

Farm grows in mission to rescue horses, offer therapy. Grant money helps facility build Welcome Center

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Photographer: [Peter Barber](#)

Nanci Beyerl of Peaceful Acres Farm in Pattersonville pets Spirit Boy, one of three horses rescued from starvation in a barn in Nelliston.

PATTERSONVILLE — Peaceful Acres Horse Farm has come a long way from its humble beginnings. Nanci Beyerl has achieved non-profit status for the stable, which specializes in equine-assisted psychotherapy. And she's increased its mission to serve as a rescue facility for abused and neglected horses.

Now the vision Beyerl set into motion when she bought the barn off Rynex Corners Road in 2002 is growing again with the help of two local grants and countless donations from area businesses. Peaceful Acres celebrated the addition of a welcome center, administrative office and additional barn space to help the operation's continued growth. "It's been tough, but we're doing good," said Beyerl, who now serves as Peaceful Acres' executive director.

This year, the farm was able to secure a \$50,000 grant from the Wright Family Foundation and another \$12,000 from the Carlilian Foundation. Beyerl said the farm was also able to attract labor donations from area contractors, which helped stretch the grant money further. Peaceful Acres this week opened the Wright Family Welcome Center, which includes clinical offices, bathrooms and a kitchen. In addition, the farm has added five new stalls, which will help house the farm's ever-growing population of rescued horses.

Heather Ward, executive director of the Wright Family Foundation, said Peaceful Acres was in dire need of the added space. Previously, she said, families attending therapy sessions were often left out in the cold because of the farm's lack of building space. "It was really something they were desperately needing," she said.

Room for 28 horses

Beyerl was appreciative of the new space and lauded all the organizations that brought the project to fruition. The farm now includes more than 150 acres, houses up to 28 rescued horses and provides therapy service for about 40 people each week, many of them children. However, Beyerl said much more work needs to be done to ensure the

farm's mission can advance. In addition to seeking more grant funding, she's asking area businesses and residents to help with donations.

Oftentimes, the referral agencies that direct troubled and at-risk youth to the programs at Peaceful Acres provide them with only enough funding for several weeks of therapy. As a result, the farm sometimes resorts to covering the child's expenses rather than turning them away. Likewise, Peaceful Acres also needs to care for the animals that are rescued. Beyerl said the farm regrettably needs to turn animals away because it simply doesn't have the resources to care for them.

"If everyone reading [this] article made a commitment of \$20 a month to sponsor a kid or a horse, we wouldn't have funding issues," she said.