

THE HORSE'S VOICE

SPRING/SUMMER 2026 UPDATE

IN OTHER'S WORDS

We so appreciate the work you do! We also know the work you do is hard on your body and your heart. Know that we are buoyed by your ongoing efforts. Thank you. Be well, with love.
Long-time donors

Thank you for all you do for the animals, people, and community!
Long-time donor

It takes commitment and tenacity to do what you do every day and people would love to hear more of your stories. Your farm is surrounded by nature, and frequent visits from wildlife – bald eagles, hawks, falcons, ducks, geese, songbirds, rabbits, deer, coyote, fox, fishers, beaver, otters, bobcat and bears – are as much a part of your lives as the animals in your care and the community you serve.
Volunteer

[page 2-3: A Love Story]

You certainly do save more than the animals in your care. Thank you for all you do. You are truly angels on earth.

Facebook follower
[page 8—Gratitude]

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." Aesop

This winter was difficult for many across the country. At our farm, prolonged, brutal temperatures broke a record for the most consecutive days below zero. Through it all, the support of friends like you fueled us, warmed our hearts, and brightened our spirits. Because of the generosity of our donors, the animals always have full bellies, fresh water, and clean, fluffy stalls for rest, along with essential preventative and routine care by veterinarians and our farrier. As we reflect on the season just past, we do so in gratitude. Since 2003, your backing has empowered us to save lives and heal hearts with a ripple effect that endures. We couldn't do what we do without you. As we look forward, we are excited to do more.

With spring comes renewal, fresh beginnings, and hope. As the days get longer, the horses shed their winter coats leaving behind tufts of hair for the thousands of wild birds that grace us with their presence to build their nests. The farm comes alive with the symphony of their song. Soon, the grass will green and the horses, cows, and sheep will graze on its lushness. The humans will pack up their winter clothes and ice cleats for mud season and warmer weather. Though we adjust to fit the season, what remains constant is our commitment to caring for the animals with intention and to providing opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to experience the healing power and grace of these sentient beings through our community enrichment programs.

Our spring/summer schedule is filling fast, including a high school volunteer workday for experiential learning, 4H Group for community service, DayHab for Mountain Lakes Services, family, and individual visits, and more. These opportunities are possible because of the generosity of our donors. Together, we are making a difference in so many lives. We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joins us on this journey.

Eddie Mrozik & Nancy Van Wie, Co-founders



Mommy (horse) having her hooves trimmed by our farrier, Tim. Tim has been caring for our horses' hooves for nearly 30 years. Dede, CMVHR staff, is holding Mommy.



Eddie & Nancy [photo: Alvin Reiner]

AFTER 16 YEARS, HE RETURNED HOME....

In 2009, a Canada goose gosling escaping a predator in pursuit ran past us and dove into our pond. The predator retreated and the gosling, orphaned and only a few days old, was left to fend for itself. We hopped in a canoe and paddled out to scoop it up with a net. Eddie was raising mallard duck chicks he purchased from Tractor Supply, so we put the gosling in with the baby ducks. We named him Mumble after the penguin from the movie, *Happy Feet*.

Mumble thrived with the ducks. When they were old enough to fly, we released them to freedom. There are several large ponds on our property, a river along our boundary line, and Lake Champlain is just a few miles away. There's plenty of places for water birds to live. This gang decided to stay close to home – very close – in the horse paddocks and barns. Despite having wild mallards and Canada geese that migrate to our wetlands in the spring, for the first three years, our ducks and Mumble did not migrate with them but stayed at the farm with freedom to come and go as they pleased.

Though Mumble spent much of his time with his mallard friends, he had imprinted on us that first day we saved him, so he would often leave them to hang with us. He would follow us everywhere, including into the house on occasion. He helped with chores, drank from hydrants when we filled water buckets, and even took to training horses after watching us. It was quite amazing to witness. Geese are smart, sensitive, and they mate for life.



Left: Mumble flying with his duck friends.



A LOVE STORY...

During the third spring, a female Canada goose thought Mumble was cute. She kept coming to the barn to woo him. He would look to us for guidance and advice. We would tell him; "You are wild and free Mumble, and she's cute. It's okay to go. She came here for you, so join her and raise a family. We'll always be here for you". Our hearts were full and ached at the same time as they flew off together. We wondered if we'd ever see him again.

Each year when the geese would return to our pond to raise their young, we'd look for him. For more than a dozen years he and his mate returned to raise their family at our pond. We always kept our distance to let him be the wild boy he was meant to be and we'd smile.

Last spring, Mumble came home alone. He walked to the house and approached us with sorrow in his eyes and pain in his heart. Geese mate for life and his girlfriend had died. He needed the comfort of his "parents" to get him through the darkness.

We cried for him and were in awe at the irreversible, lifelong bond that formed the day we rescued him 16 years prior. He stayed with us for a week before joining a migrating flock that had returned to our pond. The lifespan of a Canada goose is 10-24 years. It fills our hearts to know that Mumble will live out his days knowing we will always be here for him when he needs us. It demonstrates the sentient nature of all animals.

Below: Mumble returned home for comfort from his "parents".

Below right: Mumble stayed with us for a week and followed us everywhere while he mourned his loss and found comfort in familiar love.



Above: Nancy telling Mumble it's okay to go with his girlfriend to be wild and free and raise a family.

Below: Nancy kissing Mumble as he eats corn from her hand.



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We couldn't do what we do without your backing. **Thank you!**

Our donors are the lifeblood of our work. We make every effort to ensure accurate recognition of your generosity in our publications. Please, if you see an error, contact Nancy at horses@cmvhr.org or 518-962-8512.

FOR THE LOVE OF ANIMALS

This edition of "For the Love of Animals" is all about ice. In late December, the county declared a state of emergency. The roads between our staff, Dede, and the farm were closed due to multiple accidents so it was just Eddie and Nancy (we). For those who don't know, we are volunteers, not paid staff. This is a labor of love. Because we live on the farm, the commute wasn't an issue, but the ice was! Fortunately there was enough snow in the horse, cow, and sheep paddocks for them to walk safely. But for humans to get to the animals to feed and clean, it was a skating rink. Safety is paramount for all, so to work we went.

Nancy did the morning feeding and cleaning wearing micro spikes while Eddie de-iced an area the size of a football field. De-icing involved spreading pet safe ice melt, shavings, and sand for traction. We did the evening feeding together. It took us eight straight hours to get everything done.

It was a tough day but a good one. When we went in for the night, the animals had full bellies, plenty of water, clean, fluffy stalls, and everyone stayed safe. We were exhausted. Dinner was delicious. And sleep, no problem!



Top right: One section of ice between the house and the main barns. The amount that needed de-icing was the size of a football field.

Above: Micro spikes were required for safety, especially after a hip replacement in August!

Bottom right: Eddie spread pet safe ice melt, shavings and sand. The total cost to de-ice was over \$600. We had to de-ice multiple times this winter to keep everyone safe.

Small right: The man in the tractor aka Eddie. [It was double digits below zero, hence the ice on the mustache and multiple layers.]



WINTER WARRIORS



Caring for animals in inclement weather can be a challenge, especially when it's bitterly cold, ice is treacherous, or snowfall is measured in feet. That's what this winter delivered for months.

Despite warnings to limit time outside in double digit below zero temperatures, we don't have the option. Our responsibility to care for the animals can't be put on pause while we wait for better weather. Numb fingers, foggy glasses, frosty eyelashes and mustaches, frozen gates and latches, nostrils that freeze when you breathe in, are all part of the day. We layer up, brave the elements, and do the work we must do.

The animals rely on us every day, consistently. Our work isn't about comfort or recognition, it's about commitment. In addition to constant forage and fresh water, all the animals have shelters that are cleaned daily. Farm life and animal rescue are not for the faint of heart, but it is work that fills your heart.

Though tough for the humans on occasion and often exhausting, it's one of the most gratifying feelings in the world to know the animals are safe, sheltered, and well-fed when night falls and we rest to start again tomorrow. To all who make it possible for us to ensure the animals have everything they need, you fuel our strength, determination, and ability....you warm our hearts. We couldn't do what we do without you. **Thank you!**



Left: Dede, CMVHR staff, braving the elements. We are celebrating her seventh year as our amazing staff and twenty years since she started as a youth volunteer.

Above: A month's supply of hay. It's just about 10 tons.

Below: Full sleds from cleaning stalls & paddocks.

Bottom: KC, LBJ & Rio bundled in their blankets enjoying hay. Constant forage (hay) also helps keep them warm.



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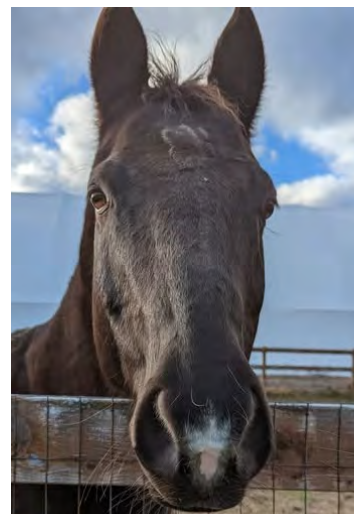
THE SAD SIDE OF OUR WORK

It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of Zephyr. Late summer, Zephyr, who was fine all day, threw himself on the ground and thrashed around in agony. It's not anything we'd ever seen before and we immediately called our vet, Dr. Amanda.

While we waited for her arrival, what we witnessed was traumatizing because we were helpless to help Zephyr. We gave him Banamine for pain and tried to walk with him, but he kept violently throwing his body on the ground. Sometimes he'd stop moving and we thought he died. Then he'd thrash more or stand up and throw himself down again.

When he got up and walked over to Rio to touch Rio's nose and gently nicker, we knew he was saying good-bye. He went down again and it was then that Dr. Amanda arrived. Her examination, combined with our description of his behavior, led her to diagnose strangulating lipoma. We learn something new everyday and this was something we had never experienced before, and we hope we never do again. Strangulating lipoma occurs when a benign fatty tumor that is attached like a ball on a string in the intestine, wraps around a section of the intestine, cutting off blood supply. The tumor is not something we'd have known was there and is most often a life-ending condition that will not resolve on its own. Transporting him to an equine hospital for emergency surgery was not an option because he couldn't stand up to be loaded in a trailer. The only choice was to humanely euthanize him.

This is the part of our work that is hard on the heart. We found solace through posting his story on social media and helping others whose horses died after presenting with the same symptoms and they never knew what happened. They found comfort in realizing they did all they could. Rest in peace, Zephyr. We will always love you.



GRATITUDE ABOUNDS

In January, after caring for animals in minus 30 degree temperatures, we checked on our 90 year old neighbor, Ben, for whom we have been caregivers for 20 years. He had just woken up and said he was cold. We ran over to his house and found him shivering and struggling to talk. He had no heat and his water lines were frozen.

We called an ambulance to check Ben for hypothermia. They took him to the hospital to get him warm and on his oxygen regimen while we worked over the next week, with the help of friends, to get his furnace repaired and his water lines replaced.

Thankfully Ben recovered and is back home. We are grateful for the EMTs, friends, and local businesses who came at a moments notice to help us. We are grateful for kindness, compassion, empathy, and unity. In the toughest of times, we are lifted up by so many who give selflessly to help others. You give us strength and lift our spirits.

