



Gully's
Learning Ranch

APRIL 2025



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Welcome!

Welcome to our monthly newsletter e-mail chain!

Each month, your e-newsletter is delivered right to your inbox – delivering important information regarding upcoming events and programs, interesting information from the world of equine assisted learning and experiential learning, and all things Gully's Learning Ranch – plus a monthly coupon!

We look forward to bringing you all the latest news from around our ranch – please let us know if you have any comments or suggestions for future installments.

April

By: Brittany Matthews

April is a special month,
A month of new beginnings.
Flowers bloom and green grass
grows,
Causing joyous feelings.

Ladybugs and butterflies,
Flying all around.
Birds gathering for their nest,
Dry grasses from the ground.

April is the time for rain,
Helping flowers grow;
April showers bring May
flowers,
A phrase that many know.

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Save It For A Rainy Day — Tips For Staying Positive

Working with horses means working in ALL kinds of weather, whether rain, snow, ice, or beautiful sunshine, we must look at the positives of all types of weather. April showers often make us think of the words “dreary” and “gloomy”. Thinking in this way can affect, not only our moods and emotions, but also our motivation and creativeness. We need to start thinking of a rainy day as a positive experience. Rain calms, cleanses, and allows for growth. The positives outweigh the negatives associated with a wet day. Let’s go through all the ways in which rain is beneficial to us, so we can refer back when we are feeling negative towards the next rainy day.

Rain helps to calm us. While we may be inside during a storm, we can still appreciate the calming qualities of rain. Many people use noise machines to artificially hear rain tapping against a roof or window. This is because the white noise created by a storm is rhythmic and calming. If we are lucky to have the opportunity to cuddle into a warm blanket on a rainy day, we instantly feel the cozy calmness that comes over us while it’s raining. There is no denying the peacefulness of a day spent relaxing during a rainstorm. If it is warm enough to be outside in the rain, we can enhance the grounding (or earthing) of our energy by utilizing the water’s conductive properties. An individual’s grounding experience is more powerful while it’s raining because, with the ions being exchanged between the Earth and us become enhanced with the water, allowing for greater energy exchange. Storms are also nature’s way of releasing pressure – and it can help us release the pressures of life too!

Rain cleanses. We all know of the importance of water to all living beings. Water has many purposes – it nourishes us, cleans us, refreshes us, and calms us. The pure nature of water’s properties means it plays a significant role in cleansing – physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Water physically cleanses everything it touches. Used as the first cleaning product ever, water is the universal solvent. Water cleanses us mentally and emotionally due to its pure, calming and positive nature. When it’s raining, or when we are under any running water, the water will cleanse our electromagnetic field of negative energy that has accumulated. Spiritually, water has been used in many faiths since ancient times, including during blessings and rituals. But even without organized religion, water has been seen as the ultimate healer and ensures overall wellness.

Rains allows for growth. Without rain, all the seeds in the world would remain dormant in a dark, cold space. We may even think of ourselves as that seed. Unsure of what the future may hold, knowing you can’t stay in this place, wondering what the next step is. Rain, in all it’s pure, positive, calming ways, is the catalyst for sprouting, for growth, and for moving forward. Without the dark days, we can never appreciate the light. Although a rainstorm brings clouds that cover the sunshine, we can still see the positive side of these types of days. We can see them for a time to self-reflect, check-in with ourselves, and decide what our next step in life will be. Beginning to look at dreary days as cleansing and calming is personal growth.



UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

April 2025 Events:**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Programs****Sunday, April 27th – Sunday, June 1st****(1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher. Skills include creative problem solving, effective communication, appropriate assertiveness, fair negotiation, teamwork, leadership, and more – all while having fun!

May 2025 Events:**6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Programs****Friday, May 2nd – Friday, June 6th****(1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

6-Week Youth Curriculum Programs**Saturday, May 17th – Saturday, June 21st****(11am-12:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

June 2025 Events:**6-Week Youth Curriculum Program****Sunday, June 29th – Sunday, August 3rd****(11am – 12:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

6-Week Teen Curriculum Program**Sunday, June 29th – Sunday, August 3rd****(1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

Authentic You Women's Workshop**Saturday, June 28th (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? Do you struggle with finding inner balance? Our unique empowerment program guarantees results that LAST with sustainable change within yourself coming from the self-discovery of problem solving and self-reflection. ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

July 2025 Events:**Authentic You Women's Workshop****Saturday, June 28th (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Program**Saturday, July 19th – Saturday, August 23rd****(11am-12:15 & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

**** Please note that dates and times are subject to change ******August 2025 Events:****Authentic You Women's Workshop****Sunday, August 24th (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? Do you struggle with finding inner balance? Our unique empowerment program guarantees results that LAST with sustainable change within yourself coming from the self-discovery of problem solving and self-reflection. ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

Authentic You Women's Workshop**Saturday, August 30th (10am-3pm with a country lunch)**

Are you looking to feel empowered in your life? ~5-hours of learning, laughing, and having fun!

September 2025 Events:**6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Program****Friday, September 12th – Friday, October 17th****(11am-12:15 & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams to navigate their way through an objectively-driven exercise with their horse teacher.

6-Week Youth & Teen Curriculum Program**Sunday, September 14th – Sunday, October 19th****(11am-12:15 & 1pm-2:15pm)**

Each week, participants work in teams with their horse teacher.

Horse Teacher Breed Profile Series: Sam

Did you know that each horse teacher at Gully's Learning Ranch is a different breed? This means we have 5 different breeds of horse (and 1 breed of donkey)! As with any domesticated animals, each breed has been created for a role or job within human society. Some horses have been bred to be large and some are small, but all breeds have a purpose. Over the next few months, we will be diving into the world of horse breeds, by examining the breeds in our herd, and finding out more of their origins and their ancestral past. This month, we will be focusing on our horse teacher Sam's breed, the Miniature Horse.

When we think of small horses, we think of ponies, and while, by height, Miniature Horses are technically considered ponies, their conformation can be much different than some of the pony breeds we see, with their short legs and neck. Miniature Horses look like a regular horse, who has been shrunk in the dryer! The conformation of Miniature Horses is that of a complete replica of their larger counterparts, such as the Quarter Horse, the Thoroughbred, and the Draft Horse. They have long legs, elegant neck, and a smaller head size compared to some pony breeds. Miniature Horses are do not have genetic defects or errors. Instead, these horses have been selectively bred down in size, all while maintaining as perfect of conformation as possible. They were also interbred with other small horse breeds, such as the Shetland Pony, the Falabella Pony, and the Hackney Pony, in order to refine the breed. These horses stand under 9 Hands in height (36" at the top of the withers). They come in all the same colours and patterns as full-sized horses. Nature has provided small sized equines without human interference. We have seen ancestral horses adapt to low food sources by generationally shrinking in body size to accommodate their changing environment. The Miniature Horse's wild ancestors evolved in the cool and temperate grasslands, steppes, and savannahs of the world.

Miniature Horse have kind and gentle temperaments, which have found them in different careers throughout history. These fun-sized horses have worked in many different types of careers. We start seeing Miniature Horses for the first time in the court of King Louis XIV of France in the 1650's, mainly as pets for nobles, but also notably as a part of the Royal Zoo for unusual animals at the Palace of Versailles. However, they were mainly bred for cart driving, these small compact horses were easy to care for, and were great for driving a small buggy or wagon. Miniature Horses eventually found themselves working in the winds of Europe. As time went on, Miniature Horses became companions, not only for other horses, but for humans once more, as well! These intelligent and curious horses love attention and do great as therapy horses – including as guide and support animals! Miniature Horses are great at helping with stress relief. Their size is perfect for everyone, especially for children and those who are fearful of horses. The American Miniature Horse Association was founded in 1978.

Our horse teacher, Sam, is a 12-year-old, buckskin coloured coat Miniature Horse, with a large white blaze, white socks on both back legs, and one brown eye and one blue eye. He is a gentle horse, who is patient, kind, and understanding. Sam has been in our herd for almost 4 years. In that time, Sam has become the first horse that most participants work with. He teaches his students the importance of being aware of our surroundings, respecting other's boundaries, and leading confidently. These are all essential skills for working with horses – and for everyday life! Sam and Lady have been living together since before they moved to Gully's Learning Ranch. They have been together for at least 6 years, if not more!

* Resources: <https://breeds.okstate.edu/horses/miniature-horses.html>
<https://meskerparkzoo.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Miniature-Horse.pdf>



News 'Round The Ranch

The Herd Is Herding Up!

As Sidney continues to settle in here, we have seen the whole herd herding up and eating their hay. Horses herding up is a huge sign that they are trusting of one another and they work together to keep the whole herd safe – even the minis in the smaller paddock! Left to right: Sam, Sidney, Dreamer, Lady, Wayne, and not pictured is Sadie, who also likes to herd up with them!

Ranch Birthday!

On March 2nd, our horse teacher Dreamer celebrated her Birthday! Dreamer has turned 15-Years-Old. Dreamer is a kind, compassionate, and caring horse who teaches her students perseverance, self-confidence, and the importance of teamwork! Dreamer is easily spotted (no pun intended) amongst her herd with her beautiful coat.

Happy Easter!

From our family to yours, we want to wish you a very Happy Easter! Did you know the late great Lilly's full name was Easter Lilly? Lilly was rescued on Easter Monday in 2018! We hope you had a peaceful and joyous Easter weekend filled with family, friends, and food!

Annual Bird Migration Begins!

Gully's Learning Ranch is a hub for the annual bird migration that makes its way through the region during the warmer months. We have already started to see some of the earlier migrators, including Robins, Raptors, Starlings, Red-Winged Blackbirds, and our personal favourites, the Killdeers! You may hear the Killdeers' distinct call, which they are named after!



COUPON

Special Newsletter Coupon – Each month, there will be a coupon at the end of the newsletter. To redeem the coupon, mention the code below when booking your next program!

This month, our coupon is 10% off ANY upcoming 6-Week Youth/Teen Curriculum Program registered for in April 2025.*

CODE: YOUTH10

* Valid only when registering for a Youth/Teen Curriculum Program paid in full in April 2025. Program can be any date.



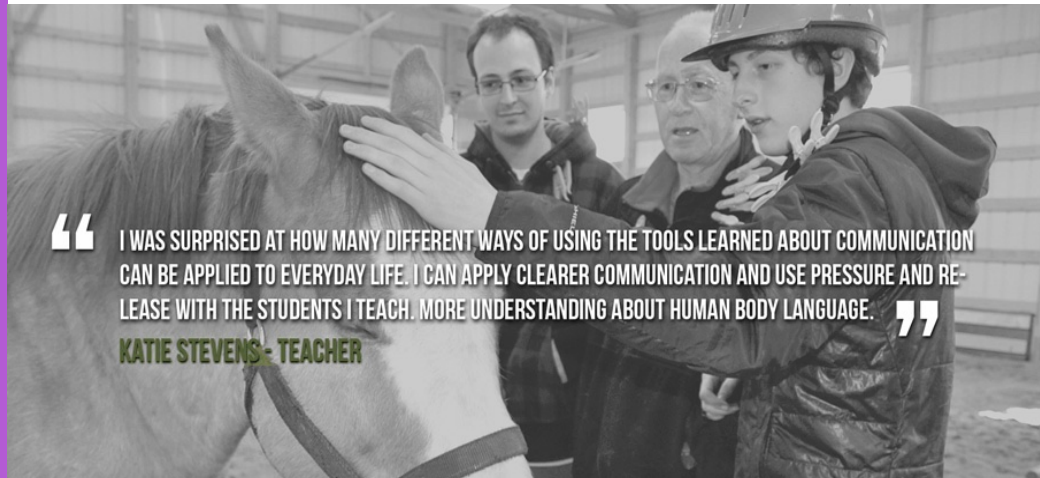
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APRIL'S FOOD FOR THOUGH

“If you want to
invest in
something with
minimum risk
and a guaranteed
big return, invest
in yourself.”

- Unknown



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I WAS SURPRISED AT HOW MANY DIFFERENT WAYS OF USING THE TOOLS LEARNED ABOUT COMMUNICATION CAN BE APPLIED TO EVERYDAY LIFE. I CAN APPLY CLEARER COMMUNICATION AND USE PRESSURE AND RELEASE WITH THE STUDENTS I TEACH. MORE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT HUMAN BODY LANGUAGE.

”

KATIE STEVENS- TEACHER

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