as the president of the Virginia Horse Center, a place very near and dear to my heart. Since my very first visit to see a Lipizzaner performance in the Anderson Coliseum back in 2004, I have been in awe of this amazing place.

I have a hard time thinking of a more beautiful natural setting in which to spend a long weekend showing. Typically the shows we host are larger than other venues and often they are championships of one kind or another, which normally enhance the experience for the horse, rider, and their entourage.

Our challenging years are well behind us and I'm so excited about the future. I must acknowledge that the reason why we have strong prospects is thanks to our amazing management team and their staff as well as, of course, to our wonderfully committed past and present donors. Having the opportunity to ride and show in Virginia is special and I think that all of us who have had a chance to experience riding and showing elsewhere can appreciate this fully.

It is our mission to ensure that the Horse Center remains the cornerstone to the equestrian experience in Virginia for generations to come. With a very strong Board, Advisory Board, staff, and friends like you, we will make this happen.

I am grateful for this opportunity to make a difference for all of us who have this passion.

Respectfully yours,

Gardy Bloemers  
*President*

What We Do ...

# EVENTS



~100 horse shows

representing a broad spectrum of breeds and disciplines.

## VHC Owned events

VHC has a stable of talented show managers who organize our equine events.

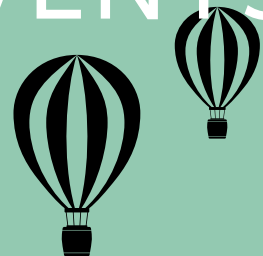
## Third Party equine events

Third party equine associations and groups rent our facilities for a variety of events including barrel racing, rodeo and quarter horse shows, training clinics, and industry seminars to name just a few.



# NON-EQUINE EVENTS

The Virginia Horse Center is also host to an array of community events including: dog agility trials, hot air balloon festival, 4-H livestock exhibitions & auctions, farmers' markets, concerts, alpaca & llama shows, weddings, industry seminars, and the Lexington Lifestyle Expo.



For a list of all events held at VHC, please visit:

[vahorsecenter.org](http://vahorsecenter.org)

\* *The long list of Owned and Third Party Events underscores the fact that the Virginia Horse Center is a cornerstone of Virginia's equine industry, which, according to a study completed by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia, generates an estimated \$1.2 billion in sales revenues for the Commonwealth each year.*



Second and third from left:  
Chuck Grossmann and Sue Tice

“The Virginia Horse Center provides a fabulous venue for all breeds and disciplines. For exhibitors it is conveniently laid out, has large safe stalls, excellent footing, and a knowledgeable, friendly staff that make it obvious that they want your visit to be a good one. The center is easy to get to, convenient to many hotels and restaurants, has ample parking, and plenty of camper hook ups.

As a member of the Board of Directors I think it is a very exciting time. We are in the process of laying the ground work to transform the VHC into a premier equestrian destination that all Virginians can be proud of.

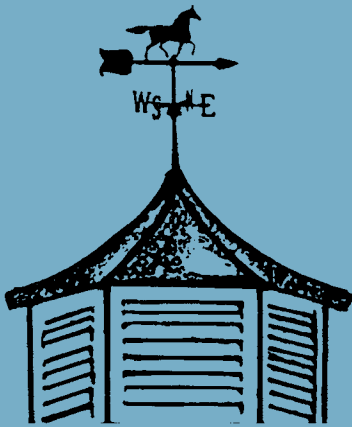
Because of all of the above (and more) Sue and I are happy to be able to be annual gift donors, a member of the Legacy Club, provide sponsorships for shows, and fund special projects.”

—Charles A. “Chuck” Grossmann, VHCF Treasurer

Virginia Horse Center

# FACILITY

REMAINS ONE OF THE LARGEST AND MOST ACCESSIBLE OF ITS KIND.



600 acres

in beautiful Central Virginia, close to historic Lexington, VA.

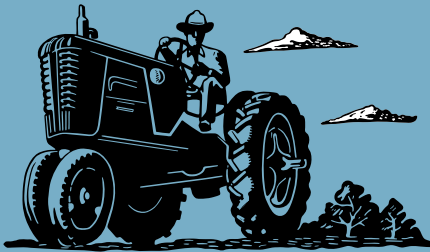
14 show rings

4,000 seat coliseum

8 barns

cross country courses

campgrounds  
special event spaces



tractor pull  
full café services

[vahorsecenter.org/facility](http://vahorsecenter.org/facility)



**We are proud to offer a wide variety of**

high-quality facilities for your event. An overview of all the VHC offers (with measurements and footing details) is available on our website. We encourage you to view the facility map to understand our layout as it pertains to your event or experience.

Reservations and inquiries can be routed to the stable office by calling 540-464-2960. Facility rental is subject to availability and, with a moving calendar, speaking with our staff is the best way to book your event and answer any questions you may have.

*The Virginia Horse Center provides a stage for the reality of equine passions. Our donor dedication to our mission and financial support is greatly appreciated and needed.*

# Into the

# FUTURE

## **LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF GROWTH**

and improvement, the Virginia Horse Center Foundation Board began implementing a major planning process, the first part of which was to create a strategic plan. The strategic planning committee solicited input from a broad range of interested parties, including staff, external stakeholders, and board members. During the process, the committee developed this strategic plan to provide a disciplined approach to address certain weaknesses and expand on our strengths.

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## **GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

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### **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

#### **What we said we would do:**

To ensure the Virginia Horse Center is on solid financial ground for the future, a 10-year financial plan has been developed with a road map on how to achieve our goals. Our long-term goal is to see that donations are critical to our expansion, not to our bottom line. The intent of the Goals and Strategies is to put the Virginia Horse Center Foundation in a position to fund operations and general maintenance through revenues so that future donations may be used for deferred maintenance and future growth.

#### **What we did:**

- Made our Big 3 shows more profitable
- Raised \$789,000 from donors and sponsors

### **CREATE A MASTER PLAN FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

#### **What we said we would do:**

An effective master plan describes and illustrates the Virginia Horse Center in three dimensions, explains the method of developing the site, and illustrates what delivery strategy to use to implement project improvement. This master plan will address the 600-acre site as a whole, and improve on horse, pedestrian, and traffic flow, physical facilities and renovations, storm water management, environmental impact relating to the Maury River and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, potential rain water capture and alternative energy sources, open space, community land use, landscaping, and future equestrian expansion.

#### **What we did:**

- Master Plan to be completed fall 2018: Plan will be a guide for all improvements





*“This era in the Horse Center’s history is, without question, a time of optimism and excitement.”*

—John Nicholson, CEO

## **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

### **What we said we would do:**

In order to attract and increase the number of exhibitors, we must improve facilities for horses, riders, and audiences and increase revenue generating programs.

### **What we did:**

- Continued to invest in excellent footing; focused on landscaping enhancements
- Attracted and hosted new large reining show
- Ran successful Go Fund Me campaign which raised funds for down payment on Zero Turn mowers
- Improved outdoor lighting
- Purchased new HVAC system

## **MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING**

### **What we said we would do:**

The continued growth of the Virginia Horse Center Foundation requires the direction and leadership of a visionary CEO, qualified staff, and employees who are committed to our goals and values, and who demonstrate that commitment in ways consistent with our mission.

### **What we did:**

- We implemented annual performance review process
- Translated employee handbook into Spanish
- Managed more than 30 staff for the season

## MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

### What we said we would do:

To be recognized as a world class facility, our mission, programs, services, and calendar must be communicated and marketed on a timely basis. In addition, communications among the Board of Directors, administrative staff, program participants, and the community are essential to establishing strong working relationships.

### What we did:

- Brought marketing and public relations inhouse to reach all disciplines and breeds
- Built database to more than 5,000 recipients—website pop up translates to hundreds of people signing up for VHC news
- Analytics data shows we have 8,000 – 9,000 users on our website monthly during show season
- Sent quarterly newsletters
- Press releases getting picked up in multiple equestrian magazines for more exposure
- Improved community relations by identifying area for new county soccer field

## INVESTMENT IN PHILANTHROPIC DEVELOPMENT

### What we said we would do:

Earned revenue (including events) is not currently sufficient to support competitive administrative salaries, deferred maintenance, facilities upkeep, operating expenses, and other needs. We must generate sufficient financial resources and assets to accomplish our mission annually and insure long-term financial sustainability.



PHOTOGRAPH © JUDY ROBICHAUX

**What we did:**

- Board President Gardy Bloemers purchased a membership for the VHCF to the Center for Non-Profit Excellence. Membership allows VHC staff and board members to help build non-profit management skills, tools for strengthening leadership skills, increased visibility, and access to many other services and resources
- Hired contract data base specialist to help manage donor data base
- Development staff exploring and learning more about online and text-to-give fundraising techniques

**GOVERNANCE**

**What we said we would do:**

We must ensure the Virginia Horse Center Foundation is following best business practices.

**What we did:**

- Identified and cultivated five new board members with 100 combined years of equine experience

**IMPLEMENT PROCESS TO MEASURE PROGRESS**

**What we said we would do:**

We must have definitive measures of success to be able to evaluate our performance.

**What we did:**

- Going forward, we will continue to measure our success and communicate through our Year in Review – Annual Report. The successes detailed above are the first steps on a long-term journey.



PHOTOGRAPH © JUDY ROBICHAUX

# FISCAL YEAR 2017–2018

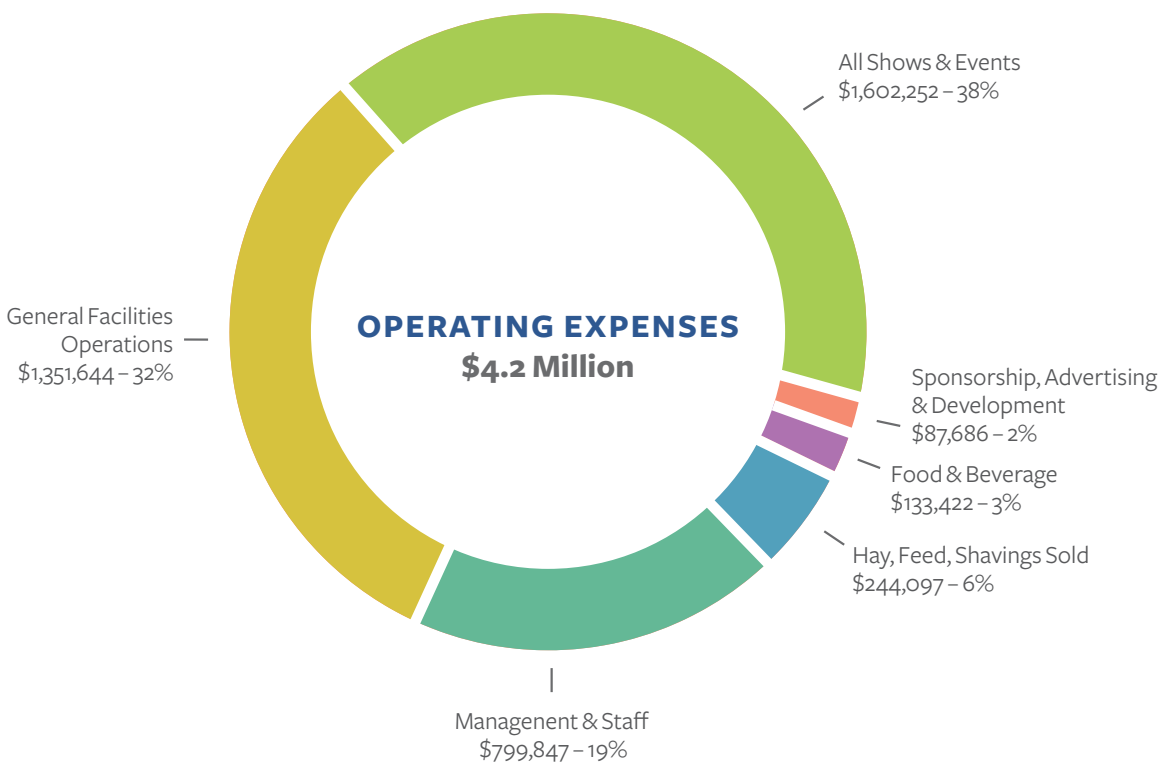
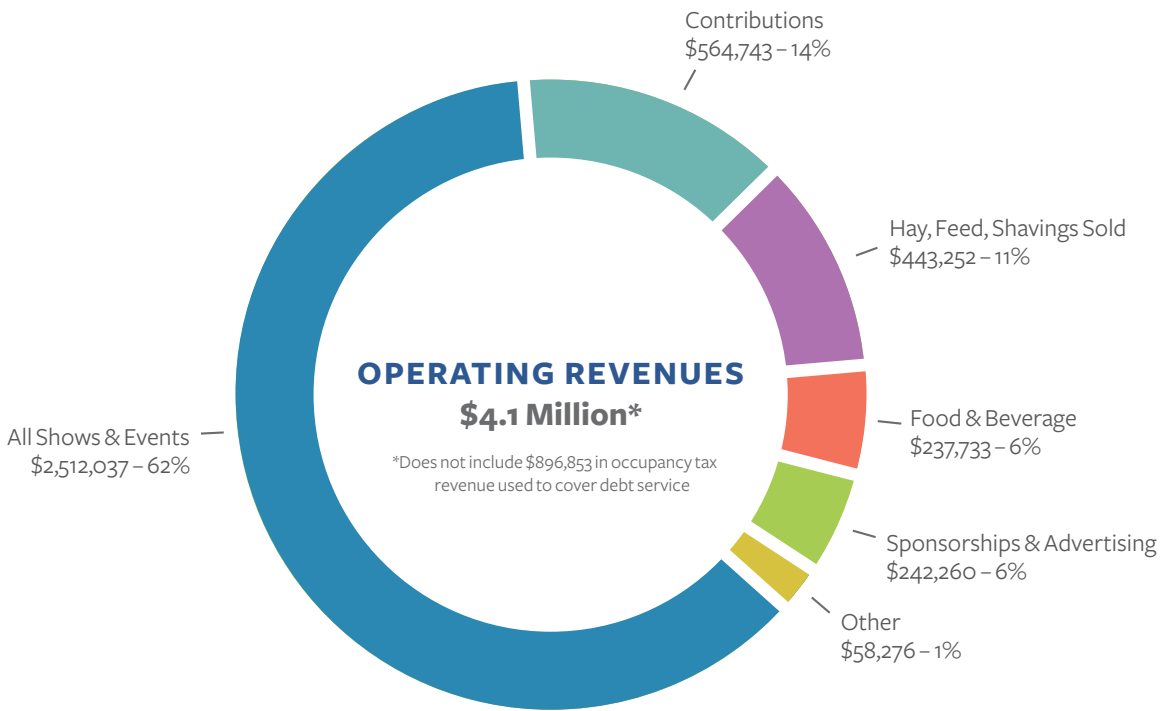
# FINANCIALS

**OUR PRIMARY REVENUES** are generated by shows that we own, followed by revenues generated by third party shows which rent our facility.

## Statement of Financial Position As of June 30

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	(Audited)	(Audited)
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 668,041	\$ 790,533
Grants receivable	399,297	475,385
Contributions receivable	110,437	284,474
Other assets	120,371	100,223
Property and equipment	18,079,316	18,789,617
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$19,377,462</b>	<b>\$20,440,232</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and other current liabilities	\$ 586,562	\$ 906,188
Notes payable and long term debt	11,244,171	11,589,493
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 11,830,733</b>	<b>\$12,495,681</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 7,546,729</b>	<b>\$ 7,944,551</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$19,377,462</b>	<b>\$20,440,232</b>

**NOTE:** The information above is derived from the Virginia Horse Center Foundation's audited financial statements. For a complete version, including the independent auditor's report, please contact the Foundation's office.



# Support

# VHCF

**THE ANNUAL FUND** is critical to the Virginia Horse Center's success. Gifts made to the Annual Fund make an impact every day in every area. Your gifts are used to bridge the financial gap between the income derived from our horse show operations and the cost of annual operating, maintenance, and program expenses. Many donors support our Annual Fund as well as sponsor events and support projects.

## Sponsorship

Sponsor classes, trophies, divisions, and hospitality at your favorite horse shows and be recognized by all your peers for your generosity.

## Restricted Gifts

A restricted gift is money or property given directly or indirectly for a specific purpose.

## In-Kind Gifts & Volunteering

In-kind gifts are contributions of goods or services other than cash grants. VHC welcomes in-kind donations and values your time volunteering.

## Bequests

A bequest under your will or revocable trust can complement your lifestyle and commitments today while supporting The Virginia Horse Center Foundation for tomorrow.

## Endowment

The Virginia Horse Center Foundation has partnered with the Community Foundation for Rockbridge, Bath and Alleghany (CFRBA), to provide donors an opportunity to invest in the long-term future of the Center and to establish a permanent charitable legacy. The principal of endowment fund gifts remains invested in perpetuity with annual earnings being used to support operations or for any donor-specified purpose.

Donors can be confident that their donations to our endowment are being managed by the experienced CFRBA professionals, and that their money will have the greatest future impact on the Virginia Horse Center Foundation.



# How to Give

## OUTRIGHT GIFTS

### CASH OR CHECK

You may send your tax deductible donation to:

**Virginia Horse Center Foundation**  
487 Maury River Road  
Lexington, Virginia 24450

### CREDIT CARD

Make a gift with your credit card through our website, or call our office. Set up recurring monthly or annual giving.

## MULTI-YEAR PLEDGE

The Virginia Horse Center relies on supporters who are committed through multiple years for support. This type of giving is critical for future planning and financial security.

### ONLINE

Make a gift online at: [vahorsecenter.org](http://vahorsecenter.org) by clicking the “Donate” button or by visiting the “Support VHCF” page. From there you will be directed to the secure and safe donation page.

### PUBLICLY TRADED SECURITIES

Please contact our Donor & Project Engagement Specialist at (540) 464-2953 to discuss the best way to transfer appreciated securities to benefit the Horse Center.

**We are unable to accept** artwork, animals, jewelry, or collectibles.

**NOTE:** Regardless of how you give or in what amount, we will acknowledge your generosity with a letter that you may retain for your tax records.

Thank you for your

# SUPPORT

## DONORS

### **\$10,000 and above**

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Ms. Jane Clark  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Clarke  
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Ms. Karen Waldron and Mr. Shawn Ricci  
The Wise Foundation

### **\$5,000 to \$9,999**

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Ms. Christine Barnicle  
Ms. Laura Butler  
Mr. Chuck Grossmann and  
Ms. Susan Tice  
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth M. Wheeler, Jr.

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*Donor has designated gift to Virginia Horse Center in estate plans*

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Mr. Chuck Grossmann and  
Ms. Susan Tice  
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John Robert "Bobby" and  
Carlene Kinlaw Burns  
*by Sarah Kelly Burns*

Isabel Deszinay  
*by Bettina Longaker*

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J.T. Tallon  
*by Ms. Barbara Bays*

Clarence Tardy  
*by Louise B. Tardy*

Steve McVeigh  
*by Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Oare*

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### *In Honor of*

Ana Clarke  
*by James River Realty*

Helen K. Groves and Otis Mead  
*by Brooks Cushman*



487 Maury River Road  
 Lexington, VA 24450  
 t. (540) 464-2950  
 f. (540) 464-2999

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*“All one needs to do is stand on the hill above the stables and arenas, viewing the vistas of mountains with extraordinary beauty, to realize that this is Virginia’s premier equestrian facility.”*

— *Supporter, participant, and owner of neighboring farm*

