

**Cross Keys Equine Therapy
Volunteer Handbook
Updated September, 2020**

**Cross Keys Equine Therapy
6107 Horse Farm Lane
Port Republic, VA 24471**

540-607-6910

www.crosskeysequinetherapy.org

Mission

Cross Keys Equine Therapy is an organization dedicated to providing quality equine assisted therapy and learning activities. Our mission is to provide hope, healing and opportunities for emotional growth to people of all ages using horses. Believing that life often brings emotional and relational brokenness, our staff of therapists and horse specialists, as well as each of our volunteers and board members are committed to providing a safe environment that promotes heart change and healing. Because horses are authentic in nature, they quickly help clients discern lie-based thinking and inconsistencies in thoughts and behaviors. Horses have the ability to influence people in incredibly powerful ways. Clients are given hands-on tasks with horses that correspond with their personal goals and objectives. Clients are then given the opportunity to process their thoughts, beliefs, behaviors and patterns. Cross Keys Equine Therapy gives clients the ability to discover effective ways to manage anger, resolve conflict, exhibit responsibility, and to establish self-care and good boundaries. This therapy enables them to take healthier patterns of relating to others and strategies for dealing with brokenness out of the arena and into their lives.

Beliefs

We believe that healing is made possible only by the grace of God.

We believe the Bible is the word of God and is our source of truth.

We believe that behavior is only a symptom of what is going on in the heart.

We believe that passivity is one of the greatest difficulties of our existence and that heart change requires active pursuit of truth.

The Property

As an organization, it is our desire to steward well, and with great respect, the resources that God has provided. The warmth and family feel of the farm allows the environment to quickly become like home. However, we are all guests and should act accordingly while on farm grounds. Cross Keys Equine Therapy, Haven Stables at Cross Keys, LLC, as well as Bruce and Alicia Burns' personal residence are on the farm.

Cross Keys Equine Therapy uses the bank barn, cottage, lower paddocks and fields, and the office in the stall barn. CKET volunteers and staff members complete projects and interact with the horses that are expressly used for, and a benefit to, Cross Keys Equine Therapy.

Haven Stables at Cross Keys, LLC uses the stall barn and upper paddocks and fields. Please do not enter these areas without expressed permission from Bruce or Alicia, or a CKET staff member. All Haven work, boarded horses, and staff are completely separate from Cross Keys Equine Therapy.

The indoor and outdoor riding arenas, gazebo, parking area, outdoor wash bay, and the riding trails in the woods and back fields are shared. You may occasionally meet the owner's of the boarded horses, while in a shared space. Please introduce yourself, as you may have the opportunity to get to know them during your time here.

The personal residence of Bruce and Alicia Burns' includes the garage, house, yard around the house, lower driveway, tractor shed, utility shed, and mowing shed. Please do not enter these areas without express invitation by Bruce or Alicia, and help remind visitors to do the same.

Visitor Policy

We happily welcome visitors and friends to the farm. Please note that all guests must sign a liability waiver prior to coming, and their visit approved by a CKET staff member.

Packing Preparations

During your time at the farm your activities may include physically strenuous work, heavy lifting, and being exposed to hot or cold temperatures for an extended period of time. Because of this the following list is provided to prepare you for your time with us.

Volunteering on the farm:

- Sun Block
- Hat or cap
- Water bottle
- Long johns or under armour layers
- Quick dry sports shorts & shirts
- Warm thick socks
- Pocket knife
- Warm work jacket
- Beanie
- Rain and/or snow jacket with hood
- Long pants are highly recommended if riding
- Insulated, waterproof gloves
- Close-toed shoes or boots (tennis shoes are appropriate)
- Insulated and/or waterproof boots
- Western wear / costume for Pony Camps

Personal:

- Bible
- Journal
- Camera / phone
- Snack

Communicate:

It is important to communicate as much as possible ahead of time and then clearly throughout your time of stay. As volunteers of Cross Keys Equine Therapy, you are representatives of Cross Keys Equine Therapy in all your words and actions. Even more so, you are a representative of Christ and a reflection of His truth in your life. In each interaction with our community, whether on or off the farm, this principle should be kept in the forefront and we should all strive to be beyond reproach in all we do and say.

Policies and Procedures

As staff and volunteers of Cross Keys Equine Therapy, we are representatives of CKET in all our words and actions. Even more so, we are representatives of Christ and a reflection of His truth in our life. In each interaction with our community, whether on or off the farm, this principle should be kept in the forefront and we should all strive to be beyond reproach in all we do and say.

Cell phone:

Cell phones are acceptable to have for the purpose of being prepared for emergency situations and volunteer-related activities. Feel free to take pictures! While volunteering, we highly encourage interaction among the volunteer team and we ask that all non-related phone use be set aside during volunteer hours.

Parking:

All staff members, volunteers, clients, and visitors may park in the cul-de-sac area by the stall barn. The driveway by the bank barn is kept clear for the Burns' use, and is not available for parking.

Smoking:

There is no smoking on the farm premises at any time.

Illegal activities:

No illegal activities will be tolerated on the grounds of Cross Keys Equine Therapy, including but not limited to: smoking or drinking by minors, illegal drug use, sexual misconduct or harassment, assault, physical or verbal abuse, animal abuse, etc.

Firearms and weapons:

Utility type pocket knives and small hip worn knives are permissible for farm staff and approved volunteers only, on farm grounds and during activities and events. Blades longer than 4 inches are not acceptable. Cross Keys Equine Therapy considers bringing firearms onto farm property impermissible and grounds for immediate removal from the farm as well as removal from participation in any and all volunteer programs.

****Occasionally the Burns' may allow personal friends to use the shooting range by the creek in the woods, by appointment only. They also allow a personal friend to bow-hunt in the woods. In both cases, Alicia will alert all staff and volunteers of their presence. Entry into the woods during that time is unsafe and strictly prohibited.

Sign-In procedure & Recording Volunteer Hours:

Your volunteer time is important to us for funding purposes and for recognizing outstanding volunteers. Please record all volunteer hours each time you arrive and leave.

Paperwork:

All volunteers must complete the Cross Keys Equine Therapy Volunteer Application, which includes emergency information, liability release, photo release, and the confidentiality agreement. This form can be obtained from crosskeysequinetherapy.org/forms

Cancellations:

If you, for any reason, will not be coming to one of your normally scheduled volunteer shifts it is your responsibility to alert the Volunteer Coordinator of your expected absence at least one week in advance. If you are questionably sick 24 hours prior to your next scheduled volunteer shift, please alert the Volunteer Coordinator of your expected absence.

Incident reports:

Cross Keys Equine Therapy is required, by law, to report all incidents. Please alert the Volunteer Coordinator of all accidents, injuries, or hazardous conditions.

Emergency Action Plan

General:

The keys to handling almost all emergencies are:

1. Remain calm at all times
2. Be prepared for action ahead of time
3. Work as a team
4. Maintain clear communication

Incidents in arena with mounted rider:

1. The Instructor decides whether or not to dismount riders
2. All horses will be halted away from the incident
3. All side-walkers will stabilize their riders
4. The Instructor will appoint (if needed) someone to: telephone the emergency number and give directions to the center, get the Medical Release Forms of the rider and give them to the Instructor, and direct the emergency vehicle to the accident site, **asking that all lights and sirens be turned off to avoid frightening the horses.**
5. The Instructor will supervise the dismounting and evacuation of riders first, then horses, from the arena. Side-walkers will escort riders and caregivers away from the arena and leaders will be responsible for removing tack and returning the horses to the pasture. All leaders shall be prepared to dismount their rider without assistance, if necessary.
6. The Instructor or other qualified personnel will administer initial response First Aid to the injured/ill rider until more advanced medical care can arrive, if needed.
7. If the emergency occurs in another area (grooming area, office, etc.) the Instructor or other trained personnel will direct the uninjured parties to another location and appropriate action (as indicated in "emergency in the ring" section) will be taken to assist the victim.

When to call 911:

Before any other actions are taken, call 911 in the following situation: cardiac arrest/chest pain/possible heart attack, respiratory arrest/breathing difficulty, unconsciousness, drowning, electrocution, head/neck injury, severe bleeding, choking, paralysis, seizures of unknown origin or of a prolonged nature, critical burns, obvious fractures, multiple injuries, poisonous snake bite.

When 911 is called, be prepared to give the following information:

Location: Cross Keys Equine Therapy, 6107 Horse Farm Lane, Port Republic, VA 24471

Your Name

The nature of the emergency (i.e., heart attack, head injury, etc.)

The victim's condition (i.e., conscious, breathing) and the First Aid measures which are being administered (i.e., CPR, pressure to control bleeding)

EpiPen Procedures:

If CKET chooses to admit student with known allergic reactions to bees into a therapeutic horsemanship-related program, then the following policy will be in effect:

A parent, guardian, or Department of Social Services worker or representative will be: on-site at all times when the participant is on the CKET property, medically and legally responsible for that client, maintain at all times a fully functioning EpiPen, and have the knowledge and instruction in the use of the medical device, within sight of the rider at all times, will not hold the Instructors, Employees, Volunteers, or Program Officers responsible for any incidents resulting in injury or death of the client.

Fire procedures:

In the event of a fire, all persons on the property shall gather in the Outdoor Arena, which is the designated safe place. A CKET Staff Member shall take a role call and head count of all persons on the property at the time of the incident. Call 911 from a safe location.

Only if directed by a CKET staff member, remove horses if able to do so without risking injury to self or others. If possible, place halters and leads on the horses, cover their eyes, and lead them out of harm's way. If barn dogs or cats are in sight, try to catch them and place them safely

away from the barn, using personal cars parked away from the building to secure them if possible. Do this only without risk of injury to self or others.

***Fire extinguishers are located throughout the barn – become familiar with their locations.** Only attempt to extinguish a fire if it is small and you have a clear route of escape. Aim the extinguisher at the base of the flame and make a sweeping motion across the flame base.

***If an individual should become engulfed by fire,** try to extinguish the flame by using the “stop, drop, & roll” method. Do not run or let the victim run. If available, use water and/or blankets to aid in extinguishing the fire.

Tornadoes, High Winds, Lightening, Hail:

If a tornado or bad storm is predicted, all regularly scheduled farm activities will be canceled. If a storm arises somewhat unexpectedly, and there is time to travel to a safe shelter, all nonessential personnel should be directed to go home or to the closest designated shelter. Other personnel should meet in the office for further instructions from the Head Staff Member.

Responding to an Incident:

Incidents may arise during your time at the farm that may put us at risk of possible exposure to blood and body fluids. Instructors are expected to respond to any instances that may occur and to provide First Aid assistance until a more qualified individual arrives. Due to this expectation, Cross Keys Equine Therapy provides First Aid kits on the shelves in the center aisle of the Stall Barn, and on the shelves in the Bank Barn. These kits have extensive first aid supplies. Please make sure you know the contents and report any usage.

After reading this volunteer handbook, please click the link below to access the agreement page (signature required)

[Volunteer Handbook Agreement](#)