2018–2019 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019







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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Dear Friends,

We are in an amazing period of rebirth and growth for our Virginia Horse Center. This is a time of pride in what, together, we are accomplishing. It is also an era of bold and radiant ambition for our future.

The things for which we should be justifiably proud would not be possible were it not for the extraordinary contributions from those who love and have chosen to support the Virginia Horse Center. This support manifests itself in many different ways. We are grateful to those who have been generous donors, for those who serve on the Board of Directors and the Advisory Council, for those who volunteer their time and their talent and, not least, those who have simply been loyal friends throughout the years.

The wonderful renaissance that we are experiencing becomes apparent when we see such things as the beautifully landscaped new entrance and the shining, newly painted cupolas upon all the barns. Projects involving storm water management, erosion and drainage have also commenced.

As we conclude the calendar year, we are planning for exciting projects that will be seen as we enter the next show season. These impressive undertakings, which will demonstrably change the physical character of the VHC, have been primarily funded by significant gifts from our family of donors. Visitors should see significant improvements to the lighting and ventilation in the Coliseum, a new and vastly expanded competition ring and major aesthetic and green space enhancements at the Horse Center.

We are reaping the benefits of all of these positive developments. Event organizers are noticing the



John Nicholson

improvements as evidenced by two new major events to be held in 2020. The VHC will be the venue for the BMX/USA Blue Ridge National Championships in January. Additionally, we take great pride in welcoming the Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association's Appalachian Championship to the VHC in June.

We are looking forward to not only an exciting new year and show season, but we are striding confidently into a most remarkable future. I join Board Chair Gardy Bloemers in expressing pride and gratitude that all of us who love and support the Virginia Horse Center are taking these strides together.

Sincerely,

John Nicholson CEO

EVENTS

~70 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, rodeos, and training clinics to name just a few.





non-equine events

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

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.

For event details and full schedule, please visit:

vahorsecenter.org







PHOTOGRAPHY © BRANT GAMMA

VHC Owned Shows FY2018-2019

Blue Ridge Arabian Horse Show "A" Bonnie Blue National Horse Show **USEF** Rated House Mountain Horse Shows Lexington National Horse Show "AA" Lexington Spring Encore "AA"

Lexington Spring Premiere "AA" Polar Bear Show Rockbridge Horse Show Sallie B. Wheeler /US Hunter Breeding National Championships Shenandoah Classic Horse Show

Stonewall Country Horse Show I "A" Stonewall Country Horse Show II "A" Spring Welcome Horse Show "A" Virginia Young Horse Festival

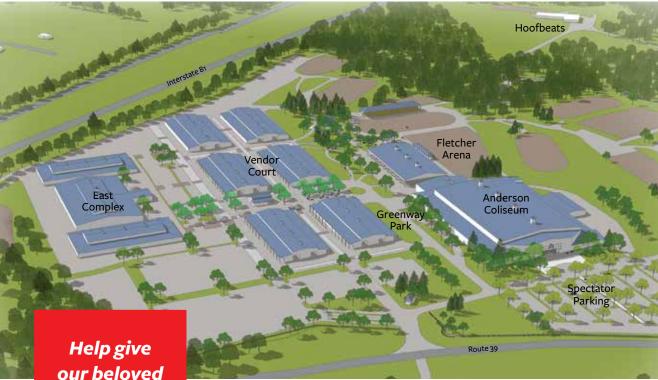
Third Party Shows and Events FY2018-2019

American Connemara Pony Region III APHA Eastern National Championship Arabian Horse Association Region 15 Championship ASHAV Horse Show AVA Region IX Equestrian Vaulting Championships Balloons over Rockbridge Buck Brannaman Clinic Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse/ Burro Adoption Canine Agility Trials Dressage at Lexington Eastern Arabian Horse Show and East Coast Championships East Coast Halter Futurity Eastern Regional Andalusian Horse Club EquiSmartz Glenmore Hunt Pony Club Great American Ranch & Trail Horse Sale Hear the Beat Horse Show (Therapeutic Riding Fundraiser) Heart of Virginia Alpaca Show Hot Pursuit 5K

Kubota Tractor Demo Lee Jackson Classic Appaloosa Horse Show Lexington Rockbridge Christmas Basket Program Lexington Spring Dressage Rosinburg Events Lexington Sunrise Rotary 4th of July Fireworks Lone Star Rodeo National Barrel Horse Association Colonial Nationals No Bull Barrel Old Dominion Gaited Horse Show Old Dominion Miniature Horse Club Old Dominion Pony Club Dressage Rally Old Dominion Pony Club Jumping Rally RAHC Bull & Oyster Festival Retro Rodeo Barrel Show Rockbridge Regional Fair Southwest Virginia Hunter/Jumper Association Finals Star City Canine Agility

Therapeutic Riding Association of Virginia Horse Show Trimble's Ridge Hunter/Jumper Shows UPHA Chapter Saddlebred Show USHJA Emerging Athletes Program Clinic VA₄-HState Championship Horse and Pony Show Virginia Barrel Classic Virginia Dressage Association Finals Virginia Golden National Palomino Horse Show Virginia Horse Shows Association Championships Virginia Horse Trials CCI/CIC/CCI Virginia Hunter Championships Virginia International CCI/CIC Horse Trials Virginia Presidential Paso Fino Virginia Starter Horse Trials & XC Schooling Virginia State Barrel Finals VPHC Color Classic & Fall Futurity VQHA Spring Breakout Horse Show VRHA Mid-Atlantic Reining Classic Winter Tournament/UPHA Show

MASTER PLAN



our beloved Virginia Horse Center a makeover!

The Virginia Horse Center's master plan addresses:

- Barn renovations including bathrooms
- Paving to alleviate dust, potholes and puddles
- Park-like settings with shade trees and more grass closer to barns
- Enlarged and renovated Fletcher Arena
- New landscaping
- So much more!



Expanded Fletcher Arena is outfitted with state-of-the-art footing, judges boxes, and viewing pavilion.



Spectator Parking at Anderson Coliseum with proposed shade treelined parking bay islands.





Proposed **Vendor Court Fountain** fronting the stable office offers respite from equine and human traffic circulation.

Your generosity will make this a reality.

For more information or if you wish to contribute, please contact Jennifer Donovan.

jdonovan@horsecenter.org

Into the **FUTURE**

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT TEN YEARS OF GROWTH

and improvement, in 2016 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. Most importantly, the plan shows the need to address financial sustainability while working to promote existing and new events.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

What we said we would do:

We must ensure the Virginia Horse Center is on solid financial ground for the future. For the first time in the history of the Virginia Horse Center, there is a 10-year financial plan along with the road map on how to achieve our goals. Our long-term goal is to make donations 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:

- Submitted bid for the FEI North American Youth Championships in dressage, show jumping, and eventing
- Attracted several new events, including the BMX/USA Blue Ridge National Championships and Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association's Appalachian Championships
- Increased our donor and sponsor gifts in the last fiscal year from \$719,273 to \$841,928.

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 and expansion.

What we did:

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED!

PHOTOGRAPHY © KATE SAMUEL





which have resulted in gifts and funding to start to seriously renovate our facility. We have entered into a new phase of rebirth and growth and it is an exciting time to spearhead this together with our CEO John Nicholson."

—Gardy Bloemers, Board President

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. In order to be a world class facility, we need to increase revenues generated by the number and caliber of events hosted each year.

What we did:

- Launched the Great VHC Makeover
- Continued to invest in excellent footing
- Completed new landscaping at entrance
- Completed new paving and drainage between Barns 1-4
- Raised money for a new, state-of-the-art arena and warm up, renovation of Barn 1, installation of fans and new lighting in the coliseum, and a complete IT overhaul for the VHC
- Began planned renovations of interior human spaces

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, while demonstrating that commitment in ways consistent with our mission.

What we did:

- Restructured the senior management team for more efficiency
- Outsourced food and beverage services

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:

- Continued to reach all equine disciplines and breeds
- Increased newsletter distribution list of 5,000 to 6,700 households
- Boosted website traffic during show season to 8,000 9,000 visits monthly
- Continued quarterly newsletters
- Plans were approved to hire a part time social media director

INVESTMENT IN PHILANTHROPIC DEVELOPMENT

What we said we would do:

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

What we did:

- Hired a part time development associate
- Standardized and scrubbed data in our donor database
- Reviewed and archived 25 years of donor records and VHC historical documents



GOVERNANCE

What we said we would do:

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

What we did:

- Successfully engaged many of our new board members with renovation projects
- With our recently completed Strategic and Master Plans, and our pending Economic Impact Study, the Board of Directors and executive staff have clear guidelines by which to direct the future growth of the Horse Center

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:

- We continue to measure our success and communicate through our Annual Report
- The successes detailed above are the first steps on a long-term journey

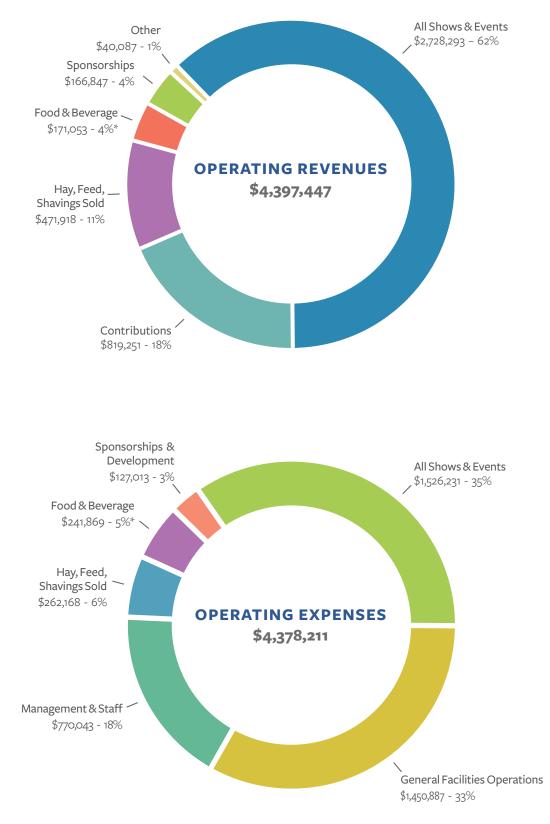
FISCAL YEAR 2018–2019

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, 2019

	2019	2018
ASSETS	(Audited)	(Audited)
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 1,506,367	\$ 668,041
Grants receivable	_	399,297
Contributions receivable	292,748	110,437
Other assets	98,732	120,371
Property and equipment	17,759,558	18,079,316
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 19,657,405	\$19,377,462
LIABILITIES Accounts payable and other current liabilities	\$ 701,164	\$ 586,562
Notes payable and long term debt	11,565,531	11,244,171
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$12,266,695	\$ 11,830,733
NET ASSETS		
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 7,390,710	\$ 7,546,729
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$19,657,405	\$19,377,462

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 offce.



* As of 4/1/19 VHCF outsourced its F&B operations.

These numbers represent only nine months of operations.

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 fund projects.

Sponsorships

Donors may sponsor classes, trophies, divisions, and hospitality events at any VHC horse show. Additionally, opportunities to give facility sponsorships, including signage, are also available.

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. VHC welcomes in-kind donations and values our volunteers.

Bequests

A bequest under a will or revocable trust can complement a donor's lifestyle and commitments today while supporting The Virginia Horse Center Foundation 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 the endowment fund 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 by credit card through our website, or call our office. Recurring monthly or annual giving options are available.

ONLINE

Make a gift online at: vahorsecenter.org by clicking the "Donate" button or by visiting the "Support VHCF" page. From there donors are 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.

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.

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.



HENLEY F. GABEAU



HENLEY FANT GABEAU died peacefully in Bend, Oregon last fall. Henley was born in Orangeburg, South Carolina on February 14, 1944, raised in Norfolk, Virginia and lived most of her life in Alexandria and Middlebrook, Virginia.

Henley spent many happy retirement years living on her farm in Middlebrook. She was a 'working' retiree, spending numerous volunteer hours supporting local causes like the Virginia Horse Center Foundation, Middlebrook General Store, the Ruritan Club, the Middlebrook Horse Show and regional conservation programs. Henley became an EMT and volunteered in several capacities to support the Middlebrook Volunteer Fire Department.

Henley is survived by her daughter Robin (Roughton) Judice and son-in-law Ross Judice, of Bend, Oregon, and her sister, Elizabeth Fant of Belton, South Carolina. Henley was preceded in death by her precious younger daughter Lucy Roughton Miller and her parents, Agnes Adele Watson Fant and George Albert Fant. Henley was very vocal during the "dark times" at the VHC and was instrumental in alerting local officials to pressure the VHCF to make some significant management changes. Those changes resulted in the recruitment of CEO, John Nicholson and his management team who have made significant progress in just a few short years. Henley also coordinated a group of women volunteers who called themselves the "Equestriennes." These women assisted in fundraising, administration support, and served as welcome ambassadors for VHC owned shows.

Henley became an accomplished horsewoman later in life. She won several top awards on her beloved Saddlebred horse, Magnolia Morning. Henley never met a dog she didn't love ... she will certainly meet her Corgis, Rottweilers, and horses in heaven. Her quiet energy, dedication, and perseverance are greatly missed.

"A Light Still Shining" JANET STERBA 1954–2019 by the National Horseman

THE SADDLEBRED WORLD LOST A GREAT LADY

when Janet Sterba passed away on March 29 after a private battle with cancer. A longtime member of the Saddlebred community, Janet's presence in the industry was a gift, and her enduring love of the horse and gracious, adventurous heart will be remembered by all whose lives she touched. Janet was admired by many and kind to all, and she will be greatly missed.

Janet grew up with Quarter Horses, but fell in love with the American Saddlebred the first time she saw one in 1981 while living in New Mexico with her husband, Jeff. The breed's spirit and beauty captivated her, and she and Jeff built their own barn and started training their own horses. They introduced their children, Katy and Dane, to horses from their first moments—Janet famously showed her first gaited horse while pregnant with Katy—and it was something the entire family enjoyed together.

When Janet and her family moved to Maryland in the late 1990s, the horses followed. They bought a farm in Virginia in 1999 and started a public training operation named Seven Oaks Stables with trainer John Champagne at the helm. After several years, they moved their horses to Grey Ridge Farm in Kentucky and eventually settled them closer to home in 2009, at Mercer Springs Farm in Princeton, West Virginia, and there they remained for the next 10 years.

Through the years, Janet showed such fine horses as CH Open Arms, Horace Taft, CH Shamanic Dream, CH My Stiletto, CH Take It From The Top, CH Callaway's Born For This, and most recently, CH Caraway's New York Minute, with whom she was the 2014 Amateur Fine Harness World's Champion of Champions and



two-time Reserve World's Champion of Champions after that, as well as the 2017 Amateur Fine Harness National Champion. Janet and "Jimmy" shared a special bond, and it was a privilege to watch them every time they stepped through the gate, as Janet's joy and vivacious spirit radiated through the entire arena whenever she was showing. "Janet was a great competitor, but she was also an equally great sportswoman, taking pleasure in the success of others and always appreciative of a nice horse or great performance," recalls Smith Lilly. "Janet's 2014 WCC title with Caraway's New York Minute in her first show with him will always be one of my career highlights."

Not only did Janet enjoy the horses herself, she supported her daughter, Katy's, dream of becoming a horse trainer, helping Katy open her Famesgate Stables in Troy, Virginia, last year. Janet also served the industry as a trustee of the American Saddlebred Museum.

In the show horse community, Janet will be remembered for her bright smile, sense of humor and the kindness she offered to everyone she met. Her understated elegance and gracious demeanor were matched only by her ability to make people laugh. She was a woman filled with a Joyful light, and she shared it freely, and so the light will shine on.

As published in the May 2019 issue of National Horseman.

Thank you for your SUPPORT July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

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Every effort has been made to list each donor to the Virginia Horse Center Foundation. If you believe the above list contains errors or omissions, please contact the Foundation office.

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3

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Joseph T. Samuels, Jr. Charlottesville, VA

Donald Stewart, Jr. Ocala, FL

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Design by Mary Michaela Murray/m.design



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

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